



FOREWORD

- During the 2001/02 season, four themes were identified that provide the basis for the strategic development of the community game in England:
 - More people;
 - Better places;
 - Access for all;
 - Enjoyment.
- The outcomes of this strategy will leave a long-term legacy to ensure that the game is self-sufficient in terms of participation numbers of players, coaches, match officials, administrators and volunteers. There will be an effective club structure with appropriate facilities that can be accessed by all. A competitive structure will provide a clear pathway and give people the opportunity to enjoy the game.
- The research undertaken by MORI on behalf of Zurich and the RFU demonstrates a clear and immediate need to focus upon these themes to ensure that there is a coherent structure for today's and tomorrow's game. The RFU will achieve this by:
 - Providing leadership;
 - Accessing funding;
 - Strong competitions;
 - Resourced Constituent Bodies (CBs);
 - Responsive governance.

THE RFU'S 'IMPACT' STRATEGY

I	Inclusion
M	Modernisation
P	Partnerships
A	Appropriate facilities
C	Club/school links
T	Training and coaching

RUGBY FUTURES - MORI RESEARCH FOR ZURICH AND THE RFU

- Zurich, the sponsors of the Premiership in partnership with the RFU, commissioned MORI to undertake independent research into the game under the heading of 'Rugby Futures'. This provided three core elements to the research:
 - Trend and context analysis;
 - Qualitative research;
 - Quantitative research.
- The aim of the project was to:

'Establish the current participation trends in rugby union and the factors affecting them, with a view to informing debate about how to raise the profile of Community Rugby and increase participation levels.'
- The MORI survey reinforced the apocryphal and anecdotal view of many within the game that outwardly the game appears vibrant and healthy. This is illustrated as follows:
 - The national side is successful - Twickenham is at full capacity for every international match;
 - Changes to the Laws and the introduction of the professional game have created an exciting spectacle;
 - Widespread coverage of major domestic and international competitions on television; press coverage overwhelmingly positive;
 - The Zurich Premiership attracting larger crowds year on year.
- However, if the game is scratched beneath the surface and is examined from top to bottom, a different picture emerges:
 - The game is operating in an increasingly competitive market for leisure time and spend, and partly as a consequence, interest in rugby union amongst adults has declined since the mid-1990s;
 - Rugby union continues to suffer from the perception that it is a white middle class sport, with little appeal to broad sections of the population;
 - Rugby is not as popular in schools as it was in the mid-1990s, with a sharp decline in participation among secondary schoolchildren;
 - Community club rugby is in a less healthy state, with evidence that the number of active clubs and teams has declined significantly since the game went open in 1995.
- The strategies that emerged from the Zurich research are based around:
 - Providing a national framework and clear objectives;
 - Setting targets based on the resources available;
 - Allowing specific priorities to be targeted locally according to need.
- The strategies will be flexible with an annual review to measure impact and clarify the objectives, both at national and local level.

RUGBY WORLD CUP 2003 - THE OPPORTUNITY



10. 2003 is the year of the Rugby World Cup 2003 (RWC 2003). England is currently ranked as the number one team in the world, generating interest in the sport of rugby union.
11. RWC 2003 provides a 'golden opportunity' to recruit new people into the game. To capitalise upon this opportunity and to address the issues raised above, the focus of the developmental activity for season 2003/04 will be on the issue of increasing participation at all levels.
12. The work all of the departments within the Union began to focus on their twin roles of assisting the England team to win the World Cup in Australia and to grow the participation base of the game. (That is not to say that the community game is abandoning the core activities, simply that where there are choices over the activities and resources to be utilised, then those that will have an impact on participation will be prioritised.)

13. The 'themes and actions' need to provide a complementary set of objectives for all of the initiatives that the RFU has established across the whole of the community game. This includes the focus of conditional funding at CB and club level, the investment strategy of the Rugby Football Foundation, the Community Club Development Programme, Seal of Approval, equity and ethics policies and other initiatives. In order to support the community game to increase the numbers of people enjoying 'lifelong' participation in the game, our focus will be:

'Rugby - Making an Impact'

14. To take full advantage of the RWC 2003, we need to understand the environment in which we operate and grasp the opportunities therein. The MORI research identified the following areas for focus:

- Interest and Participation in Rugby;
- Social Context;
- The 'Rugby Journey';
- The Professional Game;
- Rugby in Education;
- Community Club Rugby;
- Modified Forms of Rugby.

