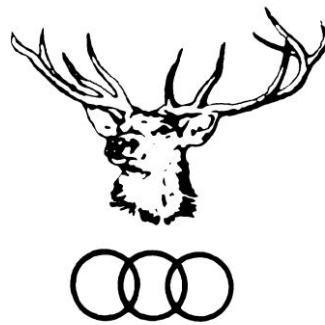




BRACKNELL RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

STRATEGIC PLAN
2019 - 2024



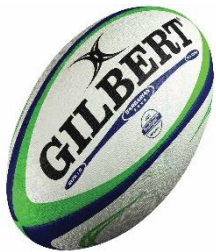
Founded 1955

RUGBY

PEOPLE

FACILITIES

FINANCE



Introduction

Bracknell Rugby Football Club has an established reputation as one of the most competitive clubs in Berkshire.

Over the last 25 years the club has made extraordinary progress in terms of playing success and investment in the club's facilities.

The time is now right for the club to look for a new vision and strategy on what it is seeking to achieve in the next 5 years to provide a focus for all the members and stakeholders.

The Club has a buoyant membership of over 500 and the ability to field up to 4 competitive senior sides and an emerging ladies team. There is an academy that provides 2 good quality teams from between the ages of 17 – 19.

In addition, there is a thriving minis & youth section which provides 'home grown' talent which looks to integrate girls and boys into senior rugby.

The Strategic Vision & Plan for the period 2019-2024 builds on strategies published by previous committees and will outline the approach that the current Executive Committee will take to show its ambition and direction to promote and provide rugby for all.

Strategic Mission.

Bracknell Rugby Club will be recognised as one of Berkshire best rugby clubs competing at the highest possible levels across the whole club.

The development of coaches and players throughout will be key, encouraging them to remain in the game and provide talent for the future.

We will provide facilities and an environment that is inclusive, welcoming and in line with the core values laid down by the RFU.

With the help and support of its volunteers the Club will grow its links with the local community through events and involvement.

Strategic Vision.

*To always **Delight, Excite and Inspire** all those connected with Bracknell Rugby Club.*

Strategic Plan.

For Bracknell Rugby Club to continue to prosper our strategic plan will be built around the challenges and opportunities in the following 4 keys areas:

- RUGBY
- PEOPLE & CULTURE
- FACILITIES
- FINANCE

Strategic Plan - Rugby

Background

While the 1st XV has challenged for promotion to National Division 2 (South) on several occasions in the last 5 years, these 'successful' seasons have been matched with several years where the team have not performed so well. Recruitment of new players has had mixed results. Developing the existing players or players that have recently graduated from the Academy has not always been a priority.

The 2nd XV have been established as a Development Team and have had several successful seasons while winning Berks/Bucks & Oxon Division 1 on 3 occasions since 2013/14 and a particularly successful season in 2017/18. In addition to the 2nd XV, the club also seeks to regularly field 2 other senior teams every Saturday. The emergence of the 3rd XV has been a success in 2017/18 in the BBO league.

Having established a Ladies Team in 1999, they were promoted to South East Division 1 in 2011/12. Unfortunately, the team stopped playing in 2014 because of a shortage of players – the squad has re-started training together during 2016. In the season 2017/18 the ladies team performed in the league for the first time in 4 years showing real promise for the future.

The Minis & Juniors continue to flourish with more than 400 Under 16s training and playing at the club on a weekly basis. The junior teams regularly challenge for titles in the Berkshire Youth Leagues and provides many members of the Berkshire County squads.

In 2018 a junior girls group was started with a view to providing rugby at the club for girls at the age of 12 upwards. Early indications have been positive, and a group of players is forming, and we are looking to grow this in the coming years.

Rugby Plan

Rugby is the fundamental aspect of what the club exists for. It covers a variety of areas from senior teams all the way to the under 6s.

It is no coincidence that the success on the pitch always leads to a happier and more positive environment around the club.

