



WRU Hub Programme Term Report

January 2022 – April 2022

Introduction

This document aims to show how the WRU Hub Programme has supported the return of rugby from the pandemic in the first academic term of 2021/22.

The mission of the Hub Programme this year is to:

Use rugby in inclusive and diverse ways to improve the health and well-being of our young people, both within WRU Hub Programme educational establishments, and through Hub Officers linking with their partner clubs and Female Hubs to enable Welsh rugby to thrive.

The WRU Hub Programme is aligned with the four purposes of the Curriculum for Wales in its aim of creating healthy, ambitious, enterprising and ethical young people.





Community Feedback



Feedback

The WRU Hub Establishments and Stakeholders were asked to provide feedback about the programme's impact.

We asked the following questions:

How important has it been for you to have a Hub Officer to work with your coaches and players following the last 18 months?

What kind of impact has it had on your club or female hub or community?



Establishments

"The impact the Hub Officers have had in the Scarlets Region has been hugely beneficial to the region in each county. Since having hub officers in employment at the Scarlets, it has allowed us to have a greater outreach to our community primary schools - as well as community rugby clubs. We are already reaping the rewards with a significant growth in participation."

"As mentioned above, the outreach to community primary schools has been significant, which has ultimately had a positive knock-on affect on surrounding community clubs - again an increase in participation. "

Rhodri Jones - Community Rugby Lead - Scarlets

"The work our hub officers do is excellent. They help with training and college fixtures support our development and academy programme, work closely with our coaching curriculum coordinating our students going out to schools coaching rugby plus supporting rugby festivals Helping set up WRU coaching courses for our students. They also work closely with the clubs and Dewar shield bringing players into the college for S&C."

"Having a hub officer has enabled regular female rugby training to take place every week for the female students this has helped to develop further interest and participation allowing fixtures to be generated and 7s competitions to be entered."

Adrian Bateman - Teacher – Coleg Sir Benfro



Female Hub

" The Work of Hub Officer to be involved with the local coaches & players is massive and is a key part of success. I try be accessible to all coaches and player as part of my role, giving coaches development messages as much as I can to offer support and guide them within their coaching. Any problems they have with sessions, activities, players etc I will pop down and give my advice.

From running the Female hub myself it has gone very well and easy transition with new coaches and players. We are now in a position to use our senior Ravens player to assist with the younger teams. The Female Hub has really taken off in the area and that's from the support network and links from Hub Officer to school to the club. Everyone is fully behind the Female Hub and have over 80 females playing week in week out. "

Mike Evans – Ravens Female Hub Lead

Club

"The hub officer role is a valuable part of the club coaching and development set-up. It provides an opportunity to develop all the coaches at the club, the M&J coaches in particular. the hub officer programme helps to bring the club together but it does require clear targets and good communication to make it work at its optimum.

CPD events have been a great success and we should look to do more. I'd like to develop more opportunities to link seniors and junior rugby and to push forward the one club culture and I believe the hub officer could play a big part in that change. "

Endaf Williams – Llandaff Rugby Club



Club & Female Hub

"During the last 18 months Gwion, our hub officer, was very supportive and kept us up to date on the changing rules. He was happy to come and support coaches with ideas on how to adapt training to the covid guidelines at the time, whilst restrictions were in place. He was also a fresh face and bundle of energy, when maybe everyone else was feeling stuck! I also understand he has been a support for some young players who have possibly lost their way and interest in sport. He has gone out of his way to encourage them back to rugby at the club, to keep them on the 'straight and narrow'.

Gwion is recognised by most of the children in the Tenby family of schools. This is great for us, as he is the familiar friendly face that they recognise when they turn up to a new club or hub training session. He has built up good relationships with staff and children at schools, which encourages them to want to play the sport and attend our facility. I have said previously the hub role provides a fantastic link for the club, hub and school communities. Gwion is always willing to support coaches and step in if someone can't make it!

The young players also enjoy watching him play for Tenby Utd too - he is a great role model for them.

