

# **ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This is the second annual report of CF10 Arms Park Rugby Trust for the period up to 30 September 2018.

The organisation was formally established on 19 May 2016 as 'Cardiff Blues Rugby Supporters Society Limited' but trades under the name CF10. It is a legal entity established under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 as a Community Benefit Society (number 7342), sponsored by Supporters Direct.

Its purpose is to be the vehicle through which a healthy, balanced and constructive relationship between the Club and its associate sides, its supporters and the communities it serves is encouraged and developed. The business of the Society is to be conducted for the benefit of the community served by the Club and not for the profit of its members.

CF10 is a company limited by guarantee with each member holding one share for their period of membership. The Model Rules approved by Supporters Direct act as the organisation's constitution.

## **PREVIOUS AGMs**

CF10 held its first annual general meeting on 8 March 2017 and the second on 21 March 2018 (copies of the minutes are available on the website ( <https://cf10rugbytrust.org/> ).

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The following individuals have been elected as Directors:

- Chair: David Allen (for 3 years until March 2021)
- Secretary: Huw Jones (for 2 years until March 2019)
- Treasurer: Derek Redwood (for 3 years until March 2020)
- Board Members:
  - Andy Baker (resigned 8 December 2017)
  - Simon Baker (for 3 years until March 2020)
  - Sally Carter (for 3 years until March 2020)
  - Fred Davies (co-opted 12 April 2018)
  - Andrew Collins (for 3 years until March 2020)
  - Lynn Glaister (for 3 years until March 2020)

The directors are supplemented by a number of invited observers who also attend Board meetings and contribute to the organisation's various working groups. The directors believe that this model strengthens the Trust by involving and utilising a wide range of skills in its work. In additions the board is very aware that its skillset needs to be kept under continuous review and is very open to supplementing it on a regular basis.

## MISSION STATEMENT

CF10 is a democratic and representative forum open to all supporters of Cardiff rugby. The Board has established a mission statement for its work. This was developed in consultation with members and approved at the AGM last year:

- ensure that the voice of all supporters is clearly heard whenever major decisions are being made at Cardiff Arms Park.
- encourage the involvement of supporters, including younger supporters, in the activities of the trust.
- achieve the greatest possible supporter influence in the running and ownership of the club.
- provide a means of organising small shareholder involvement in order to maximise its impact.
- act as a critical friend to Cardiff Blues Ltd. and its associate sides, supporting innovation when appropriate and challenging views and opinions when these conflict with the views of members.
- ensure that the heritage of Cardiff rugby is accurately and carefully preserved and that the collection of heritage materials is a continuous and valued process from here on.
- ensure that the future developments at the Arms Park fully reflect the heritage of the club including the retention of 'Cardiff' in the professional team name and to resist any attempts to dilute its prominence.
- ensure that the future Arms Park remains first and foremost a rugby stadium and that the experience of attending rugby at Cardiff is something that all supporters value. (While appreciating the necessary commercial drivers).
- work with other supporter organisations for the betterment of Cardiff rugby.

