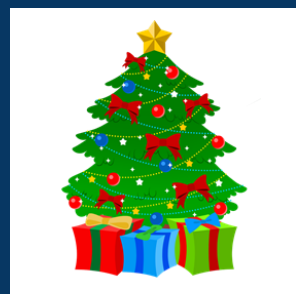


BLUES NEWS

KEEPING IN TOUCH - 10

DECEMBER 2020 - CHRISTMAS EDITION



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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](#)

**NEWBURY
RUGBY CLUB**

Very best Christmas wishes to you all. It's been a tough year and still is for many, but I hope that however unusual this Christmas might be, you are able to enjoy family and friends for some of the festive period.

There is some real optimism that we will be watching contact rugby of sorts much earlier than expected, as the RFU have gone from Stage A to Stage E this week where an adapted form of the game with no mauls or scrums can take place. See the rules later in the letter (page 9); more to follow on this as soon as we are in a position to implement it. Something to look forward to for players and spectators!!

There is some very good news and informative articles in this tenth newsletter, especially from Adam Prickett (Treasurer), so make sure you read it!

The Communication article (still our Achilles heel) is very NB and as a minimum please send your email address to the specific email address given below to help us. There is some very hard work being put in to rectify this and make sure we get to all our members and supporters.

Also read Adam Prickett's impressive report which is a financial summary of last year's accounts, as the FAGM was postponed. Remember, in June 2019 we were running a trading loss of £130,000 per annum. A call to arms, an incredible amount of hard work, business acumen and a team working together, has produced an incredible result! If Covid had not happened we would have broken even!! But Covid has not gone, and it will still kick us hard over the next 7 months and we are still set to make a substantial loss, so there can be no complacency. Every member NEEDS to support our club in any way, however small, so please do so wherever you can.

It's SANTA SATURDAY this Saturday (5th) at the club - fancy dress, Touch Rugby, outside refreshments and BBQ. Normal Covid restrictions apply. This event (organised again by the energetic and enthusiastic Kirsty and Lozzie), involves the whole club so come up, even if for a short time, and show your support.

See Jon Nelsey's report to make the Kickers into a Sports & Grill Bar, with quality food and a safe environment for the family. He has the proven track record, so another exciting change to the club structure.

Brian Lee as ever has put together two excellent articles, one on Colts rugby under and one on homosexuality in our game, showing how rugby is leading changes and attitudes in our society. Thank you so much to the ladies who have openly contributed to this article.

This year's President's Charity is to support Loose ends and the Newbury Soup Kitchen this Christmas, two inspirational West Berkshire based Charities. We will be collecting food tins, longlife packets and toiletries outside the club entrance every day until 20th December. There will be a box at the Reception entrance, if you can spare anything to donate, and we will make sure these two amazing local charities receive all donations by Christmas. Let's make it a real Newbury RFC Community effort.

Finally, Minis & Juniors are the lifeblood of the club. A survey will be going out to ask you what you would like from the club. Please let us know or speak to Sarah, Chris, Lou or Tony Lloyd with any ideas.

A very strange year 2020 but ironically maybe the year we began to make progress and understand maybe what we need to be - 'a sustainable rugby club, serving the local community'.

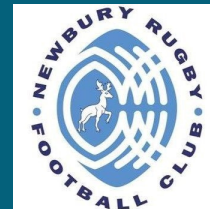
As ever a huge thank you to all our volunteers, whatever you do within the club. Without you there is no club!!! There maybe no player of the year awards this year but without doubt all those involved in restructuring your club and managing its finances should be this years winners of those awards.

Special thanks to all contributors especially Sarah for putting it together and Brian and Fiona for their regular contributions.

DAVID JONES - PRESIDENT

BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

100 CLUB / COMMUNICATION



100+ CLUB

Have you bought your
100 Club ticket yet?

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!!

**Congratulations to our latest
100 Club draw winners:**

1st BRIAN LEE

2nd ROB HARRIS

3rd PAT SIMMONS

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

Pitchero

COMMUNICATION

www.pitchero.com/clubs/newburyrfc/

To keep you informed, we need to be able to contact you.

In the relative rugby quiet of the last few months, we have
looked at how we improve communication to those
connected with the Blues, with updates both on and off the
field.

The Newbury Blues website, powered by Pitchero, is our
main way of sharing information. We are working with
Pitchero to improve the site when anyone visits it to access
information.

In parallel we also want to improve how we send
information out. Currently less than 50% of our membership
have live e-mail addresses on the site and of that only 50%
have accessed the site in the last 3 years. Not a very
effective 'Hit 'rate !!!!

With the many options media offers we know e-mail is still
the most effective at covering all the ages and levels. To
help us to keep you informed please can you update your
Pitchero account with all your latest contact details and
preferences OR simply send your email address to
communications@newburyrfc.co.uk

We would also welcome your views to other areas of the
site that can be improved.

