



RUGBY LEAGUE
WORLD CUP
ENGLAND + 2021

BLAZING A TRAIL

MAKING A POSITIVE SOCIAL IMPACT

THE STORY SO FAR

SUMMARY REPORT

JUNE 2022

RESEARCHED AND WRITTEN BY:



THE
SPORTS
CONSULTANCY

&

substance.



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that a link is interactive.





This independent summary report was researched and written by The Sports Consultancy and Substance for RLWC2021. This is a summary of a longer interim report, which is based on the research collected so far. A final report will be published after the tournament.

FOREWORD

As Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, it's my privilege to be involved in some of the most inspiring projects and events that take place across the country.

The year 2022 is packed with major sporting and cultural events - showcasing not only the country's ability to stage world class events, but also the nation's long tradition of extending a warm welcome to competing nations and their fans.

The Rugby League World Cup is the pinnacle of elite competition in rugby league, and I have no doubt that fans across the country are eagerly awaiting the moment the tournament officially kicks off at St James' Park in Newcastle on 15 October.

When major tournaments come to the UK, one word that gets regularly used is "legacy": what an event is able to leave behind after the final medals have been handed out and the tournament has come to a close. Major events often inspire more people to take up the sport - boosting participation and helping people get physically active.

As well as taking the unprecedented step of staging the men's, women's and wheelchair tournaments simultaneously for the first time ever across 21 world class venues, the Rugby League World Cup 2021 team have also been truly innovative in their approach to improving access for all. That is central to everything I do as Secretary of State, and it's something this tournament is doing so well - looking at the challenges faced

by the people that live in host towns and cities and how the event could make a positive impact on communities at a local level before the tournament has even begun.

We know that some of the towns and cities that will host Rugby League World Cup 2021 matches are amongst those hardest hit by the pandemic and increases in the cost of living, and the Government has backed the tournament with over £15 million investment to bring world-class sport to these communities.

The findings of this report highlight the positive impact that the Rugby League World Cup has already had. It is a shining example of a major sporting event that has made a tangible difference to a huge number of people.

The findings published in this report today are vindication of the decision taken to prioritise the Social Impact Programme from the very outset. It has been trailblazing in both its inception and delivery, laying the groundwork for future sporting events in this country and beyond to follow in its footsteps.



The Rt Hon. Nadine Dorries MP
Secretary of State for Digital,
Culture, Media and Sport



WELCOME



THIS IS REAL
IMPACT VIDEO

Seven years ago, when we first discussed bringing the Rugby League World Cup back to England, there were a number of key objectives that we considered as we looked ahead to what we wanted to achieve through hosting the tournament.

As a lifelong fan of the sport, thinking about that opening game in front of thousands of fans and a global TV audience was incredibly exciting and we knew that through the World Cup the sport would reach millions of people worldwide and make a significant impact on growing rugby league.

However, from the very earliest discussions, it was very clear in my mind that it had to be about much more than delivering 61 fixtures across three tournaments.

From its very inception, our Social Impact Programme has been a core focus, delivering more than £25.8 million of positive change in communities across the North of England.

Our trailblazing work has been central to the tournament's purpose and that change is happening right now, with the vast majority of the funding having been utilised before the tournament has even begun.

We have chosen to deliver this programme and in partnership with Sport England, DCMS, UK Sport, The National Lottery, Movember, Rugby League Cares, UNICEF UK, Community Integrated Care, The RFL and IRL we have adopted a selfless approach to making positive change. Bricks and mortar development projects have been significant but so have innovative programmes designed to create and support more inclusive and healthy environments, not just in rugby league environments, but in wider society and specifically in areas of social deprivation and disconnection.

We wanted our tournament to have a local focus and make a real impact in rugby league heartlands, many of which are in some of the hardest to reach communities, which was why our Social Impact Programme has been so crucial.