I'm not sure how you measure the impact - but we have 10 teams in the Swifts, all enjoying their rugby, and a good female hub running, where he attends regularly. We very much see ourselves as one club, and he features strongly as part of that. "

Rachel Grieve - Tenby Swifts / South Pems Sharks



Female Hub

"As a hub we have always been supported by hub officers in the area, from institutions such as Bishop of Llandaff, Glantaf, Cardiff West, Cardiff High and Cardiff and the Vale College. We see a huge benefit from having hub officers in our area, particularly as we grow from a one location hub to a hub with multiple satellites in Glamorgan Wanderers, Whitchurch, Cardiff Quins and the original location Hailey Park.

Hub officers do so many invaluable things for us as a hub such as, allowing us to train on school facilities and offering the school minibus to help girls get to games/festivals. These generous offers are greatly appreciated as Ely is considered an area of deprivation and some girls wouldn't be able to train or play without access to these facilities.

Our Hub officers also offer free CPD sessions that are specifically tailored to coaches in the female game, focusing on topics such as "how to scale sessions for different abilities" and focusing on formats of the game that girls are more likely to participate in such as 7s or 12s.

Hub officers are our first point of contact if we need a referee or support at training sessions and if they cannot do it themselves, they often offer the support of a rugby leader or student from their school/college.

Hub officers support us with our marketing and advertising by retweeting/sharing our posts on social media, putting up posters in their school or handing out flyers in local festivals to girls that have participated. They have a much wider reach than we do, and it really makes a difference to our recruitment.

When you have a hub officer that cares about girls rugby, they make a huge difference as hubs feel supported and like they have someone who they can ask questions to and look for guidance in."

Hannah Stone – Capitals Female Hub Lead



Club

"Huw has proven how this role can positively impact the amount of people playing rugby in a town whilst also having a significant impact on the wellbeing of its population and a significant improvement in the clubs standing within the community.

Club rugby – Welshpool rugby club has seen numbers increase at all ages but most notably at U12(year 6&7). The club have struggled to grow this group in recent years and began the season with 5 players. Due to Huw's deliveries in secondary and primary school and his relationship with the young people and the coaches this number has grown to over 20.

Walking rugby – Huw has been responsible for the development of our walk and talk programme in conjunction with his employer Ponthafren, a mental health charity. Huw's work and the role of the club in shining a spotlight on mental health has resulted in a number of people being referred to professional services with symptoms ranging from anxiety to suicidal thoughts. It has also connected the club with a group of people who would not have ordinarily been at our club and a new sense of family and community.

Wellbeing – Huw has been a part of a disability rugby provision(soon to be an ICC) that has been developed in partnership with Action For Children. We have also been inundated with reports from teachers of pupils that wouldn't engage in sport but have been actively engaged during the course of Huw's first year of deliveries. He has also supported camps, teen mental health week events, a mental health Movember campaign bringing 3 rival clubs together and several other initiatives.

This is a small snapshot of the wide ranging impact Huw has had in a very short period of time. We have undoubtedly seen a growth in the number of young people playing rugby in the club. However, the impact of Huw using rugby as a vehicle for social change and the difference that has made to how our club is seen in the community is arguably even more powerful."

Dave Roberts – Chairman - Welshpool Rugby Club



Female Hub

" The position of rugby Hub Officer (Bronnie Jones) has been vital to both the Red Kites Female Hub and Gwernyfed rfc. Through her links with WRU, local authority, schools etc and her advice and support to club directors, officers and volunteer coaches the role has been invaluable.

Prior to covid Bronnie was heavily involved at primary school level delivering rugby during the day and at after school clubs and promoting the female rugby hub for those showing interest.

Through the hub officer role Bronnie's delivery of rugby across Gwernyfed, Brecon and Crickhowell high schools has been through PE classes, taster sessions, lunch time clubs, Rugby leaders and she has taken the lead with South Powys schools rugby.

Prior to covid the hub officer organised community fun days and inter-school days, skills centres and cps.

Her role has provided an interface at director level in Gwernyfed rugby club and she has been an integral part of the mini and junior committee.

Bronnie has assisted in the running of the Female Hub and provided a link to the ladies section of Gwernyfed. She has also acted as a link between the club/hub and WRU. She has gained the support and respect of everyone involved. A recent directors meeting was delighted to hear of Bronnie's promotion and agreed to support the new rugby officer.

