





Value of Sport and Recreation
Case Study of Northern United Rugby Football Club

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Junior team – Norths 2010



1.0 Background: Why a Value Focus?

For those supporting, participating and working in sport and recreation, it is important that the value of sport and recreation can be articulated in both dollar and 'social' terms, in order to retain and grow sport and recreation. SPARC has funded this case study as well as an economic report that looks at estimating the 'dollar' values of sport and recreation in a community. This case study brings to life the 'softer' values that are more difficult to assign a dollar value to but are nevertheless important for government, local government and communities to understand so they can more fully appreciate how sport and recreation clubs contribute to communities.

1.1 The VoSR Programme

SPARC has an ongoing programme to identify the Value of Sport and Recreation (VoSR) to New Zealand, which includes:

- u Economic analysis (of the costs and benefits) of sport and recreation in a local region.
- u Economic analysis (of the costs and benefits) of significant sporting events.
- u A series of VoSR case studies focusing on grassroots clubs (or entities/sporting facilities).

1.2 VoSR Programme Outcomes

SPARC has identified three outcomes for its ongoing programme to identify VoSR to New Zealand:

1. **Long-term outcomes** – that the 'real' impact of sport and recreation is recognised, valued and supported by key stakeholders, resulting in better investment in the sector.
2. **Medium-term outcomes** – that there is an improved understanding of the value of the sport and recreation sector through up-to-date New Zealand based evidence, which can be made available to sector partners, central and local government and potential investors.
3. **Short-term outcomes** – that there is a prototype case study documenting the value of sport and recreation of one sport or recreation club at the grassroots level, which includes a clear description of the method undertaken so that other stakeholders can conduct similar case studies on other sport and recreation clubs.



1.3 VoSR prototype case study

The objectives of the VoSR prototype case study are therefore:

- u To prepare a case study of a club (or sporting entity/facility) that provides formal grassroots opportunities for sport and recreation at the community level.
- u To describe the range of values themes and illustrate how these contribute to the value of sport and recreation through a club (or sporting entity/facility) at the community level.
- u To contribute towards the development of a model to convert the described qualitative values into dollar values.

See Section 2 for description of the case study method.

1.4 Sharing this prototype of a VoSR case study

In addition to this report on the VoSR case study, reporting has included:

- u A “Value of Sport and Recreation Case Study - SPARC Protocol” that includes a toolbox of data collection tools.
- u A Photo Story of the themes.

SPARC also aims to promote the VoSR case study approach and will be sharing this case study through various forums and in a variety of formats.



2.0 About this case study: Method

This is a VoSR case study of a rugby club in the city of Porirua, situated north of Wellington. Funded by SPARC, it is an example that others may wish to replicate.

About ‘value’

The focus of this case study is on the value that Norths has to its members and their families as well as to others in the wider community. The values that the club has for these people can be either positive (i.e. benefits) or negative (i.e. costs or downsides). Some values are a combination of positives and negatives for different people or at different times.

SPARC’s interest in the value of grassroots sport and recreation

Internationally and in New Zealand, it has been shown that there are a number of benefits for those who play or participate in sport and recreation and for others in their community. However, descriptions of the specific benefits, or any costs or downsides, of grassroots sport and recreation in New Zealand are not common. This case study is part of a wider programme by SPARC to better understand the value of sport and recreation to New Zealand. It has been funded by SPARC and carried out by an independent research company, Research New Zealand.

What we did

This case study focuses on a single sports club. It aims to describe how the club benefits its members, their families and others in the community. As relevant, it also describes the negative impacts of the club. During 2010, we visited the club and observed games and training sessions. We gathered facts and figures about the club and recorded stories about why people valued the club. We met with a wide range of club people and others in the local community; from coaches and other volunteers, to players, parents and people in the local community (in colleges, the media, sports clubs and social services) as well as community and sporting leaders (such as councillors and sporting organisations).

Widely held views of the ‘value’ of Norths

The values that follow are widespread; they are values held by club members, their families as well as local people outside of the club.

What now?

This case study provides Norths, and others, with an illustration of the value of the Norths club. SPARC aims to promote the use of case studies like this to make more explicit the value of grassroots sport and recreation in New Zealand and to communicate this to people involved in sports and recreation. Including, club people as well as communities, businesses, councils and sporting organisations.

To this end, the Norths case study provides an example that could be replicated by others¹. SPARC hopes to support similar case studies in the future to build a library of similar research.

¹ For detailed information carrying out a case study see “Value of Sport and Recreation Case Study - SPARC Toolbox”



3.0 About The Club: Norths

Norths is a large, successful rugby club based at Trust Park, Porirua City (Porirua). Its catchment is the wider Porirua basin and it offers junior rugby and senior rugby to the local community. Its senior rugby is made up mainly of men's teams with one premier women's team. The club also has relationships with four local colleges that offer college rugby.

Norths is situated in Porirua (population approximately 50,000), 25 kilometres north of Wellington's CBD. The club is one of two rugby clubs in Porirua. Norths club was formed from an amalgamation of two long standing clubs in the Porirua basin 20 years ago. The Titahi Bay club, based in Titahi Bay, and the Porirua Club, based in the area where Norths is now located.

The club offers junior rugby (from four and five-year-olds through to Under 13s) and senior rugby from late teenage years upwards².

The club has some 450 junior players (mainly boys, with a few girls). The senior club includes over 150 players with seven senior teams, including: a colts team (Under 21s), a senior seconds team, a senior firsts team, a premier team, two (social) presidents teams and a women's premier team. The club also has over 300 social members, including a golden oldies team and 150 in the supporters club the '100 Club'.

The club has a catchment area spanning across the Porirua basin. Club members and club players are almost all local residents with few players coming from outside the City or from other regions. Nearly half of the junior and senior players (both male and female) are of Pacific ethnicity (45%), with a minority of Māori (33%) and Pākehā (20%) players. This pattern of Pacific representation is more accentuated among the senior players.

The club supporters are varied. Some join the supporters' club, the 100 Club, whose membership is broad. With people of all ages and ethnicities being involved, including many of who have never played rugby for Norths or elsewhere. Most 100 Club members are aged 40 to 60, however children, youth as well as a number of octogenarians and even older supporters are active in the club via their regular participation the 100 Club activities.

The club structure includes governance and leadership by a club committee (all volunteers) and a coaching team. The coaching team is headed by one full time paid Coaching Coordinator (funded by the local rugby union; Wellington Rugby Football Union); with the remainder of the rugby coaches, team managers, and other support roles all being volunteer roles. The club has 75 coaches and administrators registered with the rugby union with many more casual volunteers assisting the club, such as parents helping with the junior teams (e.g. as team managers). Many of these volunteers provide their time free for between 2 hours and 10 hours each week, while some volunteer their time for 15 to 20 hours, or more, every week of the season.

² All school age rugby from 13 year-olds and upwards is played wholly within the local colleges, with the exception of a few elite college-aged players who may hold positions in senior rugby teams and/or age group representative teams.



The club owns and maintains its own club rooms, situated at Trust Park Porirua. The Porirua City Council owns, maintains and manages the Park. This includes a stadium grandstand (capacity 1,900) adjacent to an international standard rugby field with television standard night lighting, three other senior rugby fields, change rooms, a softball diamond and car parking areas.

The fields are used on a weekly basis during the season for weekend rugby fixtures and/or rugby league fixtures, as well as for training during the week. Training consists of two training sessions each week for junior players (2 hours a week), through to three or more sessions for senior players (6 or more hours a week). In the summer months the grounds are home to a local softball club.

The club's membership includes a number of local sporting families whose involvement has continued over many years. It is proud of its All Blacks tradition which has flourished since the success of local Porirua identity, Jerry Collins. Since 1990, the club has had 50 regional representatives, 22 national representatives, as well as 21 players who have played internationally for other nations or in club rugby, internationally.

See Appendix A 'Norths Club Overview' for more detailed information about Norths.



100 Club supporters banner



4.0 Summary of values themes

Norths has a strong culture: Rugby success, 'giving back', mentoring for excellence, and the importance of family are its corner stones, with Pacific cultural values woven throughout. The club is a continuation of family, community and church. The people are its strength embodied by its motto 'Tatou, tatou'.

4.1.1 Positive values of Norths

Eleven positive themes were identified, including three relating to the concept of Norths as a community and a key focal point for the local community.

Wellbeing and youth development

Being a part of Norths contributes to the wellbeing and development of the young people and adults involved in the club. Teamwork, positive behaviour and having respect for themselves and for others' efforts are valued.

Proud yet humble

Pride in Norths, based on respect for family, church, coaches and managers is pervasive among club members and others in the community.

Mentors and role models

Norths people give a hand up to others and give back to their sport and their community. They are rugby mentors and community role models.

Dedication and commitment

Involvement with Norths means being dedicated to excellence in all aspects of the game: Having a professional attitude to training, nutrition and player development.

Winning and success

Being competitive and aiming for success is a passion held by many at Norths.

Career aspirations

A career in rugby is a dream that can come true, at Norths. Many young players have rugby career aspirations. The supports in place can take players as far as their talent and commitment allows.

Loyalty to the club legacy

There is a strong sense of loyalty and an emotional bond to Norths. The loyalty to their family and their church extends to a staunch loyalty towards their club for the many Pacific people at Norths.

Family time

Being involved with Norths means family time for many members. For others the support of their families is what makes it possible. The club fosters and strengthens family connections.



Norths: A community

Norths is a community in itself, providing opportunities to make and maintain lifelong friendships, for a wide range of people.

Norths: A community icon

It is also a community icon that provides a positive outlook and vibrancy that is important to the wider community.

Norths: Key to the City's identity

Norths is central to City pride and identity.

4.1.2 Costs or downsides of Norths

Six themes that are negatives or downsides of being involved with Norths as a member or being associated with the club in other ways were identified.

A focus on rugby without education is not in players' best interests

A singular focus on a professional rugby career by some young players leaves them poorly prepared for life outside rugby and is a concern for people both inside and outside of the club.

Early age-group success can leave players worse off

Without the right support, the benefit of early representative success can be lost and with this can come a loss of confidence and a loss of face for players and their families.

Norths status as the best club limits who plays for the club

Many players have connections to Norths from junior rugby and aspirations to play for Norths as a senior. If they don't make the Norths premier team they feel there is no place for them at Norths.

Parents' focus on rugby success is not what everyone wants

Occasionally, junior games are interrupted by over zealous actions of adult supporters from one team or another. The amount and the intensity of Norths training is more than some players and their parents want for junior players.

Age grade weight requirements cause further inequality

Due to the weight restriction set by the RFU, there is overt pressure and real stress, for junior players to lose weight to be in the same weight division as their long-time team mates.

Player size and racism towards Pacific players from outside the club

Within the club and local community, Pacific players' physique and talent is celebrated. But reactions of other clubs towards Pacific players' size, their physical maturity and their skill level can be very negative and are based on prejudices and racist attitudes.



4.1.3 Club review: Challenges and Opportunities

Through the process of describing what they valued about the club, many participants offered their views on the challenges facing the club and opportunities available to the club. As a way of providing feedback to the club, additional to the values case study, these views have been summarised in Appendix B 'Club review, where to for Norths?'

Challenges facing Norths

- u The club administration and financial situation of the club is an ongoing challenge.
- u Fundraising and seeking sponsorships is an ongoing challenge, with costs rising and sponsorship and funding dropping away.
- u Volunteerism (to maintain a skilled and sizable volunteer body).
- u College rugby model for the club as it interrupts the connection with players.
- u Changes in rugby towards a fast game, and expectations of fast-flowing rugby by rugby audiences, are an emerging challenge.

Opportunities: Sports Administration and Volunteerism

- u Developing a financial strategy and plan for the club.
- u Making greater use of new technologies: a website and video coaching.
- u Enhancing volunteerism at Norths.
- u Enhancing connections to the Community.

Opportunities: Maximising Membership

- u The success of the junior rugby and maintaining linkages with players through the four local colleges are key to maintaining a talent pool at the senior level.
- u Focusing on bridging the gap from school to club rugby and being more inviting for the less elite senior players.
- u Connecting with partners and families and being more family friendly.

Opportunities: Player Development

- u Considering the needs and mechanisms to support long term player development.
- u Developing women's rugby at the club.



VALUES OF NORTHS



5.0 Wellbeing and youth development

Being a part of Norths contributes to the wellbeing and development of the young people and adults involved in the club. Teamwork, positive behaviour and having respect for themselves and for others' efforts are valued.