A fundamental obstacle to social mobility is a lack of local opportunities and the ability to have access to new experiences and build self-efficacy.

Our Social Impact Programme has been about creating those opportunities.

Opportunities for people to try the sport for the first time. Opportunities for girls and women along with disabled players to get involved in rugby league. Opportunities for our volunteers to try new experiences, grow their skills and play an important role during tournament time. Opportunities for young people to learn about new cultures and improve their mental fitness.

This interim report tells the story of a programme that has created change and delivered a positive impact, in spite of significant challenges, and delivering our ambition to leave long-lasting outcomes for diverse communities beyond the Rugby League World Cup tournament. It details the incredible power that sport has to make a difference.

I am very proud of all that we have accomplished so far, which has included incredible support from our board, funding partners and the RFL. I am incredibly excited to see what else we can still deliver before we hand the tournament back to the great sport of rugby league.



Jon Dutton
Rugby League World Cup 2021
Chief Executive

DELIVERING SOCIAL IMPACT: **AMBITION, INVESTMENT AND PEOPLE**

Rugby league has been a way of life for communities across the North of England since the famous inception of the sport at The George Hotel in Huddersfield on 29 August 1895 and Rugby League World Cup 2021 (RLWC2021) is set to be the biggest, best and most inclusive event in the long and celebrated history of the sport.

For many of the 18 host towns and cities, the tournament represents a rare opportunity to stage an international sporting event of this stature. However, perhaps more importantly, it is a rare opportunity to get into these towns and cities and make a really positive impact on people's lives, tackling inequalities in the communities that need it most. People, place and pride has been a key mantra for RLWC2021 and giving people a sense of pride in themselves and the place they call home has been a vital part of the Social Impact Programme.

Three components were needed to make this happen.

Ambition, investment and people.

RLWC's trailblazing approach towards delivering Social Impact has been the catalyst to turn an initial investment of £635,000 into an incredible total of £25.8 million which has

delivered a diverse range of activities and made a positive difference to the lives of thousands of people across the country.

This funding has enabled the tournament's Social Impact Programme to be hugely ambitious in its breadth and its importance within the RLWC2021 strategy. It is a central component of the tournament and highlights RLWC2021's focus and emphasis on making a difference.

Working in some of the most socially deprived areas of the country six programmes were developed to:

- Stimulate physical activity and health
- Improve mental fitness
- Develop people
- Create stronger communities
- Boost the economy
- Grow the game internationally





£25,851,697
TOTAL INVESTMENT

The six programmes were focused on:



Facilities - investing in communities, providing grants for community rugby league facility development, kit and equipment.



Volunteering - creating opportunities for new and existing volunteers to play a part in the tournament – providing roles at tournament time, in community rugby league and for those with care and support needs.



Mental Fitness – developing mental fitness awareness and becoming the first major sporting tournament to launch a mental fitness charter with the goal of educating young athletes, coaches, volunteers, competing teams, match officials and teammates to look after their own mental fitness and that of those around them.



Education – inspiring young people – delivering digital resources to schools and others and working with UNICEF UK to promote children’s rights.



Culture – uniting sport and art audiences – bringing a multi-disciplinary programme of events to some of our host towns and cities.



International Development Programme – sharing knowledge and growing the game internationally, hosting workshops and events in developing rugby league nations.

Quite simply this wouldn’t have been possible without the hard work of so many people. The dedication and commitment of volunteers within clubs and communities has played a huge role in bringing projects like CreatedBy to life. However, working in partnership with organisations like

Movember, Community Integrated Care and UNICEF UK has been crucial in enabling RLWC2021 to reach a far wider and diverse audience than otherwise would have been possible and thereby delivering maximum returns from the Social Impact Programme.



