

YEARLY REPORT 2024/25

LATEST INFORMATION AND UPDATES
ABOUT BOURNEMOUTH RUGBY

PREPARED BY:
JAMES CROKER, COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR





FOREWORD BY THE DIRECTORS



“A successful season in any rugby club doesn’t just come from success on the pitch. And success on the pitch doesn’t just come from great coaching; it comes from great spectator support, it comes from great player engagement, it comes from great financial support from sponsors, and it comes from great volunteers who help make everyone’s experience, players, coaches and supporters a fulfilling and rewarding part of life.

Whilst a lot of effort has gone into creating success within the senior teams, our overriding aim is to create sustainability for the future of Bournemouth Rugby.

For us, the most important goal is to create a self-sustainable ecosystem with a growing Youth & Mini section feeding the thriving academy to feed the senior teams and much work has been done over the last year to this end.

We started our journey at the beginning of last season with a view that it will take us five years to effect the change we needed to deliver a sustainable and successful club. With continued momentum, we’re now even more positive that we can achieve those amazing results within the coming four years.”





BRINGING RUGBY TO THE COMMUNITY

A WORD FROM THE CHAIR

It's been a fascinating season in terms of regenerating the club. We have had owners for the first time in Drew Mellor and Matthew Barker, who have both been pro-active and involved with the executive committee's responsibilities.

It's taken us 12 months to gel and create that mutual trust that's needed to run the club. On the pitch, the Lions have grown into an outstanding team under the leadership of Will Croker and his team of coaches.

Our Youth & Mini programme has also gone from strength to strength. The talent of the youngsters that play and the dedicated volunteer coaches is something truly special.

The Colts have played some fabulous rugby this season with a cup final under their belts and continue to nurture fantastic players who are progressing along pathways to rugby academies.

This can only bode well for the future of the club.

We look forward to now building on this strong and exciting future, not just for the existing senior teams, but for all sections of the club: Wheelchair rugby, Touch as well as for the hundreds of children we currently have in our junior ranks in the Youth and Mini section and for generations to come.

PHIL SINKINSON OBE
CHAIRMAN

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YEARLY SUMMARY - (JUNE 2024 - JUNE 2025)

LEADERSHIP CHANGES:

- Appointed a new Director of Rugby
- Retained the previous Director of Rugby as Head of Rugby Operations
- Expanded coaching staff with the addition of two new coaches
- Onboarded a four-person commercial team
- Future appointments will see a new Club President and Vice Chair

PLAYER RETENTION & RECRUITMENT:

- Out of 18 departing players, 15 retained
- Four players returned from retirement; 31 new players were recruited
- Maintained a strong squad of approximately 80 active players
- Defined Academy pathways through to senior rugby

PERFORMANCE METRICS:

- 1st XV: Second in South Central 2
- 2nd XV: Tenth in Counties 1 Hampshire
- 3rd XV: Winners Counties 3 Tribute Dorset South and Dorset & Wilts Cup

PLAYER WELFARE:

- Private medical cover for all senior players
- Established a comprehensive support system addressing medical, physical, social, and emotional needs



FINANCE

SPONSORSHIP/PARTNERSHIP

The levels with the local business community are exceeding pre-Covid figures due to the efforts of the Commercial Director.

EXPENSES

Expenses continue to be effectively managed within the new business and sporting models of the club, but it continues to be a learning process as the new operating infrastructure of the club continues to bed in.

INVESTMENT

Expenses and investment are being managed across the club in general alignment with the established budget, but without being restricted by it thanks to the financial support of the owners of the club.

FUNDING

The funding provided by the owners of the club is being delivered as part of a joined-up process of expense management across the club.

SPONSORSHIP REVENUE TREND 2018 TO 2025

For 2024/25, sponsorship has been our main revenue stream with a increase of 428.7% for the financial year running from June to June.

