Building a legacy for the future of Chesham Rugby Club and the community it serves
"We have been coaching at Chesham since 2010 and have seen the promotion of the senior men’s first and second teams, as well as the promotion of the women’s team. We never tire of watching individuals develop their skills and grow into confident, committed team players. Being a part of a team and working hard to support one another is what rugby is all about and we can honestly say there is no other club we’d rather be coaching at.

"The players, volunteers and supporters of the Club continue to amaze us with the effort they put in to ensuring the Club is providing as many opportunities for people to get involved, no matter their background or level of experience. We stay because we have such a close-knit group of people who we can now call our friends. The support we received as players during the Women’s World Cup Rugby Championship in Paris in August 2014 was truly inspiring.

"We’re also proud to say that our girl’s and women’s teams are central to the Club and are afforded the same opportunities as the men. We’ve never been involved with a club where men and women work so closely together. Enabling women to play at such a young age will ensure that the RFU reaches its target of getting 25,000 more women into the sport by 2017.

"Building a permanent clubhouse will secure the future of rugby at Chesham and, who knows, maybe another World Cup Champion will be born here."

England Rugby World Cup Champions Kat Merchant and Rocky Clark
A message from our Club President

Help us build a legacy for young people in Chesham and further afield.

“Chesham Rugby Union Football Club, ‘Chesham Stags’ is seeking support from individuals and organisations to help build a legacy for its youth.

“Following on from the success of England Women’s Rugby World Cup team taking the title in Paris in August 2014, and building upon the legacy that has been put in place ahead of the Men’s Rugby World Cup Championship in England in 2015, we are laying the foundations for developing the next generation of rugby players.

“The future of community rugby lies with our young people and your investment in building a clubhouse will enable us to begin that legacy for them. As Club President, I am privileged to see the positive transformation rugby has on young people’s lives.

“When my own son started playing aged nine, there were only four players in his age group. Thirteen years later, we now have more than thirty. I’m pleased to say those four boys now play for our First Team, and every Sunday help train the minis and juniors.

“Alex Barton is one of these young men; having battled leukaemia, he has remained a committed player and supporter of the Club, even through his illness. You can read his incredible story on page 10.

“I hope that upon reading about our Club and the young people we support you will be inspired to make your own contribution to the legacy we are building for future generations.”

Thank you for your support,
Cliff Davies, Club President

Good luck from Bill Beaumont

“Rugby World Cup 2015 aims to build a lasting legacy for participation in the sport. As part of its legacy plans, the Rugby Football Union (RFU) will be focusing on several areas, including the improvement of facilities to help build capacity for clubs across England.

“Chesham Stags’ plans to build a permanent clubhouse to serve more young people interested in joining the sport are vital in supporting the RFU achieve its vision of getting one million young people playing rugby by 2015.

“Investing in young people and nurturing their talents now will secure a bright future for them and for rugby in England for years to come, which is why we are supporting Chesham Stags’ campaign to build a clubhouse.”

Best wishes,
Bill Beaumont, Chairman of the RFU and former England Captain

Cliff Davies - Club President with son Jack Davies, First Team Captain

Building a legacy for the future of Chesham Rugby Club and the community it serves
Investing in youth

According to the Rugby Football Union (RFU), more than half of rugby union players in England are under the age of 19. Rugby is reaching out to all corners of society and there are more and more young people from non-traditional rugby backgrounds engaging in the sport.

Chesham Stags actively promotes the engagement and development of young people through sport and provides opportunities for them to nurture their talents on and off the pitch, regardless of background or ability. Our youth teams are coached by current and former players, ensuring skills and experience are passed from generation to generation.

World class coaches

We are also extremely lucky to have two of England Women’s World Cup Champions on our coaching team; Rocky Clark and Kat Merchant.

We are committed to improving the standard of coaching and facilities we provide to our members and strengthening our relationship with the community in order to recruit and retain talent at the Club.

You can read more about some of our members on page 8.