£22.7M

investment into CreatedBy, transforming rugby league facilities across the country



Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

£1.21M

investment to deliver a multi-disciplinary Cultural Festival



MOVEMBER

£800K

investment to deliver Movember's innovative 'Ahead of the Game' initiative to athletes and coaches

£25,851,697

TOTAL INVESTMENT SECURED AT THE TIME OF REPORT PUBLICATION THANKS TO HARD WORK OF VOLUNTEERS, COMMUNITIES AND PARTNERS

£635K

initial investment into the Social Impact Programme



RUGBY LEAGUE
WORLD CUP
ENGLAND 2021

£333K

investment into the inclusive and community volunteer programmes



£100K

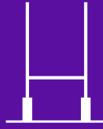
investment to support community health initiatives in rugby league facilities



£75,000

investment to grow rugby league globally through the International Development Programme





THE STORY SO FAR FACILITIES

Facilities investment has enabled more people to connect and take part in physical activity by transforming clubs into hubs of their communities.

LARGE GRANTS

For capital infrastructure projects.

£6,987,485

Invested in **31 projects.**



£11,417,675

of matched funding generated as a result of the Large Grants programme.

100%

of recipients who used the funding for a new / refurbished clubhouse anticipate the facility will now be **more accessible for disabled users.**

SMALL GRANTS

For kit and equipment.

£1,580,722

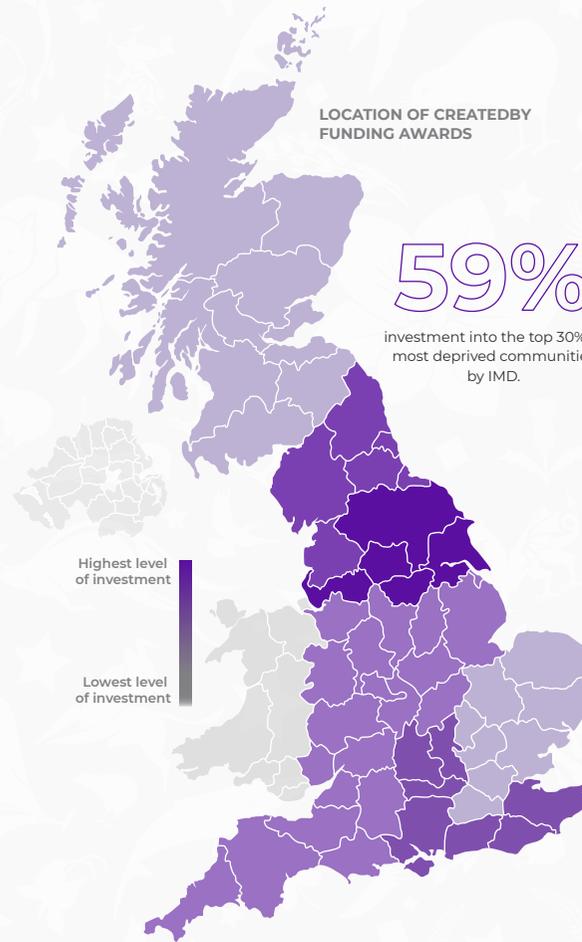
Invested in **195 projects.**



£1,507,042

of matched funding generated as a result of the Small Grants programme.

“Since the CreatedBy funding, we have seen our **junior membership increased by a third to 80 members**, and 200 children recently attended an Under 6 to Under 10s festival – a new record attendance.”



TYPES OF PROJECTS AWARDED CREATEDBY FUNDING

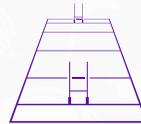
There has been a wide breadth of the types of projects that have been funded through the Large and Small Grant programme. Here are some examples of the types of projects, and the number that have been awarded so far:



38
CLUBHOUSES



22
CHANGING ROOMS



18
PITCHES



10
LAWNMOWERS



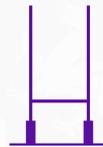
3
KITCHENS



102
KIT & EQUIPMENT



52
WHEELCHAIRS



23
SETS OF GOALPOSTS



4
GYMS



5
BOILERS

Survey responses and qualitative research with CreatedBy Large and Small Grant funding recipients has so far demonstrated the following:

