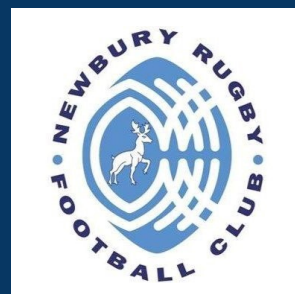


BLUES NEWS

KEEPING IN TOUCH - 16

SEPTEMBER 2021



This newsletter is sponsored by



**Newbury
Building Society**

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KEEPING IN TOUCH

If you would like to contribute to the next Blues News, please email content to [David Jones](#), [Brian Lee](#) or [Sarah Thorne](#).

**NEWBURY
RUGBY CLUB**

Well we are here !! League rugby is back this weekend after an absence for 18 months. Grove may not be our most glamorous fixture but it's a local derby which always adds some lively rivalry and it will be a competitive and tough opening game. We hope there will be plenty of supporters on the touchline. I did bump into Mike Jarvis, Martin Lockwood, Tina & Neil Pennington plus others, all warming up in the micro brewery in Inches Yard, getting ready for all the away as well as the home fixtures - great supporters over the years. There have been some good turnouts in training and it's good to see some old faces back, including James McCauley - charismatic in the changing room and a pivotal leader in the front row on the pitch.

The all weather pitch negotiations are still ongoing with WBC and seem to be taking an age. They are certainly taking up a lot of time. Sport England and the RFU are now involved and WBC has submitted a planning application but we have not signed the lease and will not until we are satisfied that the club's best interests are being met. We will of course let you all know as and when the lease is signed and the timescales.

The financial position of the club, although dramatically improved due to some excellent financial management from the Management Board but especially Rob Harris, Adam Prickett and Vicky, but it is finely balanced. Government Covid grants have been very helpful but we need to be very astute to ensure we have the right structure and business plan going forward to protect and sustain our community rugby club.

Rob Harris will step down in October from the paid role but will continue to support the club, so we need to get a Club Manager on board with some urgency. He has done an incredible amount of work in giving the commercial side of the club balance and structure and Leeann and her team have also put in a huge effort over this difficult Covid time, but particularly through the summer.

Team managers and coaches at every level in the club need to encourage parents, players and supporters to do at least one fundraising event during the year to support the club. Don't forget we have some of the best facilities in community rugby in the country but we all need to do our part to retain that.

Don't forget your membership - it's really important for the club. If you didn't join last year then why not show your support and sign up this year. The only beneficiary is your club and its future.

Let's hope we have a great season of rugby at whatever level you play or watch. Whether you are watching the men or the women or just feel inspired watching 400 youngsters playing on a Sunday morning, rugby is a great game of friendship, teamwork and fitness. Whether you are playing mixed touch rugby or competing in a league, there's a level for all of us to enjoy. Where else would you want to be at the weekend?!

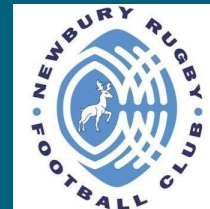
Well this Saturday I will see you at Grove and hopefully on Sunday back at Monks Lane. Enjoy the season!!

As usual a huge thank you to Brian Lee and Sarah Thorne for all their contributions to this Newsletter and all the other contributors.

David Jones - President

BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

LATEST FROM THE LADIES



As we approach the beginning of a new season the women's section have already been celebrating in style at NRFC and enjoying the new patio container bar where drinks are served outdoors, pitch-side!

As with most new beginnings there are also farewells. Hannah Ward & Rosie Archard, thank you for all the work you've done for the club! Hannah has been with the club for 23 years and coached us more recently. Rosie has played with us for 3 years and held the position of Vice Captain for the women's first XV last season. The whole women's side and wider club will miss you and we all wish you the very best in your new life in Canada.



We may have missed a lot of game time this past year thanks to Covid but that hasn't stopped our players achieving great things.



The women's teams are extremely happy to welcome former Blues player Niki Paton on board as Assistant Head Coach. This is an excellent achievement, and the team are delighted to have her on board in this new role. Congratulations again Niki!

