



# **Conduct of Members Policy Handbook**

**April 2017**

This document supersedes the NRFC 'Policy Handbook' (August 2010)



# Newbridge Rugby Football Club

## *Conduct of Members - Policy Handbook*

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### Introduction

#### **Strategy for Newbridge Rugby Football Club**

*To build a family, friendly, club atmosphere, one of support, respect, and pride in what we represent and to instil that ethos in all members, particularly the men and women who take to the pitch*

The reputation of Newbridge Rugby Football Club (NRFC) is a valuable asset. We pay a heavy price if we do not keep the trust and confidence of our members, our sponsors, the rugby community, and the public generally. This handbook sets out the general principles that govern the way in which NRFC conducts its affairs.

We, the Officers of NRFC, are the leaders of our Club, but the members are the custodians of our Club's reputation. Your personal behaviour and the example you set moulds our culture. It is the responsibility of the Officers, Coaches, and Senior Players to lead by example in order to set the standards for our members.

Together with our fellow Officers, we carry ultimate responsibility for the governance of NRFC. We rely on you to enable us to discharge this responsibility.

**Mick McCoy**  
**Chairman**

**Fiona Nugent**  
**Hon. Secretary**



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### **Code of Conduct**

#### **Introduction**

It is important that all members of NRFC foster and display appropriate behaviour. We are a family orientation Club and any behaviour considered to be to the detriment of the Club, whilst wearing Club colours, or at a function of the Club will not be tolerated. Remember that skill development, fun and enjoyment are the most important parts of the game. Respect your jersey, respect your Club and respect yourself.

#### **General Behaviour**

Members are encouraged to:

- Recognise and appreciate the efforts made by coaches, members, match officials and administrators in providing the opportunity for players to play the game and enjoy the rugby environment;
- Understand the values of loyalty and commitment to the club and team mates;
- Recognise that every player has a right to expect their involvement in rugby to be safe and free from any type of abuse;
- Understand that if an individual or group of players feel they are not being treated in a manner that is acceptable, then they have a right to tell a committee member at the rugby club;
- Ensure any injury pre-training/match is reported immediately to the coach;
- Be attentive at all training and coaching sessions;
- Recognise good play by all players on their team and by the opponents;
- Verbal or physical abuse of team mates, opponents or match officials is not acceptable. The captain is to converse with the referee when disputes arise, not the player;
- Treat all players, as they would like to be treated. Do not interfere with, bully or take advantage of any player;
- Set a good example by recognising fair play and applauding the good performances of all;
- Be a sportsman and win with dignity and respect;
- Follow and accept the rugby rules of the game do not question the referee's decision, discuss it later with the coach, if required;
- Swearing will not be tolerated in public forums, for example, where speeches are being made or where children are around. Generally, apply the rule "A time and a place for everything";
- Do not bring the club or the game of rugby into disrepute or disciplinary action may follow.



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### **Training**

Players are reminded that they play because they want to do so. Therefore, all players are expected to attend training on the arranged nights at the arranged times, where reasonably practicable. If a player cannot attend a training session, the Coach or designated contact should be informed on the Saturday before the session or as early as reasonably possible.

When players attend the sessions, they should be on the pitch ready to train at 7.00pm at the latest, unless otherwise arranged. During training sessions, all players are expected to carry out the instructions of the coaching team with enthusiasm and respect. If a query arises or clarity is required, an appropriate time should be chosen.

### **Match Day**

Players are expected to arrive at the match location in the appropriate dress and at the arranged time, unless otherwise arranged. Players may be expected to assist the Captain and Team Manager in ensuring all flags and post protectors are put out before and brought back in after all home games.

Players are expected to leave the facilities, both home and away, in a reasonable condition after a match. It is the player's responsibility to act in a mature manner and not cause any damage to changing rooms, showers, bars, or functions rooms.

### **Fundraising Events**

Players are expected to support our sponsors at social events held throughout the year. Parents of youths & minis are encouraged to support fundraising events also. Our sponsors are the people who get us on the field each year by helping to keep registration fees low and purchasing our playing equipment. If a player is unable to attend a function, it is expected that he will attend the next function.



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### **Compliance with Legal & Regulatory Obligations**

#### **Introduction**

This Compliance Policy Statement sets high-level principles to which NRFC is committed in all our dealing. Club Officers have ultimate responsibility for implementing compliance policy.

Every member has a personal responsibility to act in a manner that does not breach the law or our regulatory obligations in relation to matters over which he/she has reasonable control and must promptly report any breach of our obligations to the Club Secretary so that remedial action can be taken. Members must always protect the reputation of the Club.

