THE ROYAL AIR FORCE
RUGBY UNION

ANNUAL REPORT AND
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR
THE YEAR ENDED
31ST DECEMBER 2025

CHARITY REGISTRATION No: 1133022

COMPANY REGISTRATION No: 07024335

Independent Examiners Ltd
The Grain Store
Hills Barns
Appledram Lane South
Chichester
PO20 7EG

THE ROYAL AIR FORCE RUGBY UNION
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

CONTENTS

Page 3	Reference and Administrative Details of the Company.
Pages 4 to 13	Report of the Directors.
Page 14	Statement of Financial Activities.
Page 15	Balance Sheet.
Pages 16 to 21	Notes to the Financial Statements.
Page 22	Independent Examiners Report on the Accounts.

THE ROYAL AIR FORCE RUGBY UNION
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE COMPANY, ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2025

START OF FINANCIAL YEAR 1st January 2025

END OF FINANCIAL YEAR 31st December 2025

NAMES OF THE TRUSTEES WHO MANGE THE CHARITY

Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
AM Paul Godfrey	Chair of Trustees*		AOC 22 Group [*Revised role title from Q4 2025]
Wg Cdr Jonathan Latimer	Honorary Secretary		AGM
Gp Capt Andrew Shaw	Treasurer		AGM
Air Commodore Jamie Thompson	Head Community Rugby		AGM
AVM Paul Rose	Head Representative Rugby		AGM
Air Cdre Blythe Crawford	Head Support	1 Jan 2025 – 30 Jun 2025	AGM
AVM Mark Jackson			AGM
Wg Cdr Erica Ferguson	Governance		AGM
AVM Mark Chappell	Advisory role		AGM

RAFRU OPERATIONS BOARD (EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE)

Committee member name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year
AVM Paul Rose	Chair	
AVM Mark Jackson	Vice Chair	
	Head Representative Rugby	
Wg Cdr Matt Williams	Chief of Staff (COS)	
Air Commodore Jamie Thompson	Head Community Rugby	1 Jan 2025 – 31 Aug 2025
Gp Capt Jon Hough	Head Community Rugby	1 Sep 2025 – 31 Dec 2025
Air Commodore Blythe Crawford	Head Support	1 Jan 2025 – 30 Jun 2025
Air Commodore Alun Roberts	Head Engagement	1 Jan 2025 – 30 Jun 2025
	Head Support	1 Jul 2025 – 31 Dec 2025
Group Captain Andrew Shaw	Treasurer	
Wg Cdr Jonathan Latimer	Advisory role	
WO Tug Wilson	Director of Rugby and RFU Council Member	
Rick McConnell	NED	

COMPANY REGISTERED NUMBER 07024335

CHARITY REGISTERED NUMBER 1133022

DATE OF INCORPORATION 20th September 2009

REGISTERED OFFICE

Royal Air Force Rugby Union C/O Raf Central Fund Danesfield New Lock Lane Henley Road, Medmenham Buck SL7 2EY

BANKERS

Royal Bank of Scotland, Holt Military Banking, 200 Fowler Avenue, Fowler Business Park, Farnborough, Hampshire. GU14 7JP.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Independent Examiners Ltd, The Grain Store, Hills Barns, Appledram Lane South, Chichester, PO20 7EG

THE ROYAL AIR FORCE RUGBY UNION
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2025

The Trustees (who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act) present their report together with the financial statements of The Royal Air Force Rugby Union (the company) for the 12 months from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025. The Trustees confirm that the Report and financial statements of the company comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the company's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP), applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

Since the company qualifies as small under section 383, the strategic report required of medium and large companies under The Companies Act 2006 (Strategic Report and Director's Report) Regulations 2013 is not required.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

• CONSTITUTION

The Royal Air Force Rugby Union is a company limited by guarantee governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association dated 20 September 2009. It is registered with the Charity Commission, registered number 1133022.

• METHOD OF APPOINTMENT OR ELECTION OF TRUSTEES

The Directors of the Company are also Charity Trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the Company's Articles are known as members of the Board of Trustees. The Charity is currently required to appoint a minimum of 3 Trustees to the Board. It is stipulated that the nomination of a Trustee to the position of Chair must additionally be approved by the Royal Air Force Sports Federation. Furthermore, the Articles of Association specify that with effect from 3 years after the incorporation of the Company, 20 September 2012 in this case, then one third of the Trustees must retire from the office annually. A retiring trustee who remains qualified may be re-appointed by the other Trustees.

The Chair's appointment is endorsed by The Air Officer Commanding Number 22 (Training) Group.

• NOMINATION, APPOINTMENT AND TRAINING OF NEW TRUSTEES

In respect of the recruitment and training of new Trustees, Trustee candidates can be brought to the attention of the Board by any member, and new Board Trustees are elected by the existing Board. All trustees are required to undertake training on appointment in the form of several briefings by the Company Secretary of the Royal Air Force Rugby Union and are required to familiarise themselves with the Company's Memorandum and Articles of Association and the Charity Commission publication "The Essential Trustee". Separate to the Board of Trustees, transparent and broadly advertised process of recruitment is undertaken for all positions within the main sub-committee of the Charity (the Operations Board).

• ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE AND DECISION MAKING

The Charity is affiliated to the National Governing Body for the sport, the Rugby Football Union, and holds the status of Constituent Body. The Charity is therefore bound by the laws, regulations and protocols of the Independent Rugby Board and the Rugby Football Union, with all administration and governance of, and participation in Rugby Union activities adhering to National Governing Body guidelines. In addition, the charity is subject to the policies and protocols of the Ministry of Defence and the Royal Air Force in relation to accountancy procedures, funding and sponsorship of Service sport, and the participation of servicemen and women and Ministry of Defence Civil Servants in competitive sports activities.

OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

In managing the day-to-day operations of the Royal Air Force Rugby Union, the Board of Trustees sets the overall direction and objectives for the Charity's main sub-committee, the Operations Board, which is tasked with executing these objectives.

In September 2025, the Operations Board was reorganised, reducing from five to three pillars with Engagement, Events and Support merged into one, to leave:

- Representative — Head – AVM Mark Jackson
- Community — Head – Gp Capt Jon Hough
- Support — Head – Air Cdre Al Roberts

The Chair of Rugby, the three pillar Heads, NEDs, the Treasurer, the Honorary Secretary, the Chief of Staff and the Charity's Council Member to the Rugby Football Union, form the Royal Air Force Rugby Union Operations Board. This Board convenes monthly to oversee all aspects of Rugby Union within the Service.

THE OPERATIONS BOARD COMPRISES[2]:

- Chair of Rugby (Trustee)
- Head of Representative Rugby & Vice Chair of Rugby (Trustee)
- Head of Community Rugby
- Head of Support
- Treasurer (Trustee)
- Honorary Secretary (Trustee)
- Director of Rugby
- Rugby Football Union Council Member
- NEDs
- Chief of Staff

Each pillar Head is provided with specific objectives, priorities, and budget allocations for their activities. While a Trustee oversees and guides the principal sub-committee, the Operations Board, the functional sections within the Operations Board operate democratically, with minimal interference from the Board of Trustees.

The Royal Air Force Rugby Union Honorary Secretary plays a crucial role in coordinating administrative and governance requirements, ensuring compliance with regulations and guidance from the National Governing Body, and serving as the liaison between the Charity, RAF Sports and the Rugby Football Union.

SERIOUS INCIDENT REPORTING

No serious incidents occurred.

SUMMARY OF THE PURPOSES OF THE CHARITY AS SET OUT IN ITS GOVERNING DOCUMENT

The objects for which the Charity is established (the "Objects") are to promote the effectiveness of His Majesty's Armed Forces by increasing physical fitness, fostering the esprit de corps and raising morale of members of the Royal Air Force and other services in an inclusive and safe environment, through the promotion of participation and furthering its proper administration whilst enabling the provision of facilities for Royal Air Force Rugby Union.

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN ACTIVITIES IN RELATION TO THE ABOVE PURPOSES FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT

Following the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic RAFRU strategic focus has been clear:

> *to enhance competitiveness across all our Representative sides, professionalise the support we offer our players, and firmly re-establish our Community game.*

Our Representative Teams and our Community Pillar have delivered positive and promising performances, yet while we've celebrated notable successes, we must also acknowledge that not all results reflect the high level of ambition we set for ourselves.

The RAFRU Operations Board remains dedicated to crafting and executing a Future Strategy aimed at enhancing the sport throughout the Royal Air Force [1]. This strategy includes a continuous 5-year plan to elevate all aspects of RAFRU towards a more professional standard, ensuring comprehensive support for players, coaches, officials, and volunteers to sustain RAFRU's vibrancy, relevance, competitiveness, and sustainability. The objective is to challenge all RAFRU stakeholders on the field while diligently establishing the necessary resources and support across all operational areas off the field to achieve these goals.

This strategic direction aligns directly with RAFRU's charitable objectives, which focus on enhancing the efficiency of His Majesty's Armed Forces by promoting physical fitness, fostering team spirit, and boosting morale among Royal Air Force members and other services through the promotion and encouragement of rugby union football.

[1] Strategy update session held on 13 October 2025 from implementation in 2026.

The Trustees affirm their compliance with the duty outlined in section 17(5) of the 2011 Charities Act, ensuring due consideration of Charity Commission guidance on public benefit. As RAFRU transitions into the new calendar year of 2026, the trustees have intensified their efforts towards community rugby, aiming to provide a broad spectrum of RAF personnel with opportunities to engage in RAF Rugby Union. In the upcoming 26/27 Season plan, all financial requests for Community rugby have been fully funded, underscoring the organisation's commitment to inclusivity and participation across all levels of the RAF community.

RAFRU Strategy 2025–2029 - Forge, Connect, Succeed

- Grow the Game and Enhance Participation.
- Enhance Operational and Personal Effectiveness.
- Deliver Excellence and Competitive Success.
- Develop Our People, Infrastructure & Governance.
- Connect and Serve the Community.

Mission statement:

- As the Royal Air Force Rugby Union (RAFRU), our vision is to cultivate an exceptional rugby environment that welcomes everyone in the RAF family across all formats of the game. We want to win and win well. As a Charity and RFU Constituent Body (CB), we will ensure the growth of grassroots rugby in all its forms so that all RAF personnel, Regular and Reserve, can embrace the opportunities rugby presents.
- We are unapologetic of our ambition to win at every level while delivering excellence, growing participation and enhancing operational and personal effectiveness. We will also sustain our RFU CB status by playing sufficient competitive fixtures, fulfilling governance requirements, and maintaining strong relationships with the RFU, HQ Air Command and the Directorate of RAF Sport.

STATEMENT ON PUBLIC BENEFIT

The trustees have been mindful of the guidance issued by the Charities on public benefit.

POLICY ON GRANT MAKING

RAFRU does not allocate grants, funding is allocated to each pillar as required to conduct operating activities.

