Communications, Marketing and Sponsorship.

Date Jan 2026

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

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

Website

Now fully operational.

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

Ongoing 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. **(Ongoing)**

Sponsorship discussions

Our small but committed number of sponsors who continue to support the growth of rugby in Northumberland, but we will continue to look to build upon this.

A new Sponsorship Document has been finished 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, inc Red Bull at a very early stage following a conversation with Jonny Petrie MD of Newcastle Red Bulls. A detailed announcement on what the RB's are looking to do is due soon (March) (**Ongoing)**

Gilbert sponsorship

The Gilbert Shop is displayed on our website in a prominent position.

The revenue from sales has increased substantially over the past years following renegotiation of the contract, but a longer term 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. Currently being looked at by the Sec and Chair as well – Ongoing.

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.

It has always been 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 2,500 (as of 8/2/2026)- an increase of 92%
X (Twitter) users have also rise from 1,416 three years ago to 2,701 – also an increase of 92%.
Instagram figures are also up over twelve months – from 1817 to 2118 (up 17%)
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.

As the Rugby Correspondent and main Radio commentator for BBC Newcastle- I continue to try to increase the profile of community rugby in Northumberland wherever I can by interviewing local figures in the Rugby Community at a Red Bulls match at Half Time and carrying stories about the Community Game as well as fixtures and scores.

So far this season I have carried interviews with officials of and pieces on Alnwick, Tynedale, Women and Girls Rugby, the Board, the President, Wallsend, Walking Rugby, Touch, Blaydon and others.
(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 Red Bulls 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)**

DRAFT

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. I attended the Tynedale former County Players' lunch in Janaury and have secured the guest list of over 100 to contact. This will be enacted for next season **(Ongoing)**

All CB Reps are encouraged to become County members. I ask that they do so on the CB Reps' Whats App a couple of times a season. **(Ongoing).**

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

Issues requiring Decision, Discussion or Dissemination
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