Bronnie has been a great ambassador for rugby and for girls rugby in particular.

All of the above is critical for community rugby and for the sustainability of girls' rugby and is a particularly important role in rural areas.

Our objective for continuing the role of hub officer is to work closely with other hub officers across S Powys and to see under 18s girls rugby developed further. Prior to covid there was a girls' team for South Powys schools and it would be good to see that reinstated."

Ceri Morgan, Red Kites Female Hub Lead





Outcomes

Outcomes Jan - April 22

The WRU Hub Programme continues to deliver against the WRU Community Strategy and its objectives.

People Provide the targeted training and tools that will enable everyone involved in rugby to be the best they can be

Places Identify those educational settings, WRU clubs and local communities where there is a tangible benefit to be gained from the development of rugby

Playing Grow and develop the game in targeted communities of Wales so that individuals achieve their potential

Promote Provide an inclusive offering for all our people and communities

Partners Link up and support with other key strategic partners to help grow all our strategic priorities and increase opportunities for rugby across Wales



People

1158 Rugby Leaders have been trained and deployed throughout the country with good examples across several hub establishments.

Case studies

'52 Rugby leaders completed their practical and theory side of the course, in preparation for primary school festivals at CAVC after half term, this is a reason why no outreach in primary schools have been done before half term due to covid and H&S of schools.

15 Refs Recruited and 1st march will be a URDD refs L1 course run at the college in prep they must attend CD 7s event to assist in any way with RL, also ref Pontcanna primary schools

introduction to contact course inhouse to upskill students and develop Fitzalan High Afterschool club assisting the staff there with myself and any kind.'