POLICY ON SOCIAL INVESTMENT

RAFRU does not receive funds that it expects to re-pay and nor does it allocate funds in this format.

CONTRIBUTION MADE BY VOLUNTEERS

The delivery of rugby across the Royal Air Force remains fundamentally dependent upon the commitment, professionalism and enthusiasm of volunteers. Through the Sports Associations, volunteers undertake a wide range of roles across governance, coaching, officiating, administration, player welfare and event delivery. RAF rugby competition at every level would simply not be possible without their contribution. The value of these individuals is recognised formally within Service policy, where such activity is acknowledged as a duty contribution, but it is their dedication and willingness to give their time that remains one of RAFRU's greatest strengths.

Referees

In 2025, the RAFRU Referee Society (RAFRURS) continued its growth and development, making a significant contribution to both community and representative rugby. Society members officiated extensively across the RAF rugby programme and provided referee support to representative training camps and fixtures.

With a current membership of 25 officials, RAFRURS remains a critical enabler of RAFRU activity. Fifteen members also support the UK Armed Forces Referees Society, primarily officiating at Inter-Service and UKAF fixtures, whilst a number of RAF officials continue to operate within the National League Match Official Team (NLMOT) structure.

Whilst notable progress has been achieved, there is still work to be done to reinforce the longevity of the RAFRURS. Recruitment, retention and the development of future officials remain priority areas, particularly as experienced members retire from Service. Maintaining a sustainable pipeline of qualified referees will be essential to supporting future RAF rugby activity.

Coaching

2025 saw several changes within the representative coaching structure, particularly in the Men's Senior XV and Women's Senior XV programmes. While these changes have created opportunities for emerging coaches to take on prestigious representative appointments, they have also highlighted the limited depth of coaching experience available across the Service game; a challenge shared throughout UKAF, Royal Navy and Army rugby.

To address this, the Rugby Development Officer continues to target key areas of coach development, balancing immediate operational requirements with a long-term strategy aimed at creating a sustainable and progressive coaching pathway. Developing greater coaching depth remains central to the future success and resilience of RAF rugby.

Community Recognition

The exceptional contribution of RAFRU volunteers continued to receive recognition at both Service and national levels during 2025.

Dave Smith, a longstanding servant of Service rugby and author of the RAF rugby community newsletter, was awarded the RAF Sport Volunteer of the Year Award in recognition of his sustained contribution to the game.

Peter Williamson received the RFU Volunteer of the Year Award for his outstanding work in developing the Girls Festival of Rugby and for his longstanding commitment to promoting and advancing women's rugby. These awards reflect the quality, dedication and impact of RAFRU volunteers across the wider rugby community.

Support Staff

The influence of RAFRU volunteers extends well beyond Service rugby. In early 2025, RAF Reserve FS Jamie Hillman was selected as Kit Manager and Logistics Coordinator for the British & Irish Lions Tour to Australia. Having previously held senior kit and logistics appointments within England Rugby, Jamie's selection represented a significant personal achievement and a powerful example of the professional expertise developed through Service and representative sport.

In addition, C/T Paul Fisher was appointed as England U20 Men's Kit Manager, Sgt Ollie James served as England U18 Men's Kit Manager, and Sgt Ryan Lee fulfilled the role of Scotland Women's Kit Manager during the 2025 Rugby World Cup. These appointments demonstrate the high regard in which RAF rugby personnel are held within the wider elite rugby environment.

International Defence Rugby Competition (IDRC)

A significant volunteer achievement during 2025 was the successful delivery of the International Defence Rugby Competition (IDRC), hosted by the United Kingdom as the nation holding the Rugby World Cup. The tournament brought together seven international military rugby teams, alongside a UK Barbarians team representing Vodafone, the principal tournament sponsor.

Held over a month-long period at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, the competition was delivered almost entirely through volunteer effort. Led by Air Commodore Al Roberts, the organising team drew upon the expertise, commitment and goodwill of volunteers from across the RAF, wider Service rugby community and supporting organisations.

Notably, the tournament received no direct public funding or Service support. Its success was built upon the relationships, credibility and commitment developed by the tournament leadership. Extensive sponsorship from Vodafone provided the financial foundation for the competition, while every aspect of planning and delivery, from team liaison and logistics to match operations, hospitality, transport and welfare, was executed through volunteer contributions.

The successful delivery of a tournament of this scale stands as a powerful example of what can be achieved through Service values, volunteer commitment and collective endeavour. The IDRC not only enhanced the international profile of military rugby but also demonstrated the exceptional organisational capability that exists across the RAF rugby community.

SUMMARY OF MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE CHARITY

RAFRU remains a dynamic organisation committed to delivering rugby across the Royal Air Force and ensuring that Service personnel can benefit from the physical, social and developmental advantages that the game provides. The Operations Board, under the oversight of the Trustees, measures progress against three strategic pillars: Representative Rugby, Community Rugby and Support.

The continued success of RAFRU is a direct reflection of the commitment of its volunteers, whose contribution enables rugby to thrive across the Service despite increased operational demands and ongoing pressures on personnel availability. Progress against all three pillars during 2025 demonstrates the positive impact of RAFRU's strategy and provides confidence that the organisation remains on a sustainable path.

Representative Rugby

Referees

The RAFRU Referee Society (RAFRURS) continued to strengthen its contribution to both Service and national rugby during 2025. Rebecca Piddlesden was selected for the National League Match Official Team (NLMOT) for the 2025/26 season, with Rebecca becoming only the sixth female referee to achieve this standard.

