



THE NFWI AND ENGLAND RUGBY



**IMPACT
25**

theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN



WELCOME!

On behalf of the National Federation of Women's Institutes (NFWI) and Rugby Football Union (RFU), thank you for being a part in this exciting new collaboration between the WI and England Rugby, as part of the 'Rugby World Cup Impact '25' Programme.

WHAT IS IMPACT '25?

England Rugby is the national governing body for grassroots and elite rugby in England. Its purpose is to encourage rugby, and its values, to flourish across the nation.

England Rugby are collaborating with the NFWI to support the Community Engagement strand that sits within the Rugby World Cup Impact Programme. This particular strand of the programme focusses on encouraging women who have not previously visited or engaged with their local rugby club, to use the facility by offering new activities that captures the interest and inspires participation amongst local women. The aim of the programme is to help promote rugby clubs as safe and inclusive spaces for all women, and support clubs to strengthen their position as a community facility open to all.

The Rugby World Cup 2025 provides a once in a generation opportunity to accelerate the growth of the game for women and girls and achieve England Rugby's ambition to have 100,000 female players by 2027.

The Rugby World Cup Impact Programme, delivered by the RFU in partnership with the DCMS & Sport England will see significant investment across the country by providing not only substantial improvements in facilities, but the creation of greater opportunities for females than ever before across all levels of the game through its volunteer and coaching programmes.

WHY HAS THE NFWI PARTNERED WITH ENGLAND RUGBY?



The WI is proud to be an active partner in the Rugby World Cup Legacy Programme and supporter of the Women's Rugby World Cup 2025. With this tournament comes an exciting opportunity for the WI to be bold, relevant, inclusive, flexible and inspiring by bringing 'game changing' and long-term opportunities to women at all stages of life, around the country.

Members will have the opportunity to make meaningful impact within their communities and to be a catalyst for both women's sport and the WI.

- JERYL STONE, NFWI NATIONAL CHAIR 2024

FOUR REASONS WHY THIS PARTNERSHIP IS GREAT FOR WIs

1. Gain access to additional facilities and resources in their local community.
2. Share learning and social opportunities with like-minded women.
3. Challenge the stereotype of the WI in the community.
4. Attract new members.

The Women's Rugby World Cup 2025 presents a unique opportunity for the NFWI and England Rugby to promote our shared values and missions. This collaboration not only highlights the benefits of both organizations but also aims to engage women from diverse social, ethnic, and age backgrounds. Through this partnership we seek to deepen the understanding of team sports, physical activity and the challenges women face in sports. Additionally, it provides a platform to showcase positive examples for both women's sports and the WI.

INTRODUCTION TO A CLUB

The NFWI have a list of all Rugby Clubs that have opted into the Community Engagement Strand of Impact '25. If there is a Rugby Club in your area, we will be in touch to invite you to get involved. We facilitate email introductions between WI representatives and Rugby Clubs, sharing details on the club's community resources. Following the introduction, schedule a visit to explore opportunities for collaboration.



PLANNING YOUR FIRST VISIT TO THE CLUB

Rugby clubs boast their own distinct culture and ambiance, sometimes unfamiliar to community visitors. With good planning, you can ensure a positive experience and lay solid foundations for your collaboration.

GETTING THERE

Not all rugby clubs have prominent signage from the road. Familiarise yourself with the location beforehand; online street view maps can be invaluable. Additionally, some clubs may not have their own parking on site, so be prepared for potential parking charges or the need to find nearby parking.

WHAT TO WEAR

Dress warmly and wear suitable footwear; you will be invited for a tour of the facilities which may include outdoor spaces and pitches. Even on warm, dry days, grass around the pitches may be damp with morning dew.

SAFETY FIRST

Rugby can be a physical sport, and clubs prioritise safety for players and coaches. Follow any safety instructions provided by the club, and remain mindful of your surroundings throughout your visit, including uneven surfaces and steps.

KEEP AN OPEN MIND

Embrace new experiences and view your surroundings from the perspective of your fellow members. Consider how you could utilise the space as a WI and what benefits the club environment could bring to women from the local area. Rugby clubs encompass diverse communities, so expect to engage with individuals from various backgrounds.

THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

Darts contests, real ale tastings, spectating or officiating, clubs can offer a whole range of exciting new opportunities for your WI – look for future potential.

MANAGE EXPECTATIONS

Understand that many rugby clubs are undergoing development, and significant investments are planned to enhance facilities and surroundings. Avoid comparing club facilities to more established community venues you may be familiar with.

ASK QUESTIONS

Don't hesitate to seek clarification or ask questions during your visit. Club members will be eager to share their plans, ideas and experiences with you.

PROVIDE FEEDBACK

Let us know about your experience! Our Project Co-ordinator will regularly reach out for honest and constructive feedback to not only ensure we are meeting our partnership objectives, but most importantly, to ensure that your WI feels enthused, guided and adequately supported during the process.

HAVE FUN

Above all, remember to have fun and enjoy your time at the rugby club! Getting to know members of the club is a great way to meet new people, develop new friendships and potentially increase your WI membership!

Keep in mind, this visit presents a rare chance for your WI to connect with a different facet of your community, fostering fun, friendship, and personal growth. Embrace the experience and seize the opportunity to make lasting connections.

THINK INNOVATELY...

IDEAS FOR USE OF SPACE, RESOURCES, FACILITIES; IDEAS FOR COLLABORATION

Every WI and rugby club is unique, and our collective experience demonstrates that when members collaborate, they swiftly uncover opportunities to engage with and inspire women in their communities.

HERE ARE SOME IDEAS TO CONSIDER



SPACES FOR MEETINGS AND TRAINING

Utilise club facilities for formal gatherings and educational sessions.



SOCIAL AND GROUP ACTIVITIES

Incorporate social opportunities alongside group activities like fitness classes or craft workshops.



AUDIO-VISUAL TECHNOLOGY AND BROADBAND CAPACITY

Take advantage of club resources for presentations, workshops or online connectivity.



OUTDOOR SPACES

Explore outdoor areas for gardening or sports activities.



PARKING ACCESS

Provide convenient parking options for WI members attending local events.



SHARE IDEAS

Engage with your members to gauge their interests and understand what they would like to achieve from the collaboration. While accommodating everyone's ideas and preferences may not be feasible, involving members early on increases the likelihood of a positive response to your ideas.

WALKING RUGBY

As hubs for competitive sports, rugby clubs are well-positioned to promote active lifestyles among women. Some clubs already offer regular sessions for women to participate in various forms of the game. While not mandatory, we encourage WIs' and clubs to consider incorporating walking rugby sessions into their programmes.

VOLUNTEERING

Many rugby clubs rely on volunteers, which can present great opportunities for WI members to contribute. Women are underrepresented in roles such as match officials, coaches, and groundskeepers, and England Rugby offers additional support to clubs seeking to promote these opportunities to women.

Collaboration between WIs and rugby clubs can create a positive impact on both communities, fostering inclusivity and empowerment. Explore the possibilities and join us in building a more vibrant and diverse community!

GET ACTIVE (DIGITALLY!)

The WI Learning Hub will be supporting this partnership by offering WI members free access to a range of online learning opportunities. Not only will WIs be able to download courses and talks for viewing at WI meetings or events, being held at the rugby club, the Hub will hold a range of activities and resources to aid WIs taking part in this programme.

What is the WI Learning Hub? We all have a natural drive to explore, learn and grow; lifelong learning allows us to improve our knowledge, quality of life, it gives us a sense of worth, inspires us to achieve our personal goals, take on new challenges and discover new passions. As life changes, so does the way we learn and with the advancement in the technological landscape we must ensure our approach meets the needs of all women regardless of age, race, gender or ability.

The Hub offers a rich variety of learning experiences for WI members and non-members, bringing together a joined-up feel to education across the WI. By recognizing the continual changes that we all face, the Hub is based on 4 key principles and offers a learning journey that is accessible, flexible and inclusive; empowering all women and girls to reach their goals, regardless of their learning adventure...