- Investment, regardless of the amount, can go a long way in making a big difference
- Building environments that are welcoming and accessible creates spaces that the whole community can benefit from



**SOME OF OUR
LARGE GRANT STORIES**



**SOME OF OUR
SMALL GRANT STORIES**



MANCHESTER

HERE WE BELONG

WE'VE WON IT ALL

Community
Integrated
Care

SUPER LEAGUE

SIR ALEX
GUSON W



THE STORY SO FAR VOLUNTEERING

The Volunteer Programmes are engaging new people in volunteering; overcoming barriers to volunteering; and creating opportunities for volunteers to make a positive contribution to their community.

THE POWER SQUAD

Volunteers who will support the delivery of the tournament.

1,100

Power Squad volunteers have accepted roles for tournament time.

23%

came from the top 30% of most deprived communities by IMD.

74%

of the Power Squad volunteers said that the recruitment process had helped them to overcome barriers to volunteering in sport.



RLWC2021 VOLUNTEER
LAUNCH VIDEO

THE COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERING PROGRAMME

New volunteers who are helping community rugby league.

47

volunteers have so far taken up placements across **11 clubs and events**.

25%

came from the top 30% of most deprived communities by IMD.

89%

of Community Volunteering Programme volunteers were motivated by making a positive difference to their communities.



RLWC2021
INCLUSIVE VOLUNTEERS

THE INCLUSIVE VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME

Volunteers with mental, physical and learning disabilities engaged before, during and after the tournament.

361

volunteers with care and support needs have so far registered, **111 over target**.

350

sessions have been delivered and activities include arts and crafts, music, gardening and photography.

83%

of inclusive volunteers said the programme had helped them be more independent.



RLWC2021 COMMUNITY
GARDEN



RUGBY LEAGUE
WORLD CUP
ENGLAND - 2025

NOVEMBER
AHEAD OF THE GAME

TALK MORE
PLAY BETTER

Rugby League
Cares

AHEAD OF THE GAME

TALK MORE
PLAY BETTER



THE STORY SO FAR
MENTAL FITNESS

The Mental Fitness Programme aims to improve the mental fitness, literacy and resilience of young athletes, coaches and parents through a series of workshops delivered in partnership with Movember and Rugby League Cares.

HELP OUT A MATE WORKSHOP



213

WORKSHOPS
DELIVERED



95

DIFFERENT CLUBS
AND VENUES



3,755

YOUNG ATHLETES
ATTENDED



92%

of young athletes, having attended a Help Out a Mate workshop, agreed or strongly agreed that they:

“felt more confident in recognising the signs of mental health in myself and others.”

THE CHALLENGE WORKSHOP



38

WORKSHOPS
DELIVERED



19

DIFFERENT CLUBS
AND VENUES



667

YOUNG ATHLETES
ATTENDED



95%

of Challenge workshop attendees agreed or strongly agreed that:

“thinking positive thoughts can help me overcome challenges.”

KNOW YOUR PLAYERS WORKSHOP



20

WORKSHOPS
HELD ONLINE



383

COACHES



96%

of coaches, having attended a Know Your Players workshop, agreed or strongly agreed that they:

“felt better able to respond to the mental challenges of young athletes.”

Workshop participants came from some of the most deprived communities:

41% of young athletes surveyed came from the top 30% of most deprived communities by IMD, and 19% from the top 10% of most deprived communities by IMD.

35% of coaches came from the top 30% of most deprived communities by IMD



MENTAL FITNESS
CHARTER LAUNCH



WHAT IS AHEAD
OF THE GAME?

St. Stephen's C. of E. Primary School





THE STORY SO FAR EDUCATION

Educational resources have engaged a wide range of young people in rugby league and UNICEF's Rights Respecting Schools Award programme has positively influenced behaviour in schools.