<u>2018/19</u>	<u>2019/20</u>	<u>2020/21</u>	<u>2021/22</u>	<u>2022/23</u>	<u>2023/24</u>	<u>2024/25</u>
£179,909	£129,867	£29,325	£33,513	£49,337	£46,916	£201,147 (secured circa £220,000)





SENIOR RUGBY

Bournemouth Rugby has made significant progress this season with the Lions first team narrowly missing out on promotion. Experience has been critical in the dressing room with many battle-hardened former players pulling on the red and black shirt again.

There have been big changes off the field too with the investment from new ownership allowing Director of Rugby, Will Croker and his senior coaching team to make strong plans. The players have appreciated these new measures and we have comprehensive insurance policies in place should they get injured.

We've also muscled up with our medical provision in terms of bringing in a bigger physiotherapy and sports therapy team with all the latest technology to make sure that we give them the best chance of getting fit. This can be best seen on the pitch, with our various teams now performing at a high-level and challenging at the top of their respective leagues.



“Bournemouth Rugby has a vision and a far more sustainable financial footing than previously. So, success for us this year is creating the environment where we don’t want to lose and putting the foundations in place to be able to push on over the next few years.”

Will Croker, Director of Rugby



AMBITION, STABILITY AND MOMENTUM

The feel-good factor of new owners and new coaching staff has continued on and off the pitch and propelled all our senior players throughout the 2024/25 season. All three senior teams have performed beyond expectations and delivered a high-level of rugby.

LIONS NARROWLY MISS PROMOTION

After an 18 game unbeaten run, the Lions unfortunately lost the last game of the season to just miss out on a close run contest for promotion from Regional 2 South Central. This exceptional form delighted supporters and ignited new interest for the sport in the community. The Lions further thrilled by progressing to the semi-finals of the Papa Johns Cup.

NOMADS

The Nomads are integral to the successes of the Lions and play in the Counties 1 Hampshire league.

We've created an environment that mirrors the first team, which is critical to blooding the squad for first team rugby. We also have five former Colts playing for the team, which highlights our growing rugby pathways.

WANDERERS

Bournemouth Rugby's third team is known as the Wanderers. Bournemouth Wanderers ended the season champions of Counties 3 Tribute Dorset & Wilts South.

More silverware came from winning the Dorset & Wilts Cup. What a season!

The third team is a strong outfit that consistently feeds into the 1st and 2nd XV's.



ACADEMY

The fully-funded academy is designed to give players a professional pathway into the sport. This runs from U14s to U18s.

Our talented Academy Manager is delivering an environment that enables the players to thrive. For U18s, this is to mirror our senior rugby as much as possible.

This is perfectly illustrated by the success of The Colts that play in Hampshire U18 Division 2. Although Colts teams are traditionally a combination of the under 18 and under 17 age groups, are squad is entirely made up of under 17 players. The Colts finished at the top of the table.

We're proud to say that many of our Academy players have also been selected for the Dorset & Wiltshire Under 20 squad this year.

#	TEAM	P	W	D	L	PF	PA	+/-	TB	LB	Pts
1	 Bournemouth U18 Colts	4	3	0	1	162	53	109	9	1	22
2	 Blandford RFC U18M	4	3	1	0	128	40	88	2	0	16
3	 Tottonians Colts U17-18	5	3	1	1	110	52	58	0	1	16
4	 Chichester Colts	4	2	1	1	54	89	-35	1	0	11
5	 Fawley Colts	5	2	0	3	79	110	-31	2	0	10
6	 Vectis Colts	3	2	0	1	69	49	20	1	0	9
7	 Trojans FC U18M 2s	4	2	0	2	49	67	-18	0	1	9
8	 Salisbury RFC U18 Hants	3	1	0	2	75	40	35	1	2	7
9	 Eastleigh RFC U18M	5	1	1	3	87	188	-101	1	0	7
10	 Havant Academy 2XV	5	0	0	5	71	196	-125	2	2	4



D&W U20 SQUAD



DORSET & WILTS RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION
TEAMWORK | RESPECT | ENJOYMENT | DISCIPLINE | SPORTSMANSHIP