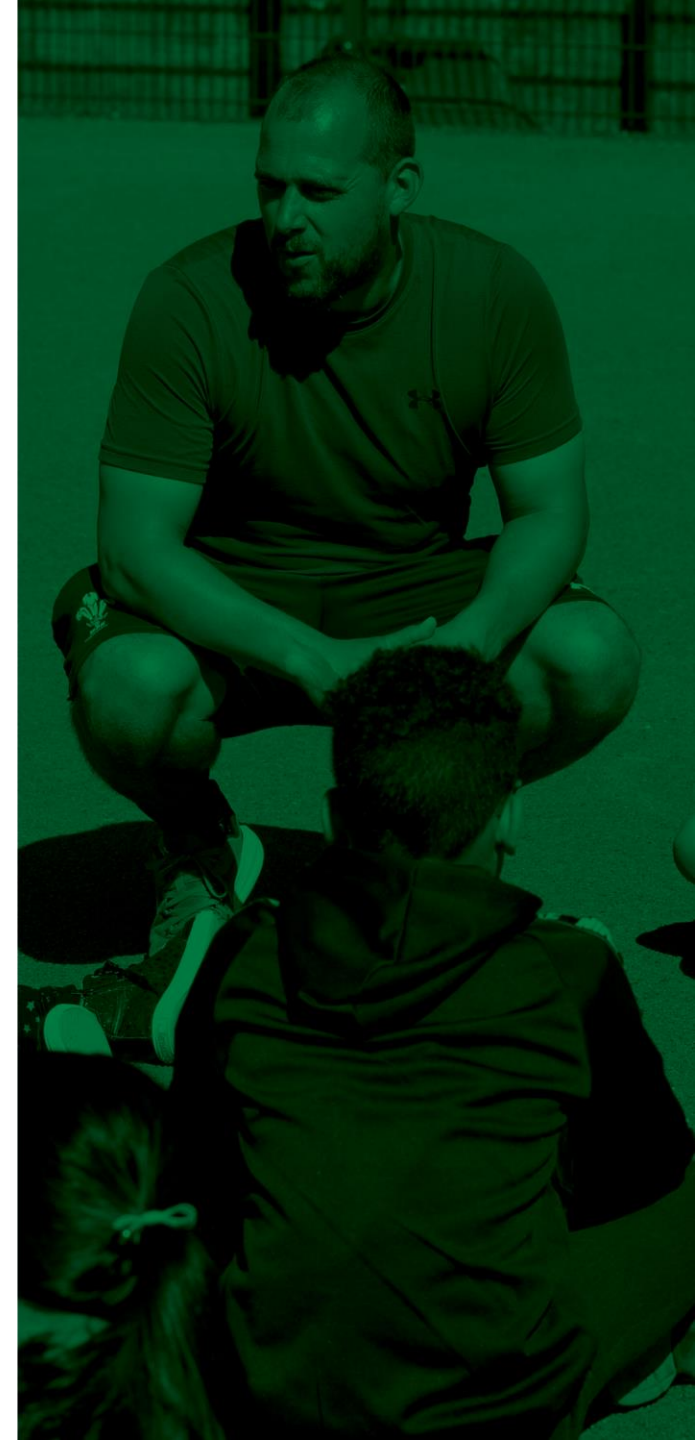
Gavin Gallagher - CAVC

'Ollie Coles had taken over as lead coach for the Bangor u.12s for this season having assisted them overt lockdown. Ollie was thrown into the deep end when two of the parent coaches decided they were taking a step back. Although very well supported by parents Ollie has taken the role on and excelled. His attention to detail has helped retain many players from leaving to attend football academies as he has made sessions challenging and engaging for the players. This has also led to a few new recruits this year to add to the side he inherited. Ollie's coaching began back in 2019 as a fresher where he attended a coaching early contact and level 1 course run out of the University. This has now led to Ollie singing up to a level 2 course and has ambitions to go into coaching longer term.'

Joe Simpson – Bangor Uni

Year 11 pupil Chloe Gant recently represented Ospreys u18s Women squad, a year young, over a series of regional festivals having been identified following strong performances for West Swansea Hawks and skills evening. We are not only proud of Chloe's hard work and attitude on the field at Bryntirion Comprehensive but also off the field, as she recently successfully completed her WRU TAG leaders qualification. I am looking forward to watching Chloe continue to develop as a rugby player but also as a rugby coach within our primary schools and younger year groups. Chloe wants to continue with her sport and rugby studies next year.

Lewis Crabbe – Bryntirion



Places

179 Clubs and 26 Female Hubs are connected to the WRU Hub Programme.

Case studies

Merthyr Steelers Female Hub are up and running with some 30+ girls training from the local area.

Jack Smyth - Cyfartha

‘Several of our year 7 boys who have tried rugby at school have transitioned down to club to join the U12s section. This has meant the U12s age group at the club is no longer at risk of folding and has gone from strength to strength even managing to get their first win last weekend much to the boys and girls delight!’

Chris Meyers – Emyrs Ap Iwan

‘Over the past few weeks I've seen that the interest of year 8s at my school is increasing. I saw this as an opportunity to restart the clubs U13s team. I'm holding two 'trial' sessions to see if the numbers will hold, but for the first session there were 19 players there which is excellent and with a couple more promising to attend it's looking good for the Lampeter u13s’

Owain Bonsall – Ysgol Bro Pedr



Playing – Alternative

Rugby is provided on curriculum throughout Wales. Hub Officers support establishments to deliver rugby activities during extra curricular opportunities. The focus in term 2 shifts to the alternative game with major 7s events like **WRU URDD 7s** and other regional events taking place.

Case studies.

'The WRU URDD 7's saw 56 Maesteg comprehensive school pupils take to Cardiff for Wales' biggest rugby tournament. The girls rugby team saw 12 pupils who have never played a rugby match before take part in the tournament and even qualify from the group stage.. One of those girls has now gone on to join 'Ogwr Hawks' girls cluster and is playing in her first match this weekend which is amazing to see.'

Rhodri Davies – Maesteg

'The Vale Sevens back up and running. After a break for a couple year because of covid and other reasons. 220+ boys participated across all 7 Vale schools and 4 year groups. Great to give all the schools the opportunity to play some sevens that they would not have had otherwise.'