Further recognition followed with Flt Lt Rebecca Piddlesden selected as Assistant Referee for the 2026 Women's Six Nations fixture between Ireland and Italy, whilst Flt Lt Nic Corrigan was appointed as Fourth Official for England U19 versus Japan.

These appointments reinforce the growing reputation of RAFRU officials and demonstrate the quality of the referee development pathway.

Coaching

Developing coaching capability remains a strategic priority. During 2025, RAF Spitfires Sevens coaches undertook bespoke CPD focused on the demands of the modern sevens game, while discussions continued with GB Sevens to establish a longer-term development partnership.

Significant progress has also been made in expanding the coaching pipeline through:

- Delivery of three England Rugby Coaching Award courses at RAF Halton and RAF Leeming, resulting in 43 new qualifications, including four female coaches.
- Increased support for coaches undertaking the England Rugby Advanced Coaching Award.
- Delivery of specialist CPD covering scrummaging, lineout play and player development.
- Introduction of externally delivered masterclasses from coaches operating within the professional game.
- Expansion of partnerships with professional clubs, including placements within Gloucester Rugby's player development programme.
- Introduction of a formal RAFRU Coach Mentoring Programme to support representative coaches through structured development and mentoring.

Collectively, these initiatives are improving coaching depth whilst building a sustainable pathway for future generations of RAF coaches.

Representative Performance

Representative teams continued to perform strongly during the season, with particular encouragement drawn from the continued progress of the Men's Under-23 and Women's Senior XV programmes.

Across all representative teams, player release remained good despite sustained operational commitments and increasing Defence outputs, demonstrating continued support from Commanding Officers and chains of command.

Elite Athlete Programme

RAF rugby personnel continue to excel within the elite game. Sarah Bonar and Amy Cokayne maintained their international careers with Scotland and England respectively, whilst Lucy Nye continued to compete in Premiership Women's Rugby with Exeter Chiefs and Josh McNally represented Cardiff Rugby in the United Rugby Championship and European competition.

During the year, Cpl Ryan Crowley signed professionally with Leicester Tigers, further demonstrating the quality of talent emerging from the RAF game.

A particularly notable achievement came during the Women's Rugby World Cup, when Amy Cokayne overtook Rory Underwood to become the most capped international player in RAFRU history.

Community Rugby

Competition

Community rugby enjoyed a highly successful year, with 162 station fixtures completed, representing a growth of approximately 30% compared with 2024.

The season also featured four major tournaments, including:

- The Binbrook Bomb at RAF Northolt, involving almost 180 participants across contact and tag rugby formats.
- The Akrotiri Tens tournament, which attracted 13 teams, including four women's teams.

The introduction of a dedicated Community Rugby structure, delivered through a volunteer team of ten personnel, has established a sustainable model that aligns closely with wider RFU participation objectives.

Participation and Development

Increasing participation remains a central focus for RAFRU. Whilst Service demographics and operational demands continue to constrain player availability, a number of initiatives have been introduced to increase accessibility and playing opportunities.

The most significant development has been the introduction of T1 Rugby, World Rugby's non-contact format. T1 provides a highly inclusive version of the game that retains key elements of rugby union whilst significantly lowering barriers to participation.

Alongside this, RAFRU continues to explore expanded inter-station competition and alternative formats, including Tens rugby, to maximise opportunities for personnel to play.

Club Rugby

Station and club rugby remain fundamental to the health of the Service game. Whilst participation levels remain below pre-pandemic levels and some stations continue to face challenges fielding full teams, RAFRU has maintained a strong focus on supporting local rugby activity and increasing opportunities for meaningful competition.

Scotland and Northern Ireland

The RAF Scotland and Northern Ireland Rugby Union programme continued to flourish despite increased operational commitments. A representative squad of 30 players was assembled from across the United Kingdom and completed a successful training camp at Leuchars Barracks ahead of competition.

The continuing support provided by HQ 612 Auxiliary Squadron and the Regional Support Delivery Group remains instrumental to the success of the programme.

Girls Festival of Rugby

The Girls Festival of Rugby (GFoR) achieved another record-breaking year in 2025, attracting more than 1,500 participants from across the United Kingdom and retaining its status as the largest girls-only rugby festival in the world.

The event featured 80 teams across four age groups and continued to provide an important platform for female participation, player development and rugby advocacy. The inclusion of STEM activities, RAF engagement stands and RAF Women's players further strengthened the event's contribution to both sport and Defence engagement.

Outreach and Engagement

RAFRU continued to strengthen relationships within the wider rugby community through several high-profile engagement activities.

RAF Leeming hosted Northampton Saints, combining military leadership and decision-making training with physical training and community rugby delivery.

Similarly, RAF Odiham hosted England U20 coaching and management staff for a collaborative leadership development event. These initiatives continue to strengthen relationships between Defence and the professional game whilst promoting shared values of leadership, teamwork and resilience.

Support

Communication

Improving communication across a geographically dispersed organisation remains a priority. The continued development of RAFRU's social media presence has improved engagement and visibility across the community.

The migration of governance and management activity onto Microsoft Teams, supported by dedicated communication channels, has increased transparency and improved the flow of information across the organisation.

Finance

RAFRU has completed a comprehensive review of its financial planning, governance and assurance arrangements. These improvements have strengthened financial control, enhanced transparency and ensured that charitable resources remain aligned to RAFRU's strategic objectives.

Sponsorship

During 2025, RAFRU undertook a significant overhaul of its sponsorship model. A dedicated volunteer sponsorship team was established and integrated into the wider Support function, improving governance, strategy and stakeholder engagement.