Also, huge congratulations to Meg Mason on passing the England Rugby Refereeing Award! Meg is now a qualified referee so we can look forward to seeing her progression there as well. As many of you will know Meg has played for Newbury for many years and captained the first XV for two years consecutively. Congratulations on becoming an official Ref Meg!



Finally, Congratulations to Abbie Leadbitter for being nominated for the Volunteer of the year awards! This nomination was well deserved considering all the incredible work Abbie does for the club both on and off the pitch, but especially all the amazing promo videos she makes for us. If you haven't seen them, get online and check them out. Thank you for all the amazing work you do for us Abbie. You're incredible!

Whilst we're on the topic of Player development we'd like to say a massive warm Blues welcome to all the new players that have joined us for pre-season, and hopefully this coming season too. We're delighted to have you on board and the progress being made is excellent all around.

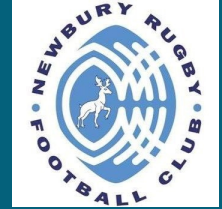
With the Women's section now fully engaged in pre-season training we can't wait for the season to start! Looking forward, we now have our First XV 2021/22 Fixtures detailed below!

26/09/2021	Guildford Gazelles – Newbury
03/10/2021	Newbury – Ivybridge Women
17/10/2021	London Irish Ladies – Newbury
07/11/2021	Newbury – Newton Abbot Ladies
14/11/2021	Wasps FC Ladies II – Newbury
28/11/2021	Newbury – Trojan Ladies
05/12/2021	Cullompton Ladies – Newbury
19/12/2021	Newbury – Portsmouth Valkyries Ladies
09/01/2022	Ivybridge Women – Newbury
16/01/2022	Newbury - London Irish Ladies
06/02/2022	Newton Abbot – Newbury
27/02/2022	Newbury - Wasps FC Ladies II
06/03/2022	Trojan Ladies – Newbury
20/03/2022	Newbury – Cullompton
03/04/2022	Portsmouth Valkyries Ladies – Newbury
10/04/2022	Newbury - Guilford Gazelles

Come along and support us, we're always delighted to see you pitch-side with a cuppa, or a cold pint, come rain or shine.

BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

SENIOR MEN - SQUAD UPDATE / PRE-SEASON GAME



THE NEW SEASON IS HERE !!!

We have a new Coach in James McAvoy but sadly due to work and family commitments we have lost Neil Hunter; the rest of the team remain the same.

Pre-season training has gone well and there has been great feedback from the Colts players as they are now under the Senior banner and train with us.

We have had close to 100 players from Seniors and Colts join in our pre-season training, although some of those will be lost to University in September. Most training sessions we have around 40 players.

We currently have ten new players who have joined the squad, which will help the Blues, Stags and As. There are also a few old faces who have come back to us including James MacCaulay, Adam Neal, Joe Pigott and Kris Ford.

During the Covid season we have inevitably lost a few players, (five at the moment) - some have moved back to their home town as they are now working mostly from home, some are having second thoughts about returning to play after a year off and prefer to spend more time with family. We hope some of these will eventually return to playing with us as the season progresses.

The mood in the squad is good and hopefully this bodes well for a successful 2021-2022 season.

This coming Saturday 4th Sept the **Blues** kick off their 2021/2022 season in South West 1 East with an away match at **Grove RFC, KO 3pm**. The **Stags/As** have a Pre-season friendly away at **Hungerford RFC, KO 2pm**.

Hope to see lots of you at Grove or Hungerford this Saturday.

Mick Fitcher - Manager Newbury Blues RFC

PRE-SEASON INTER-CLUB GAME - 14TH AUGUST 2021

Those were the days, international trial matches where the Possibles team took on the Probables team. Clearly the Possibles had a point to prove and on many an occasion they proved it. There was always a bit of niggles during these so called trial games and even though there was not a Probables or a Possibles team in the weekend's game at the club, it was a full on contest with all the players trying their best in their first proper game of rugby for who can remember how long. The sun shone, the younger players were getting to know the older ones and there were spectators, although a number of these were attending a wake being held in the Kickers bar, a gentle reminder of the more important things in life.