Junior players and end of season prize giving

Seeing all your friends in the weekend and the game. It just gives you heaps of energy and once you've finished the game it's like you want to play more and more. You keep going through the whole thing (Junior Player)

Being a team player

Players and other club members develop a sense of belonging to a team, whether this is a rugby team or teams of volunteers. By being in a team they build connections to their community. Being involved provides opportunities for developing positive behaviour; they learn to watch out for others and to support others through a team sport.

The underlying thing is that camaraderie that he has with the team players, his team mates (Junior Parent)

Our boy, rugby isn't his main passion; he's more interested in individual sports. So rugby has taught him to play in a team (Junior Player)

Teaches them a vital skill in life; to get on with other kids. Rather than those kids that stay at home or roam around the streets. There wouldn't be too many of the kids playing rugby running around outside at night (Club Volunteer)

It supports the young person's goals. It's just helping that young person reach their potential, working in a team, it's not a matter of 'I' as can be the case for a lot of youths, and it's doing something together (Social Services)



Respect

Players develop respect for themselves, for others and for their gear through playing in a Norths team. Coaches expect players to care for their gear and to respect each other through the way they train and play as a team.

If you succeed in one part of your life, it gives you a bit of a get up and go really. I know a lot of them are struggling to get work and that. So you've got to have something going well for you (Club Committee/Governance)

It's a great place for youngsters to develop other skills. You have got your achievers in education and all that, but Norths is good for the kids in Porirua to see "I can achieve something outside of education, I've got sport" (Coach)

The club members have respect for the facilities.

Those clubrooms are very clean and the fields are very clean. I was there at a funeral. The walls, it's all very plain, very plain colours and that but it's very clean and tidy. It's a nice feel inside the clubrooms itself. They take pride in what they have (Social Services)

Players respect each others' efforts and the coaches.

Everyone is treated the same. Like for me being young, nobody uses that against me, [they] look at me as being good enough, so I'm old enough (Senior Player)

The camaraderie you have amongst the players, the respect, that's the biggest thing, the respect (Senior Player)

I think friendships from Norths is the biggest thing. I have made so many friends, my coaches as well. I thoroughly enjoyed and respected all my coaches that I had and I've taken something from all of them (Coach)

We try and instil in the team like the hard yards is going to be rewarding ... we are going back to how we used to do it, which is you put in the effort and you get to go on the field (Coach)



Positive behaviour

The club has an ethos of good behaviour standards. Coaches, volunteers and parents are all expected to foster high standards of behaviour on and off the field among players as well as among sideline supporters on game day.

The expectation from the club, from the coaches' perspective, from the committee is very high. So these kids have to strive to achieve that (Local Council)

Some coaches in other clubs, you see them at half time yelling at the boys. Like they do one thing wrong or they're not having a good half, they like start yelling at them and like blame one person in the team. But our coaches are like real laxed out about it, they just say, go hard, do your best and then it doesn't matter if we win or lose (Junior Player)

The high expectations of the club coaches turn young people around.

He's a very good-natured boy, very caring, always has been. Well I think we instil that in kids. We change kids that come here (Club Volunteer)

They can be little shits and you can just get in their ear and show them respect and they think, hello? It's not happening at home and then it slowly comes (Club Volunteer)

They're [coaches] quite controlled. I just like the way they pull our kid up when he needs to be and they do it because that's what he needs, not any nastiness with any child (Junior Parent)

Game days are well supported by cheers and positive encouragement from the sideline. Negative behaviour by players or supporters is noticed and followed up, discretely.

[Years ago] one dad had threatened to give him [son] a hiding from the sideline because he wasn't playing well. A couple of the old club heads here said to his dad, I'm sorry you are not welcome to say that on the side, not [to] any players, especially [to] your own son, you have to leave. From that day on he [the Dad] has never played for Norths because of that, but it was good ... for everyone to know that Norths doesn't stand for that (Coach)

[Recently a] father was quite hard on him [junior player]. Because he did something wrong on the paddock on the Saturday, he was not allowed to go to training. He was disciplined at home by his father. We found this out and said "Well, let us do it". He said "Oh OK" because he wanted his kid to be the best (Club Volunteer)



Players are expected to be tidily presented, on time and in clean gear. They are also expected to demonstrate respect and use clean language on and off the field and around town. Senior players attend post match functions, at home and away clubrooms, in their clean pressed 'number ones' (white shirts and tailored trousers).

What I've noticed is the standard of coaching for Under 8s and Under 9s. My son has to clean his boots to get there, so they are learning appearance is important. It sends a message that you are serious about a sport and they can carry that across to school and behaviour (Social Services)

You know the one time you are going to see kids in their number ones, which is their formal dress - the white shirts - apart from their wedding [is] dressing up after a game. It's their moment. A lot of these boys won't wear their number ones and they actually feel good about putting it on [when they are asked to] (Social Services)



Club context relating to wellbeing and youth development

Junior club members are active.

- u The Junior players train for around two hours a week. This, together with their game warm up and Saturday competition means that they have at least four hours of intense physical activity each week through playing rugby.

Regular contact with adults in a structured environment provides direction and discipline in young people's lives.

- u Every junior team has a coach and some have a manager – the teams get together three times a week. This provides clear boundaries and a structure for young people and offers a positive experience of teamwork that some young people do not get elsewhere.
- u Players' parents, local social services and other external stakeholders, such as schools, all commented on the high quality of the coaching and the club environment as being focused on discipline and respect.
- u Child Young Persons and their Families recognises the importance of these factors in Norths to the extent that some young people under their care are encouraged to join a Norths team and are supported with money to cover club fees and related expenses.

High expectations of player behaviour and supporter behaviour are upheld.

- u Players' parents and external stakeholders (such as school teachers) describe the support for players in positive terms – they comment on the absence of negative sideline behaviour of parents and other supporters.
- u Over zealous parents at the junior level are identified and their behaviour managed very quickly and discretely by team coaches or others in the club.
- u Senior teams focus on teamwork and make player selections based on player behaviour at practice (e.g. punctuality) as well as on form.



6.0 Proud yet humble

Pride in Norths, that is based on respect for family, church, their club coaches and managers, is pervasive.



Fans celebrate winning the midseason shield; 100 club banner

Senior players are humble about their success and proud to represent their community and their families.

Most of those guys we have in this club that are successful are very humble. The church keeps them grounded, their family keeps them grounded, their father can tell them to go and mow the lawns, they're very respectful of their parents. Whatever their parents say to do, or their aunties, they'll go and run to the shop and get the milk and the bread and things like that. It's humbling to see that (Team Manager)

Young players are proud to be club members and have pride in their rugby heroes, the premier team.

They're really proud to be junior members of the club. They look up to them, they're heroes, something to strive for ... they're related to so many of them, you know the kids' their older cousins and older uncles, or their fathers are coaches ... to have those role models in sport in that club right from a junior level it has been really fantastic for the young ones (Local College)

It's their heroes. My grandson has got them on the wall, signed rugby balls. They're all flat, they're not going nowhere, they're staying in his room (Club Volunteer)



The community's pride in Norths' accomplishments is huge. People are buoyed to be associated with such success and are especially proud that Norths represents local success.

There's just some incredible players. Their back line at the moment, that's got an average age of about 20 and they are just some of the most incredible rugby players you've ever seen and they're just so far out of everyone else's league. They just keep producing these players year after year (Local Media)

It's lifted the profile of the area, lifted the aspirations of the kids. You can't put a dollar figure on that (Committee/Governance)

As well as a good social outlet for them and playing a team sport, they have that sense of pride that they're playing for the Porirua Club where they grew up, I can't emphasise enough the sense of pride that people in Porirua have about Norths (Local Media)

This year so far the Prem's are just going from week to week just slaying all these other clubs. It's the Norths boys, the Porirua boys that are doing it, they're all local ... and a lot of them haven't had privileged upbringing they've had to battle to get to where they are (Junior Parent)

Club context relating to pride

The 150 or more 100 Club members overtly show their pride in the Norths premier team and other teams by supporting at many games as well as through sharing messages and photos on Facebook.

Less obvious is the pervasive pride among players' families, junior players, local schools, and local community members, including the local media who follow the team's successes and follow the club members that make regional and national representative teams. Their pride comes from personal connections to many of the players or their coaches and managers whom they have known from childhood, because they are related to them, or have connection with them through church or school.



7.0 Mentors and role models

Norths people give a hand up to others and give back to their sport and their community. They are rugby mentors and community role models.



Under 12 receiving advice during 45th annual home and away fixture against Lyttelton RFU

Rugby Mentors

Mentoring comes as second nature to many club people. Yet they receive so much back in return.

You're a mother, you're a father. You're a surrogate parent sometimes. I'm a mentor to all of them (Club Volunteer)

It's the biggest thing, the respect from those kids [the senior players] (Club Volunteer)

You're paid back in love from all the people that come in here [the clubrooms] after the game (Club Volunteer)

I coached the under 5s too a couple of years ago. It's just great seeing them. They come to you as a seed and then it's up to you to nurture it and you see a result (Coach)

It's definitely seeing them develop and the promise of what they can become. I just think it's awesome (Coach)



Those that played rugby in the past, or who are nearing the end of their careers, see their role as giving back to rugby, to their club and the community.

Just out of respect to everyone else that's done it for me, you know. There'll be those that have, they didn't have to, but they stood out there while I was running round and when you want some water they'd run the water out for you. If you fell over, hurt yourself, they'd come on (Senior Player)

I thought I'd just come back and give back to this community where I'm from (Senior Player)

While they are playing, many senior players, especially those fortunate enough to experience representative rugby and coaching, become a mentor to their club or their teams.

There's a couple of premier players involved with schoolboy rugby teams, helping out with the under 8s, under 9s, coaching junior kids (Club Volunteer)

I don't have aspirations to be an All Black or whatever. But what I can help with is by being around younger guys (Senior Player)

Rugby heroes motivate others to aim high

Rugby heroes motivate others to strive, yet help them focus on what it takes to 'make it' in rugby and in life. Just mixing with their heroes is motivating to some young players.

Watching them [the Prem's], how it's played ... It teaches us how to play more, gives us moves to do in our games (Junior Player)

Some young people need to be nurtured to believe in themselves.

Anyone can do it as long as you try and this is just passing that message on and say "Look, you guys are, if not better, way better than what I was at your age. So come on, go for it! Don't let that opportunity go past." (Coach)

When our uncle died recently, my nephew had been getting in trouble a lot and he hung out with Jerry [Jerry Collins, a cousin] just for that week. The impact that he had on my nephew, turned him around, like he was really serious about his rugby (Social Services)



Other young people need to understand that while talent is important, many other factors need to be in the mix for them to be successful in life and as rugby players.

We've had motivational speakers [at school], people like Jerry Collins ... it's about all those personal skills, those characteristics that make sporting excellent, being goal orientated, all of those sorts of things that are part of motivating kids to persevere ... the stories that are very much about perseverance, commitment, making sacrifices, having really strong health routines, habits of mind (Local College)

They can relate to that person you know. That is the good thing about these Norths people when they come back, they are just the same. They don't change (Social Services)

Community role models

Players of all ages, especially those who have experienced some rugby success, are recognised on the street, at church and in schools they are supported and celebrated by the public and in their extended families. With this support and recognition, they receive attention in every aspect of their lives. This keeps players focused on being positive in their behaviour on and off the field.

Junior players and college rugby players are role models in school and in their families.

So it's not just about rugby and being on the field. But it actually goes further, because there's a ripple effect through each of these boys' family environments. There's this huge pride with Pacific families when one of the sons makes the First XV. So there's this whole expectation within the family that they've been selected to represent perhaps the Wellington Under 13s, Under 15s, Under 16s. ... You've got your cousins, and it could be your second or third cousins, you still have a close-knit family; then there are church members or church groups. Once a kid is known to be in the First XV, there is this whole 'stigma' [status], not just in school, but in the family, in the church, and in the youth group (Local Council)

Club volunteers are role models and heroes to their own children.

For my 6 year old I didn't really realise that it would be that big of a deal that I was the [seniors] coach but he was proud of it. For me I thought if I was playing for NZ when he was at this age, I thought that that would be something big and coaching is not a big deal. But it is a [big] deal for him to see me speaking to the players, and [it] almost brings out that internal leader in him and he is not too shy to speak in public you know. I'm hoping that remains (Coach)



Coaches and players are healthy role models to their families and the wider community. Being active in rugby and other sport reminds families of the importance of healthy weight and keeping active.