15. These areas of focus identified by MORI complemented those key traits of rugby union in England as identified from brand research undertaken by the RFU:

- **Compelling Physicality:**
 - a) Courage, Instinct, Intensity, Mettle, Release, Challenging & Potency
- **Mentally Engaging:**
 - a) Creative, Strategic, Cunning, Intricate & Battle of Wits
- **Enveloping Character:**
 - a) Fellowship, Global Culture, Bonding, Local Community, Genuine Teamwork, Transcending
 - b) Differences & Open and Inclusive
- **Wholehearted Revelry:**
 - a) Loyalty, Tradition, Respectful & Passion
- **Unifying:**
 - a) Memory Making, Spirit, Friends for Life, Convivial, Camaraderie, Banter

INTEREST AND PARTICIPATION IN RUGBY

16. Rugby union has a core range of values on which to build, each of these has to be used as a positive discriminator in raising interest and increasing participation:

- Exciting;
- Social/camaraderie;
- Interesting Laws;
- Physical;
- Teamwork;
- Discipline/respect;
- For all shapes and sizes;
- Family atmosphere.

17. The community game has recognised that there are different elements to the interest that will be generated by RWC 2003 amongst the population as a whole. As such, its planning will fall into three stages:

- The 'Build Up' - which ended with the final England warm-up match against France;
- The 'Tournament' - from September to the end of the tournament in Australia;
- The 'Legacy' - the period from the tournament until the commencement of season 2004/05 (and beyond).

18. In driving interest and participation in the game and to support the 'themes' of the community game, the focus areas will be:

- Club development and club/school links;
- Coaching and officiating;
- Competitions;
- Community involvement and partnerships.

SOCIAL CONTEXT

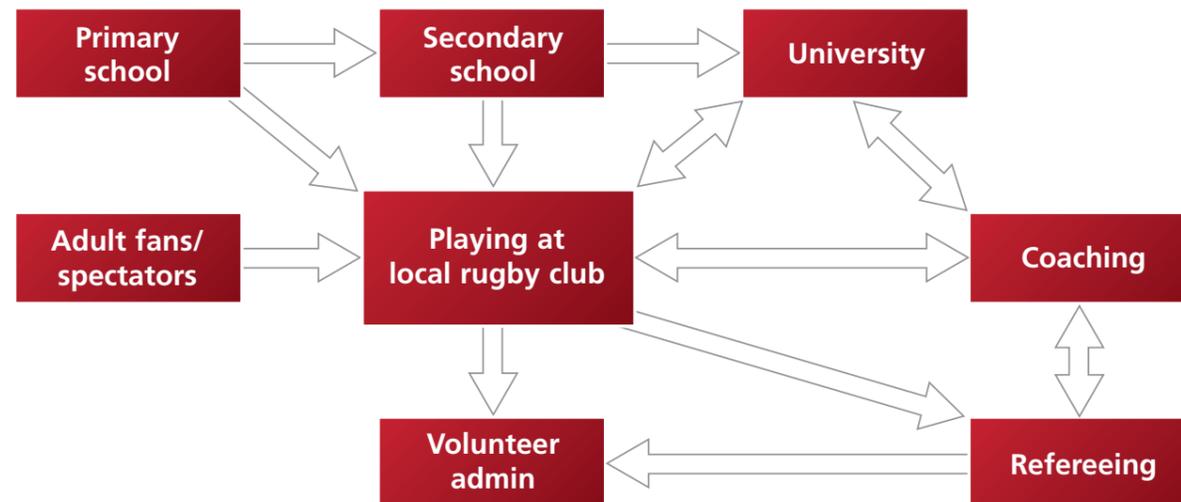
19. Changes in society and the way people live have had a major impact on peoples' involvement in rugby union and sport in general. The British work longer hours than ever before, and, on average, more hours than people in all other European countries. The lack of available leisure time has impacted upon team sports sharply.