The team in blue played against the team in red. There is hesitation to call it the Blues team as this might have a ring of Probables about it, which it certainly wasn't. On paper the teams were evenly matched and even though the Blue team eventually won 31-7 both teams played some good rugby. It was understandable mistakes were going to be made but there was sufficient good rugby played to be hopeful for the forthcoming season.

The Red team made a lively start and were the first to score a try when Toby Thorne playing scrum half darted over from close range to open the scoring. Tom Cole kicked the conversion. 7-0 Red team after five minutes. Within minutes the Blue team hit back scoring a try by one of the stand out performers, Jonny Lees, with Dan Thorne kicking the conversion making it 7-7. Not long after, the Blue team went into the lead with a try by Reuben Langdon. A missed conversion made the score 12-7 to the Blue team. As in all these pre season games it is a pleasure to report on the younger players who are likely to make an impression during the coming season and on this performance the next try scorer for the Blue team, Oli Keyse is going to be one of those players. A successful Dan Thorne conversion made the score 19-7 to the Blue team. The Blue team went on to score two further tries, one by Tim Roach and a second for Jonny Lees, the latter being converted by Dan Thorne.

Stand out moments are subjective but one is worth mentioning. Joe Pigott made a significant break which was well supported by Dan Thorne. Everyone thought Dan was in for the try, everyone that is except Red team hooker Harry Wayne Branch whose turn of speed in catching and making a try saving tackle on one of the faster players in the team was simply outstanding and this coming towards the end of the game when fatigue was setting in for most of the players.

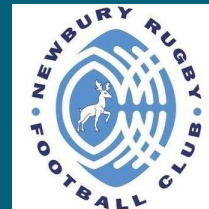
Individuals have been mentioned but the overriding feeling at the end of the game was one of gratitude to all the players for turning up and giving it their all. Playing against team mates is never easy but everyone stuck to it and the team social at the end of the game certainly had a feel good factor to it. Coaches and managers left early, possibly or even probably a wise decision.

Good luck to all our players for the forthcoming season.

Brian Lee

BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

PROJECTS & FUNDRAISING UPDATE - AUGUST 2021



Over **£50,000** now raised from donations / fund-raising (and match-funding)

Ten projects now completed since August 2019

All monies raised are used to fund community-benefit capex projects throughout the club

The new Good Exchange year commenced on 1st April 2021 and we have added two new projects to our list of live (approved with match-funding) projects.

All live projects are shown below for which we are actively raising funding for:

Current Live projects:

Description	Amount	Project No	Status	Comments
Car park CCTV & signage	£1,575	18397	Project live Nov'20	Improve car park safety & security £1,048 raised to date (67%)
Facility Security upgrade (doors / entrance gates)	£4,148	18540	Project live Dec'20	Improve building & grounds security to upgrade existing access points £0 raised to date
LED lighting for car park	£4,157	18532	Project live May'21	Upgrade the car park lighting to LEDs £3,800 raised to date (91%)
Players entrance door	£3,492	18843	Project live May'21	Replace players entrance door £0 raised to date

To donate to any of the above, you can do so in one of two ways:

- via Newbury RFC (and we will direct these onto one of the projects unless specifically requested otherwise); or
- via the following link: <https://thegoodexchange.com>, where you can donate to your preferred Newbury RFC project.

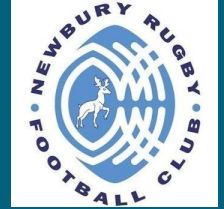
As all elements of the club return for the new season, we hope to be able to step-up our fund-raising efforts and complete much of the above.

Rob Harris

29/8/21

BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

UPDATE FROM COMMERCIAL TEAM - AUGUST 2021



We have seen strong activity over the summer for use of the club and have hosted a number of weddings, christenings, parties, conferences, wakes, corporate activity days alongside our regular community hirers and not forgetting the Super Sevens tournament in early July.