Thank you

Tony Lloyd

Chair of Communication and Events group

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

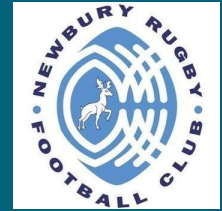
- * **2nd December - CLUB REOPENS** for
some recreational activities !!
- * **5th December - Social Touch Rugby** in the
morning
- * **5th December - Santa Fancy Dress Touch
Tournament** for the whole Club; BBQ and
refreshments from the Bar on the Hill; everyone
welcome
- * **6th December - Mini Training** from 9.30am
- * **7th December - Social Touch Rugby**
- * **12th December - Social Touch Rugby**
- * **13th December - Mini and Junior training**
- * **14th December - Social Touch Rugby**
- * **19th December - Seniors Rugby game plus social
Touch Rugby, BBQ and refreshments from the
Bar on the Hill**
- * **20th December - Mini and Juniors last training of
2020**

*There maybe other
events coming up so
please check the Blues
website or register with
Pitchero to receive
regular updates.*



BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

FINANCIAL UPDATE - NOVEMBER 2020



I wanted to provide an update on the club's financial position, given the deferral of our FAGM now until the New Year.
2019/20 Financial Accounts

The key headline messages for the year ending 30/06/20 are as follows: -

We achieved an operating surplus of £113k pre depreciation (£4k 18/19) on a reduced turnover of £530k, with a pre-tax profit of £36k (loss £68k 18/19). *[This excludes any adjustments for exceptional items.]

If we look at our results on a pure trading basis (stripping out depreciation and the final net amount of retention monies from the land sale) our revised position would be a trading loss in Income & Expenditure terms of £30k, which is what I advised the position was likely to be at our AGM in June, as per our budgetary management information.

It is also worth remembering that in the previous financial year (18/19) the club recorded a trading loss of £130k pre depreciation and exceptional items, which shows the turnaround we have achieved since last year, notwithstanding the effects of the Covid pandemic.

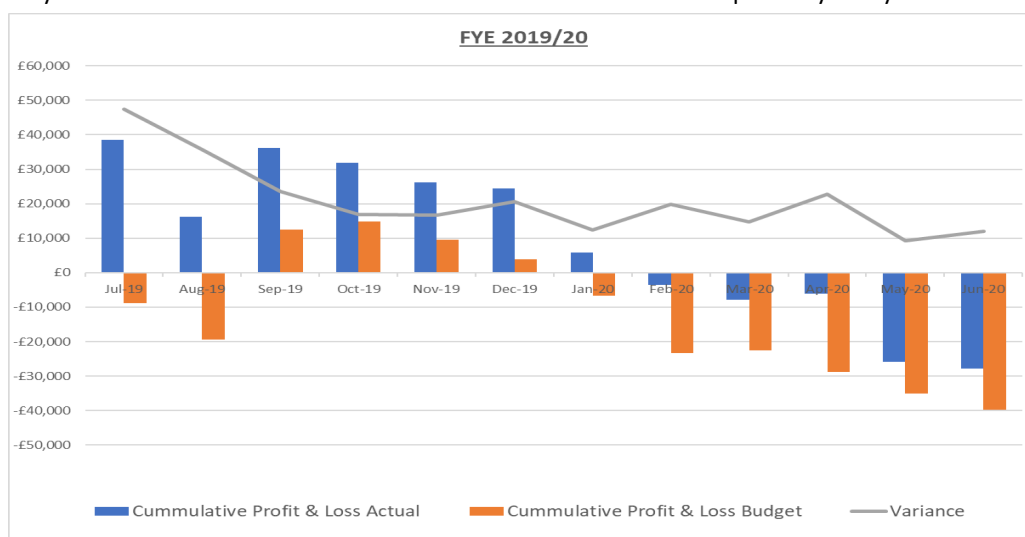
We have ensured that the club has received the financial support on offer from Central and Local Government, including the business rates holiday, furloughing of staff and any eligible grants, and will continue to do so.

Our liquidity remains strong (as a result of the last land sale proceeds) and we have net tangible assets of £2.5m, primarily relating to the value of our freehold club premises and cash/investments.

The year-end outturn position is a £10k improvement on our initial 2019/20 budget forecasting a trading loss of £40k (see graph below).

This is a remarkable achievement given we effectively lost a third of our trading year with the onset of the Covid pandemic in March.

I believe it is worth saying again that, had it not been for the virus outbreak and the significant challenges it has brought to so many of us, the club was on course to break even (in I & E terms) for the very first time in some 25 years since moving to Monks Lane. A truly fantastic effort and testament to the hard work that has been put in by many individuals.



2020/21 Budget and performance Ytd (to 31/10/20)

Setting a budget for FY 2020/21 back in June/July was an extremely challenging task with so many unknowns, and having to make many key assumptions in terms of when rugby may return, likely limited usage of the club's facilities, room hire etc. Taking a sensible pessimistic view, we forecast an operational loss of some £160k pre depreciation, but with a determination to improve upon this wherever possible. (see graph below).

We continue to review all costs, as well as our I&E performance against budget each month, focusing on any adverse variances as part of our now standard management actions. You will be aware we have recently decided sadly to close our gym, as the Covid restrictions had made it no longer viable to keep it open, and we had to ensure no further losses needed to be absorbed.

Our cumulative performance for the four months to 31/10/20 is a profit of £18k pre-depreciation v budgeted loss of £43k (a positive variance of £61k)

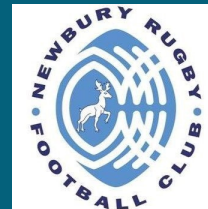
The improved performance has arisen on the back of better than expected membership income (for which we are very appreciative of), improved room hire income (pre latest lockdown!) as well as driving all other income lines.

Central Overhead costs are 1% below plan so currently in a good position

Adam Prickett - Treasurer

BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

SUPPORTING OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY



[The Kickers Bar on Facebook](#)



"The Kickers Bar"

Like us on Facebook
To win a Christmas Hamper

**See you soon &
Happy Christmas
from us all**

PRESIDENT'S CHRISTMAS CHARITY

CAN WE FILL A CHANGING ROOM WITH FOOD PARCELS, TOYS AND TOILETRIES FOR CHARITY? There's no players using them at the moment!!

