



ECCLES RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

Founded 1897

2021/2022 AGM SECRETARY'S REPORT

The General Committee saw big changes at this point last year, when Paul Thorpe and Mark Greenhalgh stepped down. These guys were both long-serving Committee members who got through a great deal of work on the Club's behalf and they much deserve our thanks. We remain very pleased that they are both still actively involved within the club in their different roles.

The new Committee took a little time to find its feet and to come to grips with some of its responsibilities and roles, and here I would like to thank the sub-Committees for their much appreciated works, running and controlling the many different sections of the Club.

Events

Off the field, particularly after Covid, the Club re-engaged with everyone by hosting a number of successful and memorable Social functions. These included a Bottomless Brunch for the Ladies, our Annual Beer and Gin Festival incorporating Chris Gaffey's inaugural 100 Years of Hoops rugby tournament and the Minis and Juniors Barbarians days. The Duke of Edinburgh Section is now back into full swing and the Walking Rugby Group is thriving.

The marquee weekend at the end of season was a barnstorming Social success, thanks in the main to Hilary's non-stop efforts in resurrecting a huge tradition, after a Covid enforced break.

On the field, the Club was honoured to host two very successful, smoothly ran cup final events at the end of this season. The Mens ADM League Shield Final (if you haven't yet heard, the Lancashire ADM League will unify and return to the RFU League structure next season) and the North West Colts League Final, which provided many memorable moments including the visit of armed Special Branch Officers and a Lamborghini which came off second best in a collision with our concrete water main!

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M&J Chair: D. Nicholls 07789 202189 | DofE Chair: M. Baines 07850 082122





Rugby

Without taking anything away from the Rugby reports, which follow later, it's good to see the Senior Ladies improving in numbers, gaining representative honours and integrating further into the Club scene by volunteering for a number of roles in recent months.

Senior Mens Rugby saw our First XV lift the Lancashire Plate at the end of the season. Well Done ! Next season I hope to see the number of playing members improve to the extent that we are able to offer and to maintain 1st 2nd and 3rd team rugby every Saturday in their various leagues.

Our now thriving and growing, M&J section, has been invigorated by its new management and by the Clubs provision of a part time Community Rugby Coach and this section will also be spoken about later.

New kits and new sponsors have appeared this year in different sections of the Club which is also very positive, and there is a real positivity about the place even if we do get a little too busy at times.

Volunteers

Seeing our wonderful team of volunteers stretched almost to breaking point on occasions is not where we wish to be. The volunteers have been supplemented this year with a couple of new faces in the kitchen, and behind the bar, but with the sad loss of my Dad, and with Brunty stepping back a bit, the Grounds and Pavilion Fossils team has been glad of an injection of youth from the likes of Benty, BG and Henrik (over 200 years between them). The young apprentices Si Holland and Tunny have got it all to come!

At this point I would like to proffer a toast to all of our volunteers. The place couldn't run without your magnificent efforts and remember every little helps. The Senior players (guys and girls), who helped out on the Finals days made a massive difference to the smooth running of the events, so you don't have to be as old as me to get involved. Please help where you can. There's plenty to do.

At Committee level, we are losing two extremely seasoned warriors tonight.

Firstly, Mike Bateman, our treasurer, who has served this Club as a player and as a volunteer and Committee member for over 60 years.



Secondly, our President, Mark Dutton, who has a mere 47 years service under his belt. Thankfully both of these lads will continue to assist behind the scenes. Mark manages the Astro pitch hire and in turn raises the club's largest consistent source of annual income. Mark is also liaising with the Local Authority to assist us with improved car-parking facilities on the overflow.

Mike will continue to overlook the accounts and offer specialist advice when its needed, doing his best to stop Danny Nicholls from spending all of the Club's funds on the kids!

Please, a round of applause for these two Club legends. Seriously, we don't honour or make enough fuss of our long-serving volunteers and members, and this is one thing that we currently have under review, so watch this space.

Facilities

There are a number of other things under review at present. Building improvements are at the top of our agenda, with a complete Kitchen refurb, a Conference Room re-fit, a Patio, more daylight into the Clubhouse via Velux windows and entrance doors, and new exterior sign are just a few of our current projects under review as we speak.

Summary

In conclusion, all in all I believe the Club is in good, positive shape generally. We have a healthy bank balance presently. On top of our on-going facilities improvement projects, we have a growing and thriving Mini and Junior section including Girls teams, the D of E award scheme is rising from the ashes of Covid and sending our youngsters out on adventures again.

Socially we have been very busy this year, our Ladies team is improving in numbers and in integrating with the rest of the Club. Our Colts and our Senior teams have suffered a reduction in numbers after Covid, but we are not alone as a Club in reporting this, with some other Clubs we know of in real dire straits.

I know that I haven't covered everything in detail, I will leave that to my colleagues but if anybody wishes to know more about the Club's vision or affairs, our Committee welcomes questions and new Committee members or visitors to our monthly meetings.

We try to be transparent in everything we do.



Under the auspices of our Chairman and workaholic Chris Gaffey, ably backed up by Martin (who I think now lives here), with Heather and Greg keeping us on the straight and narrow and securing grants and funding along the way, James and Rowanne consistently delivering, Hils and Marianne revving up the DofE, Danny and Rach all over the kids...can I say that ?

There is huge voluntary effort everywhere and we know where we need to improve things.

It's good to see Don Edmondson up and about again after trials and tribulations with his health earlier in the year, and we have certainly kept him busy with cancelled and re-arranged fixtures this year.

Matthew Nombela has joined as an assistant treasurer and his help is welcomed and appreciated.

Also, thanks to our paid employees... our Bar Steward, our Coach and our CRC, all of whom have contributed voluntarily on top of their paid efforts.

Finally, from me, this Club is about its members, its rugby teams, its supporters.

It has been in existence for more than 125 years, it keeps evolving and we are only temporary keepers of the keys. Its future lies somewhat in the hands of some of our Committee members, but mainly in your hands, as by playing, by supporting, by contributing your views and advice, we will continue to react and to roll things out accordingly.

Thank you.

Dave Nicholls

Hon. Secretary.