Despite broader economic challenges affecting corporate sponsorship, RAFRU's sponsorship portfolio remains healthy and is expected to strengthen further during the coming year. A robust sponsorship position remains essential to building financial resilience and enabling future representative and overseas activity.

Medical Support

Medical provision across representative rugby remains effective. However, increased operational pressures have necessitated greater reliance on civilian medical providers. Funding has been incorporated into future financial planning to ensure continued high standards of player welfare.

Diversity and Inclusion

The Diversity and Inclusion framework continues to provide the Operations Board with valuable assurance that RAF rugby remains an inclusive and welcoming environment, accessible to all personnel regardless of background.

Kitting

Following the conclusion of the previous supply contract, RAFRU completed a competitive procurement process to identify the most effective long-term supplier. The new arrangement will improve value for money whilst ensuring players and volunteers are appropriately equipped.

Discipline

The Discipline Team continues to deliver a professional and effective service. RAFRU again performed strongly during the annual RFU audit, supported by a team whose members remain current through RFU CPD and active involvement within civilian rugby disciplinary frameworks.

This approach ensures RAFRU discipline processes remain aligned with national best practice and continue to uphold the values and standards expected of the Service.

ACHIEVEMENTS AGAINST OBJECTIVES SET

A sample of standout moments from 2025

Representative – Women's Rugby World Cup 2025

RAFRU was proudly represented at the 2025 Women's Rugby World Cup by Flt Lt Amy Cokayne (England) and Flt Lt Sarah Bonar (Scotland), further demonstrating the Union's ability to develop and support players competing at the highest level of the game.

A significant milestone was achieved by Sarah Bonar, who earned her 50th cap for Scotland during the pool stages of the tournament. Scotland's campaign concluded in the quarter-finals against England, where Amy and the Red Roses continued their march to World Cup success, ultimately lifting the trophy in front of a world-record crowd of more than 82,000 spectators at Twickenham. Amy continued to play a pivotal role throughout the tournament, maintaining her reputation as one of England's most prolific try-scorers.

Representative – Women's International Defence Rugby Competition (IDRC) 2025

The Women's IDRC was hosted in the United Kingdom for the first time in 2025, bringing together military rugby teams from across the world in a month-long celebration of international Service sport.

RAFRU was strongly represented throughout the competition, with 10 players selected for the UK Armed Forces squad and three RAFRU personnel serving within the Team Support Group.

The tournament itself was organised and delivered under the leadership of Air Cdre Al Roberts, drawing extensively upon volunteers from across the Service rugby community. Beyond the rugby played on the field, the competition demonstrated the power of sport to strengthen international military relationships and highlighted the adaptability, resilience and teamwork that underpin both Defence and representative rugby.

Representative – Hawks (U23s and Development Squad)

The RAF Hawks programme continues to provide the principal development pathway into the Senior Men's XV, supporting the long-term vision established by the Director of Rugby, WO Tug Wilson.

Throughout the season, the squad competed against a strong programme of opposition including Chinnor Academy, Coventry Academy, Cambridge University Freshers, Oxford University Freshers, Army U23s and Royal Navy U23s. The programme continues to play a vital role in accelerating the development of emerging players, many of whom balance representative commitments with the demands of Phase 2 training and operational Service life.

The integration of experienced over-23 players alongside younger talent has proved particularly effective, providing mentorship, leadership and playing experience to the next generation of RAF representative players.

The highlight of the season came during the Inter-Service campaign, where the RAF U23s firstly delivered an outstanding performance to defeat the reigning champions, the Royal Navy, 42–14 at Stourbridge RFC. The victory represented the largest winning margin against the Royal Navy in U23 Inter-Service history and reflected the continued progress being made within the development pathway. This victory was reinforced by a convincing victory over the British Army at Cardiff Arms Park and the Inter Service title going to the RAFRU U23 for the first time in 19 years.

Representative – Women's Development Squad

The RAFRU Women's Development Squad continued to be a key enabler of growth within the women's game during 2025.

Across three fixtures during the autumn programme, 47 new players were introduced to representative rugby, complemented by a further 14 new or inexperienced players who participated in a dedicated development camp. Collectively, these initiatives significantly strengthened the depth and sustainability of the Women's programme.

Fixtures against GB Fire, Aylesbury Ladies and British Police 2nd XV provided challenging and appropriate opposition, helping to build confidence, experience and understanding of the representative environment.

Particularly noteworthy was the number of players for whom selection represented not only their first appearance in an RAFRU shirt, but their first experience of playing rugby. This reflects both the opportunities provided by RAFRU and a challenge faced across Service rugby, where representative squads frequently contain players ranging from seasoned internationals to those in their first season of the sport. Managing this breadth of experience remains essential in delivering effective player development whilst maintaining the highest standards of welfare and player safety.

PERFORMANCE OF FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES AGAINST OBJECTIVES SET

Fundraising does not take place in RAFRU.

INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE AGAINST OBJECTIVES

No investment has been undertaken in 2025.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

In the past year, RAF Rugby Union (RAFRU) experienced significant expenditure, with an income of £247,523.19 primarily sourced from sponsorships and grants, and total expenditure amounting to £252,223.03 covering various operational expenses to sustain the playing teams and to best meet charitable objects. It reset its budgeting cycle to 1 Jul – 30 Jun to align with the rugby season and RFU best practice. In Season 25/26, funds were allocated based on each team's level of activity, with sponsorships aiding in areas such as kitting, medical equipment, coaching development, and support for the Inter-Services campaign. The need to re-kit the RAFRU, combined with costly kit suppliers, contributed to the elevated expenses this season but are now in hand with increased financial controls and a new kitting strategy aligned with that of the Navy and with a new supplier. In Dec 2025. The RAFRU secured a multi year sponsorship deal with Vodafone which will bring £120,000 pa for RAF rugby, keeping the RAFRU on a sound financial footing.