As a club, we pride ourselves on supporting our local community and this Christmas in particular is going to be a tough time for so many. Each year the President chooses a charity to support and in recent years that has been Motor Neurone Disease and Cancer Care. Through our BLUES FAMILY, we would like to support two local charities, Newbury Soup Kitchen and Loose Ends, to help those who are struggling through the pandemic and with Christmas approaching.

If you are able to donate something, however small, it would be greatly appreciated. It will mean a great deal to someone in need this Christmas. All donations can be dropped off at the Clubhouse, in a box provided at the Reception entrance - deadline is Sunday 20th December. See the suggestions provided by both charities, for ideas of what to donate. We will ensure that all items collected are distributed before Christmas. Let's do our little bit to help. Thank you on behalf of Newbury RFC.

David Jones -President



Serving the homeless and vulnerable in Newbury

****URGENT NOTICE:** Due to the Covid-19 outbreak, Loose Ends has ceased regular sessions for now. Instead, we are offering a 'takeaway' service during our normal session times as well as providing meals and necessities, 5 days/week, for Newbury rough sleepers who have been housed in local hotels**

If you wish to make a donation to Loose Ends, we have our 'Amazon Wishlist'. Please click on the link below and choose an item that we are in need of:

[Amazon Wishlist](#)

Thank you to everyone who continues to support us so generously

Loose Ends is a drop-centre in Newbury serving food to the homeless and vulnerable. We are run by approximately 80 volunteers who serve on average 140 meals a week and give over 6,000 hours a year of their time to helping Loose Ends. The preparation and serving of healthy, hot meals is our main function but we also offer mini food parcels, toiletries and clean clothes to all those in need. We strive to provide a safe, friendly atmosphere where people can socialise. Our clients are often homeless or 'sofa surfing', may have addictions, suffer from a mental illness or are on low incomes. We are grateful to all our volunteers and to our donors.

GO TO THE LOOSE ENDS WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE CHARITY -
<https://www.looseendsnewbury.org/>

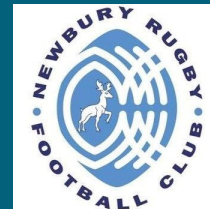


Christmas Wish List

Tinned Meat
Chicken Soup
Custard
Crisps
Shampoo
Body Wash
Thermal Gloves
Small Diary & Pen
Ladies Underwear size 8-12
Sweets & Chocolate
Small Zip Lock Bags
PUT TOGETHER WITH TEA, COFFEE & SUGAR
Shaving Cream & Razors
Wet Wipes (not makeup wipes)
Pocket Tissues

BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

SUPPORTING MEN'S HEALTH



IT'S MOVEMBER TIME -

NEWBURY RFC HELPING TO RAISE FUNDS FOR MEN'S HEALTH

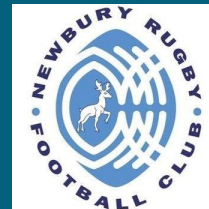
If you would like to donate, please go to uk.movember.com/team/2342166



NEWBURY RFC IN THE BEST SEAT AT THE AUTUMN INTERNATIONALS AT TWICKENHAM, IN THE WEST STAND



BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH



Needs You!

by Jonathan Nelsey
former owner Hare and Hounds & The Barn, Speen

The Kickers has long been a great facility, not many clubs at our level have such a fantastic bar area! But times change and the whole clubhouse, (as everyone keeps telling us!) is very expensive to run.

I was asked late last year, to give my thoughts on our beloved bar and how it might help the clubs finances more. Now, I have been a Blues fan for many years and latterly was proud to sponsor the men's senior team. We all have memories, some bad, but mostly good or great, of our time in The Kickers and, I'm sure, want to see it and the club successful on and off the field for generations to come. Enough of my meandering, let's get to the present day! All bets were off in so many ways with the



arrival & effects of Covid. For Blues, the lack of match day and related membership revenue has, as you will doubtless have realised, left a substantial hole in the club's accounts and accentuated the opportunity, and absolute need, for The Kickers to be a main revenue stream for the club in the future. I'm happy to help, and we have a very willing team in place, but it needs to be a whole club effort!

Whilst an out of town site, the Kickers has multiple housing surrounding it. I feel we should be aiming at sports fans, those not wanting a "town" experience, and general pub goers around us. For

those unconvinced, The Bowlers Arms acts as both proof and template for a local community, sports led pub.

The opportunity is therefore proven, the method will require buy in from members, players, pa rents et al, Yes you! The whole Blues Family! We can then grow to the local community and have a successful Kickers. Given initial, limited, peak time openings, the increased profit would start to help fill the hole. Roll that on in 2021/22 and beyond and this extra contribution to the clubs coffers every year will increase to the point where we could, just possibly, get the club's accounts back in the black! Sounds good! Sounds simple, I know, but those who watched The Hare and Hounds change over our tenure will have seen what can be achieved when everyone buys in and believes.

What can you do to help? Well right now you can ...

Sign up for our Kickers newsletter, email leeann.giddens@newburyrfc.org.uk,

Like & follow [The Kickers Bar on Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/The-Kickers-Bar-110046884213301/), (<https://www.facebook.com/The-Kickers-Bar-110046884213301/>)

Support our "Kickers on the Hill" bar by buying hot drinks and breakfast rolls

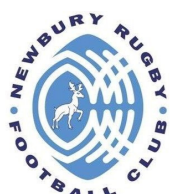
And once the virus allows us to crack on...

Watch out for flyers for our opening and future events.