"My mum and dad both played rugby for the Stags. I was five when I joined and now play for the under 11’s. My dad still coaches and mum talks to schools about the Club and encourages boys and girls to take part. I have lots of friends in the Club and we won a cup at a tournament in Great Yarmouth this year."

George Chard, age 10

Chesham Minis in action
Investing in the community

Founded in 1981, the Club is a not-for-profit organisation run entirely by volunteers. All profits are invested back into the development of the Club and its members. Known as ‘Bucks’ friendliest club’, the diversity of the Club is rich, with players of all ages and backgrounds making up our teams. As well as three senior Men’s teams, the Club has its own women’s team (the Stagettes), five junior teams, seven mini teams and its very own baby (Bugby) club. The teams play in local and national competitions, with the Men’s First Team recently winning the Bucks Junior Vase, the Southern Counties Junior Vase and promotion to the Berks, Bucks & Oxon Premiership.

Coaching and support beyond the Club

We provide free coaching to local schools and youth organisations; our ethos as a community club also sees us support other local sports clubs and businesses in and around Chesham. These same clubs and organisations will also stand to benefit from the clubhouse.

We are regular visitors at schools and local events and welcome new people into our club, whether they want to play rugby or develop their skills off the pitch.
Why we need a clubhouse

For 19 years, the Club shared its home with Chiltern Hills Academy, a great example of a community sports club and a community college working together to nurture young people’s talents. In 2012 we voluntarily gave up our clubhouse to make way for the development of the Academy and are currently renting temporary accommodation there. Our lack of changing and hospitality space is often challenging and does not allow us to provide the quality of coaching and skills development we are capable of. Despite the challenges we’ve faced, we are one of few local clubs to have accreditation from the RFU and have managed to retain our membership, winning local and national leagues.

A permanent clubhouse, which provides first rate facilities, will enable us to build on our success and continue to grow our Club and its place in the community. The clubhouse will provide a home not only to our members, but also to other sporting and social clubs in Chesham. With the agreement of Chiltern Hills Academy, the clubhouse will be made available to students and adult users of Chiltern Hills facilities, providing a benefit beyond the Club that will serve its members for years to come.

Raising funds to build the clubhouse

The club currently runs a successful ‘Deer Friends’ corporate and personal sponsorship scheme, similar to a 100 club which pays a monthly prize. These funds are essential and used to cover the day to day running costs of the Club. ‘Deer Friends’ will continue and will be expanded during our Future Building campaign.

In order to secure enough funds to cover the estimated build cost of £450k we are also seeking funding from the following:

- £300k from grants, loans and awards from organisations such as the RFU and Sport England
- £50k from corporate sponsorship
- £100k from individual members and club fundraising

Members will be individually challenged to raise up to £500 through personal fundraising initiatives.

"I’ve learnt so many skills as a player, club member and coach, which have been invaluable to me as Games Coach at Chesham Preparatory School. As well as practical playing and coaching skills, I have developed my own communication, decision-making and assertiveness skills.

I owe a lot to the club for their support and I like to think that I am continuing that work by coaching at the club and supporting the new players coming through.

Alex Jaycocks, age 24"

Your role in Future Building

Supporting the build of our clubhouse will enable you and your organisation to invest in the development of young people. Their participation in the Club not only improves their physical and emotional well-being but also helps them to develop key skills that are valuable in their personal and professional lives.

There are many benefits to supporting our Club:

- Corporate social responsibility. You can give back to the community in which you work and help support others;
- Exposure to and engagement with a network of more than 500 members and existing sponsors;
- Advertising and sponsorship deals through our website (www.cheshamrugbyclub.com) and our partnership with local press;
- Function rooms/facilities;
- Access to international tickets (Autumn Internationals and Six Nations);
- A Club to come and support or play for.
Ways to support Future Building

We would love the opportunity to meet with your organisation to discuss how you can support our campaign to build a clubhouse. You can contact us at fundraising@cheshamrugbyclub.com to arrange a meeting to discuss your requirements.