20. In responding to these changes in society, the game has had to address and embrace different forms of recreational rugby which enable greater flexibility of participation, whilst retaining the core values of the game.

21. The government has also produced a strategy for sport entitled 'Game Plan' in which a number of key initiatives to increase participation have been identified ('sport for the good' agendas). Rugby union needs to recognise and adopt those that are relevant to the sport.

THE 'RUGBY JOURNEY'



22. Key to increasing participation in rugby is ensuring that efforts are made to start people on the 'Rugby Journey' and to ensure that it is as easy as possible for them to continue on it throughout their lifelong participation in sport. People should be able to join the 'journey' at any stage, for example, by providing opportunities for spectators at Premiership matches to become involved at the community level, either by playing or volunteering.

23. Strong links are required throughout the journey to make it as easy as possible to move between the different stages. Arguably, the most crucial factor in this process is the rugby club. While people can be introduced to the sport at various stages, it is through clubs that the lifelong part of the journey will be made, whether playing, coaching, refereeing or volunteering.

THE PROFESSIONAL GAME

24. Those attending live professional rugby are extremely impressed with the 'product' offered. Spectators believe the game has become more exciting, with the game now played at greater speed. The family-friendly atmosphere and non-segregated crowds are also popular, and are thought to help distinguish rugby matches from football matches.

25. There is much potential for professional rugby clubs, players and Community Development Officers (CDOs) to assist in the delivery of Community Rugby initiatives.

26. Professionalism has had a significant impact on the community game, although for many people, their only interaction with the sport is at the professional level - watching matches on television. This provides an opportunity to encourage the 'educated' spectator to become involved in the community game.



RUGBY IN EDUCATION

27. Teachers and children must be enthused by the sport; children must want to play and teachers must both want to and have the ability to teach the sport.

28. Many involved in the sport regard the modified versions of the game (successfully introduced into primary schools) as a key element in introducing young people to the rugby journey. Creating heroes and increasing the number of children attending live, professional games will increase participation among children.

29. University and college (Higher Education/Further Education) rugby has traditionally been one of the key elements of the rugby journey, providing those leaving secondary school with the opportunity to continue to play the sport. Rugby remains very popular within universities, both among men and, increasingly, women.

30. The DfES is promoting the vision of maintained secondary schools developing their own distinctive character and ethos. Any maintained secondary schools in England may apply to be designated as a specialist college in one of eight areas, including sport.

31. Sports colleges aim to raise the standards in achievement in PE and sport and become a 'hub' for both community sport and clusters of schools.

32. Each cluster (or family) of schools will be supported by DfES funded 'Partnership Development Managers', 'Schools Sports Co-ordinators' and 'Primary Link Teachers', who will all help to develop the sports programmes within clusters of schools.

33. This activity links into the government initiative 'PE and Schools Sports Club Links' (PESSCL), which encourages both the playing of sport within schools and the linking of schools and clubs together to form clusters. The government is supporting this initiative with £459m, plus further support from the New Opportunities Fund (NOF) round 3.

34. The RFU has to target its resources into these clusters of schools, through the sports colleges who determine the development priorities within their cluster of schools.

35. This will result in greater returns on the 'investment', as both the cluster of schools and the wider community will enjoy these programmes as they 'aim to increase participation for both pre and post 16 year olds'.

COMMUNITY CLUB RUGBY

36. The aim of the Community Rugby strategy is to generate a network of sustainable community clubs geographically spread across England.

37. Community rugby clubs are the ideal platform where rugby union can be delivered against the broader social agenda. The development of community rugby clubs must be targeted to serve the needs of the club - for example the number of mini/midi, youth and adult teams, the number of qualified coaches and referees, etc. The key is the development of sustainable playing activities taking place in appropriate facilities.

38. Links to the local cluster of schools and, where possible, the sports college will enable a 'pathway' for players to join the club and sustain the playing base.

39. The development of meaningful competitive opportunities for players of all levels remains a key priority in maintaining participants' interest in regular playing activity. The further development of 'cost effective' rugby will ensure that all players access a 'good' game without having to travel too far.