Customer feedback has been very positive for all of these events and this is testament to Leeann's bar team and the upfront sales service provided from Charlotte.

While utilisation levels have dropped off a little in August we are still running at levels far in excess of those pre-Covid. We have also secured a number of new community hirers from September which will mean most weekday evenings seeing multiple rooms hired out in the club in addition to all of our day-time activities.



The container bar exterior has now been fully painted following a very successful tie-up with Newbury College Art students. In just four months of use its revenues have already exceeded the entire fit-out / conversion costs. Nigel and Leeann deserve special mention for this project and its rapid payback.

Minis and juniors' training starts again this coming Sunday 5th Sept and the container bar / patio area will be the main hub for Sunday mornings. One of the best ways to support the club is to buy your food and drinks at the club rather than from multinational companies.

We have also invested in improved benches for the patio and in front of the Kickers bar. The patio itself is due to be re-laid in the Autumn.

We intend to open the top container on Sunday mornings but this will need volunteers across the age groups to run (and will be co-ordinated through the Minis & Junior sections).

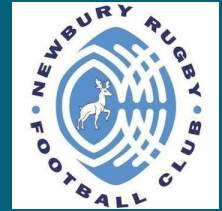
Finally we are always in need of paid bar and kitchen staff to help with our many events. Please contact us if you would like to join the team

Rob Harris

01/09/21

BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

JUNIOR UPDATE / 100 CLUB WINNERS



SUMMER FUN FOR UNDER 11S

Much to the disappointment of our U11 team the Covid-19 restrictions have meant they've not been able to go on tour for the last two seasons or really to celebrate as a team. So as an alternative this summer we arranged an afternoon at Lagoon Park where they could all let off steam and have fun. Luckily for all of us we picked one of the gloriously sunny days in July and armed with buoyancy



aids and other protective clothing around 30 of us entered the water. A

combination of players, coaches, parents and the team manager then negotiated the obstacles (some better than others) for what seemed like the longest, most exhausting 50 minutes ever! Everyone had a brilliant time both in the water or out of it and it was fantastic to finally be able to celebrate the end of what has been an up and down season.



**DON'T MISS OUT
BUY YOUR
TICKET NOW**

Congratulations to our latest 100 Club winners:

July

1st Ben Hicks

2nd Adam Prickett

3rd Joanne Rutter

A **BIG 'THANK YOU'** once again to recent winners who have very kindly donated their winnings to the Club's Good Exchange projects.

100+ CLUB

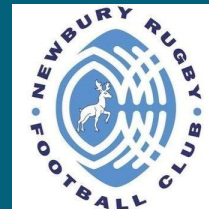
*Have you bought your ticket yet?
Did you have an annual ticket
that has expired?*

**Help support your club from just £2
a month - buy a monthly or annual
ticket via Pitchero.**

**You have to be in it
to win it!!**

BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

INTERNATIONAL TICKETS / WAYS TO SUPPORT YOUR CLUB



INTERNATIONAL TICKETS

Anyone wishing to apply for the Autumn International tickets please email your request to internationaltickets@newburyrugbyclub.co.uk.

The Six Nations application will be notified on the website in the next 3 weeks or so and you will then be able to apply in the same manner via the email, BUT we need to get the autumn internationals out of the way first.

We don't know how many tickets we will have but the allocation is based on club membership numbers so make sure you complete your membership asap. Tickets are only available to members, limited to 2 per application and must not be resold. We are always over subscribed for these tickets, so a draw as normal will take place.

Free Career Consultation with Suzanna Adams of Varnium.

Looking for career opportunities? Perhaps you have just left School, College or University or maybe you are already working but you feel there could be something more inspiring and challenging out there for you?



Why not contact **Suzanna Adams of Varnium** for a conversation on where your future could take you.

