



BEDWAS RFC

BEDWAS RUGBY (2011) LTD

Company No. 7889431

G J Arrowsmith
Director
(Rugby)

P G Browning
Director
(Sponsors)

R Davey
Director
(Facilities)

W J Price
Director
(Club Affairs)

W H Rees
Director
(Secretary)

Wednesday 7 October 2020

Dear Member,

I hope that you and your family are well after what has been an extraordinary and challenging year so far.

I wanted to write to you all to update you on what has been going on at Bedwas RFC over the last six months.

As you will remember, the beginning of 2020 was fairly eventful for our rugby club. The flooding wrought by Storm Dennis caused incredible damage to the club and left us with the big task of repairing the clubhouse and facilities. Thanks to the amazing response of you, our members, the local community and the support of the Welsh Rugby Union, we were able to get back on our feet.

You will remember that when we were last playing rugby at Bedwas RFC, we had a makeshift bar and much of the club was still in disrepair. Thanks to the incredible efforts of a small, dedicated group of volunteers over the summer months our clubhouse has been transformed. Our new-look lounge is nicer than ever and our function room has been given a much-needed facelift. On behalf of the club, I must thank all of those who have dedicated hours upon hours of their time to make our club something to be proud of.

Unfortunately, what should have been a story of triumph over adversity has been severely complicated by the global COVID-19 pandemic. The 2019/20 season was cancelled and there is little prospect of the resumption of rugby for the 2020/21 term. Along with social distancing restrictions and the understandable lack of customer confidence, we face a dire financial picture as a club. Rugby and events/functions are the lifeblood of our business and enable us to put money back into our facilities and playing sides. For now, we have been able to secure some cashflow thanks to the government-backed COVID-19 loan scheme, but the medium/long term of the business looks challenging to say the least. Rest assured, the club's leadership will be doing everything in its power to safeguard the sustainability of the club during these difficult times.

For now, we remain grateful for the continued support of our members. Whether it is renewing your membership, getting a friend to join, or simply joining us for a few socially distanced pints on the weekend, your support makes a massive difference.

Our memberships (£80 for adults; £50 for concessions) had been reformed for this new season to include a season ticket at our best-ever price. However, despite the return of rugby being a long way off, I do hope that (if you haven't already) you will renew your membership. Your club needs you more than ever right now and your membership will make a big difference.

You can purchase a membership online via this link: <http://www.bedwasrfc.co.uk/memberships>
Alternatively, you can ask behind the bar, or one of the club committee members will be happy to help.

Elsewhere in the club, I wanted to bring you up to date on a number of other changes.

After many years of service, our Secretary, David Cousins, has passed on the baton and stepped down from his role at the club. Dave spent decades as a leader of this club, both on and off the pitch and has steered the club through some of its most turbulent years. He helped to bring the club extraordinary success at the summit of Welsh club rugby and has worked tirelessly to help the club attain financial sustainability. Many of you will know Dave far better and far longer than I have, but I would like to put on record the heartfelt thanks of this club and of this community for everything that he has done to keep rugby thriving at the Bridgefield. I hope that once we get through the pandemic that we can give Dave the recognition he deserves in person at the clubhouse. Dave will continue to be a strong presence at the club and the Directors will continue to seek his counsel in times to come and we thank him for his ongoing support.

As a result, we now have a Board of five directors, namely: Gareth Arrowsmith (Director of Rugby); Russell Davey (Director of Facilities); Bill Price (Director of Club Affairs); Peter Browning (Director of Sponsorship) and myself as Secretary-Director. We believe that our Board of five presents the club with a good leadership team of diverse expertise and will allow us to take the club forward. Directors are up for re-election at the next Annual General Meeting so that judgement, as ever, is in the hands of our membership. As ever, the Board of Directors is supported through input from Executive and Operational committees.

On the subject of the AGM, we have taken the decision to postpone the 2020 AGM indefinitely. The Directors had explored holding a virtual AGM, or holding an AGM in limited numbers, socially distanced at the clubhouse.

However, we found both of these options to be unsatisfactory. For now, in accordance with our Articles of Association, the AGM will be postponed, but a copy of our End of Year Accounts may be accessed on request at the clubhouse. Once conditions allow, we will reschedule the AGM.

I hope that I will have some more positive news for you in the near future, but for now we are set for a difficult winter ahead. Nevertheless, your club remains open and we remain strongly committed to following all COVID-19 related regulations so that you can have confidence in the clubhouse as a safe environment. We have all of the Pro 14 and English Premiership action on our televisions and we will be showing the newly named 'Nations Cup' (Autumn Internationals in old money) next month. I hope you can join us for these.

Our opening times have varied since we came out of lockdown, but for now they will remain as opening from 7pm on Thursday, 5pm on Friday, 2pm on Saturday and 11am on Sunday. Any changes to these times will be communicated via our website and social media.

Our teams will all continue to train in accordance with the Welsh Rugby Union's return to rugby 'roadmap' and I know that our coaches across all sides are working hard to keep players motivated and engaged. When we do get the go-ahead, we will be ready to hit the pitch and enjoy continued success.

Lastly, I would like to thank all of our volunteers both on and off the pitch for all that they do for our club. I would also like to thank our staff for adapting to the 'new normal' so well.

It is my hope that once we are through this pandemic we will be on the verge of a promising new era for our club. We have the people and we have the passion – once this global event draws to a conclusion we can start forging a strategic and sustainable vision for rugby at Bedwas RFC.

Best Wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Will Rees', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Will Rees

Secretary

Bedwas RFC