We are an ambitious club that wants to be competing at the highest level possible. This means that in 5 years' time our ambition will be to be an established level 4 club.

We will develop a robust plan that shows a clear flight path to this goal. This will see us be promoted to level 4 in the next 3 years and then we will spend 2 years establishing ourselves as a recognized level 4 club.

The coaching and management structure of the playing side of the club will reflect what is needed to meet this ambition

The 2XV will play competitive rugby which challenges the players to a level that supports the progression and competition for places in the 1XV.

The 3XV will compete in the relevant leagues with the 4XV offering rugby for players who wish to continue playing rugby in a less structured level.

We will offer rugby for females in the same way as we do for males across all ages at the club.

All players will have the opportunity to develop themselves and remain in the game be that as a player, coach or official.

Our Minis and Juniors will continue to learn and grow in a safe environment in which they have fun and enjoy the game supported by great coaching.

The senior players at the club will engage more with the mini and junior sections with planned and structured ambassador days.

We will look at introducing different forms of rugby to others. Walking rugby and a tag rugby summer league will be considered.

As a committee we will support as well as challenge the players, coaches and management in achieving these goals and not be afraid to make necessary changes or will we be distracted from the aim.

Rugby – Targets

- Ladies team to build on their current numbers
- Identify alternative training facilities for Sundays and Wednesday evenings to maintain pitch time when club pitches are closed due to weather.
- Introduce Player & Parent Information Pack to be shared with all registered Age Group players at the beginning of the season
- Re-establish the Ambassador Scheme
- Promote recruitment of senior players to increase the registered player base.
- Promotion to National Division 2 (South)
- Increase registered player base to 150 senior players
- Levels of mini & junior players increase year on year.
- All Mini coaches to hold formal RFU qualifications & Junior coaches to be offered support to achieve RFU level 2

Strategic Plan - People & Culture

Background

The club would not survive without the support and involvement of the people.

Over the past few years the club has worked hard to engage more with its members and supporters and lots of great work has started in making the club available for the wider public with hiring out the facilities and engaging with the wider community through events like the Ale & Cider festival and the annual fireworks.

By far the largest group of people who make the club operate are the unpaid volunteers. It is fair to say that without these volunteers to share the workload; the effective management of our club will be compromised.

The club has a varied audience to cater for and is currently providing service to the following:

- Senior Rugby (i.e. Saturdays and Tuesdays & Thursdays evenings) – with 100 registered senior players and many regular spectators, the focus of the club every Saturday is Senior Rugby especially the 1st XV.
- Minis & Junior, Ladies and Academy Rugby (i.e. Sundays and Wednesday evenings) – with ~400 registered players from U6 – U16 the club is dominated on Sundays by the players, parents and families of the 12 separate age groups
- Social Members (most evenings & weekends) – the clubhouse / bar is open 7 days a week from Midday – 11pm with a group of individuals for whom this is their key benefit of membership.

We have seen in recent years a shift away from the traditional clubhouse environment to a more inclusive rugby club atmosphere.

This has at times led to a less busy clubhouse on certain days during the week partly due to changes in the drinking culture and as we become more inclusive.

People & Culture Plan

This plan will seek to gain that support from all members and stakeholders to perform a role, no matter how small, to help keep Bracknell Rugby Club moving forward successfully. We will introduce a volunteers Programme that will look at ways to attract, reward and recognize volunteers across the club.

The membership categories and process will be reviewed to ensure we capture all the details and appropriate payments in a timely way whilst at the same time offering alternative options of membership.

We will have a strong marketing plan which covers the whole year and looks at events and opportunities to attract use of the clubhouse by both internal and external sources.

On top of this we need to ensure that the clubhouse staff are correctly trained, incentivized and rewarded for the roles they perform.

Our communication plan will ensure all members across the club are aware of what is going on and feel involved in all events.

We will review our various channels of communication to ensure they meet the needs of everyone.