Suzanna Adams - Recruitment Consultant Tel: 07392 842606
www.varnium.com

Geoff Fisher is providing fruit and vegetable boxes for collection from their Hambridge Lane depot. Order online on the Fishers of Newbury website.

West Berkshire Council's Community Support Hub is available to help anyone in need. Anyone needing support from the Community Support Hub can email WestBerkshire@public.govdelivery.com.



— SIMUL MOVERE —

SIMPLE WAYS TO SUPPORT YOUR CLUB

**PAY YOUR
CLUB MEMBERSHIP**

SPONSORSHIP
Contact Richard Deal

CLUB EVENTS
Details posted on Pitchero

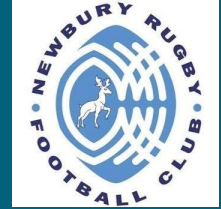
**LATEST
GOOD EXCHANGE PROJECT**

**FOR ALL THE LATEST
CLUB NEWS**

100+ CLUB

BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE AT THE CLUB



VOLUNTEERS

Further to my last request for volunteers to help, a big 'thank you' to Brian Lee and Ian West who will be helping put the history of the club together and sorting the photographs out in the club.

Thanks also to Andy Street for again volunteering to help with the international tickets.

These guys already do volunteering work for the club so it would be good to get some new volunteers standing up to help the club. Please email [David Jones](#) or [Ian West](#) if you are able to offer any time to help, even if only a small amount of time. Thank you.

Other opportunities available are listed below.

David Jones

If you are interested in any of the following 'paid' roles at the Club, please email a letter of application and CV to [Rob Harris](#)

Experienced Cook

The club is looking to recruit an experienced cook to service our Venue Hire and Rugby events during the season.

Part-time Marketing Role

To promote the commercial business at the club and rugby linked events. This is an important and exciting role.

Club Manager

To co-ordinate and oversee all club activities, linking commercial and rugby and reporting to the Management Board and Trustees.

If you would like to enquire about any of the following 'volunteer' roles, please contact [Ian West](#), Volunteer coordinator, or [David Jones](#). Every little bit helps so please do what you can.

Events Co-ordinator

Help co-ordinate Events within the club, working as a team for social and fundraising activities.

Newsletter Writers and Contributors

Some additional support in compiling the monthly newsletter would be appreciated.

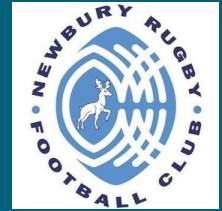
General volunteers

To help on the gate and with carparking on match days and lots of unsung jobs around the club - 2 hours a month or when you can ?

WE LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU!!

BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

DODDIE WEIR FOUNDATION CHARITY DAY



DODDIE WEIR FOUNDATION CHARITY DAY RAISES £1600

The first Lions test match against South Africa was also our first event back at the club and was really well supported as you can see from the photos below. We used the occasion to support the Doddie Weir Motor Neurone Disease charity and with a raffle draw, Just Giving page plus donations, we raised an excellent £1600. Any club raising more than £555 were to be put into a draw to potentially win a

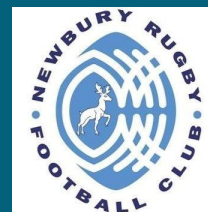
coaching session from Sir Ian McGeechan. We've not heard yet if we won anything ! Huge thanks to all those who supported the event and in particular Don Cameron, George Strang, and Christine Morrell for all their work at just 10 days notice and their generous support.

The excellent Sion Whiley entertained on the guitar after the game with a cameo performance from our own Phil Lamb to round off the evening . Great

to have the club busy again and doing its bit for this hugely deserving charity.



BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH



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TACKLE your mortgage.

Contact your local branch today to discuss how we can help you.

Call: 01635 555777 | **Visit:** www.newbury.co.uk

Newbury Building Society is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority (Financial Services Register number 206677). English Law applies and we will communicate with you in English. We are participants of the Financial Ombudsman Service. We have a complaints procedure which we will provide on request. Most complaints that we cannot resolve can be referred to the Financial Ombudsman Service. 1040