#### **Risk Characteristics**

Failure to have adequate compliance controls would expose NRFC to legal and regulatory sanctions, damage to our reputation, material financial loss, including the costs of rectification and breach of our ethical values, as set out in this Handbook.

#### **Policy Statement**

It is the policy of the Club in all businesses under our management control to:

- Comply in full with all applicable legal and regulatory obligations, including statutory codes of conduct and voluntary codes to which we formally subscribe;
- Provide leadership (“tone from the top”) from the Executive Committee and Coaches to embed a culture of compliance throughout the Club;
- Communicate the applicable compliance standards (including relevant policies and procedures) to members and coaches and provide appropriate and periodic training to assist them to meet these standards;
- Ensure that all compliance risks are managed under an integrated framework, recognising a defined scope covering specialist areas, such as rugby regulations and by-laws or health and safety, is allocated to an appropriate specialist function;
- Take appropriate action in dealing with any breaches of this policy;
- Provide the appropriate channels to enable members to speak up where they have a suspicion of wrongdoing and protect those who speak up in good faith against any adverse consequences resulting from their actions.



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### **Environment Policy**

The Club aims to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This principle of sustainable development demands that we accept responsibility for the direct impact of our own operations on the environment.

At a minimum, we will:

- Accept a responsibility for contributing to the protection of the environment and strive to ensure that our actions will not detract from the long-term sustainability of environmental resources;
- Assess and improve the impact of our actions on the environment in our daily operations and strategic planning;
- Design energy efficiency into new services, buildings and manage energy efficiency across all operations, where possible;
- Strive to reduce the consumption of materials and energy and use renewable or recyclable materials, where possible;
- Minimise harmful emissions;
- Consult with our suppliers to improve the environmental impact of goods and services provided to the Club.



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### **Health & Safety Policy**

#### **Introduction / Scope**

Under applicable laws, NRFC has legal obligations in respect of the health, safety, and welfare of their members and of visitors to the Club grounds.

#### **Risk Characteristics**

The risks which can arise from failure to implement this policy and observe the operating procedures include injury to members and visitors, damage to buildings and other assets and the risk of prosecution or other legal claims with associated costs.

#### **Policy Statement**

NRFC must comply with its obligations under applicable legislation, whether national or EU and to ensure:

- As far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of their members and visitors to their premises, as required by applicable law;
- That hazards under their control are identified and addressed;
- That, based on the identification of the hazards, a written safety statement is prepared and brought to the attention of members, in accordance with law;
- That adequate instruction, training, information, and supervision is given to members to honour the obligations under relevant legislation;
- That data in relation to accidents / incidents is collected, analysed and retained as appropriate (see Accident & Incident Reporting Policy);
- That first aid kits and other safety equipment are available to all coaches together with suitable training and instruction;
- That members are reminded of their obligations under applicable law and of their obligation to take reasonable care to protect their own safety, health, and welfare and that of any other persons who may be affected by the member's acts or omissions.





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### **Information Security Policy**

#### **Introduction and Scope**

Information resources are of vital importance to the Club and our members. Information Security means protecting the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information in all its forms (electronic, paper and other) and of the systems, networks and processes which manage that information.

The policy applies to:

- All Officers and agents of the Club and relevant joint ventures or strategic alliances.
- Officers and agents of other organisations who directly or indirectly have access to our information assets.
- Officers and agents of other organisations (including business partners, contractors, or other third parties) who directly or indirectly have access to our information assets or provide services to the Club.

#### **Risk Characteristics**

Exploitation of security weaknesses could enable fraud, cybercrime, diversion or loss of funds, or disclosure of confidential information. Failure to maintain best practice security could increase the likelihood of errors occurring; critical business systems not being available; or corruption of the data upon which the Club relies. Any of these risks could have a severe impact on our operating capability and our reputation as well as loss of public confidence.

Failure to comply with this policy and its supporting standards will lead to the Club operating with unnecessary risks. It may leave the Club and its employees open to legal action and employees liable to disciplinary action.

#### **Policy Statement**

It is the policy of the Club to use the ISO 27000 standards series as the foundation for our approach to Information Security Standards.

#### ***Confidentiality***

The confidentiality of member and Club information must be maintained always:

- Information access is restricted to those with specified authority to view the information.
- Such access will only be granted according to business needs as necessary for a job role.

#### ***Integrity***

- Information must be complete, accurate and timely in order to support sound business decisions and activities.

#### ***Responsibilities***

- Information, process, and system owners have a responsibility to ensure that appropriate security measures are implemented and maintained. Responsibility for implementing security measures may be delegated, though accountability must remain with the nominated owner of the asset.