We will also look to make use of individuals with specialist capabilities and/or knowledge to contribute to the development and ongoing delivery of these plans.

People & Culture – Targets

- Improve Communication & Engagement with membership by seeking input to and approval of Club Strategy
- Develop Volunteer Plan to encourage greater involvement in the day to day running of the club from current members
- Develop external relationships between Bracknell RFC and: -
 - Bracknell Forest BC
 - Bracknell Town Council
 - RFU Regional Development Office and Facilities Co-Coordinator
 - Berkshire RFU
- Coherent social and fundraising strategy implemented
- Functions
 - Annual events: -
 - BACF
 - Fireworks
 - Volunteers event
 - Summer Fun Day
 - Annual Dinner
 - Sportsman's Dinner

Strategic Plan - Facilities

Background

In the past few years there has seen significant investment in the clubhouse facilities including the Changing Rooms, the Club Room, the Bar and in improving Disabled Access. Financial support from Bracknell Forest Borough Council has facilitated the improvement of the access area to the front of the clubhouse and the paths around Pitch 1.

The club invested in replacing the pitch surround on pitch 1 and a kind donation from the Elliot family along with monies raised by the Minis & Juniors, we have brought a new electronic scoreboard.

The club continues to struggle with the quantity and quality of the pitches, but we have seen some improvements in recent months. Following a grant from Sport England a significant project to improve the drainage on pitch 2 has taken place. The pitch remained closed for the 2018/2019 season but will be available following this.

After several meetings, Bracknell Town Council have agreed to turn the football pitch at Calfridus into a second rugby pitch.

Despite this the club continues to invest in external facilities for all teams when the pitches at Lily Hill Park or Calfridus are closed.

The debate on whether the club should invest in an Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) continues.

The RFU project has now been cancelled and no further funding for this is available. We had already been discounted from the project after we failed the rugby partnership criteria of the process. The other option was to look at a partnership with Bracknell Town Football Club, but this also failed as we were unwilling to meet some of the demands being made.

The gym provided on site by FW Urban Gym has not been the success we all hoped it would be. We have recently announced to the Gym owner that we are reviewing the current set up and will be looking at how we can improve on what we have either within the current agreement or following a different route.

Facilities Plan

We need to conclude the debate on AGP and decide which way we are going to head. This is something we need to do quickly and inform the membership so our plan for pitches is shared.

We will introduce 2 new minis pitches in the area between pitch 1 and pitch 2. This will allow them to have their own space as well as identify some unused grass as a training/warm up area.

We will develop a scrum area adjacent to the grandstand which will house the scrum sledges.

In May 2019 we will start some work on pitch 1 which will improve drainage and levelling on this pitch. Pitch 2 work will be concluded in the close season, so this pitch is ready for use in September 2019.

We need to aim for 95% home pitch availability in the 2019/2020 season and reduce our reliance on external facilities.

The club roof needs some urgent attention and following a recent inspection we await the quotation. This will need urgent review by the executive.

We will produce a pitch & club maintenance plan which will look at and share a usage plan of all the pitches available to us. This will include a review on ongoing use and cost of external pitches. The plan will also decide on future maintenance, particularly pitch 3 and how we best look after our facilities. We should consider our own in-house maintenance/grounds person and provide equipment and tools to maintain the upkeep of our pitches, clubhouse and surrounding areas.

We need to review and update our 'shopping list' of what people across the club would like the club to invest in. This year we have provided several great things from this list and we should review and continue with this.

Internally we will look at upgrading the bar area with improved lighting, TV availability, projector and general upkeep.

The front of the clubhouse and reception area will be changed to be a more welcoming environment.

Conclude the review of the Gym and decide on the correct approach to deliver a facility that meets the needs of all.