Corporate sponsorship

Sponsorship can be tailored to suit your individual or corporate requirements. We are happy to discuss branding options, including the sponsorship of shirts, banners, function rooms, pitches, website advertising and even the naming of the clubhouse.

Individual giving

As an individual there are many ways you can support our campaign. Perhaps you’d like to dedicate your fundraising activities in 2014/2015 to the club. We have a page set up on Just Giving (www.justgiving.com/chesham-rugby) which you can link your personal page to and send on to your friends and family who are keen to support you with your challenge. You can also make a one-off donation to us through our Just Giving page if you wish.

Thank you for your support.
Meet our members ...

Friendliest club in town

“ I started playing rugby when I was five. Mum and Dad have been involved with Chesham Stags for a long time, as players and coaches, so encouraged me to take part.

Playing at the Club has helped me make new friends and I have been able to mix with kids I wouldn’t necessarily have spent time with. There are kids from all different schools playing at the Club, so you get to meet lots of different people and learn to work with them as part of a team. I am a member of a few other sports and social Clubs but I think the rugby Club is the friendliest. It’s so much fun playing rugby, a lot more exciting and really helps to keep you fit.

Confident at school

Playing rugby has also helped me with my confidence; it has made me more confident because I have to interact with lots of people of all ages. I am much more confident at school and feel comfortable when I meet new people.

Everyone gets a go

Rugby is a real team sport and it doesn’t ever feel like you have to compete with your teammates. The Club is a big part of the community and we have a big junior rugby section. My team has won a few tournaments at home and on tour.

Come and have a go

I would encourage other young people to join our club because it’s a great way to meet new people and keep fit. You don’t have to worry about being nervous on your first day or about being lonely, as the coaches are kind and the kids are really friendly. It’s a fun club to play at and everyone gets treated equally. It doesn’t matter if you’re not the best player because our teams are not graded against each other.

A good thing for the community

Having a new clubhouse would be great for the club but also for Chesham. I think the club helps to encourage young people to take part in a sport and to keep fit and so that’s a good thing for the community to have. I think if Chesham didn’t have a rugby club, not as many kids would be involved in as many activities as they are. Our club is really well-known and we make a big effort at local events, including Chesham Carnival, to promote the Club to more young people. We are always encouraging new people to come and take part.

George Chard, age 10

George with Chesham Men’s First Team
Championing young girls

I joined the club when I was 20. I used to play tag when I was kid but only did it for about a year; my dad was one of the coaches and played for Chesham for many years so just took me along with him. Later on, I worked with one of the senior women’s players and she convinced me to go along and give it a try. I’ve been there ever since.

Building self-confidence

Sport is fantastic for self-confidence in young girls. I help coach the Chesham Stags Girls’ Youth Team and seeing them become more confident each week is really rewarding. It’s great to see the girls making new friends and working together. Hopefully these friendships will last for the rest of their lives. I struggled a lot at school academically and sport was a haven for me. I had fun, made new friends and learnt a lot of skills which have been invaluable to me. Encouraging young girls to participate in sport is really important. As well as boosting their confidence, it provides them with useful skills they can use outside of sport. Chesham Stags Rugby Club is one of a few clubs to introduce a girls youth squad, which enables young girls to participate at an early age.

Personal development

I have gained many skills from playing rugby; confidence, emotional control, effective team work and general social skills. It’s these social skills that have helped me the most. Becoming confident in talking to people you don’t know and being able to play alongside them is crucial, and this has helped me at work where I deal with lots of different people every day. I am a Fitness Instructor and so I need to be able to confidently communicate with and lead groups and individuals.

County trials

I have been very lucky with the opportunities I have been given at Chesham Stags. In my second year of playing I got into the county squad, which is run by our coaches, England Women’s Rugby World Cup Winners, Rocky Clark and Kat Merchant. At the start of my third year I also went for trials for South West England and got in. It was a major achievement and I wouldn’t have even thought about it if it wasn’t for Rocky and Kat putting me forward. Here I trained with specialist coaches, played alongside England players, played against regions, and gained a huge amount of experience, as well as developing my skills.