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- The Executive Committee must develop and support procedures to effect good information security practices and ensure compliance in the area for which they are responsible. They must ensure that all agents falling under the scope of this policy are aware of and contractually bound by its provisions
- All members must be aware of and fully comply with this policy and the standards supporting it. They must notify the Club Secretary of any vulnerability, breach or suspected breach of information security or loss of data / records.
- Agents involved in systems development, service implementation and service delivery have responsibility in ensuring that the IT assets of the Club are secure.



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### **Privacy & Data Protection Policy**

#### **Introduction and Scope**

NRFC has an ethical responsibility to maintain the highest standards of confidentiality in the safeguarding of information about its members. NRFC also have a legal responsibility under Data Protection legislation to ensure that personal information, relating to both members held by NRFC adheres to the principles of Data Protection in how it is collected, used, and maintained. This document sets out the Club's Privacy & Data Protection policy, compliance with which is the responsibility of every member in the organisation.

#### **Risk Characteristics**

- Reputational risk (member confidentiality)
- Risk of sanction (including sanction from regulators, fines, power to erase databases, and possible criminal proceedings against both the Club and an individual member)
- Risk of litigation (breach of confidentiality, Data Protection Legislation etc.)

#### **Policy Statement**

NRFC's Privacy & Data Protection Policy is to ensure the highest standards of confidentiality in the safeguarding of information about our members and any other dealings we may have with them. This policy aims to protect an individual's right to freedom from unnecessary intrusion into their personal privacy, while at the same time, complying with our legal and regulatory obligations.

#### **Collection, Use and Maintenance of Personal Information**

NRFC will not collect any personal information without the individual's consent. Fair obtainment lies at the heart of Data Protection and concerns only collecting information with the knowledge of the individual. We will ensure that the individual is aware that personal information is being collected about them, and the use(s) to which it will be put prior to collecting it, so that the individual can decide whether or not to furnish that information to us.

We will only use the information collected for the purposes we have specified in our registrations and on our forms. In order to provide an appropriate service, we will endeavour to ensure that the information we hold on individuals is accurate and up to date. Individuals can assist us in this regard by informing us when their circumstances change. In addition, we will ensure that personal information will not be held for longer than is necessary.

On the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data any information provided to us will be treated with the highest standards of security and confidentiality in accordance with the terms of the relevant Data Protection and Privacy Legislation.

We will obtain explicit consent from individuals in order to process any sensitive information. Certain categories of data are considered to be "sensitive personal data", these categories are racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious beliefs, trade union membership, physical or mental health conditions, and sexual life.



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### **Access to information**

When requested in writing and, on receipt of the appropriate fee where applicable, we will provide individuals with a copy of their personal information held by us in both electronic and manual format. We will respond to such requests within the applicable time frame, as required for under Data Protection legislation.

### **3rd Parties**

Where we use 3rd parties to process information on our behalf we will put in place a contract containing the relevant Data Protection clauses to ensure that the 3rd party only processes personal data in accordance with our instructions and that the same standards of security are adhered to. In addition, we may be obliged to disclose personal information relating to individuals to 3rd parties to comply with legal requirements, as well as to protect and defend the rights of property of NRFC, our licensors and/or our other members.

All Officers are required to:

- Comply with the requirements of Data Protection and Privacy legislation;
- Ensure that the relevant procedures are in place, accessible, up-to-date and are adhered to;
- Ensure that all Officers are aware of their personal responsibilities in relation to Data Protection;
- Liaise with the Data Protection Regulators on NRFC's behalf in relation to all queries and complaints.



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### **Policy on Media Relations**

#### **Introduction and Scope**

It is important to state at the outset that the purpose of this policy is not to curtail appropriate pro-active media relations activity at individual business and local levels. This activity is an extremely important part of the overall Club PR programme. However, while initiatives are both desirable and encouraged, it is important to ensure that they complement rather than contradict each other and that they contribute to a coherent and well co-ordinated overall Club PR programme. Consequently, some general rules governing contact with the media are necessary and that is what this policy covers.

A co-ordinated Club media relations policy is needed to ensure that NRFC presents itself in the best possible manner and meets all the appropriate guidelines from a best practice perspective in its interaction with the media. This policy highlights the key points which need to be covered in ensuring that NRFC's media relations activity is successful and well co-ordinated at all levels and in all areas of Club. Responsibility for the development and updating of these operating procedures will rest with Club PRO as will responsibility for communicating this information to relevant NRFC contacts.

#### **Risk Characteristics**

Failure by NRFC members to comply with an agreed media relations policy can result in inaccurate, misleading, contradictory, or inappropriate information being released to the media. This can cause severe damage to our reputation and can, in some instances, have legal consequences.