## GOVERNANCE

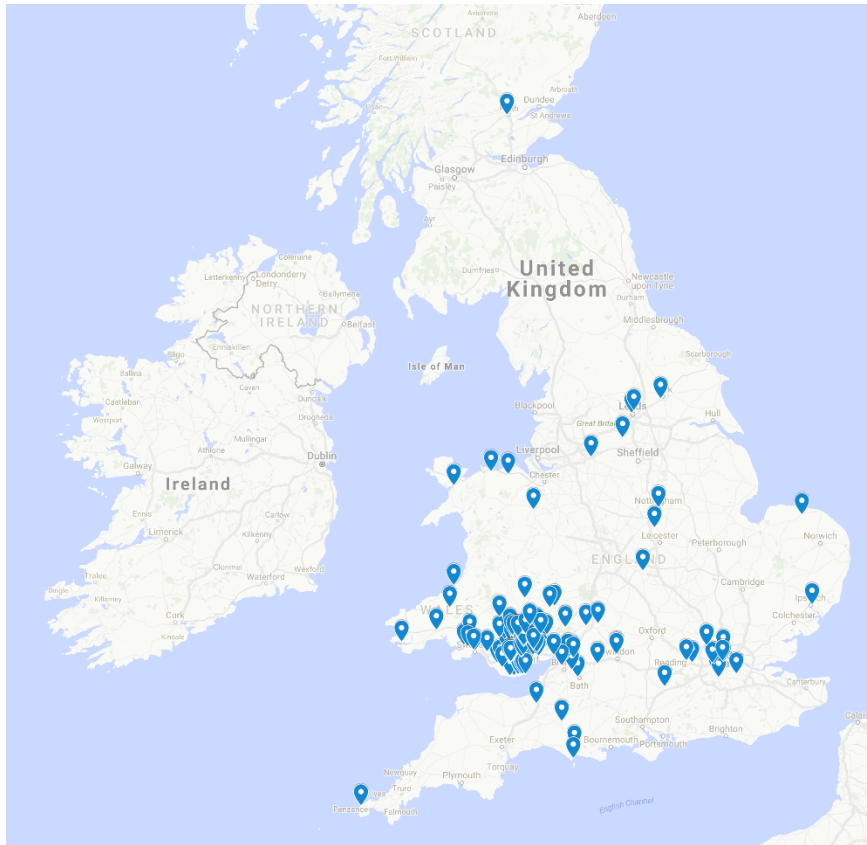
Complementing our Standing Orders the Board has established a Director's Handbook, both of which are available online (<https://cf10rugbytrust.org/documents>). We believe strongly in the principles of openness and transparency and routinely publish our Board meeting minutes. We also update our Governance Action Plan at every meeting.

## MEMBERSHIP

Up to 30 September 2018 we had 663 members. We have an ambition to recruit 1000 members - the bigger we are, the more influence we will have. We recognise that if every member signed up just one new member in the coming months, we'd easily reach our target (<https://cf10rugbytrust.org/join>). The '1000 members' Campaign will comprise a number of initiatives and the Board will monitor and review its progress during the next financial year.

Contrary to some beliefs, members don't have to live within the City walls to join (as the map below of our UK members shows). Internationally we have members as far afield as Austria and Australia, Spain and New Zealand.

- UK wide – Birmingham, Bristol, Cheltenham, Huddersfield, Ipswich, London, Loughborough, Penzance, Watford, Weymouth, Yeovil;
- Wales wide – Aberdare, Brecon, Bridgend, Blackwood, Caerphilly, Crickhowell, Hengoed, Llanelli, Merthyr Tydfil, Milford Haven, Newbridge, Newport, Old Colwyn, Pontypridd, Pontypool, Port Talbot, Swansea, Tonyrefail, Tredegar, St Asaph, St Clears to name but a few.



We plan to hold a further members' meeting on 17 October 2018. Local rugby historian Gwyn Prescott has agreed to give a talk on the early origins of Cardiff Football Club. Those present will have the opportunity to express their opinions on a variety of topics including the possibility of the WRU becoming the leaseholder at the Arms Park, Project Reset and regional A teams.

## **SHARES**

The Trust (and therefore each member) owns 700 shares in Cardiff Blues Ltd. More importantly, members who are shareholders have signed proxy forms to CF10 for over 35,000 shares, meaning that we can vote en bloc if we need to and have greater influence on the club in doing so. This means that we're the 10<sup>th</sup> largest shareholder in the company, which has really made people sit up and take note. However, there are around another 100,000 shares in the hands of existing members who have opted, to date, not to proxy.

## **CARDIFF ARMS PARK REDEVELOPMENT**

As always, there is a great deal going on behind the scenes in an effort to secure a redevelopment of CAP that benefits all key stakeholders. Though not invited to take part in discussions directly, CF10 has already played a significant role in bringing some key players together and we very much hope to be formally involved at the appropriate point and ensuring that supporter views are fully considered in this key process.