In some way you feel responsible for someone. You can see a pathway they're taking and you don't want them to go that way. Especially with their health with diabetes, as most players here are very big players, they're obese players so you want to see them live a little bit longer (Senior Player)

Club context relating to mentors and role models

The club has more than 100 volunteers across the 25 junior and seven senior teams undertaking coaching roles, manager roles and other support and administration roles that mentor the young upcoming players.

Players in the premier teams, and those selected for representative teams (both senior and junior) are role models for club members, their extended families, their peers at school and college, their church and other people in the community. Many people outside of the club look up to players. With many of the players being Pacific peoples their family connections are extensive and include second and third cousins.

Access to heroes and role models who have 'made it', occurs readily.

- u Junior players idolise and study every move of the successful premier players, some of whom are older brothers or cousins.
- u Premier players attend junior registration at the start of the season, and pay visits to their old primary schools. Given that almost all premier players have grown up locally, their connection to the local community is strong.

The club produces many rugby heroes for younger club members and others to look up to.

- u The strong links that players have to their club mean that these heroes are regularly present at the grounds for youngsters to meet and learn from.
- u Since 1990, some 50 club members have been selected into regional representative teams. In addition there are junior players in representative teams – such as city teams, national age group teams whilst they are college age, and ex-club members play for regional franchises outside the region; such as for Waikato.
- u Added to these, the club has had 22 New Zealand representative players since 1990 – in men's, women's, Māori, Sevens and age groups teams. The club has also had 18 representative players for Pacific nations and three players playing international club rugby. (A total of 43 players with international experience since 1990).



8.0 Dedication and commitment

For many players and coaches as well as others, involvement with Norths means to be dedicated to excellence in all aspects of the game: Having a professional attitude to training, nutrition, player development and so on.



Women's team coach

Being the best: striving for excellence

Norths people are committed to rugby, to being disciplined on and off the field, and to doing the required preparation to field a fit, skilled and focused team each week. Both players, and those that support them, strive for excellence, to be the best that they can be.

Being committed and striving for success comes from 'within' players as well as from the support they get from their club.

They were brought up with nothing and they've survived, they understand, they don't get things on a plate, they have to work twice as hard to get where they want. So they'll strive, they'll strive harder than guys that go to school in town (Coach)

When it's too wet the Council will shut the grounds and then we all have to go and look for car parks to train on. We have to do a road run or go to empty car parks and practice there (Coach)

Players are dedicated competitors on the rugby field.

He's very very competitive when it comes to Norths. Although they're his really good friends at school, they're his arch enemies when it comes to rugby on a Saturday (Junior Parent)



Coaches and managers foster the talents of players. They have a high level of skill and promote fitness and skilled, safe play. They work closely with players to identify their strengths, areas for improvement, to set goals and to make plans for improvement.

I set myself goals for the team, like I've got a player that I think is going to make it and that is my goal, to make sure that she gets through (Coach)

We have worked hard to promote the club as a top professional amateur club (Club Volunteer)

One of the secrets at the moment, [is] we've got coaches that have new ideas and that's what's helping the guys, there's challenges for them (Coach)

Everyone has adopted that professionalism where ideas come in and we're trying to be more professional and prepare ourselves, we have pre-season plans and trainings. This year is one of my best years that I've ever experienced, in that everyone has worked together really well. We can't build a winning club if we don't work together (Coach)

The club has an ethos of respect for coaches and players who put the time in, who are dedicated.

They're pretty welcoming to guys who want to put the time in. The guys will respect them. The same with the coaching, you know. They respect guys who want to do it for them (Committee/Governance)

It's good life lessons like; if you put in the hard yards you are going to get rewards. That's what they helped me realise here at Norths and if someone is promising enough, if they can see somebody is putting in the effort, they will invest more time in you and you do go far (Coach)

Players work hard to learn new skills and to take up training opportunities offered to them, especially those with aspirations beyond the club rugby.

This year has been a step in my career, learning from all the players. They teach me things that I don't know; a lot of the game this year is new to me. I thought I knew quite a bit about the game, but I feel like I've learned a lot more about the game and about myself (Senior Player)



For senior players, dedication to their game can flow onto the way they manage their nutrition and decisions about drinking alcohol.

Not everyone drinks. I've seen the top performers, the top players in this club; you don't even see them with a beer in their hand straight after the game. They'll be drinking water, you know that professional era, drinking water for a couple of hours and then they'll have a beer. They'll have a beer just to support the club and then you see them go home. The whole attitude is changed, not like back in our day (Coach)

Jerry [Jerry Collins, All Black] always said, to everybody in Porirua I have made it, you can make it. So they behave themselves. It's not only about playing for your club, you've got to behave yourself, you've got to drink in moderation, not to smoke or take drugs, you're not to be violent (Local Sports Club)

When I think of Norths, as opposed to other traditional rugby [clubs], I don't think of Norths as having a drinking culture associated with it. I don't think of people going to the clubrooms and getting trolleyed. I just think of them as a good elite, local grassroots, rugby club (Social Services)



Club context relating to dedication

Dedication of players comes from dedication and efforts of the club members around them

The team coaches and other volunteers put in significant time to support the players' development over the season and to ensure they are well prepared for each game. See Appendix A, Figures 5 and 6 for more details.

- u The coaching team - the coaches/managers – give significant time each week. Coaches working with the senior teams give 25 or more hours of volunteer time each week, whilst assistant coaches, managers and others provide 10 to 20 hours of volunteer time each week.
- u For junior teams, the coaches give around 6 hours and the managers give 1 to 2 hours, of volunteer time. Although the two junior co-convenors each volunteer around 20 hours of their time each week.
- u Hours that administrative and club committee volunteers put in are also significant; with most roles being 10 or more hours each week.

Dedication and cultural factors mean that alcohol is not a big part of Norths' ethos

Players' career ambitions and connections to family and church mean that there is an environment among premier players and other senior teams that is focused away from drinking alcohol. Coaches and managers raise funds in order to offer orange juice, sports drinks and water for players to rehydrate following games. Players occasionally have a beer at the home or away club rooms to 'support the club/bar'.

Senior coaches, managers and some senior players occasionally relax with a few beers at the clubrooms following games or training, and 100 Club members tend to have 'a few beers' before and/or after games. The drinking culture at the club is more of a social nature than a heavy drinking culture. Drinking games for example are not played, and nor is alcohol a focus of post match celebrations or used as a reward for standout plays or players' awards.



9.0 Winning and success

Being competitive and aiming for success is a passion held by many at Norths.



Under 9s Makos at junior prize giving

Norths members love winning. Many club members remember the hard years at the bottom of the table. The recent years of success are immensely satisfying and exciting.

The ground is fantastic, the facilities, the changing rooms are fantastic, clubrooms good, and you're winning. Can't get much better than that (Committee/Governance)

The premier team is what our club is gauged on, the success of them. But everybody in the other teams, they all feel a part of the club, because of that success that our premier team is currently showing and have shown (Team Manager)

Club volunteers are 'hooked' on the adrenalin and the buzz of the game each week.

It's that feeling, that winning feeling, that being a champion feeling. That 20 years ago, we never had. It's the feeling of being part of it. It's just amazing (Coach)

Just looking at the girls now, it's exciting. It's exciting being around (Coach)

You still feel a bit of excitement for those that are about to take the field, and hope like hell that you've done everything you could to make that 80 minutes worthwhile for them. Come Saturday, it's all up to them (Senior Player)



Players are passionate about their team and their own achievements on the field. Their love of the game is infectious. Their satisfaction and the high they get from being the best is equalled by the pride in their achievements by their family, friends and coaches.

It's awesome just to feel the time when you jump over the line and score. Everyone is cheering you on (Junior Player)

If you play good in the forwards you get a Forward of the Day. [You feel] proud that they're noticing you (Junior Player)

It's exciting for me, because if you play at a sport long enough, you can get bored with it, and then [with] the younger guys they're in the changing rooms they've got their own culture, they're building their own success and their own values and that's exciting. It makes you want to have another couple of seasons of it (Senior Player)

The excitement and energy on the sideline and after the game gives a strong lift to players, coaches and volunteers alike. The clubs supporters group the 100 Club is a staunch, rowdy, colourful 'entourage', with people from all walks of life. Many have never played rugby and some who did, did so decades ago.

It's like we're at home even when we're away, you know, which is quite cool (Senior Player)

When you bring the Jubilee Cup back here, you can't move, you can't move outside and you can't move inside. It doesn't matter what day, if it's a Saturday night or a Sunday night, it's just packed you know (Club Volunteer)

For many volunteers being involved is about being a part of the success, mingling with the 'stars' and being in the 'know' of what is happening at the club.

Saturday mornings, I'm walking round like a lost rabbit. I find I'm leaving earlier and earlier, I'll say, I'm leaving at 11 o'clock and it's 20 to "Oh I'll go now. What's 20 minutes?" I think it's the feeling that you don't want to miss out on anything on a Saturday, especially when things are going real good. So if you're winning, you want to be there it's the enjoyment, the winning, meeting these young kids, they're stars, they're super stars, our team. It's having them call you by your first name, and the respect (Club Volunteer)

It is a big buzz. You know I talk very proudly about what goes on, if people want to be filled in the missing pieces as to what's actually happening "Where is this play? Where is that play?" (Team Manager)

You go down town and you walk through the town centre and everyone wants to stop you and they just acknowledge you (Committee/Governance)



Volunteers, youth and junior players get to be with their heroes, the stars of the game, through the club.

That's one of the draw cards to this club, is that people can walk up and see All Blacks running around and touch them (Senior Player)

It strengthens their [junior players] resolve to stick to rugby, as well. To come up here on a Saturday when Norths are playing and see how many young ones, even [those] that have been playing in the morning still in their gear some of them (Junior Parent)

We get to meet people that some people don't actually get to meet (Junior Player)

We tap into the resources here. We train up here and our premier side trains up here, as well. Fortunately for my boys there's the premier side, there's Hurricanes and there's All Blacks and there's coaching. So these young fellas get to see their local heroes training right next to them (Junior Parent)

Club context relating to winning and success

The club members, supporters and the local community's strong focus on winning and the value they place on this has come about through the club's history.

- u The club is currently experiencing an extended winning streak across all grades, senior, junior and including women's rugby. This followed a long period, of a decade after the club formed, and decades prior to that, for the two clubs that amalgamated to become Norths, in which the club(s) rarely fielded a team that tested other clubs in the local competition.
- u Currently, the Norths premier team has been to six out of the last seven finals for their competition since first winning in the 2004 season.
- u All the club senior teams have been winning or coming second or third throughout the season and many participated in finals again in 2010. With the premier team and the women's team both winning their competitions in 2010.



10.0 Career aspirations

Being a part of Norths gives many young players rugby career aspirations. For some players, the supports in place enable their aspirations to be taken as far as their talent and commitment allows.



Club members' All Blacks jerseys since 1990

A career in rugby is a dream that can come true, at Norths

For young rugby players, success through rugby is a dream. The dream is to be a professional sports person. In rugby they dream of supporting their family through New Zealand and Pacific nation's national teams or international club rugby.

They know that in their local community they can be aiming for a career in rugby at the highest level (Local College)

[Norths is a] premier rugby club, for the kids to play for, to aspire to. They can come and be part of a club that has Hurricanes players, that has got All Blacks (Committee/Governance)

They've had All Blacks in recent years, so the students see that as possible for them to strive for (Local College)

Where 20 years ago no one was getting in the All Blacks, no one was getting in the Hurricanes, no one was getting in to Wellington [representative teams]. Now it's changed, the attitude has changed. [They] see the kids who live right next door to you, going to the top (Committee/Governance)



Young players (junior players as well as senior players) are inspired by their uncles, brothers and cousins with national and international rugby careers. Similarly the success of the club's women players inspires young female players.

Because of my Uncles, they played for North and their careers took off, so I want to try to play like them (Junior Player)

If someone from Porirua can make it, why can't I? (Coach)

The kids that run around on the frost-bitten parks in Cannons Creek that if they keep playing well they'll get into their local club and then possibly go on if they're good enough (Local Media)

The club is a pathway to higher rugby honours. This path has been followed by growing numbers of club members over the past decade. Talented players are supported and fostered.