Come along, and enjoy a pint, freshly cooked snack or meal and of course, the hub of any great pub, the people, a good old chat with friends old and new.

More news soon of The Kickers in 2021 so please **don't wait, please sign up for the newsletter and on Facebook, now!**

Together we can shape The Kickers future and help in doing the same for the club. It needs to happen and the main help will come from all who love The Kickers and The Blues!

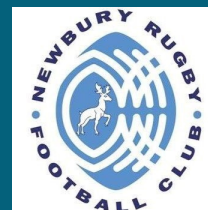


**So.. Buckle down folks, because there is no choice the time really is now!
Lets put 2020 behind us and once again shout it loud and proud "C'mon you Blues!"**

Jon

One Club, run by members for the community

BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH



Let us help **PROP** up your savings and
TACKLE your mortgage.

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

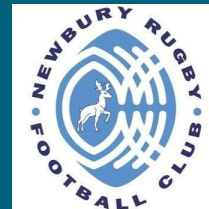
Call: 01635 555777 | **Visit:** www.newbury.co.uk

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 206077). 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

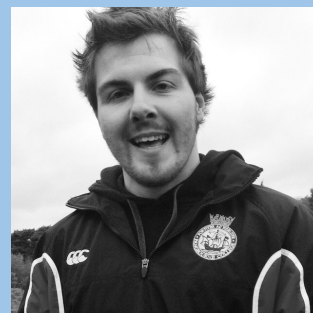


BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

COACH'S CORNER - WILL HARWOOD



Transitions in life can be challenging for us all and in a rugby context the transition from junior to colts rugby and then from colts rugby to senior rugby can be daunting for many young players and this is why the management of such transitions is vital to ensure as many young people continue to enjoy their rugby and are not lost to our sport. There always tends to be a bit of a falling away of players at the end of junior rugby, but for those who continue there beckons a whole new friendship group and opportunities that aren't available when playing age grade rugby. We hear a lot about rugby workload these days and one of the more positive developments over the years has been to reduce the amount of rugby colts players are able to play. No longer do we see players turning out for school matches Wednesday afternoons and Saturday mornings, a club game on Saturday afternoon, a colts game on Sunday and then school and club training during the week. This can only be beneficial for individuals and the game and player game time is something current colts coach Will Harwood is conscious of, realising burn out can come too early if players are asked to play too often.



One of Will's early transitions was moving from Kennet School to Pangbourne College for sixth form where he was a good enough young player to win a rugby scholarship. Will had also played for Welsh Exiles, Berkshire and was part of London Irish Academy. As school rugby captain in year 13 Will says, "Reaching the semi finals of the Rosslyn Park 7's was a highlight, although we struggled a bit at the 15 a side game mainly because our better players were in year 12 and we were not as big as some of the other schools we played against." At every level size seems to matter and as coach to 17 and 18 year olds Will has a responsibility to his players to make sure they are as best prepared as possible to compete on a physical level with opponents. This can mean giving advice on the amount of weights young players engage in as too much too soon can be disastrous.

Leaving Pangbourne, Will went to St Mary's University in Twickenham to study Applied Coaching Science. Occasional weekend visits back home to Newbury saw him play the odd game for the A's and it was during one of these games Will ruptured his cruciate ligament. This not only curtailed his rugby career, it also impacted on his course as it limited the amount of time he could devote to the practical aspects of his degree. As a result of this injury he decided to get into coaching. He says he had a run out for the A's about 2 years ago and enjoyed playing alongside some of the lads he had coached when they were colts. He hopes to have the odd game for the A's when rugby resumes. Having been doing a lot of running in lockdown, Will says he is fit as he's been for a long time and is running the London Marathon next year.

Will says that coaching a group of 17 and 18 year olds is not that much different to coaching adults. His philosophy is to ensure his coaching is player centred with the key themes of engagement and encouraging players not to be afraid of making mistakes. If it's on then go for it, whatever part of the field the team may be in at the time. Like life in general if a mistake is made, learn from it and move on. Transitions again, this time for his young charges. Will is aware of his responsibilities to advise the senior coaches when colts players are ready for the step up into senior rugby. Too soon and things could go horribly wrong. The evidence of the past few seasons is that he has got this absolutely right and nothing gives him more pleasure than seeing colts players thriving in senior rugby.

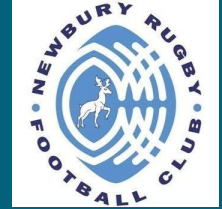
As an RFU Level 2 coach, Will was disappointed when lockdown prevented him from starting his Level 3 qualification but he is determined to undertake this in the future to better himself as a coach and to keep on learning. His coaching ambition is to coach at the highest level of rugby he can, whatever that may be. The future for many at the moment is very unclear and for Will, having recently been made redundant from his job with Dallaglio Rugby Works, he is currently looking for new employment. Any offers considered. Working with Rugby Works gave Will the opportunity to work with young people who had particular needs and to use sport to give these young people some hope for the future. Will reflects with some pride how a young lad who had been sexually abused refused to go outside with any male member of staff, but after a number of rehabilitation sessions the lad eventually had enough confidence in Will to go outside with him and another colleague. Such a huge step forward for a young person and it suggests Will has the correct approach and temperament to get the best out of his colts players.

His best moments coaching? There are many, but winning the Ultimate 7's national rugby tournament with his colts team is one of them as is the women's team gaining a bonus point win away at Plymouth a few years ago in the last play of the game. But right up there is seeing former colts players make that successful transition to senior rugby, interacting successfully with teammates and simply enjoying themselves. Great stuff. Colts rugby after all represents the future of the club.