Facilities – Targets

- Upgrading and improvement of pitches.
- Establish a formal pitch maintenance Programme
 - Daily pitch maintenance of all 5 pitches
 - General tidiness of the club's external areas
 - Line marking
 - Owns usage plan
 - Plans and books alternative pitch plan
 - Prepares pitches for match day
 - Usage plan
 - Alternative options
- Identify External Storage Space for Pitch Furniture / Equipment
- Purchase of Pitch Maintenance Equipment including Mower and Strimmer
- Changing Rooms – improve water volume & temperature of showers
- Potential introduction of Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP)
- Club provides 5 pitches (at least 2 with floodlights) that remain open 95% of the season
- Grandstand
- Coffee/Tea shack (Horse box)
- Speaker system
- Minis pitch (Bottom of pitch 2)
- Scrum Sledge area (Grandstand side of pitch 1)
- Improve Pitch 3
- Brighter Bar
- Bar Extension (long term Option)
- Ladies Changing area
- New entry for kitchen
- Better car park management
 - Afton usage
 - Identify poor parkers (Signs on car)
 - Better neighbors, free entry, B&AF, Fireworks?
- Clubhouse roof
- Kit shop on line
- Opening hours
- Communication
 - Website
 - Twitter
 - Newsletter
 - Other?

Strategic Plan - Finance

Background

The club has an annual turnover in excess of £500k per annum, including bar turnover, sponsorship funds and membership fees. In recent years, the club costs have included: -

- Bar Costs, including costs of sales and staff costs
- Playing Budget includes Playing & Coaching costs, Medical & Physio support as well as Playing Kit & Equipment and Travel to away games.
- Clubhouse & Overhead Costs

New regulations from the RFU have forced us to rethink our playing budgets along with the need to build new commercial opportunities as well as maintain the current ones.

Sponsorship and our investment in International tickets continues to be a big source of income for the club.

Our membership levels remain flat, but we have seen a reduction in the VPs membership. The club has invested heavily in several areas over the years as described in the facilities section.

Our income has benefited in recent years due to the launch of new events such as the Ale & Cider festival and the Fireworks.

Finance Plan

We will explore further several new ventures with recently acquired sponsors such as Oakman Inns and Astbury Manor.

We need to sweat our assets more and ensure we are getting value for money in everything we sell.

Our accounting systems need to be tested for robustness and we will ensure we have contingency plans of trained staff when needed.

Sponsorship deals will be supported by the correct contracts and we will have administration processes in place to support these.

Our commercial offering will be widely advertised in conjunction with our marketing and commercial teams. We will make best use of the local business community in spreading the Bracknell Rugby Club brand

Finance – Targets

- Establish a clear brand for Bracknell RFC – what does BRACKNELL RUGBY represent
- Establish and implement a Commercial Strategy including specific targets for levels of annual sponsorship funding
- Sponsorship & Marketing
 - Local Companies
 - Promote foot fall at annual events
 - M&J Sponsorship
 - Academy
 - Senior – Men's
 - Senior – Ladies
 - Programme
 - Website
 - Twitter
 - Better communication and advertising of sponsors
 - One Brand – 'Bracknell Rugby Club'

Our Strategic Vision.

Delight

- Our members with the environment and atmosphere we create in and around the clubhouse
- Our players from all ages with the offering we provide
- The community by being 'part of it' and providing facilities and events that engage with them.
- The supporters of Bracknell Rugby Club by providing good competitive rugby.

Excite

- New sponsors into supporting the club by sharing our ambitions and opportunities.
- New players into joining
- New members into joining and volunteering and contributing to the club
- The community and local businesses into supporting Bracknell Rugby Club through new events and better wider communications and marketing.
- Everyone by showing a clear pathway to level 4 rugby and sustainability at that level

Inspire

- The youth to enjoy rugby with quality coaching
- The next generation of senior players by better integration of squads in training.
- The growth of the club off the pitch with quality events management and marketing
- All players, with a clear plan that supports their retention in the game and the club, be that as a player, coach or official.