They are establishing pathways to the Lions and to the Hurricanes. You know as an 18-year-old if I'm a half decent player, I'm going to get pretty good coaching and if I've got the natural sort of talent they can hone that and I've got a good shot of getting into the Hurricanes (Local Media)

It's almost a perception that if you can make the Norths first team by default you're almost in the Wellington team. In their clubrooms the guys like Tamati and Jerry have their All Black shirts up on the wall, young kids think, "Hang on, this is going to be the best pathway for me ... it's my local club" (Local Media)



Careers and skills for life

Commitment and focus to sport gives players and volunteers skills that can provide opportunities for employment, education and skills for all areas of their life.

A lot of the guys have gained employment because of who they play for, because it's on their CV. Your profile, yes it does help. It shows that you're committed, dedicated (Coach)

I've found that I didn't concentrate throughout a whole game. Now playing premier rugby, older players get at me if I'm not concentrating. I've learnt how to concentrate on the field and off the field. I'm applying myself in school I can feel myself drifting out of things and I know that I've just got to keep in it for that moment ... like class work "Come on bro, you've got to just concentrate now, we've 20 minutes left". I just use that outside rugby, as well, which is pretty cool (Senior Player)

The fitness that we do at training helps for cross country that we do at school. It keeps you one step ahead of everyone (Junior Player)

I have worked with one who was a coach and he extended into Manager but he is still with Norths. They have always been transferable skills into his work, whatever he has been taught there he has been taking out to his employment as well. They are very committed and it seems to be a life time thing with Norths. It's good for employment that they are learning these sort of managerial skills and things like that for these kids (Social Services)



Club context relating to career aspirations

As mention earlier, since 1990, some 50 senior players at Norths have been selected into regional representative teams such as the Hurricanes and the Wellington Lions. The club has had a total of 43 players with international experience since 1990.

The focus on well rounded achievement and career is supported by the focus of local secondary schools to encourage and require high standards of any students hoping to play rugby for the school or as a school representative.

- u Students must achieve agreed attendance levels, academic standards and behaviour standards on and off the field to play for their school.
- u The colleges' academic requirements help to ensure families and parents remain as focused on academic achievement as on sporting achievement.

It's encouraging parents to not just go to watch rugby games on Saturday, but also to participate in parent teacher interviews, to see how well they're doing in the other areas of school. ... Both parents may not be able to attend, but they'll always have one parent there (Councillor)

- u School students that have been selected for club teams are still expected to achieve if they wish to have their schools' permission for leave if nominated for regional or national schools' teams. Players value the 'push' this gives them to achieve.

It's good, it makes me work harder. If we don't have anyone pushing us we kind of go easy on ourselves. So we've got that push from teachers and it's good to have, I guess (Senior player)



11.0 Loyalty to the club legacy

There is a strong sense of loyalty among club members and past members. This goes back generations and is connected both to Norths as well as to the two clubs (Titahi Bay and Porirua) that amalgamated to become Norths, some twenty years ago.



The Titahi Bay days of the club

Loyalty to Norths is evident in both the actions and emotional connections members have in relation to the club. Their strong loyalty to their family and their church extends to a staunch loyalty towards their club for the many Pacific people involved with Norths.

Mum's in her seventies, if you go to our home in Titahi Bay, it's all Titahi Bay photos, team photos and Norths with my nieces and myself, when I played for Norths way back then (Committee/Governance)

My upbringing was my father used to coach, my father-in-law used to coach here, so I've just followed through as a coach. No one has asked me to go coach; it's just something that's inside you because you've seen it with your own two eyes when you were younger (Coach)

There is that loyalty that if a player is not necessarily going to go on to the Hurricanes or the All Blacks or whatever, he'll stay with Norths and as he gets older he'll probably drift down the grades. But there is that loyalty within Porirua and within the Norths club. Once Norths always Norths (Local Media)

Members, supporters and volunteers have a strong emotional bond to Norths that holds true even through changing times.

He was thinking seriously about going ... he went back and told his Dad what he was thinking of doing and his Dad actually started crying. He started crying because he said, son if you want to go that's fine, but you know this club is always my club. Son if that's what you want to do, you go to it. This boy said as soon as his father started crying that was it (Team Manager)

I was in here on Saturday, it was the Old Timers' day, and I was talking to one of the people here. Their son played for Ponake, in their 20s team, and he was out watching our team play, which was pretty cool, because he had grown up here (Senior Player)



Past members return to continue their involvement with Norths after periods away for their education, following rugby success at the highest levels, or time taken to raise a family or focus on a career.

I've only been out of Norths once for one. I got offered money to play for [another club]. What brought me back here was my love for my town (Coach)

I ran out on this field here, shivers, I was about six or seven. I left here, went flatting in town and always came back and played here. I'd never go to any other rugby club, other than when I moved out of the area to live. But the first results I look for is always to see how the local team got on. I've always had the love for the club, it will never wane (Team Manager)

Members are committed to maintaining the legacy and the energy of the club that the 'pioneers' set up. Supporters and volunteers remain involved and dedicated over many years or decades, overcoming other commitments and obligations to stand behind Norths.

There's a lot of friends and families. There's a lot of history, memories of older people that used to support us when we were playing. Trying to carry on their legacy, it's kind of like a responsibility and "Oh who else is going to do it?" You've got to get up there (Coach)

I don't want to sit in my office and get a 'Dominion' one day and go, Norths has gone under (Committee/Governance)

Friends I grew up with, some of them are still involved with the club and I don't want to let them down because we're mates. There's some other families, like Terry Farrow who passed away a couple of weeks ago, that's a big rugby family that was really respected in Titahi Bay - Porirua. You know I just don't want to let them down either (Committee/Governance)

I got asked to consider going on to the committee because some of the guys that were my age group were progressing to the committee right. So I did (Committee/Governance)



Even though the club is relatively young at 20 years old, members follow long standing traditions that connect members to those who have come before them. These experiences teach young players life lessons and give them the opportunity to be a part of club tradition.

With the Under 12s last year, we went to Lyttelton. It's been going for close to 50 years. It's a home and away (Junior Parent)

There is camaraderie between the teams. The parents and children get billeted out; it's building the character of your kids (Junior Parent)

With that trip, one of the coaches of our team, his father was one of the players. He was one of the players. We're talking three generations, because the coach is coaching his son [now]. The grandfather is still one of the ones who are always on the premier's bus going out to games, just so very staunch, such a staunch supporter. It's been all this time. It's a big deal (Junior Parent)

Club context relating to loyalty

Loyalty to the club is pervasive and comes from the strong links to the clubs' past.

- u Many club members, especially those involved in the club committee and in coaching roles have been involved in the club all their adult lives, and while some played for the club as a junior, others are the second or third (or even fourth) generation of their family playing and volunteering for the club – or its predecessors.
- u More than one local family has an honours wall of historic club pamphlets and team photos dating back a generation or more.

Loyalty is evident in the newly formed, yet vibrant, 100 Club for supporters.

- u The 100 Club is three years old and 150 members strong. The club members attend all home games and many away games, travelling to a few away games each season en masse.
- u When they travel, they have up to four buses of supporters going to the opposition club dressed in the Norths bright blue club colours, wearing face paint and carrying banners.



12.0 Family time

Being with Norths means family time for many members. For others the staunch support of their families is what makes it all possible.



Families pack the grandstand at the junior prize giving

The club fosters and strengthens family connections. Each week at training or on a Saturday, families meet and follow the family traditions of their fathers, uncles and grandfathers.

For me, Saturday mornings is, we go and watch the schoolboy games. ... We watch every home game here with the kids. Then my son and son-in-law now don't play rugby, but they come down and watch on Saturdays. They sit up on the bank there and the kids are down playing touch rugby. My wife is in the 100 Club here (Club Volunteer)

Family, the old man played for the club, I did, the boys are playing for the club, the grandson plays for the club. There's a lot of families doing the same thing (Committee/Governance)

I've been here since I was 21 and my sons played here, my grandsons played here and now my youngest grandson is playing, my son-in-law and son are coaching. So it's, the family, it's just a continuation of different eras coming through (Club Volunteer)

My brothers have played here, my in-laws have played here. My Dad when he was alive he used to come here and he used to enjoy it, you know he never came to see me play rugby, but when he retired he took an active interest in coming down here and spending Saturday afternoons down here. It's galvanized the whole community, everyone. People have said to me in the street "Oh good game Saturday, the guys are travelling well" (Team Manager)



Families are the strength of the club. Wives and partners get involved themselves, or get behind the volunteers. Families are the staunchest supporters of young players.

I can leave the house and come down here for three or four hours out in the paddock, in the rain. We've even been in the snow here. Go home and you know that your tea is cooked, to me that's one of the biggest things. The same with my daughter and her husband. There's a lot of credit goes to the wife (Coach)

A lot of the successful sports people out there, they couldn't have done it without the backing of their family. The families are behind them and they're all into it, they all support, encourage, and they love it (Junior Parent)

The strength of the family and the presence they bring to the sideline is a big part of the culture at Norths.

It is important for us in our [Pacific] family groups to do well and go and support our family members when they play, so there's a lot of family presence at any games (Local College)

We're just gutted when a game is cancelled you have to wait another whole week for the game, to see that competition and to see your boy out there doing something he loves (Junior Parent)

[Cheering] it keeps you going through the game. It helps you; it makes you want to win. Makes you want to play hard. It just keeps you going through the whole game, hearing all the supporters cheering for you (Junior Player)

Many family milestones are shared and celebrated at Norths. The clubrooms are a regular venue for 21st birthday celebrations, weddings and family funerals. Members also gather at the clubrooms with their church groups and their workplace colleagues; many of whom are not club members themselves.

I've had three twenty-firsts in this club, for my daughters, and they've felt really a part of it. Because the last one that we had, this club was getting renovated and there was dust and everything in it, but they still wanted to go ahead with it, so we did (Committee/Governance)

Our club, it's only small, but I've used it a few times like for my son's twenty-first, family meetings, church meetings, anything. There's the park, you can use it for team-building. We had a work team-building here (Coach)



Club context relating to family

For a core group of families, their involvement with Norths means that Norths is a place that they regularly meet up and spend time together as children, parents and grandparents.

Whilst the rugby players all tend to be younger people under 35 years; older club members and others in the local community stay involved, or are in some way connected to the club, for many years after they stop playing. They get involved as a part of the volunteer club committee or as supporters, so that many members of one family are involved in different club activities from week to week.



13.0 Norths: A community

The Norths club is a community in itself. It is friendly to newcomers, maintains connections for people across the community and for some members represents links going back several generations.



Teammates and friends for life

Norths has a strong culture. Rugby success, 'giving back' and mentoring for excellence, the importance of family and its coming of age as a club are its corner stones, with Pacific cultural values woven throughout. The club is a continuation of family and church. The people are its strength 'Tatou, tatou' (It's the people, it's the people).

Like your own family no matter who you are, I walked in here and didn't know some from a bar of soap, and they treated me like family. They welcomed me in, gave me what I needed, offered me a hot drink, and it's just like a family here now (Senior Player)

At the start of the year to raise some money they have a big thing, like a hangi, it's called an umu, and it's a massive, massive thing at Porirua Park, big amounts of food. All the club's there, right from your top stars down to your juniors (Local Media)

Norths is a family club. Norths' motto is Tatou Tatou so pretty much what you see is what you get. We have not been able to be a club that has all the resources available like a lot of the clubs around Wellington. The people make Norths (Junior Parent)

It's the people, it's really the people. We could be the richest club, or the poorest, it's always going to be the people (Senior Player)



The club is open and friendly. Norths members are rekindling friendships from childhood, and are forming new life long friendships every season.

A lot of the people that I went to primary school have been active in the rugby club. So our paths cross in a lot of ways (Team Manager)

A lot [of friendships] through here. You play rugby with guys, you've grown up with the guys, you stay in the same area, so there's a long-term connection there (Committee/Governance)

I've made a lot of good friends in rugby, lifelong friends. I see people that I might not see until the following season. We always shake hands ... and if I see them on the street, we'll sit down and talk and see how their team is travelling, we look forward to when we can see each other on the paddock, doing what we're doing (Team Manager)

After the Norths game, after the Prem's. [We] play on the fields and play around with our friends (Junior Player)

Friendships are formed within rugby teams, and across social boundaries. The differences in social history and culture are celebrated and shared. Norths is a comfortable, easy place to be.