Calum Digby – Cardiff Rugby (Vale Officer)

'Organised and hosted a year 7 and 8 boys 7s rugby tournament on 1st March, their 1st ever festival as secondary school pupils due to the pandemic. Had 6 rugby leaders to help on the day with coaching, refereeing, timekeeping and scorekeeping.'

Dyfrig Davis – Dyffryn Amman



Playing - Female

The girls' game has a variety of offers from traditional contact rugby to non-contact touch rugby. **7,000 girls** have participated in educational establishments supported by the Hub Officer.

Case studies

'I've now started year 7 and 8s girls after school rugby training sessions. 22 from year 7s and 10 from year 8s. First time the school have a girls team so I'm looking at tag game's for the less confident player's and tackle 10 a side for the confident girl's. Really excited as they love rugby and would train 3 times a week if I could fit them in'

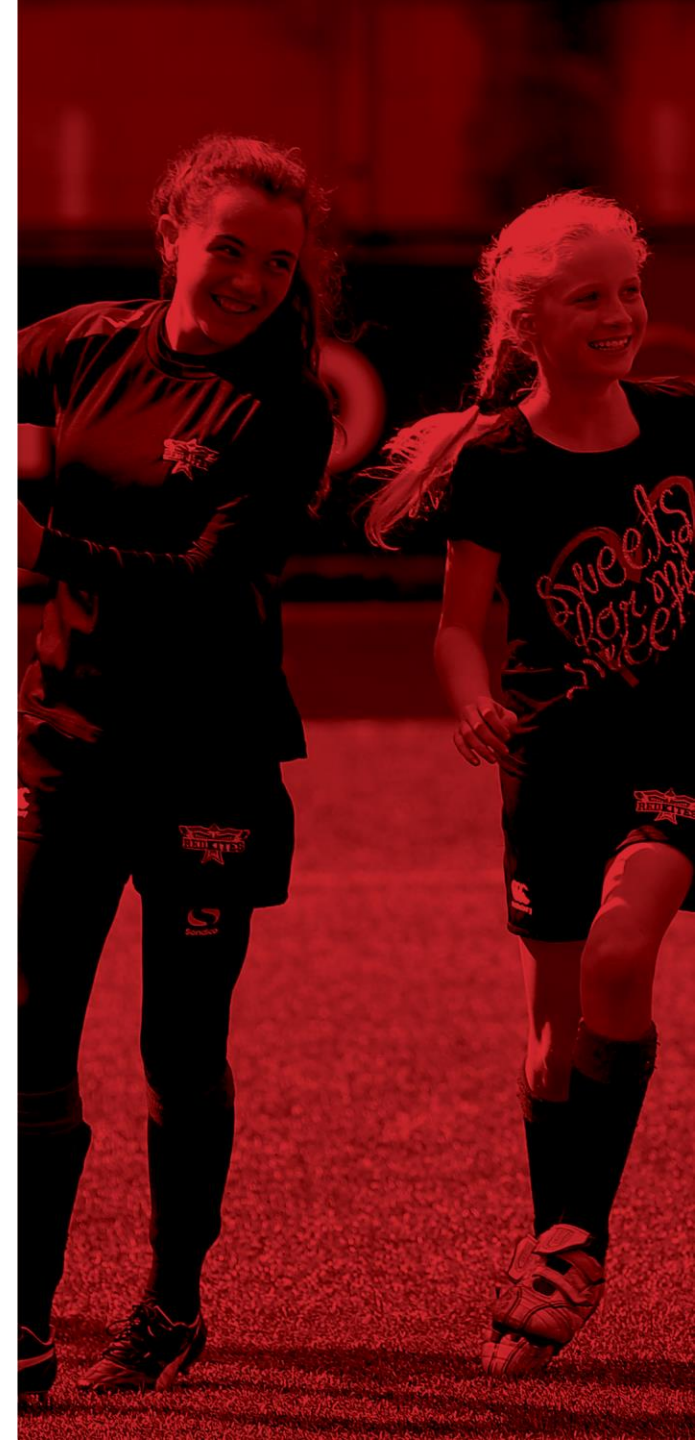
Wayne Morris – Ysgol Calon Cymru

'Rookie rugby festival held for year 5 & year 6 girls for Llanelli schools. Over 200 pupils in attendance.

