



## Hi George

The RFU Council has today made the difficult decision to cancel the Adult Competitive Leagues (Level 3 and below for Men, Level 2 and below for Women) for the 2020/21 season. We believe that, even if a return to full contact rugby becomes possible, playing a meaningful competitive league season resulting in promotion and relegation is no longer feasible.

Given the Government's additional restrictions to curb the increase in Covid-19 cases in locations across the country, and growing concerns around travelling significant distances outside immediate localities to fulfil fixtures due to increased risk of transmission, the decision has been made now so we can provide clubs with some certainty for the remainder of the season.

The Championship remains on course to start in January 2021, with this league subject to Government's Elite Return to Play protocols.

### **What rugby can we play?**

We have been in daily contact with Government about moving towards some form of contact rugby that will enable as many matches to take place as possible.

Steve Grainger, Rugby Development Director, said; "We are very keen to see competitive rugby being played again and have been pushing extremely hard to accelerate a return to contact rugby. However, we also need to be realistic about the prevalence of Covid-19 cases in society and, given the introduction of further regional restrictions, we are working with Government to create alternative solutions.

"Progress has been made following productive conversations with DCMS and the Office of the Deputy Chief Medical Officer who have shown a willingness to work with the RFU to explore other available options."

Sports Minister Nigel Huddleston said: "I know that today's decision from the RFU will be disappointing to players and fans across the country however protecting people's health is absolutely paramount. The government is continuing to work closely with the RFU on ways in which we can bring the competitive, community game back in some form ahead of a return to full contact as soon as the public health situation allows."

Steve Grainger added: "While many people have looked forward to contact rugby returning, we are receiving more and more feedback from clubs and players that adaptations would be acceptable. There is an increasing appetite to play an adapted format of rugby rather than having no fixtures at all.

"We will do everything we can to enable the rugby community to return to contact matches as soon as we can, but our priority is to keep players, coaches, referees and volunteers safe. We will provide an update to our community clubs as soon as we can. We would like to once again thank everyone for their incredible efforts in implementing the necessary changes and for their continued support in keeping formats of rugby going during this challenging season."

For the current time we remain at Stage D on the **Return to Community Rugby Roadmap**.

**Teamwork    Respect    Enjoyment    Discipline    Sportsmanship**