It's got a flavour to it, with the Pacific [people] they sing and chant at the matches, like at the Jubilee Cup final, they brought all their supporters along and were all singing Pacific songs. It's real easy to be swept up in it (Local Media)

I've made some really lovely friends, with people from completely different backgrounds to my own and I see them in Porirua and they're just like, they're friends, it's lovely. It's a camaraderie that's got nothing to do with your background; you're bound by that nice club environment (Junior Parent)

Norths is one of these multicultural clubs. Norths is different from all the other clubs. It's certainly the people that make it. Everybody is aware of everybody's culture and respects them (Junior Parent)

You get to connect ... a lot of the players are like sons. Two of my daughters went out with two of the boys and they've gone separate ways, but you treat them like your own sons ... I've known them since those boys were at Intermediate. ... He was in the First XV when I was coaching. I've been up to the house and have a cup of tea. It's a special family (Committee/Governance)

It's the people, like the whole community coming together. They always come together when there's big games. They show their spirit, like a united spirit, win or lose (Coach)

I like the mix of culture, you've got what I'd call a melting-pot of a lot of nationalities and those differences culturally are kind of left behind at rugby. I mean [he] is probably one of about three European Pākehā boys in the team (Junior Parent)



For some club stalwarts, the club represents much of their social contact and most of their social networks outside of work. They are long time volunteers who have played for the club in past seasons and have held many, varied, roles around the club.

When the season's over we've got to do inventory, stock take, and then we've got to do end of year wrap-up, reports, AGMs, so you've got to get the books audited. So the committee side and the admin side, we go right through. This is it. This is my life (Club Volunteer)

For other members, Norths is one of several important social networks, alongside other sport and recreation networks, strong family networks and church networks.

When you need something done there's a lot of tradesmen here. You just ring them and they'll do it for you for a cheaper price. It's on your cell phone, it's so handy (Coach)

The 100 Club is a blue clad, rowdy group of supporters from all walks of life who have a well developed sense of belonging that has been achieved over just three seasons. The 100 Club is connecting past members back into the club and bringing people from their community into the club as well as boosting confidence among players.

They're the banner wavers, they're dressed in blue, all in blue with their scarves, their jackets, their hats (Club Volunteer)

You feel like you belong, whether you know each other, or not. There's a big feeling like that. A lot of the guys from the old days, the two old clubs are starting to come back (Committee/Governance)

You just go to that game on Saturday and to see all those Norths [supporters] in their jackets and we are not talking youth, we are talking over 60's (Social Services)

It's becoming offensive to other clubs now. It's a bit of a threat when you have two busloads of supporters, just supporters, turning up at an away game! The home crowds are going "Oh my God, what's this?" (Club Volunteer)

It's great. Last Saturday here, we ran out through a massive blue tunnel, it's like something you see on television with these English clubs. The guys love it, it pumps them up (Club Volunteer)

Even the guys say after in the changing rooms when it's all finished "God wasn't it amazing when we came out?" You looked in the grandstand and it was just a big lump of blue up there (Club Volunteer)



Club context relating to Norths as a community

Norths is a club with a broad range of members of different ethnic groups, ages, and backgrounds who have a singular focus on sport and rugby. The clubs' activities promote community cohesiveness through its welcoming atmosphere and acceptance of families of a variety of cultural groups and by providing opportunities for people of many age groups and abilities to participate and be a part of club life.

The club's large membership are all local to the Porirua basin, and includes many Pacific people, Māori and Pākehā players, as well as social members and supporter club members in these ethnic groups.

- u There are more than 100 Club volunteers; all are local people, who spend a significant amount of time at the club each week.
- u More than 450 junior players (aged 13 years and under) in 25 teams are involved along with their families.
- u There are over 150 senior players across seven teams.
- u The 100 Club has around 150 members that include young children and youth, people aged 40 to 60 years as well as elderly people from the local community. Many 100 Club members are non players, some whom have never played rugby and they are a mix of ethnicity, with fewer identifying as Pacific people and more as Pākehā and Māori than among senior players.

Connections for junior players, their families, and others involved in the club are life long connections both in the local community and to the wider rugby community across New Zealand.

- u Many adult club members, especially those in volunteer club roles, describe lifelong friendships with others in the club and those associated with city clubs that they made from their school boy (junior) player days.
- u Every year for the past 45 years an Under 12s team has had a home and away fixture with the Lyttelton RFU, Christchurch. Generations of the same families have been involved in these fixtures over the years as players, coaches or parents.



14.0 Norths: A community icon

Norths is a positive and iconic symbol for the local community. Norths is representative of hope, positive values and community vibrancy for those closely involved as well as for community people who are observers rather than participants in club life.



Success of Norths is celebrated in the local newspapers

A Community Icon

Norths has a strong following in the community, including many who have never been club members, or at least not for decades and who follow Norths' success from afar. Norths brings vibrancy and weekly excitement to the street and the local park; it's a 'happening place' every home game.

When I drive down there, it's exciting when you see the car park full. I don't go and watch it, but it's exciting to see that support. It's a gathering, it's community! (Social Services)

We had to park right back, instead of being angry we thought it was kinda cool (Social Services)

On Saturdays or evenings, I think wow this is cool, look at all the cars, its just packed! And that's neat because you take that away, what else do you have that is of entertainment on the el cheapo? (Social Services)



Through Norths there is faith and pride in the local community and hope for its future. This is seen as especially valuable for the positive influences Norths provides local youth and other local people.

There's a real sense of pride in the kids that they belong to a strong sporting community. I mean for Pacific and Māori people it is important to be excellent at sport (Local College)

If there's any place that needs a boost and a good nice kick every now and again it's [here]. These boys who go to school barefoot and sometimes without any breakfast, if one of the things that they can possibly do is play for Norths and get seen and do well wearing their local team's colours, it's a positive (Local Media)

To be able to hear the kids speak about [these suburbs] in positive ways ... you don't have to go to town and watch the Hurricanes, this is our place (Social Services)

Back in the day, the Pacific Island boys had to go into Wellington. Now, they can go to school locally, they can stay and train locally, they can stay within their community and there's that sense of pride (Local Media)

A Community Hub

Norths is a community resource, it's a place for youth to hang out and a community meeting point. Youth make connections with Norths as supporters, through coaching support their schools get from the club, and when the Beard trophy (the inter-school trophy) is held at the grounds.

It's attracting a lot of the youth there. That is a positive, the youth have somewhere where they can all meet and where they can go and support their teams. My nephews, they go there every week. It doesn't matter what team is there, they support them (Social Services)

A base to the community, which is health and recreation, socialising It's a place where people go to have special family occasions, where they hire the clubrooms (Local College)

Club context relating to Norths as a community icon

Norths is situated a few kilometres from the town centre amongst an area of suburbs that are less affluent than others in the Porirua basin. Its location within a Council owned public space provides a strong tangible positive presence for the local neighbourhoods especially for the local youth.

Access to the grounds is free for all club games and provides a welcoming, socially affirmative activity that local youth are interested in and attracted to.

The club is growing its connections to the local community and local youth through the activities of some premier players. Some players are building connections with their old schools by visiting school students or connecting with junior players by coaching junior teams through the season.



15.0 Norths: Key to the City's identity

Norths' success is integral to the City's success and positive image. For many years City leaders have recognised the value of Norths' success to the City, and support and assist the club to this end.



The grandstand and ground is the pride of the Council, the community and the club

Norths' success is Porirua City's success

Through its local newspaper following, and through the actions of the Council to celebrate Norths' successes, Norths has become central to City's identity and its vibrancy.

It's been a boon for Porirua, because to be honest it hasn't necessarily got the best name nationally, everyone thinks riots and car fires and murders. It's actually a pretty vibrant city. The success of the rugby club [has] been part of Porirua going ahead a bit (Local Media)

It's the club that has put Porirua on the map, this city on the map, for being able to produce great rugby players. Norths have been nothing but a positive on this city (Local Council)

It's put Porirua on the map, you watch rugby and [see] how many All Blacks are running round from this club, how many Hurricanes are from this club (Junior Parent)

What we've achieved as a club in the last 10 years has become nationwide now. [On] Rep Rugby on television with Ken Laban and Murray Mexted, they're always saying, this is a product of that great Norths club (Club Volunteer)

When they were looking to build a \$19 million arena [the Te Rauparaha Arena], in a city that can't necessarily afford it, the popularity and the success of Norths and the Vikings [League club] certainly helped that along. So there have been spin-offs (Local Media)



Norths' success plays a strategic role for the Council. The Council has invested in the success of the club. As the Council works to place the City in the hearts and minds of the wider New Zealand public as a vibrant, multicultural and talented community; it links Norths' success, and that of several other sporting codes, with the City's growing positive self identity.

The Council celebrates the success of the codes; like if we win the Jubilee Cup they'll have the little flags on the bridge "Welcome to the City of the Jubilee Cup"
(Committee/Governance)

[This has come] all through a public investment in a top quality facility and they are the lessons that people need reminding about. This didn't [just] happen. It's not accidental
(Local Council)

Club context relating to Norths as a key to the community and city identity

The local City has seen Norths as an important community asset for many years. Community leaders made strategic decisions to support and invest in the club from before the amalgamation of the two clubs that formed Norths in 1990. More recently, support has included the development of a high quality number one ground, lighting and a grandstand.

In some recent years the City has held parades and placed banners on the motorway over bridge to celebrate Norths wins.



NEGATIVE VALUES – “DOWNSIDES”



16.0 Downsides of Norths and club rugby

There are downsides to the experience of being a part of Norths for people involved and from the perspective of those outside the club. When asked about the 'downsides', some people feel there are none, others feel there are one or two.

The reasons and causes for these downsides are varied and sometimes complex. For some downsides described, the club already has practices in place to manage the issues; such examples are noted. For other downsides, any remedy is likely to be relatively complex and may go well beyond the influence of the Norths club, or any sport or recreation club.

A sole focus on rugby is not in players' best interests

Some people feel that a singular focus on a professional rugby career by some young players leaves them poorly prepared for life outside rugby. A career in rugby is not realistic for every young player, but not all young players recognise this given that, in their experience, success is quite common for local players. However, to 'make it' players need talent and commitment and the right supports, attitudes and opportunities, as with many other careers.

A lot of the kids have this perspective that they want to be a professional rugby player, that the skills that they have are going to get them there, but they don't realise they have to first of all get the education. These people live amongst them and they know of them. A lot of them have got the skill, but you know you need the breaks, as well (Team Manager)

Club members, and other community people, want to see players succeed in life. They are saddened that some local young people are missing opportunities to be successful beyond rugby and have no 'back up' plan.

It's really sad when they get interviewed, going down to WINZ, the first thing they say is, I want to be a rugby player. But that's pie in the sky really (Team Manager)

He's going on the dole and it's really sad to hear that. They are good at rugby and they think they only have to bide their time and they'll get picked up or they'll get recognised. I am very disappointed. It is pretty risky, because they don't make it, they've got to go back and try to get some education (Team Manager)

My nephew played for the NZ 7's and travelled around the world. He had an operation on his knee and then what is he doing now? There is no tertiary education behind that and that is [like] many of them. And then you see others [players] from other areas [regions] who have stopped playing but they have got a degree and they are doing some kind of business or whatever (Social Services)



Early age-group success, without the right support, can mean players miss out on later opportunities

Some people in the local community feel that early success, such as age group representation at 10 to 12 years old, can be such a new experience for junior players, that without the right support, future representative opportunities can be lost to them if they are unable to handle the new environment. Furthermore, they and their parents experience a loss of confidence and a loss of face, if the young player is not selected again.

Some are actually 11, 12 selected for the Under 13s team because they're that good, but you put them in that environment and all of a sudden they shut up shop ... then the parents become down and out about it, because their son doesn't feel like he's fitting into that environment, or [that] he's not good enough (Local Council)

Because they've played with Pacific and Māori kids that come from the same area as them, the minute they are selected for a rep team, especially the Wellington rep team, there's the interaction with other kids from other schools, kids from other areas. The different ways they live, their family home, [it's] completely different (Local Council)

Some kids aren't so lucky to have strong family support. They don't end up doing all those things that you need to do to be playing at the top level of the sport. They might have the right attitude, but they may not have the resilience (Local Council)

Norths status as the best club limits who plays for the club

Some people outside the club feel that as Norths players are so talented, it is difficult to be selected for Norths. Rugby players who are not selected for the Norths premier team often join other clubs. While this may be viewed as “a player's choice”, this is not the first choice of some players. Many have connections to Norths from junior rugby and aspired to play for Norths as a senior player.