- To offer a variety of accessible and inclusive learning experiences, reflective and relevant to women at all stages of life.
- To provide a flexible learning pathway that propels women into pursuing their passion, skills or academic goals, empowering women to increase their self-worth, confidence and reach their full potential.
- To be a bold leading force in making learning and development convenient, safe and attractive for women, expanding knowledge and understanding both within the WI and society.
- To grow a modern, non-judgmental and inspiring learning environment which captures interest and elevates knowledge, skills and confidence for all women.

COURSES ARE OFFERED IN A RANGE OF FORMATS

- Live courses mean that you'll be engaging live with the Host as the course is delivered.
- On-Demand courses are recorded live courses, available to access anytime up to 7 days after the live course, as well as courses which you can work through at your own pace.
- Study courses are broken up into six terms spread over two years; classes include lecture style content, full-group discussion, the use of break out rooms and small-group work. These courses follow the structure of either the GCSE History, GCSE English Literature or the A Level Politics syllabus but with no end exams, this is designed to be instructive and educational, but also fun and informal.





LET'S GET GOING

Once you've established an agreement with your partner rugby club on how to collaborate, we encourage you to kick-start your activities without delay! We advocate for a pragmatic approach, using existing processes wherever possible, to avoid excessive bureaucracy.

Ensure that your fellow members are informed about the planned activities and encourage those who may have visited the club to share their experiences. Promoting the activities or opportunities to other WIs in your area and letting your federation know what you are planning is an effective way to generate interest and spread awareness.

Work together with your club to promote your WI and the activities you have planned. Ask clubs to promote the activities amongst club members and share information about your WIs' – look for space for a noticeboard or tag the club in your WI social media posts. Use this opportunity to invite and welcome women from the broader community to participate in events or activities at the rugby club – this can help dispel misconceptions about the WI and potentially attract new members.

Capture moments of success with photos and spread the word! Utilise your WI's social media channels to showcase images and testimonials from women who have participated in events or activities at your partner rugby club. Share updates with local community newspapers, radio, and TV stations, ensuring to include the NFWI Project Co-ordinator in your communications.

LISTEN AND LEARN...

IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Maintain a record of the hosted activities at the club, including those women who attend, while adhering to your WI's relevant data handling policies. Regular data collection by the NFWI Project Co-ordinator will support RFU reports to DCMS and Sport England. Additionally, surveys will be conducted among women who have visited their local rugby club to gather insights into their perceptions and experiences.

Your feedback is incredibly important to us and plays a crucial role in the sustainability and success of our partnership. By completing our evaluation forms, surveys, and participating in workshops, you provide us with essential insights that directly impact our ability to secure funding, meet agreement criteria, and fulfill reporting requirements. This feedback not only helps us to improve our programs and services but also ensures we can demonstrate the value and effectiveness of our work to stakeholders. Your input is vital in ensuring that this partnership can continue to thrive and make a positive impact. We greatly appreciate your time and effort in sharing your experiences and perspectives with us.

Grant Funding: Rugby clubs have the opportunity to apply for an Activation Fund Grant of up to £500 from England Rugby. This grant supports ongoing initiatives aimed at encouraging more women to utilise club facilities through regular activities and events. Funding can be allocated for equipment (e.g., yoga mats), training for new activities, marketing initiatives targeting women, or operational costs associated with facility access. Talk to your club and see what ideas you can bring forward, working together will encourage joined-up thinking and help support the clubs grant application.



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HELPFUL LINKS

- NFWI Learning Hub Community Projects
learninghub.thewi.org.uk/category/community-projects
- Impact '25 WI and Rugby Connections Facebook Page
www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61561096935968
- Women's Rugby World Cup 2025
www.rugbyworldcup.com/2025
- Coronation Gardens
<https://mycoronationgarden.org/>
- NFWI PR Guide (Members Area)
mywi.thewi.org.uk/communications-and-pr/nfw-communications-guide.

WHO CAN I CONTACT?

- NFWI Project Co-ordinator
wirugby@nfw.org.uk
- RFU Community Engagement Team
communityengagement@rfu.com