THE EDUCATION HUB AND ITS RESOURCES

A collection of resources for schools to better engage young people in primary and secondary education, develop literacy and numeracy as well as promote participation in rugby league.

7,614

young people have been engaged using the resource packs.



Compared to a 'normal' school session, schools reported that young people were **65% more engaged**, **42% better behaved** and **39% more confident** during sessions using the resources.

Having used the resource pack, **50% of schools were more likely to attend a rugby league match**, and **59% were more likely to engage with their local club**.



EDUCATION
RESOURCES LAUNCH



SCHOOL
COMPETITION WINNER



CLASS OF RLWC2021

UNICEF'S RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOLS AWARD

Through the partnership with charity partner UNICEF UK, RLWC2021 has supported work to promote children's rights via the Rights Respecting Schools Award.

36,000

children in **98 schools** across the UK, have been reached by the Rights Respecting Schools Award programme, 50% of which have been funded by RLWC2021.



56% of participating schools have progressed through the Rights Respecting Schools Award – from bronze to silver, or silver to gold. The remaining 44% have demonstrated progress towards attaining their first award.

"...day-to-day self-esteem has increased as a result of our Rights Respecting work."





The International Development Programme has supported developing rugby league nations to connect to the global rugby league community, helping them to develop new skills and deliver the sport in a better way to more people.

13 nations have taken part in the International Development Programme so far.

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER WORKSHOPS

78

people have attended a workshop.



97%

of participants agreed that the knowledge transfer workshops had a positive impact on their ability to perform their role in rugby league.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

2,666

people have taken part in a community event.



"There has been a 20 – 25% increase in the nation's interest in rugby league as the profile of the sport has grown through increased media and marketing activities." (Brazilian Federation)

NETWORKING EVENTS

272

people have been to one of the networking events.



"Our Federation had never interacted with the British High Commission until the International Development Programme came to Jamaica. Thanks to new relationships built through the International Development Programme, we are now an International Rugby League affiliate member and more connected to the rugby league community." (Jamaica Federation)



RLWC2021 VISIT JAMAICA FOR THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME



WHAT IS TO COME?

THE SOCIAL IMPACT PROGRAMME WILL CONTINUE THROUGHOUT 2022:



CREATEDBY CAPITAL GRANTS PROGRAMME

Additional investment by
RLWC2021 through the Small
Grants Programme.

12 new / refurbished Large Grant
facility projects will be completed
and opened.



MENTAL FITNESS PROGRAMME

Movember Mental Fitness Match
on Saturday 5th November at
Wigan's DW Stadium.

Workshops for Power Squad
Volunteers and tournament
workforce.

Workshops for competing teams
and match officials.

THE POWER SQUAD

VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME

1,100 people will be trained to volunteer at the tournament.

250 Community Volunteers will be in roles in community rugby league.

250 people with support needs will volunteer at the tournament.



EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Education Resource and Activity Packs available to download.



CULTURE PROGRAMME

The Power of Performance, a touring outdoor dance-theatre production, will be unveiled at tournament time.

The Power of Poetry, a collaboration of poetry on a touring trailer, will be launched at tournament time.

The Power of Connecting, workshops, exhibitions and performances in libraries, will be delivered in partnership with Libraries Connected.



RUGBY LEAGUE
WORLD CUP
ENGLAND AND WALES 2013
FINAL
SATURDAY 30th NOVEMBER, 13

NEW ZEALAND v

NEW ZEALAND v AUSTRALIA



**THE FINAL CHAPTER OF THIS STORY WILL BE
PUBLISHED IN SPRING 2023, IN THE MONTHS
AFTER THE FINAL TROPHY HAS BEEN LIFTED**



&

substance.

Researched and written by The Sports
Consultancy and Substance
Designed by RLWC2021 Ltd
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EXPERIENCE THE
**POWER OF
TOGETHER**

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