The team is so good and [positions in the team] so sought after. What if your son doesn't make that team? People aspire, they go up through Norths juniors and reps and aspire to them, but only so many can be in it. So what do you do? (Social Services)

Some people outside the club feel that less talented young players (seniors) are not treated in a way that makes them feel that there is a place for them in a Norths team.

Kids [young senior players] who really want to play for Norths because it has got such a high stigma [status] and they are treated the wrong way because they are not good enough. How does that impact on these kids? Do they want to go to [other clubs]? They [Norths] should be taking any potential, anyone that wants to play should be allowed to play at that club ... you pay the fees (Social Services)

Note that Norths provides a pathway for developing players who do not have the skills or ability to be selected for the premier team; including selection for the Under 21s squad (see pages 35 and 36).



Some parents' focus on rugby success is not what everyone wants

Although club members, parents and others in the community made many positive comments about Norths supporters' behaviour; junior games are occasionally interrupted by adult supporters from one team or other. The club handles such behaviour if it arises (see page 19).

Some of the supporters they get too overactive and start coming on to the field and moaning at the ref. I don't like it. It stops the game (Junior Player)

The amount and the intensity of training is more than some players and their parents want for junior players. Two trainings a week requires a significant commitment and takes junior players away from other activities.

Sometimes it's hard, because if you're supposed to do something with your mates and you've got training, you can only be with them for a little while (Junior Player)

Some people feel that, at times, the intensity of training may be more a response to parents' needs, rather than the players' needs to be skilled and safe while having fun playing rugby.

My husband coached. One of my sons was only 10 and he said "Well practise will be on a Monday" The mothers looked at him like, 'Only one day a week?' "and Wednesday" [he said]. The mothers go to every single training and sit there and make sure that their sons were listening. That was their dream. There were two kids there that looked like they didn't want to be there. My husband felt for the kids because he knew they didn't want to play and after a while he didn't want to coach. This isn't all the teams but it was definitely out there (Social Services)

Age grade weight requirements are a concern to some parents

Year after year some young players have to lose weight in order to play with their mates. There is overt pressure and real stress, for junior players to lose weight if they want to stay with the team they have played in for four or five seasons. Although some positives can come from this, such as goal setting and discipline, on balance some parents consider that the weight restrictions are too strict for young Pacific players (i.e. too low for the players height and physical maturity).

His main drive [to lose weight] was he wanted to stick with his boys that he'd always played with. That was basically the goal for him that was the only thing that kept him from digging into that KFC box, and would make him run laps and run home and just keep him disciplined (Junior Parent)

This particular year he really struggled, he was 3 kg over that weight, and that's a lot, 3 kg is a lot to try to lose. He wasn't a particularly overweight kid anyway, but he did it, with a lot of sweat and tears and stress. It was a lot of stress for him. But you know there's nothing like that feeling of achievement when he's jumped off the scales and he's made it. So he knows that if he sets his mind to something he can do it. It taught him discipline (Junior Parent)



Racism towards Pacific players from outside the club

For the supporters of Norths senior teams, the differences that Pacific players' physique and talent bring to the game, is regularly commented on. While this could polarise the community and be an issue, it very often does not do this. Rather the local talent and the cultural diversity of the players is celebrated.

There's no arguing that they [senior Pacific players] are just incredibly naturally gifted, talented and big people and there is that perception that, unless you're a half back or a first five, which is traditionally European positions, you're not going to get into the Norths first team. So there is that. Well it does polarise it a little bit, but in saying that there are a lot of white faces on that Norths sideline of a weekend. So I think a lot of people just don't care, you know (Local Media)

Nonetheless, the reactions of other clubs towards junior Pacific players' size, their physical maturity and their skill level can be very negative (this includes taunts and comments by other teams' players and supporters). These situations are regularly experienced by the junior teams in the local competition. These reactions from other clubs have been ongoing for many years and have continued in the 2010 season. It is the reality for Norths junior teams to have to contend with comments based on prejudices and racist attitudes. Parents, coaches and players regularly face comments about players 'eating too much', 'eating taro', and that the club is not truthful about players' weight.

Prejudices. The first thing people see, is big boys, overweight, how did they get that in there [the team]? The boys came across it and I know that it's happened this year (Junior Parent)

Parents of junior players consider that the negative comments are in part a reaction to their players' being talented rugby players, but that nonetheless these are hurtful and challenging to deal with each season.

These boys are quite talented. So if they were useless then they're not going to be so targeted [in relation to their weight] by other teams (Junior Parent)



Appendix A: Norths club overview

Club overview

Norths is situated in Porirua (population 50,000), 25 kilometres north of Wellington's CBD. The club is one of two rugby clubs in Porirua.

The club offers junior rugby (from four and five-year-olds through to Under 13s) and senior rugby from late teenage years onwards³.

The club has a catchment area spanning across the Porirua basin. Club members and club players are almost all local residents with few players coming from outside the City or from other regions.

The club is currently very successful, and has been for the past five to six seasons, after many years of limited success. All the senior teams are at or near the top of their competitions by the end of the 2010.

Club history

Norths club was formed from an amalgamation of two long standing clubs in the Porirua basin 20 years ago. The Titahi Bay club, based in Titahi Bay, and the Porirua Club, based in the area where Norths is now located.

Prior to the amalgamation, the two clubs were facing various difficulties, neither club was attracting local talented rugby players, and whilst one was financially secure the other was struggling with administration and finances. Both were performing relatively poorly on the field compared to the Wellington City clubs they were competing against.

In the past two decades, since Norths formed, the club has faced a number of ups and downs. While the difficulties have included managing and raising funds to pay for debts and costs associated with the clubrooms and use of the Park facilities; there have also been many positives as described below.

The local Council's role in the Park's facilities upgrade (that is, the development of the number one ground and the new grandstand) is the pride of the club. The Council's ongoing support in maintaining these facilities, and supporting the club in other ways, has been a significant boost for the club.

Recently, the club committee has overseen a renovation of the clubrooms.

³ All school age rugby from 13-year-olds and upwards is played wholly within the local colleges, with the exception of a few elite college aged players who may hold positions in senior rugby teams and/or age group representative teams.



Over the past decade in particular, the on field milestones have significantly shaped the club.

In the past ten years, many club members have achieved representative honours. Most notably, for the impact it has had on the club and the aspirations for others to follow in his footsteps, is Jerry Collins' 2001 to 2008 All Blacks role. Since the early 2000's, a growing number of club members have had representative honours in national teams (including the All Blacks, the Black Ferns, Pacific Island nations' national teams, and New Zealand age-group teams). This national success is mirrored by the success of many club members being selected for local representative teams, including both male and female regional teams and age group teams such as the Under 13s. (See Figure 4 below for further details).

The advent of a paid coaching role (a Coaching Coordinator, or CCO, paid by the Wellington Rugby Football Union) based at the club, reportedly provides high quality coaching throughout the club and strong links to the local colleges. This has been described as one of the factors behind the club's on field success throughout the grades.

Club facilities

The club owns and maintains its own club rooms, which are situated at Trust Park Porirua. The Porirua City Council owns, maintains and manages the Park. This includes a stadium grandstand (capacity 1,900) adjacent to an international standard rugby field with television standard night lighting, three other senior rugby fields, change rooms, a softball diamond and car parking areas.

The fields are used on a weekly basis during the season for weekend rugby fixtures and/or rugby league fixtures, as well as for training during the week. In the summer months the grounds are home to a local softball club.



Club structure

The club structure includes governance and leadership by a club committee (all volunteers) and a coaching team. The coaching team is headed by one paid coaching coordinator, with the remainder of the rugby coaches, team managers, and other support roles all being volunteer roles.

Figure 1: Club structure

Club administration and facilities roles
Patron
Club President (figure head role and Wellington Rugby Football Union delegate)
Club Committee
Executive (Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary, Club Captain)
Up to eight other general committee members
General administrative roles
Membership secretary
Supporters' club coordinator (the 100 Club)
Facilities coordinator
Bar Manager
Club coaching roles
Coaching management roles
Coaching Coordinator - this is the <u>only</u> paid role at the club
Junior Co-Convenors (two)
Premier Men's Team
Coach (also the paid coaching coordinator)
Co-coaches
Manager (and Assistant Managers)
Physiotherapy (two)
Senior Teams (Senior First, Senior Seconds, Under 21s, Women's)
Coach
Assistant coach
Manager (may include an Assistant Manager)
Junior Teams (Under 13s) and Social Teams (Presidents Teams and Golden Oldies)
Coach
Manager



Club membership

The club has some 450 junior players (mainly boys, with a few girls). The senior club includes over 150 players with seven senior teams, including: a colts team (Under 21s), a senior seconds team, a senior firsts team, a premier team, two (social) presidents teams and a women's premier team. The club also has over 300 social members, including a Golden Oldies team and 150 in the supporters club the 100 Club.

The majority of the junior and senior players (both male and female) are of Pacific ethnicity, with a minority of Māori and Pākehā players. This pattern of Pacific representation is more accentuated among the senior teams. The club's membership includes a number of local sporting families whose involvement has continued over many years and for three to four generations.

The 100 Club membership is broad. People of all ages and ethnicities are involved, many of whom have never played rugby. Most members are aged 40 to 60, however children, youth as well as older supporters are active participants via the supporters club.

Figure 3: Club membership in 2010

Club Membership	
Wellington RFU membership, players	
Senior players (seven teams)	
Total 160 ⁴	65% Pacific, 15% Māori, 15% New Zealand European, 4% Other
Male (130 players)	62% Pacific, 18% Māori, 14% New Zealand European
Female (30 players)	75% Pacific, 18% NZ European
Junior players (25 teams)	
Total 450	45% Pacific, 33% Māori, 20% New Zealand European, 2% Other
Male (420 players)	48% Pacific, 33% Māori, 18% New Zealand European
Female (30 players)	33% Pacific, 33% Māori, 33% New Zealand European
Wellington RFU membership, volunteers	
55 registered coaches	
20 registered administrative volunteers	
Club membership (additional to WRFU registrations)	
Paid up club members, other than those registered with the WRFU include 'financial' club members, some of whom have volunteer roles ⁵ (n=340), and the 100 Club (n=154).	

⁴ There is also a second Presidents team and a Golden Oldies that play occasionally throughout the year.

⁵ Parents who are managers of junior teams (i.e. volunteers) are not all club members.



Representative honours

Figure 4: Club members representing the region, New Zealand and other nations, or playing internationally since the club was established in 1990

Regional representation up to 2010 season (since 1990)	
Wellington/Hurricanes players (<u>includes</u> those who are also national representatives)	
Senior players (men and women) – Total 50 players	
Hurricanes	14 Hurricanes
Wellington Lions	21 players* (including 13 who were <u>also</u> Hurricanes)
Wellington Pride (women)	28 players
Junior players – Total 3 players	
Wellington Under 13s	3 players
National representation up to 2010 season (since 1990)	
New Zealand representative players (men and women) – Total 22 players	
All Blacks	5 players
NZ Māori	3 players (including 2 who were <u>also</u> All Blacks)
Sevens	2 players
NZ Colts	5 players (including 3 who were <u>also</u> All Blacks)
NZ Under 19s	11 players (including 2 who were <u>also</u> NZ Colts, and another 2 who were <u>also</u> NZ Colts/All Blacks)
Black Ferns (women)	4 players
Sevens – women's	1 player
Other nations – representation (men/women) – Total 18 players (who are <u>not</u> also NZ reps).	
Tonga	1 player
Manu Samoa	6 players
Manu Sina (women)	9 players
Cook Island Sevens	1 player
Samoa Sevens	2 players (including 1 who was <u>also</u> a Manu Samoa player)
International club players Total 3 players (who have <u>not</u> also been NZ/other nations reps.)	
Clubs in France, Ireland, Japan, Scotland	4 players (including 1 who was <u>also</u> an NZ Colt)

*In addition, ex-club members play for other regional teams (e.g. in 2010 two play for Canterbury and Waikato).



Paid and volunteer hours, training hours

The following tables present the paid and volunteer hours of the club administration team and the club coaching team. Just one person, the coaching coordinator, is in a paid role. See Figures 5 and 6. Senior players train for 6 or more hours per week, whilst junior players train for about two hours per week. See Figures 7 and 8.