STATEMENT EXPLAINING THE POLICY FOR HOLDING RESERVES

The target minimum Operating Reserve Fund for the Royal Air Force Rugby Union has been **£30,000**, equal to what was previously **three** months of average operating costs. The trustees have reviewed this in light of inflation and increased expenditure and is on track to increase this figure to £60 000 at end of Season 25/26 and then build to £90 000 in Season 26/27; and £120 000 in Season 27/28. This will provide us with close to 6 months of our recalculated average monthly operating costs. The amount of the Operating Reserve Fund target minimum is calculated each year after approval of the Financial Plan and reported to the Managing Trustee.

Reserves as at 31 December 2025, as represented by unrestricted net current assets, were £215,364.

PRINCIPAL FUNDING SOURCES

The primary source of funding for RAF Rugby Union (RAFRU) is derived from sponsorship agreements with industry partners. These partnerships are highly advantageous as they provide funding for designated areas and cover the overall operational expenses of RAFRU. Financial support is also received from the Royal Air Force Central Fund, which is allocated towards Operating Costs, New Member Engagement, Overseas Visits, Training Camps, and Kit and Equipment. Additionally, players can secure personal funding based on their individual playing capabilities. Funding is also received from the Rugby Football Union to support development of grass roots rugby and channel towards the community game.

PRINCIPAL RISKS FACING THE CHARITY

Income generation to match operating costs is a risk being actively managed by the BoT; understanding of the risk and mitigation (further sponsorship and holding costs down) continues to evolve.

GOING CONCERN

After making appropriate enquiries, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the Accounting Policies.

STATEMENT OF DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES

The Charities Act and the Companies Act require the Board of Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial period which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity as at the end of the financial period and of the surplus or deficit of the charity. In preparing those financial statements the Board is required to :-

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.
- state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;

The trustees are also responsible for maintaining adequate accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which are sufficient to show and explain the charity's transactions and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006 and comply with regulations made under the Charities Act. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees are also responsible for the contents of the trustees' report, and the responsibility of the independent examiner in relation to the trustees' report is limited to examining the report and ensuring that, on the face of the report, there are no inconsistencies with the figures disclosed in the financial statements.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

I approve the attached statement of financial activities and balance sheet for the year ended 31st December 2025, and confirm that I have made available all information necessary for its preparation.

Approved by the Directors on 15 Sep 26

Signed on behalf of the Board of Directors by Andrew Shaw

Digitally signed by Andrew Shaw
Date: 2026.09.15 07:21:06 +01'00'

PRINT NAME: Andrew Shaw

THE ROYAL AIR FORCE RUGBY UNION
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2025

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	TOTAL 2025 £	TOTAL 2024 £
INCOME						
Donations & Legacies	**3(a)**	14,948	-	14,550	29,498	47,218
Charitable Activities	**3(b)**	16,920	-	-	16,920	9,391
Income from Trading Activities	**3(c)**	201,105	-	-	201,105	78,500
TOTAL INCOME		**232,973**	**-**	**14,550**	**247,523**	**135,109**
EXPENDITURE						
Charitable Activities	**4 (a)**	237,673	-	14,550	252,223	270,075
Raising Funds	**4(b)**	-	-	-	-	3,300
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		**237,673**	**-**	**14,550**	**252,223**	**273,375**
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		**(4,700)**	**-**	**-**	**(4,700)**	**(138,266)**
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-	-
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		**(4,700)**	**-**	**-**	**(4,700)**	**(138,266)**
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS:						
Total Funds Brought Forward		220,064	-	-	220,064	358,330
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		**215,364**	**-**	**-**	**215,364**	**220,064**

Movements on all reserves and all recognised gains and losses are shown above. All of the organisation's operations are classed as continuing.

The notes on pages 16 to 21 form part of these financial statements.

THE ROYAL AIR FORCE RUGBY UNION
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2025

Company registration number: 07024335

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	31-Dec-25 Total £	31-Dec-24 Total £
Fixed Assets						
Tangible assets	**2**	8,887	-	-	8,887	11,984
Current Assets						
Debtors and Prepayments	**10**	72,134	-	-	72,134	51,911
Cash at bank and in hand	**11**	141,305	-	-	141,305	170,018
Total Current Assets		**213,439**	**-**	**-**	**213,439**	**221,929**
Creditors: amounts falling due	**12**	6,962	-	-	6,962	13,849
NET ASSETS		**215,364**	**-**	**-**	**215,364**	**220,064**
FUNDS OF THE CHARITY						
General Funds		215,364	-	-	215,364	220,064
Designated Funds	**7**		-		-	-
Restricted Funds	**6**	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL FUNDS		**215,364**	**-**	**-**	**215,364**	**220,064**

DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES:

The charitable company's financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

The Directors consider that the company is entitled to exemption from the requirement to have an audit under the provisions of section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 ("the Act") and members have not required the company to obtain an audit for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Act. However, in accordance with section 145 of the Charities Act 2011, the accounts have been examined by an Independent Examiner whose report appears on page 22.

The Directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of financial statements.

