Communications, Marketing and Sponsorship.

Date Oct 2025

Update Report compiled by **Dean Gray (DG)**

Key events, issues, and achievements since the last report.

Website
Now fully operational **(Ongoing).**
NRURS have opted for their own website at this time, although it must be said that opinions are divided as to whether that is the right decision as the quality of the new NRU website is widely recognised. Conversations will continue with NRURS about how we can support NRURS **(Ongoing)**

Cyber Security
I am in conversation with Tom More, our Data Officer, at his instigation, about introducing training to ensure that all those who have access to our digital presence do not commit unnecessary data breaches. This would be on-line and not unduly onerous.

Sponsorship discussions
We have a small but growing number of sponsors who continue to support the growth of rugby in Northumberland but will continue to look to build upon this dependent upon what happens to County rugby moving forward.

Dave Penny has reluctantly decided to withdraw his support as main sponsor for Northumberland RFU due to changes in NI, but we continue to have a number of sponsors whose support is hugely valued and appreciated, including Cathryn Clark Physiotherapy, Total Business Group, Aspire Digital Marketing Henry Cave and, of course, Gilbert.

A new Sponsorship Document is being finalised and over this coming season I will attempt to focus on growing the number of and revenue generated by Sponsors. Conversations are ongoing with a n umber of major sponsors. (**Ongoing)**

Gilbert sponsorship
The Gilbert Shop is displayed on our Website in a prominent position.
The revenue from sales has increased substantially over the last couple of years following renegotiation of the contract, but a longer erm goal is to grow even more- especially at key times of the year- i.e. the start of the season, Christmas and during the County season with special offers including bundles of kit and will be discussing with Dave Pennant of Gilbert how best we can do this.

DRAFT

We renegotiated the contract two seasons ago, so this is the last year under the current agreement. I will be looking at tenders from other suppliers in the New Year to see who is competitive.

We currently receive a Gift of Kit irrespective of sales made (under the old contract we had to spend £15,000 to get any kickback). The GoK last season was a little over £3,000- up from £1,800 two years ago. (a 67% increase) **(Ongoing)**

Marketing (ongoing)
Northumberland needs to be relevant to it stakeholders – namely its constituent clubs and all their members.

I t is my belief that, if we follow that logic, we should therefore not solely promote the CB, its events and matches on our social media but also share anything directly Rugby related posted by our clubs in order to increase our engagement with and promote them.

The number of people looking at our Facebook pages as a result has also increased hugely and continues to grow- from 1,035 in Nov 21 to 2,300 (as of 17/10/2025)- an increase of 122%
X (Twitter) users have also rise from 1,416 three years ago to 2722 – an increase of 192%.
Instagram figures are also up over twelve months – from 1817 to 2098 (up 16%)
The more traffic we get through our social media and especially our website, the greater the opportunity we have of marketing the CB, attracting sponsors and selling our goods And the better the relationships we can foster with our clubs.
The revenue from sales has increased substantially over the last couple of years following renegotiation of the contract, but I want this to grow even more- especially at key times of the year- i.e. the start of the season, Christmas and during the County season with special offers including bundles of kit.

I am the Rugby Correspondent and main Radio commentator for BBC Newcastle- as such I will continue to try to increase the profile of community rugby in Northumberland wherever I can by interviewing local figures in the Rugby Community at Half Time and carrying stories about the Community Game as well as fixtures and scores.
(Ongoing)

Team of the Month
Agreed for the new season with Newcastle Reds Bulls with the Committee again voting on whom, amongst the entries should get 20 tickets to a Falcons match of choice. Ian Richardson has asked to take this on and run it. We did review this with the Falcons as recent experience has been that it has been either a feast with lots of entries or famine when we have had to run months together. However Red Bulls wished to leave it as was for the time being. (**Ongoing)**

County Membership Drive (ongoing)
I am working with the County Secretary on a range of proposals to increase County membership and the revenue from it- and thence potentially- sponsorship by making the offering more attractive. This will be enacted for next season **(Ongoing)**

All CB Reps are encouraged to become County members **(Ongoing).**

All Whats App and F/book Groups for information for various County teams and groups are well established and have proper oversight. There have been one or two spark points between clubs and coaches but these have been successfully defused. **(Ongoing)**

DRAFT

Issues requiring Decision, Discussion or Dissemination
Former Players Lunch – date, venue, format. This has now been taken forward by Andrew Hodgson and others who are putting the event together.
Offering to County members- tba **(Ongoing).**

NB – This report must not include personal or identifiable data as it may be appended to the Board Minutes. If there is a need to report on a Confidential matter, please forward that communication separately, marked 'Confidential'.

DRAFT