Figure 5: Volunteers in administration roles: committee, clubrooms roles

Role	Hours/week	Notes about role
Club President	- 2 hours	- Figure head role (past Chairman) - Represents club as Wellington Rugby Football Union delegate
Sub total	- 2 hours	
Chair person	- 8 to 10 hours	- Email conversations/decisions, and meetings two nights/week.
Sub total	- 9 hours	
Club President	- 3 hours	- Figure Head role (mainly) - Wellington RFU Delegate
Sub total	- 3 hours	
Treasurer	- 9 hours	- Invoicing, budgeting, attending meetings regarding budgets
	- 5 hours	- Check grants reports from past years being sent out - Prepare grants reports from this year are being prepared
Sub total	- 16 hours	
Secretary	- 8 hours	
Sub total	- 8 hours	
Club Captain	- 12 hours	- Four nights/week. See coaches/managers, check injured players
	- 5 to 10 hours	- Communication with the Regional Union, club members
Sub total	- 19.5 hours	
100 Club	- 3.5 hours	- 30 minutes most days on telephone and email making arrangements for 100 Club activities
	- 6.5 hours	- Saturdays
Sub total	- 10 hours	
Bar Manager	- 12 hours	- Evenings/weekends managing the bar. Volunteer role that moves around different people.
Sub total	- 12 hours	
Membership	- 8 hours	- Evenings/weekends taking registrations & signing up members
Sub total	- 8 hours	



Figure 6: Volunteers working with senior teams: coaches, managers, game/training support

Role	Hours	Notes about role
Coaching Coordinator	- 40 hours	- Paid role and volunteer role as premier coach
Sub total	- 40 hours	There is one CCO
Coach (senior team) ⁶	- 20hours	- Four to five nights two trainings and two to three extra skills training sessions
	- 4 hours	- Friday night & Saturday morning (game plan, player goals)
	- 7.5 hours	- Saturday morning at club gear preparation, pre game, game, post match function (two hours more if an away game)
Sub total	- 27.5 hours	There are 5 competitive senior teams and 2 Presidents team
Skills coach (senior team)	- 12 hours	- Three nights
	- 5 hours	- Saturday pre game, game and post match function (two hours more if an away game)
Sub total	- 17 hours	There are 5 competitive senior teams and 2 Presidents team
Co-coach (backs coach)	- 1 hour	- Player reviews/selections. Phone discussions/emails with other coaches
	- 5.5 hours	- Three nights training
	- 2 hours	- Friday night game plan
	- 2 hours	- Saturday morning game plan
	- 7.5 hour	- Saturday pre game, game and post match function (two hours more if an away game)
Sub total	- 18 hours	There are 5 competitive senior teams and 2 Presidents team
Co-coach (forwards coach)	- 3 hours	- One night training
	- 7.5 hours	- Saturday pre game, game and post match function (two hours more if an away game)
Sub total	- 10.5	There are 5 competitive senior teams and 2 Presidents team
Co-Coach (senior women)	- 1.5 hours	- Player reviews/selections. Phone discussions/emails with other coaches
	- 3 hours	- Two nights training
	- 3 hours	- Saturday pre game, game (2 to 4 hours more for some away games)
Sub total	- 7.5	There are 5 competitive senior teams and 2 Presidents team

⁶ Premier team has 1 coach, 2 co-coaches, 1 manager, 2 to 3 assistant managers, 2 physiotherapists.
Other senior teams have 1 coach, 1 co-coach/assistant coach, 1 manager and 2 assistant managers



Role	Hours	Notes about role
Team Manager (senior team)	- 5 hours	- One to two training nights
	- 6 hours	- Saturday pre game, game and post match function (two hours more if an away game)
Sub total	- 11 hours	There are 5 competitive senior teams and 2 Presidents team

Figure 7: Volunteers working with junior teams: coaches, managers, game/training support

Role	Hours	Notes about role
Junior Co- Convenor	- 20 hours	- 2 to 4 nights a week and all day Saturday
Sub total	- 20 hours	There are <u>two</u> junior co-convenors
Coach (junior team)	- 3 hours	- Two nights training
	- 1.5 hour	- Friday/Saturday game plan
	- 1.5 hours	- Game
Sub total	- 6 hours	There are 25 junior teams (all have at least one coach)
Manager (junior team)	- 1.5	- 1 to 2 hours of ringing and texting the team each week - May be carried out by coach if no team manager
Sub total	- 1 hour	There are 25 junior teams (not all have a manager)

Figure 8: Players' hours training per week (additional to warm up and game)

Role	Hours/week	Notes about role
Senior teams	- Three times a week	- All senior teams have two formal nights and all/most players attend a specific skills session on another night and/or warm down
Sub total	- 5 hours	There are 5 competitive senior teams and 2 Presidents team, with 160 senior players
Senior players	- Own training	- All senior players also have their own programme (e.g. weights in the gym)
Sub total	- 1 hour	There are 5 competitive senior teams and 2 Presidents team, with 160 senior players
Junior teams	- 2 times a week	- All junior teams have two formal training nights a week
Sub total	- 2 hours	There are 25 junior teams, 450 junior players



Appendix B: Club review, where to for Norths?

Norths faces a number of challenges that it will need to address and opportunities to take up so that it can remain a vibrant, successful club in the future.

Challenges facing Norths

The club administration and financial situation of the club is an ongoing challenge

The model of clubroom ownership and use of Council owned and managed grounds requires the club to constantly raise money. This situation has been a challenge for many years and the club has a number of debts related to this and due to a range of historical factors. If the financial situation remains difficult or worsens, some stakeholders feel that amalgamation is a potential that could become a reality. A likely outcome would be to join with a Wellington based club, which would result in a loss of the 'local' identity that is central to Norths.

- u Currently, sponsorship is limited and few local businesses are fully engaged with the club.

Businesses have been slow to realise it.... learning to understand that if we have got a major game at the Park this is an opportunity for the business community (Local Council)

- u Fundraising activities take significant time and commitment. While members have less time to get involved than in the past, changes in attitudes and spending habits also mean that, some income sources, such as the club bar, are also providing less and less 'pay back'.

The old style fundraising entities in the clubs they're not there any more, because people are so busy (Committee/Governance)

We've got to do our own fundraising and it's getting harder and harder (Club Volunteer)

The big income spinner for our rugby club was the bar. [Now] people don't come down to the club, the kids are better at the drinking driving thing than perhaps my generation ever were. Also we're not in an affluent area, so some people just don't have that extra cash to blow 60 bucks every Saturday night on booze (Committee/Governance)



Fundraising and seeking sponsorships is an ongoing challenge, with costs rising and sponsorship and funding dropping away

It costs about \$40,000 to run the premier team for a season, including trips for pre-season training as well as week to week expenses and a share of the ground fees. Team managers have a role to fundraise for their team.

One roll of tape, I just priced some tape it was 15 bucks and we'll go through between 5 and 6, 7 rolls of that per game. That's only brown tape, not including white tape, you know. So it's finding all that money (Club Volunteer)

It's just increasingly hard to get money to pay subs from players for us to pay the Rugby Union. We've got to pay for the grounds ... up in the thousands (Club Volunteer)

We've got to pay to train on them [grounds] and we've got to find that money (Club Volunteer)

There is a decreasing funding pool and a changing, and challenging, funding environment. The changes to gambling habits and the changes to regulation of gaming machines (pokies) and gaming sites has significantly decreased the income of the Community Trusts that provide grants to clubs like Norths.

But the problem is now, that some funding organisations used to meet monthly, now they meet every two months, because the public aren't spending as much money on pokies. We got 60 grand at the end of last year, and 100 grand before last year (Committee/Governance)



Volunteerism is a challenge

The volunteer roles at the club are a substantial commitment, and not all these roles are well understood. These factors, along with potential volunteers' other commitments, 'turn-off' potential volunteers.

It's just such a challenge today to try to be part of so many different things. You'd love to be, but you just don't have the time (Junior Parent)

When I was a player, a lot of the rugby administrators worked for government departments. You can't do that any more, your job is so important to hang on to (Coach)

What turns a lot of people off is the time factor. These guys have got to commit themselves nearly four nights a week. Two nights a week team training, but if they have a warm down on a Sunday or rehab, a planning session on a Monday [its more] (Committee/Governance)

Some people don't want to be involved in the committee, because they think the committee is hard work, but if you get the right people, the committee, it can be a lot easier (Committee/Governance)

The club struggles to attract volunteers with certain skills, which results in an imbalance of workloads or activities not getting done, or being delayed.

We're struggling to get the website up and running and we've got someone working on it, but it's not in your face at the moment (Committee/Governance)

We don't have the financial analysts. We don't have the lawyers sitting round our table (Committee/Governance)

They need professionals on board (Committee/Governance)

We need a lot more help on the committee [on the] administration side. Everyone has got ideas, everyone has got great ideas for you to implement, but it's about implementing it (Committee/Governance)



College rugby model is a challenge for the club

Having separate college rugby limits the success of clubs and club rugby. Norths develops a special atmosphere and bond between talented players and their families with junior rugby which is lost when the team split up to go to college. Many players move to other sports and activities during their college years and some join other clubs after college rather than returning to Norths.

The model of college rugby doesn't help, you're better off having a go with the clubs, sticking with the clubs (Committee/Governance)

There's 500 kids playing schoolboy rugby here. They go to college and we get 15 coming out the other end. One of the reasons ... is that when they're young they go through the same teams for five or six years, every kid brings their parents or their grandparents, and at 12 years of age they split up and that group splits (Committee/Governance)

Changes in rugby and rugby audiences is an emerging challenge

The changes in rugby means that it no longer suits all physiques, and the professionalism and representative selection from a young age interrupts the connections clubs like Norths make with junior players and their families.

Rugby used to fit anybody, any size, any profile, but now rugby is a little bit different, it's more streamlined, you don't have the big telly tubbies playing any more.... the game has changed that much that there's not a role for everybody (Team Manager)

The union they've got academies now, if they spot a talent they try and pull it out and you're pushed into that category, "over there, that's where you're going to perform". They don't have that connection with the club or the local rugby team at grassroots (Junior Parent)

When you're talking about rugby, it's engrained in New Zealand, it's grassroots. This is where it starts. It starts with the junior kids. This where families come together, where communities support it. Then when you get on to another level and it gets to a whole different ball game, the professional level (Junior Parent)

Rugby audiences are changing and want to be entertained and to see fast flowing rugby played by professionals.

People will want that type of rugby and they want that professionalism thing. It's more entertainment and the Sevens reflects that. There's a culture that follows Sevens (Junior Parent)



Opportunities: Sports Administration and Volunteerism

Opportunities to strengthen the club sports administration

A number of stakeholders comment on the need for Norths to enhance sports administration in parallel to the professionalism being developed amongst coaches. While some club members feel that the committee has some good people now, others feel that it is an area that the club needs to take every opportunity to strengthen.

We've got some good thinkers within like, some good leadership within the committee, some good business people up there in terms of strategic thinking. So they've got their ideas (Coach)

Suggestions and comments included the following:

- u More 'professional' input and support is needed.
- u Some of the roles are quite extensive, with the treasurer role (in particular) requiring a specialist skill set.
- u The grants role, which is often shared among the executive, or has been attached to the treasurer role, includes preparing applications as well as fulfilling reporting requirements of funding received. This is a large role and too much for the treasurer to do in total.
- u The chair role is quite extensive, and includes financial and business leadership, requiring planning skills and experience. There is also a 'figure head' component with this role that has included the expectation from club members of attendance at senior games and post match functions on Saturdays (which adds a further 4 to 6 hours a week to the role). In recent years, the person holding this role has not always fulfilled the figure head role as it is a significant commitment.
- u The club committee (especially the executive) as well as other volunteers are using significant amounts of their 'work' time or personnel time at lunchtimes and evenings to manage emails (review emails and make decisions via email) that in the past may have occurred at weekly meetings.
- u There needs to be better systems in place to ensure processes run smoothly and effectively year in year out, rather than being dependent mainly on a talented person in a role 'going the extra mile'.
- u Systems need to consider long-term player recruitment, retention and development, as well as sports administrator (volunteer) recruitment, management and training/development. This will ensure that a pool of talented people (administrators as well as players) are attracted to join and stay involved with the club.
- u Use of sports administration best practice tools may be an option to assess where the club is at and where actions are needed to better meet demands.



Developing a financial strategy and plan for the club

Club members and others comment that the club needs to build stronger links and develop relationships and new ways of working with those that can provide sponsorship, funding or even 'buy' services from the club.