Brian Lee

BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

LATEST FROM THE RFU - RETURN TO 15-A-SIDE RUGBY



HOT OFF THE PRESS

THESE GUIDELINES ARE SUBJECT TO MORE INFORMATION FROM THE RFU AS THEY ONLY CAME OUT TODAY (WEDS), NEWBURY RFC HAVE YET TO CONFIRM WHEN WE CAN IMPLEMENT THESE CHANGES.



We are delighted to confirm that Government has approved our submission to return to 15-a-side contact rugby.

The Rugby Football Union (RFU) welcomes the news that Government has given its approval for 15-a-side contact rugby union to return at grassroots level, subject to adaptations.

This comes after extensive research and consultations with Government into mitigating the risks of close contact. By using law variations, this will limit the risk of prolonged face-to-face contact, allowing the community game to resume (everything below the Greene King IPA Championship and Allianz Premier 15s). Clubs will be able to begin adapted training from Wednesday 2 December in preparation for local friendly fixtures recommencing from Friday 18 December when the following law variations will come into effect:

- There will be no scrums or mauls in the game.
- Instead of a scrum, the game will begin with a free kick. This free kick cannot be taken quickly.
- A minimum of five and a maximum of seven players from each team are required to form a lineout.
- A team awarded a penalty or free kick will no longer be able to choose a scrum option.
- A team awarded a penalty or free kick at a lineout can instead choose another lineout at the same mark.

Further details on the variations (Law 5 - Time, Law 16 - Maul, Law 18 - Lineout, Law 19 - Scrum, Law 20 - Penalty and Free Kick) [can be found here](#). These law variations will be reviewed as the season progresses and as restrictions change.

"We are delighted that our submission has been approved to return to a format of 15 a-side rugby and we thank Government for working with us to find a solution that enables the safe return of the community game," said RFU Rugby Development Director Steve Grainger.

"In recent months, we have received growing support from clubs and players in favour of adaptations, with law variations preferable to the option of no rugby at all. This is wonderful news for community clubs, their volunteers, players and supporters around the country, who can now look forward to playing contact rugby for the first time since March.

"We now need to be as safe as we possibly can be and comply with all off-field social distancing and Covid-secure guidance to ensure we can continue our phased return to full contact rugby when it is safe to do so." England Head Coach Eddie Jones added: "I know how much work has gone into getting international rugby back. "Having community rugby back is the next step in getting the game up and running and I am pleased for everyone involved in the community game, which has gone through a very tough time. They can now get excited about having rugby back in their lives."

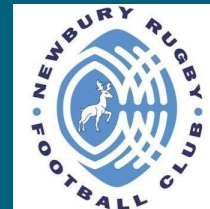
Clubs in all tiers will be able to return to Stage E on the [Return to Community Rugby Roadmap](#). Further guidance on travel within and between tiers will be issued following publication of government guidance.

There is no obligation for players and clubs to play 15-a-side adaptations. Clubs will still be able to play Ready4Rugby matches up until and beyond 18 December.

Adapted Stage E rules/laws for Age Grade Rugby have also been approved for U7-13 and U14-18. The move to Stage E will allow the recommencing of Tag Rugby for U7s and U8s.

BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

A CLUB FOR ALL



"The past is a foreign country; they do things differently there", (L.P. Hartley The Go Between 1953)

Some critics argue these are the greatest opening lines in modern English Literature. Whether you agree or not they are certainly memorable and I guess we can all associate with them on a personal level. We can I am sure think of instances in our past where, with the benefit of hindsight we may have said or done things a little differently, perhaps acted a little differently, particularly towards those who may not have fitted what we thought was the norm at the time. Like many other people, I was lucky growing up, I fitted in. A traditional all boys grammar school was a good place to be if you fitted in, lots of friends, lots of laughs, lots of rugby. There were however a few boys at the school, who were a bit different, a bit effete, and life for them was anything but easy. Most of us left them alone, but there were others at the school who made their lives very difficult. The school should have done something about it, we should have been more welcoming but it was only later, when we had left school and with an increasing maturity we realised this is what should have happened. Many years later on logging in to Friends Reunited, it was great to see a picture of one of the boys who had such a hard time at school. Clearly successful, sitting by a lake in New Zealand, his strap line, "Yes, I was the only gay in the village." He went on to berate his school tormentors and even in middle age the hurt of school days way back in the early 1970's remained with him. There is no question he would associate with the words of the song Smalltown Boy, written by Bronski Beat in 1984, "You leave in the morning with everything you own in a little black case, alone on a platform, the wind and the rain on a sad and lonely face." Band members Steve Bronski, Jimmy Somerville and Larry Steinbachek had a lived experience of these lyrics. Openly gay in the 1980's could not have been easy but they channelled a lot of their sexuality into their songwriting and this one in particular resonates strongly with the LGBT community.