40. Widening the network of volunteers should be a key objective of all those involved in the sport, as the community game will always rely upon them. Among ex-amateur players, half said that they would have been encouraged to volunteer for their club if they had been asked to do so. Providing volunteers with appropriate and rewarding opportunities can help to motivate and sustain their involvement, and the RFU's 'Valuing the Volunteer' initiative is an important step in making sure this happens.

MODIFIED FORMS OF RUGBY

41. Modified versions of rugby union have already been successfully introduced into primary schools, providing a way of learning the basic skills of the game in a non-contact environment. These games have proven to be very popular, among young people, adults and those teaching rugby.
42. Most involved in the sport welcome the wider introduction of modified versions of the game. It appeals to those who have given up the sport and to new participants.
43. The further introduction and support of modified forms of the game represents a significant opportunity for the development of interest in the game by community clubs.

SOCIAL INCLUSION (ACCESS FOR ALL)



44. The women's game, where it exists, appears to mirror the men's game of a decade or so ago, with the social aspect of the sport at the fore. Increasing the numbers of women playing the full contact version of the game will not be easy. Half of women are simply not interested in doing so. However, few spontaneously mention the physicality of the sport as a barrier to their participation.
45. However, watching the professional game live is a family-friendly pastime with a large proportion of fans at these events being women. Targeting this group to get further involved in the sport might provide greatest results in the short-term.

46. The barriers that prevent many white people from having an interest in rugby are made worse for members of ethnic minority groups. While barriers include the complicated rules, perceived violence and cliques already identified, furthermore a strong perception exists that the sport is played only by the white middle class.
47. Those involved in the game tend to believe this is not as true as it once was, but many still acknowledge that the perception remains. In order to appeal to ethnic minorities, rugby has to reach out to these groups rather than passively expect them to come to the game.
48. Rugby union can also be used as a delivery mechanism to engage with those members of the community who feel socially disaffected from both their communities and society at large.
49. While some comment that other sports might be more easily adapted for play by disabled people, several mention that innovation in its delivery can lead to wider participation among this group.

50. There is, however, a growing recognition that funding might be available to help with the establishment of such schemes. In addition, several clubs have begun to develop facilities to make it easier for disabled people to watch at their clubs, which is an important step to involving them more in the sport.
51. The RFU is working towards the Intermediate stage of the Sporting Equals programme. With the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), the RFU has produced a number of ethics and equity policies to reinforce its commitment to enabling all members of the community to participate in and enjoy rugby union.
52. Further to this, it has a number of 'ambassadors' (Darren Jordan of the BBC and Nick Bailey from EastEnders) to help promote the game and reach out into other communities within society.

'IMPACT' INTO ACTION

53. The Community Rugby division and all of its partners within the community game have been working together to produce an action plan for the achievement of the outcomes of the 'IMPACT' strategy.
54. The planned outcomes are contained in a summarised form at the rear of this document. In each case, the lead member of the executive team has 'signed off' their commitment to achieve each outcome during the year 2003/04.
55. The detailed version of this summary will be used as the performance indicator and evaluation tool to determine the success or otherwise of each outcome in terms of both delivery and relevance to the achievement of the 'IMPACT' strategy.
56. The final evaluation of performance will be submitted to the Community Rugby Committee of the RFU for scrutiny.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

57. The 'IMPACT' strategy sets clear outcomes that will be reviewed in line with the stages of the RWC 2003 programmes, i.e. 'Build up', 'Tournament' and 'Legacy'.
58. Each strategic area will be reviewed through web-based rolling 'perception trackers' to measure whether the participants are seeing the impacts of the strategy at a local level. Specific perceptions to be tracked will include (but not limited to):
 - The RFU is promoting rugby union for all sections of society;
 - The RFU is promoting rugby union in schools outside those that already play rugby union;
 - The RFU is committed to developing community rugby clubs;
 - The RFU is a major investor in the community game.
59. The effects of the programmes will be measured longitudinally through the RFU Questionnaire to be completed by all clubs in membership of the RFU.
60. A 12-month evaluation of the outcomes and effect of the strategy will be completed. The findings will be distributed to all key partners.