- u Develop stronger relationships with the Council and sponsors.
 - u The Council has invested in strategic ways with the club over the years and is reasonably likely to continue to do so given Norths standing in the community, but this relationship needs to be nurtured and developed.
 - u There is a need to involve and engage with sponsors, such as local businesses more. The club could invite them more often to celebrate with them, to be a part of the activities at the grounds and at away games, perhaps along side the 100 Club.

Heighten the communication, newsletters. Ring them up and say, hey we're taking a bus out to the final in Ponake 'Do you want to come?' (Committee/Governance)

- u Consider how to better access grants/funding that does still exist (i.e. develop systems that are not dependent on one individual).
 - u Developing new ways to access funding will be key, as the club cannot depend on the traditional funding streams, given the changing funding environment.
- u Consider ways to earn money, rather than focusing on competing for the ever decreasing pool of grants funding.



Examples from Vikings League Club

Consider opportunities that other clubs use. By way of example, the Vikings League Club have introduced the following to develop their club:

- u Earn money as a team rather than fundraising. For example, the Club has an arrangement with the Council to keep their home park clear of rubbish. Junior teams (college age) pick up rubbish around the park three times each week, with the team collecting the \$45 paid for their team fundraising. This money is not a hand out; it's a hand up and is a valued service role that teaches young players life lessons about their place in the community.

The Vikings Rugby club is doing some really great things ... like they have got their juniors in organised programmes, like cleaning up Ascot Park, picking up rubbish. Because they want them to have some pride in their patch. Now what is the Council's attitude going to be? They come along with some request for help we are going to respond positively (Local Council)

- u Senior players as Community ambassadors⁷:
 - u Senior players are ambassadors for the Drive Safe campaign (the messages include being a licensed driver, and no drink driving).
 - u Senior players and the club are campaign supporters for the "Violence is not our game" campaign. This promotes non-violence on the field, and at home and has had an impact with no players being sent off from games for violence in the past year.
- u Launch of an Elite Programme for 15 to 17 year olds (this includes gear/kit, 'number ones' for post match, scholarships to Australian league clubs, gym fees, league identity David Lomax as the elite coach and a clear set of rules to commit to such as no drink, no drugs).

⁷ Note that it may not be appropriate for Norths to be involved in such programmes, as the club culture and player populations are likely to be somewhat different to those of the Vikings club.



Greater use of new technologies: a website and video coaching

A wide range of club members and others outside the club mention that the club could make greater use of technology. The website functions that the club has are currently used to connect with overseas rugby people.

Having a good website is a key thing, too. We had a couple of players from South Africa; they just turned up this year. They went on the website, had a look. I've known other players that have said "Oh I've looked at the website" (Club Volunteer)

However, many feel that the club is such a success and that there are so many opportunities that a fully functioning website could provide to promote the club, the players and the coaches to the community and the world; that a better website is a key area to develop. They feel that this should include player profiles including game movie clips, information about the volunteer roles and updates on club events and club news.

They need to sort out a website that's got like a video facility so a French club or a UK club that's looking for a good club player, they can't see how any of them are going [now] (Local Media)

For a successful club, and I can't emphasise how successful they've been, they don't have a website, which is just terrible. If you look at the French and British clubs that want to recruit and say they think someone at the Hurricanes or even down one to the Lion's, is out of their league, they might start plundering club rugby, [well] they can't. They can't find it [the club]. I think Norths have signed up through one of those websites that you can sort of piggyback, like Sporting Pulse, but it's really haphazard (Local Media)

Others mention that use of technology for coaching is a great opportunity, but expertise is needed to ensure players learn from the experience.

They need to explain the new technology to players. It's all very well video taping and then letting someone watch it, but they need someone to analyse their game. Because there's a lot you can get out of a video tape (Senior Player)



Enhancing volunteerism at Norths

Most volunteers are people who have been connected with the club as players (or parents of players) in the past. Any events that reconnect these people are an opportunity to remind people about their loyalty for their club and are a chance to have them return something to the club as supporters, sponsors or volunteers. Comments and suggestions include the following:

- u The World Cup, for example via the World Cup legacy group, represents an opportunity for Norths to promote itself around the world. It will provide exposure and remind past members of their old club, wherever they are.

More players would probably want to come back here. We've got a number of players playing overseas right now (Club Volunteer)

- u Old timers' days and any events that celebrate players' past glories, offers an opportunity to link players back into the club.

We're going to have that team come here on old timers day, so it would be nice if we could actually get one or two of them to link back in, even if they join the 100 Club and make a donation (Committee/Governance)

- u Although current trends suggest that more local players are likely to take up international playing opportunities, whether this is with the All Blacks, other national teams or going directly to international clubs, many will eventually return to their roots, to their parents and their families in Porirua. Club members dream about the amazing opportunity it would be for the club to have these 'stars' as coaches, even if it is a stepping stone to other coaching roles.

Having those guys to come back [after their international careers] and coach, wow! They'll be financially secure when they come over. Because most of them they love to develop their coaching careers, so maybe, hopefully they're eyeing up their local club to come and start their coaching (Coach)

While it is important to refresh the pool of volunteers, club members feel that recognition, acknowledgment and support for the talented volunteers already with the club, are important.

Support for the coaches. If you wanted to keep quality coaches coaching year after year then it would be good for them to be acknowledged in some way or form. I'm not talking anything monetary (Junior Parent)



Enhancing connections to the Community

People outside the club comment that the club does a lot for its local community simply by being successful and having a vibrant club atmosphere. For the good of the community as well as to enhance the standing of the club within the community, however, those outside the club feel that there are opportunities for the club to leverage off their success and the significant status that the players have in the community, especially among the youth.

- u Social services in the local area, in particular, commented that Norths could connect more with the local community by becoming better known and sharing their successes in life. This could include active 'ambassador roles' by rugby heroes (i.e. premier players, including those who do not have representative roles), through to profiles and publicity about their skills and talents off the field (e.g. that players finished college, study at Tech, are doing an apprenticeship).

My nephew has got the passion around rugby but his academics, like at school, he just turns off, switches off. I always say to him rugby players have really good ethics and for you to be a good rugby player you have to have all that too, balance (Social Services)

It would be nice to read about them. Even if they do a story, like the KapiMana do them they could profile their successes, academically or things like that too; more than just the rugby (Social Services)

Maybe some community service within schools ... they go in and promote some sort of cause that could be anti bullying and they could be recognised as being advocates (Social Services)

It doesn't matter what comes out of their mouth, my 7 year old would think it was wonderful ... they could use that as a tool (Social Services)

- u Further linking Norths' success with Porirua's success and other champions in Porirua will strengthen Norths standing with city leaders, with local businesses and with people in regions across New Zealand. This could include linking the club with performing arts for example.

The Kapahaka and the Pacific Island cultures are massive. We have got the world champion barber shop quartets in our colleges, Viard or Aotea or Porirua College. ... There is another layer to be exposed and a natural coming together of performing arts and sport. We need to show case those good singers at our top rugby fixtures. Bring them all on and put them on for entertainment at half time (Local Council)



Opportunities: Maximising Membership

Junior rugby and colleges are key to maintaining a talent pool

While club members and others mentioned that Norths works hard to maintain relationships with the local colleges; many mention that linkages to colleges, and staying connected to past juniors while they are at college, remains a key area for the club's ongoing success in attracting talented senior players to the club. Comments about this include the following:

- u Porirua has a growing population and the potential to grow junior rugby, among other things, that is an (almost) unique opportunity for Norths, and one that will become the envy of other clubs.
- u The local colleges are a significant 'asset' for Norths. Unlike city clubs Norths has relationships with four separate colleges, whilst some clubs are 'scraping' over players; with two or three clubs linking in with a single college.
- u The success of junior rugby grows club loyalty and positive experiences of junior players. The talented junior players will boost the quality of the local college rugby. These juniors have loyalty to Norths and aspire to be Norths players in the future. This connection is already there, but has to be nurtured so that players maintain some links with the club.

The junior rugby has been going really really well. The coaches that are involved in there, the parents that are coaching these kids, they're getting better and better, they're winning. The junior rugby is doing so well that it's going to feed into the colleges and feed into the club and it's going to make those guys want to come back (Junior Parent)

- u The club needs to support the schools to maintain a focus on rugby, especially when there are changes in school personnel, changes in school focus and increasing workloads in schools.

The club has got to provide it [a school focus on rugby] otherwise a whole bunch of the players you have bought through to this Under 13 level [can] go into those schools and never come back to you (Rugby Administrator)

The schools are critical. One of the issues for schools now with the changing demographic and age of secondary school teachers and interests and NCEA workloads and all of that stuff that's going on, is that less and less teachers are committing to co-curricular activities and far less to rugby (Rugby Administrator)



Bridge the gap from school to club rugby and be inviting for the less elite players

Club members and others mention that it will be important to further extend connections with college rugby players by considering the experience of starting at the club for new senior players, including those with less confidence and fewer overt talents. Suggestions are as follows:

- u Offering players experiences that expose them to the quality coaching and positive atmosphere of the club.

To attract the second tier players you've got to have the right coaches. If you have the right coaches then the guys will say "Oh yes, well he's a good coach. I'll go and play there because I know that I'm going to learn something, I'm going to get better at my game and maybe one day I'll break into the Prem's" (Coach)

Looking after youth, involving the young age grades with the premiers or the senior first and the [Under] 21s. Inviting them, communicating with them, when they're at college. Making them feel that they're still a part of the club, inviting them here, during their school holidays, running a bit of a camp to involve them with the 21s, just to give them a look at what's involved when you leave school, so it's not so much of a surprise (Senior Player)

- u Ensure players see and understanding that there are pathways and opportunities for senior players within any team in the club.
- u Capitalise on current players' networks by recognising that decisions about selecting a rugby club are often linked to friendships. Friends follow friends into clubs.

Just him [college aged player] being here is going to drag a lot of guys from his school, and a lot of people from other schools that associate with that age. I was the same, I didn't play rugby really at school, but when my mates went to a certain club, that's what you do, you follow them. You want to be with your friends while you're young (Senior Player)



Connect with partners and families and be more family friendly

Gain support and connect better with families. Consider the need of families with very young children as well as Pacific players' families who are non drinkers.

It needs to be more partner-friendly. Most players, their partner is more or less their best mate. It's hard to stay at a club when your best mate is not here (Senior Player)

There's a lot of young families here, we can't just play footy all the time, we need to put something on for the kids, we need to feed them. You can't just put them in a room. It's meeting the need of the family, so we can make this one big happy family (Senior Player)

We've got to get the community more involved, the guys parents. They're all shy, they see the people that come in here [the clubrooms] as drinkers, but most of them don't drink. More of things outside, some kind of culture thing, tents where they can go and buy island food (Coach)



Opportunities: Player Development

Long term player development

Club members and others feel that currently coaches mainly focus on the short term. They feel that long term player development is a role that the wider club needs to consider. Several people mention that a sports academy would be an asset to the club useful for supporting local talent. The comments focus on supporting local young people with sporting talents who are well rounded and are equipped to make career decisions that are in their own interests, whether this is within rugby or other sports. Suggestions include the following.

- u Developing a sports academy that offers support across several codes for promising college players where Australian scouts can connect with local talent.
- u Consider international opportunities for talented local players as an asset rather than a hindrance to the club over the long term. While a decision to move overseas takes young players away from New Zealand and the local rugby scene, if players have strong links to their club and feel that the club is supportive of their decision, then Norths is likely to be where they will return to.

Every young kid wants to go overseas. OK manage the experience, make sure they have got something to come back to, so all this political concern about our young people going on leave, I think they are missing the point. ... They will come back (Local Council)

I've had a young fella who had the opportunity to go and play professional rugby. A lot of these players would actually make a decision to go with family in mind. Because unfortunately it's bigger [the opportunity] than what their heart or loyalty may be for the club (Junior Parent)

- u Promote a more rounded development of young people.

I would like to see them do more instead of just fostering great players, foster great men or great people that are successful in all areas of life (Social Services)

Women's rugby

Club people, and others, described women's rugby at Norths as a significant asset. Suggestions about enhancing this area included that the club could acknowledge and celebrate the successes of the women players more. Some also suggest that women's rugby is a growth area and that the club could explore forming two women's squads, a development and a premier squad. This would give college players a clearer pathway to work towards the premier women's squad.

It would be good to see two women's teams, even if we had like a colts squad as well as a prem' squad. I think the men's teams are doing well in terms of numbers and terms of the quality of players that we are churning out (Coach)