FORWARDS

Joel Andrews
Mason Beech
Ed Betts
Alex Bridgeman
George Burnell
Decklan Clarke
Will Hollaway
Will Ingram
Samuel Knight
Zak McLeod-Jones
Ethan Mullan
Will Padfield
Makensie Parker
Malachai Rabuli
Bruno Skinner
George Smith
Jack Wallace
Josh White
Ryan Woodford

BACKS

Swanage & Wareham
Amesbury
Lytchett Minster
Corsham
Bournemouth
Supermarine
Sherborne
Salisbury
Salisbury
Bournemouth
East Dorset Dockers
Oakmeadians
Dorchester
Salisbury
Lytchett Minster
Fordingbridge
Salisbury
Dorchester
Bournemouth

Callum Angell
William Barnard
Ollie Byrne
Flynn Drummond
Maverick Goodchild
Sol Hopkins
Joshua Kerrigan
Joseph Martindale
Wyatt McLoughlin
Charlie Paden
Sam Rook
Matthew Simpson
Will Squires
Dylan Walters
Roy Waters
Morgan Wellard
Archie Wood
George Yarwood

Chippenham
Salisbury
Bournemouth
Dorchester
Bournemouth
Royal Wootton Bass.
Sherborne
Trowbridge
Wimborne
Salisbury
Oakmeadians
Trowbridge
Bournemouth
Dorchester
Salisbury
Devizes
Oakmeadians
Salisbury





YOUTH & GIRLS RUGBY

YOUTH PROGRAMME

Over the last year our membership of 410 has welcomed 75 new members (including 36 paying members). This figure is set to double this forthcoming 2025/26 season with the recruitment of u16s moving into Colts.

The teams are supported by an army of volunteers that deliver the rugby provision from U4s to U18s. A big thank you to them for all the hard work and commitment.

GIRLS RUGBY

The largest growing area for our club at present is the girls rugby at 45 members, which we will leverage further around the 2025 World Cup in August.

NEW KIT

All of the youth kit has kindly been gifted to the youth players (shirt, shorts and socks) all supported by 66 of the club sponsors.





WHEELCHAIR RUGBY

WHEELCHAIR TRAINING VENUE

We have secured a venue for training that is separate from other disability sports. As one of the few wheelchair rugby teams in the region, we're immensely proud of our players and coaches.

TOURNAMENT SUCCESS

Congratulations to the lions wheelchair rugby team and the new members who took part in the recent Police UK Disability Sport 5s tournament in Reading.

PARALYMPIAN INSPIRES AT GALA EVENT

Kylie Grimes MBE was guest of honour at a charity fundraising dinner event for Bournemouth Wheelchair Rugby.



“As a player and sponsor I'm pleased to be involved and to see how the money is being spent. The benefits of the sport improves your daily life, especially the fitter you get. I'd encourage anyone to come and join us.”

Grace Capaldi, Chair of Wheelchair Rugby

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

In partnership with Rippa Rugby, we're proud to be providing experienced and creative rugby coaching into local primary and secondary schools. Our community rugby manager, Stuart Gallagher is passionate about enhancing rugby in schools and the benefits for children, fostering their development both on and off the field.

This season has been a success with record numbers of young people taking part. We're now focused on reaching less advantaged areas and to continue increasing diversity in the game.

These unique rugby initiatives would only be made possible by the generous support from Bournemouth Rugby's community patrons

24

This invaluable programme is currently coaching in 24 schools across the region.

800+

We're reaching over 800 children per week through P.E consultancy provision and after-school coaching sessions.

4

Outside of term-time, the partnership runs two dedicated girls rugby camps and two mixed camps during the school holidays.

4

We organise four primary school rugby festivals a year. March saw the Ellis Edwards Dorset & Hampshire Schools Tag Rugby Festival.



“We're often in the privileged position of introducing rugby for the first time to growing numbers of children. I was introduced to the egg-shaped ball at school, and I really believe that it changes your life.”