#### **Policy Statement**

Club PRO: NRFC's policy is that the Club PRO handles all proactive or reactive contact with the media on issues which have a Club-wide impact (*e.g. Club policy, Club performance, significant appointments, changes in structure, acquisitions*) and all potentially negative or controversial issues. To ensure that an appropriate media plan is prepared, the Club PRO should be briefed on these issues well in advance of the time they need to be announced. In cases where an enquiry from a journalist raises a potentially controversial or negative issue, the response should be discussed and agreed with the Club PRO. Similarly, if there is any confusion or uncertainty about how to deal with any media query, contact should be made with the Club PRO before responding.



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### **Diversity Statement**

#### **Introduction**

Equality and diversity means valuing of all cultures and people, their similarities, and their differences, equally and without discrimination, in today's society.

#### **NRFC Diversity Statement**

At NRFC, we recognise that our continued growth and success depends on maintaining the trust and confidence of our members, our supporters, and our sponsors. The values of honesty, integrity and fairness are at the core of our enduring success and personal relationships, both internally and externally.

As a Club, we believe that valuing the diversity of all of our people is an essential component of living these values. For us at NRFC, diversity is not just about gender, race, age, or disability; it is also about differences in personality, beliefs, working and thinking style. Harnessing these differences creates a Club environment where all of our members feel valued and respected in reaching their potential, in generating and sharing ideas, and in working together to drive individual and team success.

At the heart of our Club we recognise the need to understand the changing nature and increasing diversity of our members. We treat all our members with fairness and with respect.

Invariably as a Club, we are judged by our actions; embracing diversity and placing the values of honesty, integrity, and fairness at the heart of our actions ensures we create a positive Club environment for all our members.



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### **Expenses Policy**

#### **Scope**

The NRFC Expenses Policy sets out the guidelines for the claiming of expenses in all areas of the Club. It is owned by the Club Treasurer. This document defines the Club Expenses Policy and outlines the members' responsibilities with respect to compliance with the policy.

#### **Expenses Policy**

NRFC's policy is to reimburse members for all reasonable expenses they incur when carrying out their responsibilities for the Club. No member is expected to be out of pocket for Club expenses, or to spend Club funds unnecessarily. Expenditure on expenses must be consistent with the needs of the Club and in full compliance with this policy and its procedures. All expenses must be pre-approved by the Club Treasurer. It is the responsibility of the individual to secure this in writing.

#### **Club Expenses**

Club expenses are defined as expenses that have been paid or incurred on in the normal course of business and that are necessary and reasonable in amount. Generally, such expenses are incurred in the conduct of NRFC business on travel and other routine business activities. NRFC will only provide reimbursement for actual Club expenses incurred.

#### **Sanctions for Inappropriate Use/Claims**

Members making improper, inappropriate, or inflated claims for expenses may be liable to disciplinary action and/or legal proceedings.

#### **Non-Reimbursable Expenses**

Personal expenses incurred which are not directly related to the Club activities are not reimbursable. Examples of such non-reimbursable expenditure include:

- Personal expenses or entertainment not related to Club activity
- Personal travel which is combined with a NRFC trip
- Fines – traffic/parking violations
- Tolls and parking charges unless related to NRFC journeys
- Car valet charges
- Clothing
- Duty levied on non-Club material or property
- Mini Bar expenditure



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### **Claimant Responsibilities**

Members incurring expenses are responsible for the following:

- Acting reasonably with respect to incurring expenses
- Retaining receipts for all claims
- Preparing and submitting expense claims promptly and in line with the authorised time limits, i.e. on a monthly basis
- Detailing all information relevant to the claim in line with the policy guidelines
- Checking the accuracy of bills and charges before paying or accepting them
- Accounting for all cash advances
- Ensuring all claims are compliant with taxation requirements.

### **Receipts**

Receipts are required for all Club expenditure. It is the claimants' responsibility to ensure that they furnish any receipts, bills, expenses etc. on a monthly basis with their expense claims. If for any reason an original receipt is not available or is lost, a written explanation must be provided to the Club Treasurer as part of the approval process and the claimant may be required to obtain a copy of the receipt from the service provider/supplier.

The Club Treasurer must approve the receipts for a submitted statement/claim when approving the documentation. If the Club Treasurer is not satisfied with the validity of the receipts, he/she should reject the statement/claim and advise the claimant accordingly. Expense claims, for which receipts have not been received, will not be paid.

### **Cash Advances**

In certain circumstances cash advances are permitted to facilitate Club requirements. The amount of the advance should be consistent with the purpose and duration of the activity requiring the advance. Cash advances are only intended to provide temporary financial relief and must be accounted for fully within the time limits prescribed in the policy, i.e. within one month.