I also attended the England Kabaddi trials and got in to the team; Kabaddi is an Indian wrestling sport which relies heavily on good rugby skills. If it wasn’t for rugby, I doubt I would have got a place on the team.

Someone like you

My advice to anyone considering joining the Club would be to just do it. You’ll never know until you try. There will always be new people just like you, who will be just as nervous as you. The more experienced players will know exactly how you feel, as they felt like this on their first day. I would recommend always giving it a good few weeks to try a new sport. Never give up on a first session, as week by week you will grow in confidence and your feelings will change. My only regret is not taking up rugby earlier. I have loved every minute and all the friends I have made at Chesham Stags.

Nicky Gross, age 24
My greatest victory

"I was 18 when I was diagnosed with Leukaemia. It turned my life upside down. I had to quit college, work and playing rugby, which I found really hard. I’ve played at the club since I was nine years old and it is a major part of my life, so it was devastating not to be able to continue doing the thing that I loved.

After an exhausting period of chemotherapy in hospital, and several months off, I got the all clear from the doctors to play again. It was the best news. When I started back I could only play for ten minutes, as I was so tired and my muscles were just not there at all. I’d lost quite a bit of weight and it took me a while to get back to full strength again, but I did, with much support from my family and friends at the Club.

Everyone at the Club supported me throughout my illness and did everything they could to get me back to strength again. They even raised over £1,200 for Leukaemia Care. Whenever I had a bad day, someone at the Club was always around to pick me back up again. The club means a lot to me and I don’t think I’d be the person I am now without it.

I have made so many great friends on and off the pitch. Playing rugby makes me really happy and I feel privileged to be a part of the Men’s First Team. I received the Coaches’ Award Trophy last year, which is given to the player they consider has trained and played the most consistently.

I am also supporting with the coaching of the juniors and minis’ teams and I really enjoy watching the younger players develop in confidence.

I believe rugby is a great sport for young people to get involved with, not least because it brings them into a supporting community. I have learnt lots of skills playing and coaching and I hope that having a permanent clubhouse will enable us to reach more young people in and around Chesham.

Alex Barton, age 22

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Standing out from the crowd

I started playing rugby when I was six. My dad and brother were already at the club and I wanted to get involved with a sport. There weren’t many team sports for girls my age at the time and the rugby club seemed the friendliest, so I decided to give it a go.

I’ve made lots of friends at the Club and had the opportunity to play with boys and girls, which has been fun. It’s hard at first when you come together with people you are not at school with and don’t know as well but you start to build friendships and become a really good team.

One of the best things about the Club is that everyone is welcome and encouraged to take part. Everyone gets a chance to play, even if you aren’t the best. I have built up a lot of confidence playing at the Club and it has enabled me to channel my energy into something positive.

I think letting girls play at such a young age helps them to feel more confident about themselves and helps them to stand out. I feel by playing rugby, I have something different to talk about and feel comfortable with who I am.

Playing has also helped me physically. I have built my strength and my fitness and this helps me in other sports, as well as with my well-being. I now play with the Chesham Girls’ team and have the opportunity to try out for county rugby, which I am going to do.

I would encourage other young people to come and give it a try and not to worry that they might not be able to do it. I think people have a perception about playing rugby that isn’t true when you come to play and are surprised by how much fun it really is. It’s a great team sport and everyone should give it a go.

Sasha Edhouse, age 12
I don’t think there are enough ways to describe all the things I have learned at Chesham. Playing there as a teenager, young adult and now a man, it has been fundamental in growing up. I think it has shaped me and made me well-rounded, hard-working and confident. I imagine like with all sport, it shows you what happens when you work hard. The results are always there and I think that’s a great ethos to take into the outside world.

Olly Jaycocks, age 24