Approved by the Directors on 14 Sep 26

Signed on behalf of the Board of Directors by.....

PRINT NAME: P Godfrey

THE ROYAL AIR FORCE RUGBY UNION
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2025

Basis of preparation

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Advantage has been taken of Section 396(5) of The Companies Act 2006 to allow the format of the financial statements to be adapted to reflect the special nature of the charity's operation and in order to comply with the requirements of the SORP.

The company has taken advantage of the exemption in Financial Reporting Standard No 1 from the requirement to produce a cash flow statement.

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

Changes in Accounting Policies and Previous Accounts

There have been no changes to the accounting policies (variation rules and methods of accounting) since last year, and no changes to the previous accounts.

Preparation of accounts on a going concern basis

Preparation of the accounts is on a going concern basis. The Trustees are of the view that the level of reserves will support the charity going forward.

Changes to accounting estimates

No changes to accounting estimates have occurred in the reporting period

Material prior period errors

No material prior year errors have been identified in the reporting period

The particular accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Income

Recognition of Income

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when:

- the charity becomes entitled to the resources;
- it is more likely than not that the charity will receive the resources; and
- the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Offsetting

There has been no offsetting of assets and liabilities, or income and expenses, unless required or permitted by the FRS 102 SORP or FRS 102.

Grants and Donations

Grants and Donations are only included in the SOFA when the general income recognition criteria are met (5.10 to 5.12 FRS 102 SORP).

Contractual Income and Performance Related Grants

This is only included in the SOFA once the charity has provided the related goods or services or met the performance related conditions.

Gifts in Kind

Gifts in kind are accounted for at a reasonable estimate of their value to the charity or the amount actually realised. Gifts in kind for sale or distribution are included in the accounts as gifts only when sold or distributed by the charity. Gifts in kind for use by the charity are included in the SOFA as incoming resources when receivable.

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

Income (continued)

Volunteer Help
The value of any voluntary help received is not included in the accounts but is described in the Directors' annual report.

Investment Income
This is included in the accounts when receivable.

Expenditure and Liabilities
Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

Grants with performance conditions
Where the charity gives a grant with conditions for its payment being a specific level of service or output to be provided, such grants are only recognised in the SOFA once the recipient of the grant has provided the specified service or output.

Grants payable without performance conditions
These are only recognised in the accounts when a commitment has been made and there are no conditions to be met relating to a grant which remain in control of the charity.

Deferred income
No material item of deferred income has been included in the accounts.

Creditors
The charity has creditors which are measured at settlement amounts less any trade discounts.

Debtors
Debtors (including trade debtors and loans receivable) are measured on initial recognition at settlement amount after any trade discounts or amount advanced by the charity. Subsequently, they are measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be received.

Fixed Assets
These are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year, and cost at least £5,000 (note prior to 2024 the capitalisation limit was £1,000. The Trustees decided that the fixed asset policy should be changed to improve financial reporting by focusing on capitalising more material assets) They are valued at cost or, if gifted, at the value to the charity on receipt.

Depreciation Expense
Depreciation is calculated at a rate to write off the cost of tangible fixed assets on a straight line basis over their estimated useful lives. The rates applied per annum are as follows:

Equipment	10-20% depending on type of equipment capitalised (until 31-Dec-23 the rate was 20% - 33%)
Motor Vehicle	33%

2. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

(all unrestricted)		Equipment £	Motor Vehicle £	**Total £**
Cost	01-Jan-25	26,037	3,000	29,037
Additions		-	-	-
Disposals		-	-	-
Cost at	31-Dec-25	26,037	3,000	29,037
Depreciation	01-Jan-25	14,053	3,000	17,053
Charge		3,097	-	3,097
Disposals		-	-	-
Depreciation at	31-Dec-25	17,150	3,000	20,150
Net Book Value	31-Dec-25	**8,887**	**-**	**8,887**
Net Book Value	31-Dec-24	11,984	-	11,984

3. INCOME

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total 2025 £**	**Total 2024 £**
(a) Donations and Legacies					
Donations	1,170	-	-	1,170	4,070
Nuffield Trust Grant	-	-	-	-	6,180
Other Grants	9,528	-	-	9,528	21,726
Public Funding	4,250	-	-	4,250	-
RAF Central Fund Grant	-	-	14,550	14,550	15,242
	14,948	**-**	**14,550**	**29,498**	**47,218**
(b) Charitable Activities					
Personal Contributions/Membership	3,840	-	-	3,840	8,736
Inter Services	13,000	-	-	13,000	555
Miscellaneous	80	-	-	80	100
	16,920	**-**	**-**	**16,920**	**9,391**
(c) Income from Trading Activities					
Corporate Sponsorship	189,950	-	-	189,950	78,500
Sale of Clothing and Equipment	11,155	-	-	11,155	-
	201,105	**-**	**-**	**201,105**	**78,500**

4. EXPENDITURE

(a) Charitable Activities

		Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total 2025 £**	**Total 2024 £**
Depreciation		3,097	-	-	3,097	1,037
Inter Services		39,967	-	-	39,967	63,268
Kit & Equipment		122,425	-	8,348	130,773	43,082
Other Operating Costs *	Note 5	56,682	-	6,202	62,884	105,349
Overseas Visits		3,046	-	-	3,046	42,404
Sponsorship Expense		12,456	-	-	12,456	14,935
		237,673	**-**	**14,550**	**252,223**	**270,075**

5. DETAILS OF MATERIAL EXPENDITURE

Within the expenditure items above the following items are within operating costs:

