

## RFL COMMUNITY BOARD SUMMARY – 8<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2025

Dear Community Game Colleagues,

### **Building the Future of Community Rugby League Together**

We're excited to share the latest progress from the Community Board meeting held on 8th October, where we discussed the ongoing development of the National Community Rugby League (NCRL) framework.

The NCRL brings together *Primary Rugby League, Youth & Junior, and Open Age* under one aligned approach – making sure our game is fun, safe, inclusive, and sustainable from the first tag to Open Age competitions.

Below is a quick update from each area, plus a reminder that FAQs are included at the end to help answer some of the questions that have been coming in from clubs and volunteers.

### **Primary Rugby League (U6–U11)**

Primary Rugby League (PRL) is all about fun, participation, and skill development for our youngest players. It operates *outside of formal competition governance* to keep things simple and enjoyable — no tables, no scores, just rugby and smiles!

- A National PRL Steering Group is being formed to oversee the delivery and support of clubs.
- Regional groups in Cumbria, Yorkshire, North West and London are helping with local fixtures, participation, and welfare.
- New PRL Guidelines are being developed covering coaching ratios, safety, inclusion, and match-day best practice.
- Coach CPD sessions will run from January–March 2026, with a focus on fun, skills, and festival-style activities.
- A full review of the Primary offer is planned for the 2027 season.

### **What's next:**

Finalising steering groups, confirming the coach development calendar, and preparing for delivery to start early in 2026.

**In short:** PRL will stay simple, safe, and fun — helping more children fall in love with rugby league.

### **Youth & Junior (U12–U18)**

Our Youth & Junior framework continues to take shape, creating a consistent and player-focused experience across all regions.

- New Regional Management Groups are being formed in the North West and Yorkshire to oversee competitions from U12–U18.
- Each group will work under shared Terms of Reference and competition rules, ensuring fairness and transparency.
- The Lions Development Programme (LDP) remains central – supporting player development, late developers, and coach education.
- We're also building a regionalised calendar that blends competitive games with development opportunities maximising the playing calendar.

### **What's next:**

Appointing regional management group members, finalising 2026 calendars and rules, aligning LDP delivery, and confirming coach and volunteer development sessions for early 2026.

**In short:** We're moving toward a consistent, supportive, and development-minded structure where everyone – players, coaches, and parents – can thrive.

### **Open Age (Men's Game)**

Exciting progress is also being made in shaping the future of Open Age men's competitions under the NCRL structure.

- Discussions with leagues and clubs, including the NCL and Southern Conference League, have been positive and constructive.
- We're moving toward a three-tiered structure to create a clear and sustainable pathway:
  - Tier 3: Two National Leagues
  - Tier 4: A number of Regional Conferences
  - Tier 5: Regional Leagues
- Management Groups will be established at each level to ensure strong governance and local voice.
- 2026 is the 40th anniversary of the NCL. The move towards the new NCRL structure will recognise the significance of that anniversary as we evolve.

### **What's next:**

Finalising structures and management groups, and planning coach, volunteer, and match official development ahead of the 2026 season.

**In short:** Open Age competitions will be player centric and sustainable – offering the right level of rugby for every player and every club.

### **Looking Ahead**

The NCRL is about working together to create a system that supports everyone involved in our great game – from young children picking up a ball for the first time, to adults enjoying competitive rugby in their local communities.

We're genuinely excited by the progress being made and grateful for the feedback and collaboration from clubs, leagues, and volunteers along the way.

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