

## Chairman's Report

AGM – 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2019

Generally, the Chair's report looks back over the last 12 months, but I want to take a moment to reflect on when my son first joined back in 2015. As part of the handful of the new Under 7's team the club had, what was then the Under 12's, the Open Age and the new Under 7's team entering into the 2015 season. This year we start the season with our Tots, 7's, 8's, 9's, 11's, 13's, 16's and Open Age. A testament to the hard work that has been put in by club volunteers over the years.

2018 wasn't without it's challenges. For a good bulk of the year the management committee wasn't running at full strength; our Secretary's day job zapped a lot of her spare time and let's face it; running a rugby club doesn't pay the bills or keep a roof over anyone's head like the day job does. As Jo officially steps down from the Secretary role, I personally want to thank her for her involvement in the club over the last 3 years or so and making Garforth Tigers what it is today.

We also suffered the extremes of the English weather from being snowed off at the beginning of the season to having to put over 10 ton of soil onto the pitches on Glebelands to ensure that matches could be safely played at our Gala due to the ridiculously hot weather over the summer. We pulled together as a club and made it happen though and again, a massive thank you to those that grab a spade, a wheelbarrow or watched on from the side-lines to make sure we did it right.

Our Under 7's and Under 12's teams were formed last year; bringing more knowledge and experience to the club from the respective volunteers as well as continuing to create opportunities for kids to play rugby. Thank you to everyone involved in making that happen.

We successfully delivered our first after school club on tag rugby at Green Lane which has opened up more opportunities for the club to be involved in the local schools. Thanks to Ian, Sarah & Lee for giving up their time to deliver those. And a huge thanks also to Ian Watkinson and Martin Store for giving up their time to deliver assemblies & taster sessions at some of our local primary schools.

Lots of time an effort has been pumped into the club during 2018 to make it what it is today. A sincere thank you to everybody who has played their part and especially to those that have supported me and got me through the year.

This coming year will be the clubs 39<sup>th</sup> year and is already set to be a promising one. The Open Age is set to reform, our Under 7's squad is already looking healthy on numbers and we have the Leeds Rhinos Foundation delivering their annual Sky Try session this coming Friday (25<sup>th</sup>) at Garforth Academy.

Next Tuesday (29<sup>th</sup>) see's us host the Garforth schools tag tournament for Y5 & Y6 kids – thanks to Ian Watkinson for leading on this. Another great opportunity for us to showcase the club to our local schools.

We've already got our Girl's U12's taster session booked in for Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> May, being delivered by Leeds Rhinos Women and England international player Lois Forsell and colleagues from Leeds Rhinos Foundation and Leeds Rhinos Women's team. With the support of our existing coaching

team and volunteers; we're confident that we can make this a success.

We've got sessions planned with the development team at the Rhinos Foundation, to ensure that we continue to support and develop our coaches, potentially introduce the adults into the tag rugby game and get support for the management committee in ensuring that we maximise every opportunity to successfully grow the club.

That said, we have 17 different kit sponsors join us this season; so we must be doing something right. Whether you've taken sponsorship directly yourselves or been involved in getting sponsorship through family or friends; a huge thank you.

I'm massively proud of what our kids do when out on the field, be it training or playing in a match. And that happens because of people like us giving up our time to volunteer and make our grass roots club work. Thank you!. That isn't going to change if we're to continue to develop our players, allowing them to do **their** best on match days. The only way of making that work is for the workload to be shared amongst more people. It makes more sense for 10 people to do an hours work each, rather than 1 person do 10 hours work. For that to happen though, 9 other people need to step forward. If you're not already doing so, please come and help those who already are!

From myself and the current management committee; thank you for a great 2018. Let's make 2019 the year to remember!