## **CF10 AND REGIONAL RESPONSIBILITY**

The Board produced a position statement in response to a suggestion that CF10 needs to adopt a more regional perspective:

1. A Supporters' Trust 'is a democratic, not-for-profit organisation of supporters, committed to strengthening the voice for supporters in the decision-making process at a club, and strengthening the links between the club and the community it serves'.
2. CF10 supports the umbrella organisation that is Cardiff Blues Ltd. and the associate sides for which CAP is their home ground. Cardiff RFC is owned by Cardiff Blues and therefore falls within this purview. This position has recently been ratified by our parent organisation, *Supporters Direct*.
3. In keeping with this definition, our membership is drawn from fans who support the professional side and who live across the entire region. This is prima facie evidence of the fact that the Trust is not seen as geographically exclusive by those who follow the team.
4. We operate in the absence of an agreed definition of what constitutes a 'region', but this is most commonly interpreted as having responsibility for the junior player development pathway within a specified geographical area of Wales. It is not defined by a geographical supporter pathway; indeed this would be impossible to achieve as affinity can neither be commanded nor controlled.
5. Further to points 1 and 2 above, we do not encompass Pontypridd, Merthyr or any other club as this would be constitutionally inappropriate; this should and must not be interpreted as us having any antagonism to these sides or indeed any of the 81 clubs within the region.
6. All clubs in the region have their own supporter infrastructures and it would be highly inappropriate, presumptuous and ill-received should we attempt to impose on these. Presumably CBSC would also have difficulty with such a mandate.
7. Aside from the improper nature of CF10 being asked to undertake a regional role, it is unreasonable to expect the Trust to take a lead in achieving attitude change at our Premiership clubs when Cardiff Blues Ltd. themselves have clearly struggled in this respect.
8. Whatever myths might be presented on social media and elsewhere, the Trust has evidenced its support for the regional duties and responsibilities of the professional team in its blogs.
9. Further to point 2 above, should Cardiff RFC become a separate entity from Cardiff Blues Ltd., the Trust's membership will need to determine which side it wishes to be affiliated with.
10. As a corollary of the above, Cardiff Rugby Museum has a clear focus on the history and heritage of rugby within the City. It is not a South/Wales Rugby Museum as this would clearly be beyond our remit and would be more appropriately served by our national governing body (which it clearly intends to do).
11. What would be appropriate would be for CF10 to offer its advice and experience on establishing supporter trusts and to share our museum expertise, infrastructure and methodologies with any interested clubs within the region and this is something that Cardiff

Blues Ltd. could offer to facilitate if it wished.

12. Finally, it has been suggested that the Trust should change its name to demonstrate a more inclusive approach. It has already done so once at the behest of Cardiff Blues (the original trading name being 'Cardiff Blues Rugby Trust') as it was felt that this could lead to confusion with the charitable trust which they themselves were establishing. To suggest a further change and move away from our current strong branding is therefore unreasonable and, in any case, unnecessary given the points above.

## **CARDIFF BLUES AND PROJECT RESET**

The proposed replacement for the Regional Services Agreement between the regions and the WRU continued its long gestation period. The new Professional Rugby Agreement (PRA) which will replace the RSA is part of a much larger restructuring of Welsh rugby. While this is potentially a great opportunity, it also raises some issues. ( <https://cf10rugbytrust.org/blog/project-reset-influence-or-control> ). It is unlikely that clarity will be achieved until the New Year.

CF10 has been expressing concern about the governance of Cardiff Blues since its establishment. At the start of our financial year BBC Wales' Scrum V programme tore into the running of the company. The club were invited to participate in the programme but rightly chose not to do so. They also chose not to respond through the media but to focus on 'the people that matter, the fans'. They held an open meeting for season ticket holders, Supporters Club members and CF10 members to explain their position. Fronted by CEO Richard Holland rather than the Chairman, they handled it well. He focused primarily on the future rather than the past and presented a number of important decisions which Mr Thomas had agreed beforehand. These included:

- They have no intention of handing the club back to the WRU (as previously proposed);
- A commitment to retaining the name 'Cardiff' and the club colours;
- The Board has agreed to set up a working group, chaired by Board member Martyn Ryan, to advise it on the development of a vision and strategy for the club (which they latter vetoed);
- The Board will also consider the appointment of two non-executive directors (NEDs) to assist it and improve governance;
- A second proposal, supported by Cardiff Athletic Club (CAC) Rugby Section, for a joint venture to redevelop CAP will be considered by the CAC Management Committee (CACMC). This was later rejected.

