



Volunteering Policy

Newry Rugby Club was established to promote social enjoyment and participation in the sport of Rugby Union in the greater Newry & Mourne area. Affiliated to the Ulster Branch of the Irish Rugby Football Union (IRFU), we seek to operate on a financial basis that both covers for our day to day expenditure and provides a surplus to meet future capital expenditure. Quite simply, Club success is very much dependant upon those who volunteer their time, knowledge, resources and energies and who are genuinely interested in sharing the game and its ideals with all. Perhaps regarded as not a major sport within this area, this policy demonstrates our commitment both to our volunteer programme and to our individual volunteers.

Having sought assistance from both the IRFU (Ulster Branch) and Volunteer Now we intend to implement 'best practices' from these 'support' organisations and will enshrine volunteering into our procedures. We wish to ensure fairness and consistency across all of our policies and procedures to encourage, recognise and reward our members, players and volunteers.

'Volunteering is the commitment of time and energy, for the benefit of society and the community, the environment, or individuals outside (or in addition to) one's immediate family. It is unpaid and undertaken freely and by choice'.

**Join In, Get Involved: Volunteering Strategy for Northern Ireland
March 2012**

To that end, no-one at Newry Rugby Club shall receive financial remuneration for their time or energies, be that coaches, Board members, players. That said, volunteers may choose to apply to the Committee for re-imburement of genuine out-of-pocket expenses undertaken to genuinely benefit the Club. Advance authority should be sought from the Board and Honorary Treasurer when expenditure is anticipated and applications should be made in writing to the Honorary Treasurer within three months of the expense having been made.

Core Values

Central to everything we do at Newry Rugby Club are the core values of RESPECT, INTEGRITY, INCLUSIVITY, FUN and EXCELLENCE ¹ and we shall aim to reflect these in our daily practices.

RESPECT and discipline are cornerstones of Rugby Union. We expect everyone involved in our club to show respect both on and off the pitch for team mates, opponents, coaches, match officials, club members, parents, sponsors, Board members, volunteers, club premises and all those involved in the rugby family.

¹ From Grassroots to International Success: One Island, One Passion, One Goal – Strategic Plan for Irish Rugby 2013-2017

We believe that **INTEGRITY** is the foundation of rugby. It is generated through honesty, transparency and fair play, all characteristics we aspire to see throughout every aspect of our club.

We at Newry Rugby Club celebrate **INCLUSIVITY**, camaraderie and teamwork which transcends gender ,cultural, racial, geographic, political and religious affiliations. We will promote the concept of “diversity” within our players, coaches, club members, parents, sponsors, Board members, volunteers and other stakeholders. We believe that we have much to learn and profit from diverse cultures and perspectives.

We are committed to developing and maintaining our players, coaches and other volunteers. We recognise that our club will be stronger by valuing individuals and groups with differing ideas, abilities and backgrounds free from prejudice, and by fostering a climate where equity and mutual respect are intrinsic.

We believe that rugby generates **FUN**, enjoyment, passion, pride and excitement. We will promote this belief to our players, coaches, club members, parents, sponsors, Board members and volunteers developing an emotional attachment and a sense of belonging to Newry Rugby Club.

Newry Rugby Club aspires to **EXCEL** as a Leader in sport in our community, which achieves success at all levels through being transparent, innovative and forward thinking. Newry Rugby Club prides itself in doing things well and in a professional manner. Newry Rugby Club aspires to enhance a sense of “belonging” to our Club and sport.

Recruitment and Selection

Everyone interested in becoming a volunteer will be contacted by the Volunteer Coordinator or a member of the Board. If there is an appropriate opportunity, prospective volunteers will be asked to complete a “Registration” form and meet with the Volunteer Coordinator or a member of the Board for an informal chat , following which a decision about the suitability of the volunteer/opportunity will be made. If successful, Newry Rugby Club will then take up the relevant checks for the role and arrange a start date for the volunteer.

Support

Newry Rugby Club recognises the importance in giving volunteers support structures and supervision to ensure that they are carrying out their role appropriately or to identify relevant training or even a more suitable role. We will appoint a volunteer mentor for every volunteer role. This person will offer support and guidance as needed, ensuring that volunteers are confident and capable of carrying out their role. This person may be the Volunteer Coordinator, a member of the Board or another volunteer who is experienced in carrying out the same role.

The Club will work in conjunction with IRFU (Ulster Branch) to deliver appropriate guidance, coaching and training to volunteers as identified by the club, volunteer, mentor or IRFU (Ulster Branch). This will take lots of different forms including, but not limited to, access to relevant policies and procedures, skills based workshops, online training courses, coaching, mentoring and shadowing.

Reward and Recognition

Newry Rugby Club’s Committee shall explore all available options to enhance the quality, quantity, experience, contribution, value and accessibility of volunteering within our Club. We will organise an annual “volunteers’ day” to thank our current volunteers and to encourage new people to get involved with our Club.

Young volunteers (aged 16-24) will be encouraged to participate in the GoldMark scheme. This is an accreditation programme delivered by IRFU (Ulster Branch) which recognises the contribution young volunteers can make to our Club.

In recognition of the value that volunteers bring to our Club, Newry Rugby Club will place at least half of its international ticket allocation for Ireland's home 6-Nations fixtures for sale to its volunteers and players. All volunteers shall be invited to apply for these tickets. In order for players to avail of this offer, they must have paid the appropriate annual subscription in full in advance of applying for these tickets. A dedicated panel comprising of Newry Rugby Club's President, Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Youth Convenor shall decide how these tickets will be allocated. A detailed list shall be prepared for members notice at our Club's Annual General Meeting as to how Newry Rugby Club's 6-Nations ticket allocation has been dispensed.

Problem Solving

Newry Rugby Club values all their volunteers and hope that they enjoy their volunteering experience. However if any volunteer is unhappy about any aspect of their volunteering they should speak to their volunteer mentor, the Volunteer Coordinator or a member of the Board. We hope that any issues or concerns can be dealt with informally through good support and communication however if there is a complaint made about or by a volunteer we will take this seriously and take appropriate measures to resolve it.

Playing Members

We really hope that our playing members will consider volunteering as it is important for the long term sustainability of our Club. However volunteering and playing are seen as separate in the context of this policy. Players in all categories are expected to complete a "Registration" form on an annual basis and pay their appropriate membership fees in full in a timely manner to ensure the Club complies with its various financial responsibilities. Playing members are also expected to always adopt the core values of RESPECT, INTEGRITY, INCLUSIVITY, FUN and EXCELLENCE whilst representing Newry Rugby Club.

The Club recognises further benefits in particularly offering 'incentives' to players in order to encourage them to volunteer. An example may be a discount on the following year's playing fees for helping out at a big club event or a higher discount for taking on an appropriate role and carrying it out well. It should apply as recognition of an appropriate contribution made and be something that all could apply for. It should not be seen as an implied contract. Given our Club's current financial situation, this is an aspiration at this stage but is something which we will consider in future.

Newry Rugby Club's Board shall work closely with IRFU (Ulster Branch), Sport NI, Volunteer Now (Northern Ireland) and other leading stake holders to renew this policy and implement any up-to-date best practices and policies in relation to volunteering.

Date adopted by Committee: _____

Date of review: _____

Signed by: _____

Chairperson/Honorary Secretary (delete as appropriate)

Signed by: _____

Role on Committee: _____