Jonny Griffiths – Scarlets Officer (Llanelli)

The girls PE lessons that I have delivered have been with all year 7, 8 and 9 girl year groups. From these taster sessions, numbers have increased dramatically for the new Monday after school girls rugby club. With last Monday being our highest turn out yet, with 16 girls. As a school we have entered two girls teams into the Urdd 7's, one for each year group. Alongside this I have I am still running a Tuesday lunch time girls rugby club, which is more skill based and numbers are increasing to that also. Touch Rugby Sessions

Rhys Lawrence – Bishopston



Promote

Disability Six Nations Events Events have been held in the Scarlets, Ospreys and North Wales to provide opportunities for SEN pupils to engage in rugby. The hub Officers engage SEN schools throughout the region and then deliver a regional event to provide students with the opportunity to participate in a large-scale event.

Case studies

'Attended and coached at SEN festival in Trinity, Carmarthen, 2 of the schools (Heol Goffa & Brynteg) that I've been delivering at attended the festivals and absolutely loved it, their staff were very complimentary of the festival. We (Scarlets) have given complimentary tickets to Brynteg to attend the Connacht fixture.'

Jonathan Griffiths - Scarlets Officer (Llanelli)

'Some of our year 10 PE group attended the WRU Inclusive festival at Eirias Parc to assist with delivery. With this being their first experience of this type of environment they all excelled and were fantastic ensuring 112 disabled young people had a brilliant experience.'

Chris Meyers - Emrys Ap Iwan

'Engagement within the college was fantastic overall we engaged 15 students with severe learning difficulties in rugby. this was delivered by 4 rugby leaders and have asked to for the rugby sessions on a weekly basis, the feedback from the session was phenomenal, a Prosthetic leg participant that never participated in any sport within the college session took part and scored a try, there was also a wheelchair user involved in the session and her teammates were involving her and helping as much as possible. a great session by everyone.'

Gavin Gallagher - CAVC



Partner

“One of our classes have made a tour of the Principality Stadium on Minecraft and we are now planning to take a tour of the stadium in the near future.”

Jac Hopkins – Pen Y Bryn

“Actif restart project for NEET 16-19 year olds successfully completed their rugby leaders award with me and have delivered to a local primary school & at a festival.

One of the students has also gone to join New dock stars youth rugby team as he enjoyed the sessions.”

Jonny Griffiths – Scarlets (Llanelli)

“At the start of the month I ran a Rugby Leaders Course for CMD BTECH Sports Student in Pwllheli college to help them with their coaching Module and to give them experience in their coaching journey”

Eon Williams – Bro Idris





Headlines

Headlines

People

1158 Rugby Leaders and 206 Referees

have now been trained. We are looking to deploy these students internally and externally over the coming months.

Places

179 WRU Clubs and 26 Female Hubs / 82% of registered boys and 86% of registered girls aged U7s to U18s are supported.

Over **150 CPDs** have been delivered in the community.

Playing

7,000 girls have participated in curricular, extra curricular or inter school/college /university programmes.

Promote

5 Disability Six Nations Events and 75 Fit Fed Fun Camps have now been delivered throughout Wales.

Partners

2,500 sessions were delivered by college officers (6) and partner officers (12) to **11,641** primary school children.



Individual Impact

Rugby is a vehicle in schools to ensure pupils are engaged in their establishments and community

Case studies

Year 9 girl has not been involved in a single PE lesson this year due to anxiety and mental health issues. After months and weeks of working to try get her involved in a lesson, she finally attended and took part in a rugby lesson which then led her to attend training the following evening. Huge breakthrough, she has attended every PE lesson since, and it is visual that she gets a lot of enjoyment from taking part in these rugby lessons in school.

A refugee from Syria joined our school in year 7 with very little spoken English. He attended the Touch Rugby lunchtime provision in the school which he seemed to really enjoy. He started to develop his skills and understanding of the game rapidly. When getting together a team for the Y7 Rugby festival, I asked him if he wanted to play and give it a go. He jumped at the opportunity. We lent him full kit and boots so he was able to play in the tournament.





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