Welsh Rugby Data Report

Extract from the Sheffield Hallam University report

This paper has been produced by researchers from the Sport and Physical Activity Research Centre (SPARC) in the School of Sport and Physical Activity at Sheffield Hallam University. The methods, analysis, and conclusions are those of the Sport and Physical Activity Research Centre alone. The report aims to validate the data provided by the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU) across population, schools, clubs, plus analysis of team performance, contribution to the Wales national team and the British & Irish Lions, attendances, stadium utilisation, and a limited set of financial indicators.

1.1 COMMISSIONING AND INDEPENDENCE

Commissioning and funding:

This report was commissioned and funded by Ospreys Rugby Limited ("the Club") under the Terms of Reference reproduced at Appendix 8. It has been produced by researchers from the Sport and Physical Activity Research Centre (SPARC) at Sheffield Hallam University on the University's standard consultancy terms. The fee was fixed in advance and no part of it depended on the findings.

Independence:

The methods, analysis, and conclusions are those of the authors alone. None of the authors has any financial or other interest in the Club, Y11 Sport & Media, in any other Welsh professional club or in the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU).

Sources:

The WRU's "Men's Professional Club Locations Data Pack" (November 2025) is not a published document; a copy was supplied to the authors by the Club. The Club also supplied its own unpublished briefing note on the data pack. All other material used is publicly available and is cited in the report where applicable. After the Terms of Reference were issued on 23 September 2026, and agreed on 1 October 2026, the WRU published further material: the Keystone report and its own supporting papers on the futurerugby.cymru website (9 October 2026, revised 16 October 2026), and its annual report and accounts for the year to 30 June 2026 (22 October 2026), together with its stated position on moving from four professional clubs to three and on what it can afford. The authors have had regard to that material in its published form only. The authors have not seen any unpublished WRU document other than the data pack.

Review of drafts:

The Club was sent three working drafts and returned comments on accuracy, arithmetic, sourcing, and presentation, and suggested some additional points. The authors considered each on its merits and adopted only those they judged to be supported by the evidence; where they did not agree, the text stands as the authors wrote it. A log of the comments and the authors' response to each is held by the University. The findings and conclusions are the authors' own.

Scope of comment:

The Club informed the authors that its agreement with the WRU places obligations on the Club concerning public statements. The University is not a party to that agreement. This report is confined to the analysis of data and evidence and expresses no view on the conduct or motives of any organisation or individual.

Use of the report:

The report was delivered to the Board of Ospreys Rugby Limited. Any onward circulation or publication is a matter for the Club. The authors are willing to present the findings and to answer questions on the analysis from any interested party.