Stuart Gallagher, Community Rugby Manager

WELLBEING

CLUB HEALTH INITIATIVES:

- Our mental health ambassador in partnership with Dorset Mind continues to deliver an essential service. A former player and longtime associate of the club.
- We have initiated the highest level of continuous professional development strategy for coaches.
- Lions captain Grant Hancox received a full knee reconstruction operation thanks to the club's medical cover.
- Positive outcomes from the AGM with retained staff and continuity in leadership roles.

COMMERCIAL GROWTH

Bournemouth Rugby's innovative approach to income generation has made the difference this season with increased revenue generation achieved through sponsorship and hospitality.

What sets us apart is that Bournemouth Rugby does not rely solely on food and beverage revenue. Instead, we have embraced creative strategies to achieve success.

Bournemouth Rugby boasts a growing network of businesses and a dynamic calendar of events, ensuring clients enjoy exceptional experiences and service.

To strengthen the club's commercial efforts, we have continued to utilise creative partners in PR/Comms and digital marketing. The Matchday Coordinator and Sponsorship Administrator also continue to play vital roles.



“Our commercial and operational work has been incredibly significant this season. It’s testament to the generosity of our sponsors and community patrons that we can demonstrate to the community that rugby can be a sport for everyone. With record numbers now participating in the game locally, we’ll continue bringing people together to enjoy the wellbeing benefits.”

James Croker, Commercial Director





SPONSORSHIP AND PARTNERSHIPS:

- Secured 140 business sponsors with a target of 150
- Average sponsorship spend increased to £2.3K
- Hosted 14 sell-out home lunches and sell-out Lions that Lunch events
- Engaged over 250 business leaders at the inaugural Pride of Lions networking event. Average attendance 92 sponsors
- 43 player sponsorships
- 12 community patrons that will enable the community outreach

MEMBERSHIP GROWTH:

- Anticipated increase in membership from 820 to over 1000 this year
- Increasing matchday audiences
- 15 community support memberships
- Adult Memberships: 68 **(25% up)**
- Youth/Mini/Academy Memberships: 406 **(5% up)**
- Family Memberships: 395 **(10% up)**
- Members/Season Ticket Holders: 37 **(5% up)**
- Partner Membership and Season Tickets: 124 **(1140% up)**
- Partner Season Tickets: 632 **(1480% up)**

PRIDE OF LIONS

A community of businesses supporting Bournemouth Rugby who meet monthly. The popular events take place at local restaurants and bars and attended by numerous businesses from Dorset & Hampshire. It's an opportunity to network and gain insights into the journey of the club through meeting staff and players.

LIONS THAT LUNCH

A monthly networking event that includes lunch and a guest speaker. These have included Jeff Mostyn, the former Chairman of AFC Bournemouth, Anthony Dunkerley a modern slavery expert and Dr Zoe Wimshurst, Visual Performance Coach.

PRE-MATCH LUNCH

The pre-match lunch event is hosted by Bournemouth Rugby and welcome to all. The event includes a meal, a welcome drink, and is another fantastic opportunity for supporters and sponsors to meet staff and players.

AWARDS AND CHARITY EVENTS

Our awards events all about celebrating the passion, teamwork, and growth of every player in Bournemouth Rugby. With speeches, presentations, trophies, goodie bags and all hosted in a fantastic local venue.

These incredible days are only made possible by our amazing sponsors and staff who continue to back grassroots rugby at every level.





LIONS THAT LUNCH

WITH GUEST SPEAKER: **JEFF MOSTYN**

LESSONS AND ADVICE FROM AFC BOURNEMOUTH

PLEASE REGISTER ON OUR WEBSITE: BOURNEMOUTH-RUGBY.CO.UK/EVENTS

- NUSARA, WESTBOURNE, BH4 9AE
- 27TH NOVEMBER 2024
- 12.30 ARRIVAL - £52 PER PERSON



CHRISTMAS SOCIAL

PRIDE OF LIONS

JOIN US FOR AN UNFORGETTABLE EVENING AS WE BRING TOGETHER THE HEART OF OUR COMMUNITY AT CHRISTMAS TIME.