These commitments of themselves didn't solve all the problems but they were a massive start. It's clear the club is listening to supporters.

Following the above, in September we wrote formally to the Cardiff Blues Board asking that they consider appointing a Supporter Director as part of their planned governance changes and the appointment of NEDs; we also made the case in a detailed blog (<https://cf10rugbytrust.org/blog/window-opportunity> ). In our letter, we specifically stated that:

'It is the creation of a Supporter Director that is our objective per se, and we obviously have no right or expectation that we should fill such a position. Indeed, it is our view that to have any credibility the position would need to be advertised and filled by election through a transparent process'.

The Board responded positively, though not in a way that we had anticipated. It stated that 'The Cardiff Blues Board would like to encourage CF10 Trust, should it wish to do so, to nominate a candidate to formally apply (via the external recruitment company managing the process) for one of the Non-Executive Director positions'.

The CF10 Board considered this response and, though it was not the outcome that we sought, on balance decided to submit a nomination as suggested. The appointment process is ongoing at the time of writing.

## **CARDIFF RUGBY HERITAGE**

The heritage work is now formally constituted as a working party of Cardiff RFC and also has input from Cardiff Blues. Detailed plans and agreements were put in place to ensure the conservation of heritage materials from both teams and significant work was completed during the year, with support from Cardiff University students.

The most vulnerable artefacts were put into safe storage, in cooperation with the Welsh Rugby Union. The Trophy Room at CAP was re-stocked and the on-line museum was formally launched.

The online museum continues to add new items at regular interval. Soon to be added to our collection of 'virtual' objects will be Barry John's Cardiff and Wales caps, the programme from the 1905 Wales-All Blacks game, the medal presented to Rhys Gabe after that match, and a series of match programmes from the 1940s. CF10 Board member Sally Carter spoke at a workshop on rugby memorabilia hosted by the WRU at the Principality Stadium at the end of November.

From January next year we will hopefully start digitizing the rarest photographs from the CAC collection. Work on adding the Bleddyn Williams collection held at the Glamorgan Archives is also continuing and we'll put this on the site as soon as possible. Early in 2019, the team will receive some training in collecting oral histories, after which we plan to commence the programme of collecting former player's memories about Cardiff rugby and the Arms Park. We've also started writing a series of articles about items in the collection and have produced four to date.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

We have developed a really vibrant series of blogs (<https://cf10rugbytrust.org/blog>) on the strategic and political issues that currently face the club. These sit alongside match previews and reviews for every Cardiff Blues game. We are fortunate to have such a talented set of writers at our disposal. We are working hard on establishing a more systematic presence on social media and this is an on-going challenge.

## **PRESENCE AT CARDIFF ARMS PARK**

With the support of Cardiff Blues we now have a regular page in the match programme and have had a stand in the Pack Bar before matches.

## **WELSH LANGUAGE**

Trust member Sion Williams, who is also a Board Member and Treasurer of Menter Caerdydd, has recently attended CF10 meetings as an observer. Sion has made a number of positive suggestions as to how the Trust can begin to adopt a bilingual approach to our work and we will begin to adopt these over the coming months.

We've encouraged Cardiff Blues to do the same and had a positive discussion with Richard Holland to this end. The Club should reflect the community it serves. We live in an increasingly diverse society, and CF10 is challenging the club to modernise in this respect and to make itself a place where all fans, staff and players feel comfortable. Jointly increasing our use of the Welsh language is one part of this process.

## **RELATIONSHIP WITH CARDIFF BLUES SUPPORTERS CLUB**

A number of positive meetings have been held with our colleagues at CBSC to take forward the principles of the Heads of Agreement signed in March. We have established distinct areas of work so as not to overlap and also explored areas for joint working. CBSC are leading on the organisation of a joint CBSC/CF10 with Cardiff Blues coaches and players. Meanwhile CF10 is working on opening the Trophy Room up before some Cardiff Blues home games, hopefully featuring some memorabilia from both teams on the day in question; CBSC will liaise with the away supporters club to try and achieve this. A joint meeting with Cardiff Blues management is also planned for the New Year.