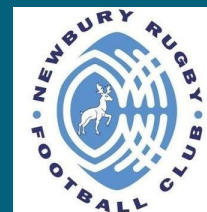
That was then, but what of now? We all know of the experiences of people like Gareth Thomas and Nigel Owens, but what of people closer to home, those who are part of the Blues Family? How welcome are those who may not be heterosexual? A few of our women players are openly bisexual and while there remains some sensitivity over this issue I am very grateful to three of them for sharing some of their thoughts and experiences. Kayleigh and Kelly, members of the Women's social team, happily married, a number of team mates present at their wedding. Great. That unquestioning acceptance is unlikely to have happened back in the day. They say the welcome they have received at the club has been fantastic and the fact that some of their team mates attended their wedding meant a great deal to them. Niki Paton has had a similar experience at the club. She says, "It's been absolutely brilliant. There's a lot of understanding and no judging from my team mates. It's like having a second family." Again, great. They have encountered no bigotry at NRFC, they are simply three individuals playing rugby with their mates. A bit like Levi Davis, formally of Bath, now playing for Ealing Trailfinders. He did an interview on BT Sport with Ugo Monye. Levi recently came out as bisexual. Commenting on the interview, Ben Kay said something to the effect that it's a shame we have to make such a big deal about someone's sexuality but it's where we are in society at the moment. Another elite sports player who has come out and who is one of the people Kelly most admires is Kate Richardson Walsh. She is "only" an Olympic gold medal winner, being part of the successful GB Hockey team at the Rio Olympics in 2016. Lots of role models but some people still feel it is impossible for them to be truly themselves.

Kelly and Kayleigh started playing rugby at the club in 2017 and say their first game was memorable as, "we were so scared and opted not to be involved in full contact." That feeling lasted all of 40 minutes and in the second half they were fully committed and have not looked back since. Like all of us who have had the ridiculous good fortune to be involved in rugby they say that some of the people they have met at NRFC have become some of the most important people in their lives and it was quite easy for them to come out within the rugby environment. They were treated no differently to anyone else in the team and were pleased when team mates were excited for them on hearing of their marriage plans. Kelly also had a very positive response from her family when she decided to tell them she was bisexual and says that as soon as her family met Kayleigh they knew it was the right decision as they could see how happy they were together. Interestingly, Kelly says her mum had a slight idea of her sexuality and I wonder if many parents have this instinctive feeling. It wasn't all plain sailing though as some of Kayleigh's friends outside of rugby began to treat her differently on hearing the news so some prejudice continues to exist even amongst younger people.

Niki started play rugby at University and has been associated with NRFC for about 7 years. Her highlights? Far too numerous to mention all of them but up there is the promotion to Championship Division 2 and seeing the U18's grow in numbers. Niki had a very positive response from her friends when she told them of her sexuality and the most difficult thing she faced was telling her parents. She says the first family member she told was her older brother and goes on to say, "I was really worried about what my parents would say, but he helped me and gave me the confidence to tell them and.....coming out to my parents just made our relationship stronger." It shows the importance of having a strong family network for help and support, particularly when having significant conversations with them. Niki points out, "The club is welcoming to everyone. I don't think the club is averse to gay or lesbian individuals and I've always found it welcoming and inclusive." As for role models, as a teenager Niki was a massive fan of Lara Croft, "as it sent the message to me that women can be bad ass!" She also admires Dame Kelly Holmes and David Attenborough, the former because of the way she managed being an elite athlete

BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

A CLUB FOR ALL / PROJECT UPDATE



and how she coped when she became, for a while, lost with who she was and the latter because he is doing great things for the planet and wildlife.

So are we a club for all? On the basis of the conversation with Kayleigh, Kelly and Niki, then yes we are. Admittedly a sample size of three is insufficient to make sweeping conclusions but it is heartening at the very least that all three of these young women feel completely accepted at the club. They have publicly aired some very personal feelings, by no means an easy thing to do, in the hope it will help others who may be struggling with their sexuality. Thank you to all three. We are all aware that mental health issues can manifest themselves amongst individuals who are concerned about coming out for fear of what their family or friends may say and the reaction they may get. All I can say is speak to someone like Kelly, Kayleigh or Niki, get some help and support and trust in the words of L.P. Hartley.

Brian Lee

PROJECT UPDATE - DECEMBER 2020

Kit8 set- out the fund-raising appeals for this season and our continued use of Greenham Common Trust's fund-raising platform the Good Exchange.

Each year the Good Exchange will match fund approved projects to a £10k maximum with individual projects capped at £5k.

Our Projects cannot succeed without Fundraising and require contributions from all parts of the Club – from members and supporters/companies/charitable foundations. For the current financial year we have achieved the following:

Description	Amount	Status	Comments
Repair / refurbishment of the Balcony	£8,590	COMPLETED under separate GE top-up match-funding	£4,295 raised from donations and NRFC Golf day held in August. All match-funded. Balcony work completed early November
Further LED lighting up-grading of the building	£4,020	COMPLETED	£2,800 raised from the Colefax Charitable Trust (£2k) and donations. Part match-funded
Car park CCTV & signage	£1,575	Project made Live in November	To further improve car park safety and security
Maintenance works to Top Pitches	£5,160	Project made Live in November	To cover the cost of on-going pitch works (to benefit M&Js, Men, Women, Colts & Girls training)
Total	£19,345		

The Good Exchange has proven particularly useful to raise funding for projects where we are carefully investing in upgrading our now twenty-five year old facility. Nigel Thorne continues to play a crucial role on this often-forgotten side of the club.

For the Good Exchange donation year ending 31st March 2021 we have a further £9,250 of project(s) value that we can apply for on top of the above and we have a team that meets quarterly to identify suitable projects

Any suggestions or ideas for projects and/or fund-raising activities are always very welcome.

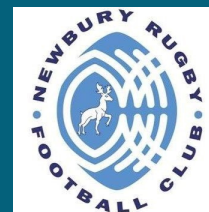
Lastly to donate to any of our projects, you can do so by one of two methods:

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

Rob Harris
27/11/20

BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

LATEST FROM THE LADIES / JUNIOR JOKES



LATEST FROM THE LADIES

What we've been up to:

We can't wait to get back to training, but we've been keeping ourselves busy with Floga, Zumba with Harris and HIIT with Loz.

