



# THE CLUBHOUSE

MARCH 2015

WRU NEWSLETTER

## CHANGES AT THE TOP FOR WRU

Clubs have been assured they will be kept informed of the progress towards appointing a new Group Chief Executive of the Welsh Rugby Union.

Roger Lewis steps down in October after nine years at the helm and the WRU Board is actively engaged in discussions to

identify a replacement.

WRU Chairman, Gareth Davies, has written an open letter to all clubs within which he outlined the initial phases of the work now underway. He explained that the first priority was to review the evolution of the game in recent years and identify precisely what sort of leadership is

now required in the top role. He has also publicly expressed his gratitude to Roger Lewis for the progress he has overseen in his nine years as Group Chief Executive.

The departing CEO has described his tenure as a “great adventure” and also thanked the WRU Board and all his colleagues for their support.



## ATTRACTING PLAYERS

The drive to attract more players to join our clubs has been raised and debated by the WRU Board.

The issue of how to build participation has consistently been earmarked as an important topic for review at the highest level.

At the most recent Board meeting the representatives decided to raise the issue as a topic for discussion at a strategy gathering called to focus on the way forward for the WRU.

Player numbers have been an issue for many clubs and the topic is also being raised under the banner of season structures, which are also being debated at Board level.

This embraces matters such as the need to play matches during timelines such as the Autumn international window when traditionally the leagues have been on hold.

The focus of debate has been the need to ensure a regular run of games whenever possible to ensure players stay in the habit of turning up and getting out there to take part.

## A WRU STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE

The WRU is actively developing a new strategic plan which will help shape the future of the game and identify clear priorities for the work of the governing body.

This is the latest update of the five year rolling financial and operational plan which is effectively the operational “roadmap” for the organisation.

The new plan is a radical reshaping of the format and is aimed at casting an even clearer focus of what the WRU should be doing for the game in Wales.

The Executive team began preparing the process before Christmas and now the full WRU Board is actively engaged in the plan.

A meeting to review the current content of the document and brainstorm new ideas and directions has already taken place this month involving the full Board.

The plan will match spending against the priority needs of the game and will include clear measures of how to review progress to make sure its aims are being fulfilled.

District directors will debate the process with club representatives to make sure all involved are kept up to speed with progress.

## NON EXEC DIRECTOR APPOINTMENTS

There has been a great response to the call for applications from people who want to join the board of directors of the WRU.

At the last Annual General Meeting delegates decided to seek up to two new directors, with at least one preferably being female.

The aim is to strengthen the Board with individuals boasting expertise from the business sector to ensure a rigorous review of the operational management of the WRU takes place.

Search consultants were appointed and they have now drawn up a “longlist” of candidates they are now checking through

and speaking to.

A shortlist of the very best applicants will then be drawn up and the Board will then set in place a formal interview process.

The appointments will then be made so that the new Board will be complete later this year. Currently the Board is made up of 14 representatives of the districts around Wales, three national directors who each represent the whole of Welsh rugby and the Group Chief Executive.

Some of the applicants for the new Board places boast high calibre corporate CV's so the WRU is confident that excellent candidates can be appointed.

## ANTI-DOPING

The WRU is urging all clubs and players to take note of the new anti-doping information and education programme now available.

There is clear advice on the link ([wru.co.uk/antidoping](http://wru.co.uk/antidoping)) with all the rules and regulations explained including a new World Anti-Doping Code.

This code came into force on 1 January 2015 and the web pages include links to help players check any medication and supplements they may be considering for

personal use.

All WRU clubs have already been written to about this issue so this is a reminder to make sure you all share the relevant information.

## FEEDBACK

If you have any feedback or ideas for Clubhouse content you can contact the WRU Head of Communications, John Williams, directly, via:  
[jwilliams@wru.co.uk](mailto:jwilliams@wru.co.uk)



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## FREE LEGAL SERVICE AT YOUR DISPOSAL

Clubs are reminded that the WRU has in place a free legal advice service for their exclusive use.

It has been set up as a pro bono scheme with Cardiff University to ensure clubs can get quick and useful legal help anytime.

Clubs can contact the service by email via [intouch@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:intouch@cardiff.ac.uk) in English or through [camsefyll@caerdydd.ac.uk](mailto:camsefyll@caerdydd.ac.uk) in Welsh.

You can also call the Law School on 02920876705 between 9am and 5pm and ask to speak to a member of the WRU Law School Pro Bono team. All calls are returned if the team are busy or unavailable.

Please take note that after normal office hours the university security staff will answer calls but won't be able to assist.

## FOUR MORE CLUBS AWARDED FULL WRU MEMBERSHIP

Four more district clubs have been elevated to full member club status by the WRU Board.

Fall Bay RFC, Hafodyrnyys RFC, South Gower RFC and Treharris RFC will become full member clubs from the start of season 2015/16.

This means they will receive full funding, ticket allocation entitlements and have voting rights at WRU Annual General Meetings.

There are still some 50 District Member Clubs without full status.

The ultimate aim of the WRU is to unify the status of clubs under the umbrella of the governing body.

## National Leagues latest

The National Leagues Working Party set up to review and monitor the new structure has held its first meeting. We will report back on progress in future editions.



## TICKET SALES BOOST FOR CLUBS

The member clubs have won praise from the WRU Board for selling thousands more tickets to fans as part of a new incentive scheme.

Through the Tier One Season Pass project some 18,000 more tickets were sold through clubs last Autumn than for the November series in 2013.

Under the terms of the Season Pass scheme that meant the clubs also earned £300,000 in commission for securing the sales.

The scheme has been introduced again for the Dove Men Series Rugby World Cup warm-up fixtures this summer against Ireland and Italy and will also be in place for the next RBS 6 Nations tournament games.

Clubs striving to build more sales are being urged to make sure they adopt procedures which ensure local people know when to turn up to buy tickets and how to make sure they become club members to take part in the sales process.

The ultimate aim is to build a structure in which more and more people realise that becoming a rugby club member in Wales is the best way



of making sure you can get yourself a seat at the Millennium Stadium for the big matches.

## NATWEST RUGBYFORCE

Clubs like yours are vitally important to both Welsh rugby and your local community.

The WRU is keen for more rugby clubs to take advantage of the NatWest RugbyForce grant scheme that is designed to help you improve your facilities.

All clubs are eligible to make the application for the grant, even those who applied and were successful last season and the deadline has been extended to the 4th April to help as many clubs as possible fill out the application for the grants.

There are 30 grants of £500 each available for small projects that will make a big difference to the sustainability of the club.

So if your function room needs a



fresh lick of paint or you can improve the external appearance of the club by cleaning or gardening then please apply now.

NatWest are great supporters of Welsh rugby so working together we can all help make a difference where it matters.

The application forms can be accessed through this link:

[www.wru.co.uk/eng/club/natwest\\_rugbyforce\\_enter.php](http://www.wru.co.uk/eng/club/natwest_rugbyforce_enter.php)