## **SUPPORTERS DIRECT**

The Trust continues to be members of the national body, Supporters Direct (SD). However, the proposed amalgamation of SD with the Football Supporters Federation into one body will mean that the exclusive focus of the new company will be on football. The proposal will mean that any non-football organisation will only have associate membership and be unable to vote and elect representatives. Given this disenfranchisement, CF10 will need to consider whether it takes up membership of the new organisation.

## **MEDIA**

We've developed relationships with a number of media contacts and this has proved really helpful at key times - though this may not always be apparent.

## **NETWORKING**

Much of our work also goes unseen; our networking especially. It happens without most people knowing about it, especially when something else is happening publically; our meetings with Cardiff Blues, WRU and politicians to give some examples. The Trust has always been clear, it will act as a critical friend to Cardiff Blues Ltd. We have met with management many times during the year and established an open and honest dialogue. After all, we have the same fundamental aim at the end of the day. Through series of blogs we have been both constructive and occasionally critical of decisions or sometimes the lack of them. We have adopted the same approach in relation to Cardiff Athletic Club (CAC) the freeholders of Cardiff Arms Park and the main partner in terms of agreeing a redevelopment proposal.

During the year, we engaged in a number of meetings with local politicians. Our stated aim is to keep rugby at the Arms Park and with the name of Cardiff being used by the teams playing out of there. We believe that it is imperative that local decision makers are made aware of our aims. This is best achieved by talking to as many key influencers as possible. We met with the Leader of Cardiff Council, the Council Cabinet Member for Sport, many local Councillors, all 4 of the City's MPs and one Assembly Member. We went to the meetings with the intention of pointing out the importance of the club to the economic and social life of Cardiff. We have been pleased with the response as

there is no doubt how much Cardiff rugby means to them; a number have subsequently joined the Trust.

Last year we spoke about the proposed working group that was being set up by Cardiff Blues Chief Executive, Richard Holland, to map out the future direction of Cardiff Blues. We were looking forward, with others, to make a significant contribution to this. Unfortunately, the proposal was later vetoed by the Board and the working group never got beyond the stage of an agreed terms of reference.

## LOOKING FORWARD

The Board has identified a number of key areas that we plan to focus on in forthcoming months and we will be welcoming members' thoughts on these at the AGM:

- Contributing to shaping the future vision for Cardiff Blues and Cardiff Arms Park - our biggest concern;
- Seeking to further increase our membership numbers and shareholding;
- Establishing broader engagement with members, especially our younger and older supporters, people with disabilities who want to attend CAP, the local and regional communities;
- Building resilience at board level.

If Cardiff rugby is to truly benefit the community it serves then it will require all stakeholders to have:

- The same ambition as us for the club;
- A vision for the development of Cardiff rugby as a precursor to the redevelopment of the ground
- Insights and a strategy to achieve the vision
- Clarity of roles; who does what best
- A commitment to work as one.

These are fundamental to any high performing organisation. We also have to assume that they are fundamental requirements of major funding partners such as the Welsh Rugby Union and sponsors. With the resources at our disposal as the capital region we significantly underperform at the moment. Putting those five points in place will be a priority of our influencing strategy.

## GETTING INVOLVED

The Board is really keen to involve more members in the working of the trust. Please don't be shy in putting your name forward as we are a welcoming group. In particular, we are looking for members with skills in the following areas:

- Social media
- Marketing
- Graphic design

You don't have to be brilliant at any of these, just enthusiastic to contribute.





We'll also be carrying out some research around the heritage project and looking for willing participants for this. If you think you can make a contribution to any of the above, please get in touch-we'd be delighted to hear from you!

If you have any issues that you'd like us to raise regarding Cardiff rugby, then feel free to get in touch here: <https://cf10rugbytrust.org/contact-us> - we're always keen to hear your views.