Upcoming fun call to be conducted in line with the latest Coronavirus rules..):

- 5th December - **Christmas touch tournament**
- 19th December - Probable **inter-team contact training game**, followed by food and drinks.

Some of our players have been keeping themselves busy by raising money for good causes whilst we've all been hibernating.



Kirsty Batten (Social Sec) has been raising money for **Coppafeel**, the **Breast Cancer awareness charity**, by running a number of fun events and challenges, including rowing 11,585km to represent the 11,500 women and 85 men who die from breast cancer in the UK every year. She also completed 7 workouts in one day to represent the 1 in 7 UK females who will be diagnosed with breast cancer within their lifetime. [Goho-Coppafeel](#)

Action Woman, **Carrie Smith** is currently deployed to **Naval Support Facility Bahrain**, and has been raising money for **Age UK**, to help make sure that the older generation aren't left behind and we all stay at home and communicate digitally. Carrie and a group from NSF Bahrain each covered a distance of 54 miles each to escape from Bahrain. They rowed 4 miles, ran 13 and cycled 37, equivalent to reaching Dubai 540 miles away.

[Escape from Bahrain](#), organized by [Carl Richards](#)



MINIS and JUNIORS

Newbury Blues Survey - One Club serving the Community

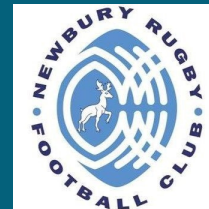
We are looking at the best ways to communicate important club information to players, coaches and parents and we would like to understand what your preferred channels are for finding out about rugby and events around the club. We will shortly be sending out details, initially to the Minis and Juniors, with the aim to build a wider survey at a later date. When you receive this request it would be great to receive your feedback.

JUNIOR JOKES

- ◇ A man goes to the Optician for his annual eye test. The Optician puts a contraption on his face and asks him what he can see. "I see empty airports and empty football grounds" he says. "I see closed theatres, closed pubs and closed restaurants." "That's perfect" says the Optician, "you've got 2020 vision!!"
- ◇ According to research most people don't notice when you replace words with random musical instruments !
- ◇ Does anyone know if there's anything I can take for Kleptomania?
- ◇ I felt uncomfortable driving into a crematorium when my Satnav said I had reached my final destination.
- ◇ If your wife says she is very stressed about her weight, whatever you do don't tell her to lighten up.
- ◇ Light travels faster than sound. That's why some people appear bright until you hear them speak .
- ◇ To the guy who stole my Zimmer Frame and camouflage trousers. "you can try and hide but you can't run "

BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

PERSONAL PROFILES FROM ACROSS OUR BLUES FAMILY



SENIOR MEN 1



TOM COLE

Playing history: Played rugby at St Bart's for all year groups including the 1st XV in years 12 and 13. I didn't play at NRFC during school but was a goalkeeper for a local team. In December 2018 I got a call to ask if I could play for the A's. From there I was moved up to the Stags and I have benched for Blues. In 2019 I played regularly for Berkshire U20.

Favourite song: It's very difficult to pick a favourite song as I have a varied music taste but the song I would choose is Waiting All Night by Rudimental. It's very fast and upbeat and I listen to it before every match

Most admired person to invite for dinner: I would love to have dinner with Lewis Hamilton. To perform at the level he has for so many consecutive years shows he is an incredible athlete.

Most surprising fact about yourself: I used to do high jump for school and Newbury Athletics Club when I was 13 and 14.

Favourite rugby moment at NRFC: kicking the winning conversion for Stags at Windsor last season to take us to second in the league above Witney. This kick wasn't only important to win the game it also turned out to have a significant impact on maintaining second place for the rest of the season.

Additional information: I used to be an avid golfer. Not so much now but I play off 8 which is a decent achievement, getting down to single figures.

SENIOR MEN 2



NICK WESTON

Playing history: Started in 1975 !!! at Camberley RFC, played through the age groups until I went to school at Millfield, Somerset. Played for London Irish and London Universities while a student in London. On completing my studies, prematurely..... I returned to Camberley but in 1995 I moved to Newbury, didn't know a soul, and joined the rugby club.

Favourite song: The Album Graceland by Paul Simon. Listened to this while driving around Europe with a great mate of mine in the summer of 1987, saw him in concert in Malaga, great memories.

Most admired person to invite to dinner: A bit of a weird choice but Peter Ustinov for the great stories, Professor Brian Cox because I find him fascinating and he makes my brain hurt and a chap called Victor Gauntlett who was the savior of Aston Martin

Most surprising fact about yourself: I was, a long time ago, Berkshire U15 Discus Champion

Favourite rugby moment at NRFC: I was very lucky to play for many years with a great group of players in the old Stags team, so many funny moments both on and off the field and so many life long friends. Also now playing with a lot of colts and young players, including the son's of people I used to play with, brings a great deal of satisfaction to see the almost endless supply of good talent coming through the club.

A great clubman— probably our longest serving current active player; 45 years and still going strong.



CLUB OFFICIAL



TONY LLOYD

Playing history: I didn't play until I went to Uni. In freshers week my room mate convinced me to try for the college team. Over the next 12 years, I played for the college, Southampton, Basingstoke and finished up at Wootton Bassett, occasionally packing behind Simon "Sid" Little, who ended up at the Blues. I did once play against the Blues at Pinchington Lane during the New Year period. I retired after a neck x-ray conversation with a Doctor who encouraged me to hang up my boots.