CONCLUSION

61. RWC 2003 provides the game of rugby union with a unique opportunity to widen the appeal of the sport to all sections of the community and to build upon the core values of the sport.
62. The 'IMPACT' strategy will be the focus of all activity in England to generate an increase in the participation base of the sport.
63. The resources invested in these programmes will be measured and evaluated to determine their effectiveness to enable review and redirection where necessary.
64. The England 1st XV have the best opportunity to win the World Cup since its inception. We all have to work together to ensure that we too make an 'IMPACT' in the community game.

RUGBY- MAKING AN 'IMPACT'

I	Inclusion
M	Modernisation
P	Partnerships
A	Appropriate facilities
C	Club/school links
T	Training and coaching

Community Rugby activity	Outcomes	'IMPACT'
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary and Secondary School Projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 200 new secondary schools will have been introduced to rugby union. 950 clubs working towards 'Seal of Approval'. 2600 club/school links will have been established. 227 coaching and refereeing courses will have been delivered for 700 teachers. Run a linked tournament for up to 40,000 young people will have taken place. 30% of all sports colleges will be delivering rugby union to both boys and girls as a core sport in both curriculum and out of school hours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion Modernisation Partnerships Club/School Links Training & Coaching
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion and marketing of school and community club links 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There will be a raised awareness of rugby union in the community. External funding at CB and club level will have been generated to match the investment in the community game by the RFU. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modernisation Partnerships Appropriate Facilities Club/School Links Training & Coaching
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'More than a Game' (16-24 age group) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each CB will be involved in an U15 & U17 competition. 8 FE/6th Form college leagues will be operating. Each RUSLO will have a HE league/festival in place in each HE college serviced by him. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion Modernisation Partnerships Training & Coaching
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social inclusion projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An Equity Policy will have been produced. 2,000 people will have been trained in the RFU Child Protection training product. 20 pilot programmes will have been run. Each CB will have run at least one social inclusion project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion Modernisation Partnerships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coaching and refereeing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There will be a 20% increase in the number of youth and adult teams with a qualified coach.* 2,000 people will be qualified as a mini/midi coach/referee. 4,000 people will be qualified as a Foundation referee. 1,000 people will have completed the CSLA course. 50 coach and referee trainers will be qualified through the 'Train the Trainer' programme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modernisation Partnerships Appropriate Facilities Club/School Links Training & Coaching
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Premier Rugby links 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There will be integrated community programmes with the CB and RDOs. Touch/CSLA/Academy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion Modernisation Partnerships Club/School Links Training & Coaching
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Volunteering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There will be a 15% increase in the number of volunteers.* 20% of clubs will have a club volunteer co-ordinator. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion Modernisation Partnerships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Player and fixture pools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There will be a 5% increase in the number of players involved in matches each week.* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion Modernisation Partnerships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recreational rugby (touch/tag) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There will be a 15% increase in the number of players involved in non-contact rugby.* 100 rugby weeks/festivals will have been run in conjunction with targeted Local Authorities (LAs), targeting the partnership between clubs, companies, communities and LAs. These rugby weeks/festivals will have included 'rugby in the park' and 'rugby on the beach' concepts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion Modernisation Partnerships Club/School Links Training & Coaching
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult recreational festivals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 festivals will have taken place in each CB = 81. 30 CB organisers will have been appointed. Host international EGOR festival. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion Modernisation Partnerships Appropriate Facilities Training & Coaching
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RU Ready for RU 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 150 clubs will have been targeted to ensure that they are able to run (additional) sides and become sustainable community clubs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion Modernisation Partnerships Appropriate Facilities Club/School Links Training & Coaching

*Estimated percentage increase



Community Rugby & Operations Department
Rugby Football Union
Rugby House
Rugby Road
Twickenham TW1 1DS
Tel: +44 (0)208 892 2000
Fax: +44 (0)208 892 9816
email: communityrugbyinfo@rfu.com
www.rfu.com