Cash advances for expected Club expenses should be pre-approved by the Club Treasurer and the circumstances requiring such action should be detailed fully as part of the approval process. Any unspent cash at the end of the period for which an advance was granted should be repaid immediately and cannot be carried forward to future periods.

Business need should be detailed and receipts should be provided for all cash advances as part of the reconciliation process. It will not be possible to provide further cash advances before outstanding cash advances have been satisfactorily cleared.

### **Taxation**

Responsibility for ensuring that the correct income tax and PRSI treatment is applied to the reimbursement expenses rests with the claimant.





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### **Non-Smoking Policy**

The Irish Government has banned smoking in all indoor workplaces with effect from Monday, 29th March 2004. The purpose of these regulations is to protect the right of all employees to work in a smoke-free environment.

In order to comply with these regulations, smoking will not be permitted in the NRFC Clubhouse with effect from this date. Similarly, in the interests of the health and safety of our employees, NRFC will not be providing outdoor smoking shelters.

### **Impact on Employees**

The regulations on smoking in the workplace will affect NRFC employees in so far as all forms of smoking will not be permissible within NRFC Clubhouse.

### **Misuse of Policy**

The new regulations provide that any member who smokes within any of NRFC's premises is in breach of the law and may also be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Responsibilities and interpretation**

These regulations are for the protection of staff and members from the dangers of inhaling tobacco smoke. In these circumstances, all staff bear responsibility for ensuring that the workplace is free from health and safety risks, be they from colleagues or members.

The Department of Health's guidelines require that non-smoking signage be erected in all premises and a further sign, indicating to whom a complaint can be made to if necessary. If you wish to make a complaint you may make it through the Bar Manager.



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### **Dress Code Policy**

The Strategy for Newbridge Rugby Football Club (2009-2014) states that we want to build a club atmosphere of “respect and pride” and to instil this ethos in all members. To assist in achieving this, we have adopted the following approach to dress code:

#### **On the field:**

It is important that all players project a professional image when representing the Club. This is particularly important where a team has been in receipt of sponsorship, and the Club has an obligation. To ensure this, the following guidelines have been adopted:

- Senior and Youth Players must present themselves at matches wearing the proper NRFC kit (jersey, socks, and shorts) and it should not be mixed with other non-kit garments. Failure to comply with this policy could mean that players cannot enter the field of play.
- Mini Players are encouraged to wear the proper NRFC kit (jersey, socks, and shorts), the jersey at a minimum.
- NRFC kit should be well maintained. This is the responsibility each individual.

#### **Off the field:**

Pre and post matches, senior players are encouraged to wear the team polo shirt (must have team badge) and jeans or shorts. In some instances, senior players may be required to wear slacks and a formal shirt along with the club tie. Players will be advised in advance.

When every person wears the same uniform, it presents a much better image, and shows unity.



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### **Accident & Incident Reporting Policy**

#### **Introduction / Scope**

In conjunction with the NRFC Health & Safety Policy, NRFC has an obligation to collect, analyse and retain appropriate data in relation to accidents / incidents that involve their members and / or visitors to the Club grounds.

At a minimum, we will:

- Have a system for recording incidents, dangerous occurrences, and near misses, with a view to reducing incidents in the Club and in respect of incidents which may occur to members when travelling in connection with the Club. This does not include travelling to or from their place of residence to the Club.
- The Coach is responsible for supplying the relevant information on these incidents to the Club Secretary on forms supplied (see attached).
- Incident investigations may be carried out by the Club Secretary or persons acting on his behalf and/or by Insurers' representatives.
- The purpose of incident investigation is not to apportion blame, but to establish causation, so as to prevent recurrence.
- Copies of all incident reports should be held centrally for two years by the Club Secretary.
- Each Coach should have copies of the incident report form. Additional forms are available on request from the Club Secretary.

The following types of accidents / incidents must be reported:

- Any injury sustained in the course of the match or training (on or off the pitch) on behalf of Newbridge RFC, which prevents a person from performing the normal duties of the work or education for more than three calendar days, not including the date of the accident, should be reported.
- Any injury sustained while a person is travelling on official business in connection with Newbridge RFC, should be reported.



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### **International Match Tickets**

At the beginning of each season the Executive Committee shall be tasked with preparing a policy for allocating that season's international tickets and the procedures for applying for these tickets.

Their proposals shall be discussed and ratified at that meeting and the terms shall be minuted and circulated.

A sub-committee shall be responsible for the implementation of the policy and shall report to the Executive Committee periodically.