Favourite song: Varies, but in lively moments the current one would be "Have a nice day" by the Stereophonics; calmer times, "Love of my life" by Queen.

Most admired person to invite for dinner: My mum, for many, many reasons

Most surprising fact about yourself: I used to be a pirate (and some people say I still am). It was a summer job at Thorpe Park.

Favourite rugby moment at NRFC: I have seen quite a few games in the closing minutes in the Blue Corner, but without being sycophantic (yes a big word for someone from Bolton) it would be more recently meeting the many great people behind the scenes that keep the club up and running.

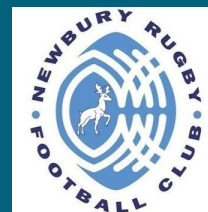
Additional Info: I once had a meal at Fawlty Towers. The exterior used in the series was a country club near Marlow, restaurant in the basement, before it burnt down.

I used to play in black and white.

Tony now heads up our Comms and Events Group and has thrown himself into the role, having made a big impact in just a few months.

BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

BACK IN THE 1980'S



16 th XV MARLOW.	STAGS XV MARLOW 2 ND	A XV MARLOW 3 RD	17.4.83 NEWBURY 0/85 OLD GUILDFORDIAN VETS.
P. LAMB P. GUBB G. FISHER M. LARGE M. OTTAWAY P. MABEY R. BARNES T. COLES P. BROWN S. CRANE D. HAWKINS P. BROUGHTON P. MILLER D. BARRETT G. BURTON	R. LITTLE P. ROWLAND G. DENNER A. KING N. DAVIS D. HAWKINS * E. CRIPPS S. BIRCH T. WALLBANK A. BIRCH S. ARNOLD P. EGGBEER G. KARPETA R. TUCKER P. WHITE * S. CZERPAK	D. EDWARDS P. HOLMAN J. CHARTER M. SMITH D. STOPHER J. RASMAN N. PATEMAN I. SLATER M. BLACKBURN A. NAYLOR R. ALLEN P. SANDERS R. COTTE K. PRESTON B. INSTON	N. BEAUMONT * L. SUGDEN D. EGGBEER C. WHITTAKER G. DENNER R. LITTLE E. CRIPPS A. NAYLOR R. PRATLEY C. VARE P. WHITE D. BARRETT B. INSTON D. FISHLEIGH R. TUCKER
WON 10-4	LOST 3-11	LOST 3-64	WON 10-6

1983 - Now that was how to keep the team records!!! All four teams playing Marlow on one day. Wouldn't that make sense for local derbies for the whole club every week? Discuss!!!! Tony Boyer was passionate about our rugby club and kept these records for years and did so much for the club.

The second team in the early 1980 s. Can you spot Trevor Coles (the microphone man), Peter Winfield (Josh's dad), affectionately nicknamed Killer!, and former

President
Dick Tucker
and the
Skipper,
Nigel
Cripps' dad,
Ted Cripps.



SIMPLE WAYS TO SUPPORT YOUR CLUB

[PAY YOUR
CLUB MEMBERSHIP](#)

[SPONSORSHIP](#)
Contact Richard Deal

[CLUB EVENTS](#)
Details posted on Pitchero

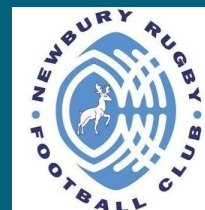
[LATEST
GOOD EXCHANGE PROJECT](#)

[RETURN TO RUGBY
EVENTS](#)

[100+ CLUB](#)

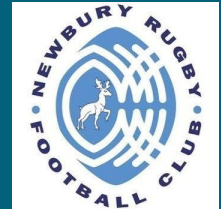
BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

MINI & JUNIORS - CHRISTMAS WORD SEARCH



BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

MINI & JUNIORS - CHISTMAS WORD SEARCH



Find words that are forward, up and down. No diagonal or backwards words.

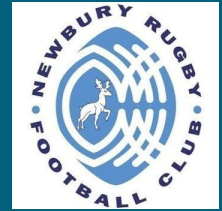
1. LIGHTS
2. SNOWMAN
3. BELLS
4. JOYFUL
5. FRUITCAKE
6. JESUS
7. MANGER
8. PRESENTS
9. GIVING
10. FAMILY

11. FRIENDSHIP
12. BETHLEHEM
13. CHURCH
14. SINGING
15. JINGLEBELLS
16. THANKFUL
17. NATIVITY
18. SANTA
19. RUDOLPH
20. CHIMNEY



BLUES NEWS - KEEPING IN TOUCH

SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY



Free Career Consultation with Suzanna Adams of Varnium.

Let's make some positive career decisions, YES even in lockdown!!!

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



— SIMUL MOVERE —

Geoff Fisher is providing **fruit and vegetable boxes** for collection from their Hambridge Lane depot. Order online on the Fishers of Newbury website. Geoff has also been making weekly fruit and veg donations to NHS staff at Newbury Hospital.

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.

SPONSORSHIP

Richard Deal has been busy generating new sponsorship for this coming season - not an easy task in the current circumstances, but he's doing a sterling job.

Thank you to all those sponsors who have already signed up and all offers to support the club financially.

Anyone wishing to sponsor or support the club, however small (or BIG), please contact **Richard Deal**.

Please note that support of certain community club projects will be match-funded by Greenham Common Trust. Because of the Covid Virus, we have never needed sponsorship so much and will never be more grateful!

Thank you!

WISHING YOU ALL A VERY
MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND A SAFE, HAPPY &
HEALTHY NEW YEAR