

Chairman's Report

I was appointed a trustee in June 2023 and took over the Chair of Trustees in August 2023. Initially my priority focused on the procedural structure of meetings to maximise time spent on the critical aspects of managing a volunteer organisation running a community rugby club. Individual reports pertaining to rugby, trading, finance etc were provided prior to meetings, employing time more effectively for discussion and planning the way ahead.

The club is very dependent on four major areas of income. Membership, Sponsorship, fundraising and SRU support. Should any of these three elements fall significantly it would have a severe impact on the capability of the club to provide rugby for all. In tandem costs have increased through higher utility and supplier prices, and Fife Council applying rates for the very first time. There is a drive to control and manage costs to minimise a rise in members subscriptions, at a time when incomes are under pressure.

During the year the potential for hiring the function suite has not reached it's potential. The café has also been underutilised. Finding and retaining staff to promote and run this continues to be a source of frustration. That the facility does not operate on regular hours, therefore finding someone able to do so is

The club since the inception of the new building at Duffus Park has operated with a very small group of members managing activities both on and off the field. It is their dedication and passion for the club which allows rugby to flourish. I commend them and recognise their commitment. Like many organisations the club is impacted by societal changes, with fewer people willing to take on administrative roles.

It is necessary for the club to engage with members, parents, supporters, and all associated parties to become involved, in a small way, to make a big difference. The club has been unable to operate with a committee structure since 2017, due to lack of volunteers as per previous comment.

On the rugby front, a new coaching team under the guidance of Stewart Lathangie, has established a core group of players, for the 1st XV and The Crusaders. For the 1st XV, the exciting style and brand of rugby is reflected in the large support at home and away matches. Crusaders competed well, having made a two league step up. Narrowly failing to stay in the higher division. The club winning their own 7s tournament was a highlight of the season.

The Harlequins started the year without a coach and a small pool of players. Throughout the season they achieved increased numbers, actively engaging with and promoting the women's game, in addition to recruiting a coach. Finishing third in the Caledonia Midlands/East Region League 1 was a very creditable outcome.

In the youth section the under 18s won the Caledonia Cup.

Overall numbers in the mini section remain strong, however specific ages groups have struggled for players. Recruitment of coaches at this level is low. It is a great sight when the pitches are packed with youngsters running everywhere. Our aim is to provide rugby for all, developing the skills and aptitude to enjoy the game. And it starts right here.

Rugby remains the focus of all activities, yet many challenges remain in operating and funding the future of the game.