	2025 £	2024 £
Accommodation	17,414	20,991
Affiliation, Entrance and Membership Fees	1,942	1,536
Annual Dinner	-	9,918
Coaching	2,229	8,621
First Aid	14,220	10,534
Hire Costs	6,276	11,520
Independent Examiners Fees	1,380	1,380
Insurance	709	2,638
IT Equipment and Software	5,179	11,554
Laundry	184	414
Medals and Engraving	1,806	2,764
Miscellaneous Costs incl Bank Charges	577	4,785
Nutrition	4,010	2,704
Officials	-	242
Printing, Postage and Stationery	8	78
Professional Fees	436	286
Publishing Costs	401	661
Refreshments , Entertainment and Subsistence	5,170	17,575
Repairs and Maintenance	-	865
Subscriptions	1,512	-
Ticket Costs Marketing	8,710	6,500
Training Camps and Courses	870	7,746
Travel and Vehicle Costs	3,172	5,186
VAT Partial Exemption Adjustment	(13,321)	(23,150)
	62,884	**105,349**

(b) Raising Funds

	Unrestricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total 2025 £**	**Total 2024 £**
Cost of Sales	-	-	-	-	3,300
	-	**-**	**-**	**-**	**3,300**

6. RESTRICTED FUNDS

CURRENT YEAR

	Balance 01-Jan-25 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance 31-Dec-25 £
RAF Central Fund	-	14,550	(14,550)	-	-
	-	**14,550**	**(14,550)**	**-**	**-**

PREVIOUS YEAR

	Balance 01-Jan-24 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Balance 31-Dec-24 £
RAF Central Fund	-	15,242	(15,242)	-	-
Nuffield Trust	-	6,180	(6,180)	-	-
	-	**21,422**	**(21,422)**	**-**	**-**

Transfers **into** funds represent annual internal grants from unrestricted general funds or unrestricted designated funds. Transfers **out of** funds represents the replenishment of historic restricted expenditure over the past few years that has been funded by the unrestricted Main Association funds, instead of being shown against each individual disciplines restricted cost centre.

Purpose of Funds:
RAF Central Fund - to be used for operating costs, kit and equipment, overseas visits and development activities.

7. DESIGNATED FUNDS

The Royal Air Force Rugby Union did not hold any designated funds during 2025 or 2024.

8. STAFF COSTS AND NUMBERS

There are no staff paid by The Royal Air Force Rugby Union Association (2024: Nil).

The Royal Air Force donate the services of a staff member, as the Rugby Development Officer, in support of the RFU funding received as a Constituent Body.

9. DIRECTORS AND OTHER RELATED PARTIES

Apart from the reimbursement of charitable expenditure paid personally (which totalled £401.26), no other payments were made to directors or any persons connected with them during this financial period. No material transaction took place between the organisation and a trustee or any person connected with them.

10. DEBTORS AND PREPAYMENTS

	Unrestricted Fund £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Funds £	**Total 31-Dec-25 £**	**Total 31-Dec-24 £**
Accrued income	-	-	-	-	800
Debtors	11,661	-	-	11,661	9,069
Prepayments	10,438	-	-	10,438	29,152
VAT Debtor	-	-	-	-	12,890
	22,099	**-**	**-**	**22,099**	**51,911**

11. CASH AT BANK AND IN HAND

	Unrestricted Fund £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Fund £	**Total 31-Dec-25 £**	**Total 31-Dec-24 £**
Cash at Bank	141,305	-	-	141,305	170,018
Total Cash at bank and in hand	**141,305**	**-**	**-**	**141,305**	**170,018**

12. CREDITORS AND ACCRUALS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	Unrestricted Fund £	Designated Funds £	Restricted Fund £	**Total 31-Dec-25 £**	**Total 31-Dec-24 £**
Trade Creditors	17		-	17	1,947
Accruals	1,572		-	1,572	11,902
	6,962	**-**	**-**	**6,962**	**13,849**

13. DEFERRED INCOME

No income was deferred in 2025 or 2024.

14. RISK ASSESSMENT

The directors actively review the major risks which the charity faces on a regular basis and believe that maintaining the free reserves stated, combined with the annual review of the controls over key financial systems carried out on an annual basis will provide sufficient resources in the event of adverse conditions. The directors have also examined other operational and business risks which they face and confirm that they have established systems to mitigate the significant risks.

15. RESERVES POLICY

The directors have considered the level of reserves they wish to retain, appropriate to the charity's needs. This is based on the charity's size and the level of financial commitments held. The directors aim to ensure the charity will be able to continue to fulfil its charitable objectives even if there is a temporary shortfall in income or unexpected expenditure. The directors will endeavour not to set aside funds unnecessarily.

16. PUBLIC BENEFIT

The charity acknowledges its requirement to demonstrate clearly that it must have charitable purposes or 'aims' that are for the public benefit. Details of how the charity has achieved this are provided in the Trustees report. The Trustees confirm that they have paid due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit before deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

THE ROYAL AIR FORCE RUGBY UNION
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT ON THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2025

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 December 2025.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND BASIS OF REPORT

As the charity's trustees of the Company (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law), you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ("the 2006 Act").

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited for this year under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the 2011 Act"). In carrying out my examination, I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S STATEMENT

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006; or
- the accounts do not accord with such records; or
- the accounts do not comply with relevant accounting requirements under section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
- the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS102).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



J Irvinesmith FCIE

16 September 2026

Independent Examiners Ltd
The Grain Store
Hills Barns
Appledram Lane South
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PO20 7EG