PLEASE REGISTER ON OUR WEBSITE: BOURNEMOUTH-RUGBY.CO.UK/EVENTS

- THOMAS TRIPP, CHRISTCHURCH
- DECEMBER 17TH 2024
- 5.30 PM - 10.00 PM // FREE EVENT



PRE-MATCH LUNCH PACKAGE

ONLY £39*

JOIN US FOR A DELICIOUS TWO COURSE PRE-MATCH LUNCH & MATCH TICKET PACKAGE

PLEASE NOTE BOOKINGS SHOULD BE MADE BY TUESDAY 8TH OCTOBER

MATCH SPONSOR

TWELVE

TO BOOK YOUR TABLE VISIT: BOURNEMOUTH-RUGBY.CO.UK/EVENTS

- SATURDAY 12TH OCTOBER
- MEET AT 1PM
- CHAPEL GATE



GALA DINNER WITH PARALYMPIAN KYLIE GRIMES MBE

GOLD MEDAL-WINNING PARALYMPIAN, KYLIE GRIMES MBE, WILL BE THE GUEST OF HONOUR FOR BOURNEMOUTH LIONS WHEELCHAIR RUGBY FUNDRAISING GALA

PLEASE BOOK ON OUR WEBSITE: BOURNEMOUTH-RUGBY.CO.UK/EVENTS

- MARSHALLS, BOURNEMOUTH
- APRIL 24
- £64.95 PER PERSON





“We’re proud to be sponsoring Bournemouth Rugby and investing in local sporting talent. Being able to help Jordi and Fiifi (players) allows them to fully concentrate on playing to the best of their abilities. With our range of exclusive sportswear, we can also kit them out properly.”

George Cole, Director of Sport It First

“We love being part of the club and firmly believe Bournemouth Rugby is on the up. Keep up the good work.”

Paul Stewart, Managing Director Goadsby.



A massive thank you to our sponsors BCP Media Group who kindly produced a giant promotional deck chair, which has been popular for photo opportunities all season. They have also supported us as a trusted print and signage partner.

Just one of the many examples of the vital role that sponsorship plays in the continuing success of Bournemouth Rugby.

MARKETING

With a dedicated marketing team, Bournemouth Rugby has made considerable steps to engage with the community through social media and regional/national media coverage with PR for the 2024/25 season. We are currently building a new club website, which is weeks away from launching.

SOCIAL MEDIA INSIGHTS

Our social media community continues to expand across all channels and platforms. We have over 13,900 engaged followers, with LinkedIn demonstrating the highest percentage increase. While Facebook maintained the largest absolute impression count.

Top performing posts this season have included match day analysis, Scottish international Greig Tonks and game day line-up announcements. Colts, Girls rugby community posts.

Key figures from our social media engagement over the 1st September - 23rd June period:

2.63M

Total Impressions
(Facebook, Instagram,
Linkedin)

42K

Likes
+198% increase

1.2K

Comments
+466% increase

33.6K

Shares
+312% increase



PR AND ENGAGEMENT

Over the course of the season, Bournemouth Rugby has established strong media contacts and actively sought both regional and national media coverage. This publicity has been vital to engage and interact with the community, which in turn has led to increased match attendance, sports participation and commercial opportunities.

With consistent local support from the Bournemouth Daily Echo, BBC Sport and The Rugby Paper who have regular published pre-match, post-match reports and interviews about the club.

Former Scotland international Greig Tonks joins Bournemouth
18th January
RUGBY UNION

England international Andy Long returns to Bournemouth Rugby
28TH FEBRUARY RUGBY UNION

Bournemouth Rugby Club season launch

LION-SIZED AMBITIONS
Club's big plans for future: P36

Hancox joins the 200 club
Published on 27 October 2024
By The Rugby Paper Team



BRINGING RUGBY TO THE COMMUNITY

WEBSITE: WWW.BOURNEMOUTH-RUGBY.CO.UK

FACEBOOK: BOURNEMOUTH RUGBY

INSTAGRAM: @BOURNEMOUTH_RFC_OFFICIAL

X: BOURNEMOUTH RFC

LINKEDIN: BOURNEMOUTH RUGBY

#LIONSROAR