Quick Guide: Planned Facilities Development for Your Rugby Club

1. Initial Planning & Preparation

Before committing resources, clarify your goals and lay a solid foundation for your project:

- **Define Needs:** Clearly identify the next stage of your club's development and establish your exact facility requirements for the future.
- **Initial Engagement:** Early on, contact your **RFU Facilities Manager** and the **Dorset & Wilts (D&W) RFU Club Support Chair** to discuss your proposed plans.
- **Critical Analysis:** Robustly challenge your project proposals to ensure they address real club needs and will deliver the intended impact.
- **Project Deliverability:**
  - Form a dedicated project team and designate a clear project lead.
  - Identify necessary professional support.
  - Map out a realistic timetable containing key development milestones.

2. Key RFU Requirements & Guidance

RFU Minimum Standards

If your project involves any of the following, we suggest the club meets the RFU minimum design and construction standards:

1. Changing Rooms
2. Toilets
3. Floodlights

Essential Documentation & Security

- **Club Development Plan:** Required prior to applying for certain capital funds if you are improving, redeveloping, or replacing existing facilities.
- **Security of Tenure:** Proof of legal tenure (Freehold or Leasehold) on your facilities is mandatory for specific grant applications.

RFU Guidance Notes

Refer to the official RFU guidance documents available at www.rfu.com covering:

- Planning Permission
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- Floodlights
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- Grass Pitches & Grass Pitch Maintenance
- Accessibility and Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Compliance

3. The 10-Stage Action Plan

Once your future vision is established in consultation with RFU Staff and the D&W RFU Club Support Chair, follow this structured 10-stage execution pathway:

Stage	Key Tasks & Stakeholders
1. Consultation	• **Stakeholders to consult:** Club membership, RFU Facilities Staff, D&W RFU Club Support Chair, Local Authority, and local community/sports groups (to explore joint revenue opportunities, particularly during summer months). • **Internal Skills Audit:** Identify qualified construction professionals within your membership who may offer initial advice pro-bono or at reduced rates. • **PR:** Utilize local media to raise awareness for your plans.
2. Design	• Appoint an Architect to produce basic, preliminary scheme drawings. • **Tip:** Keep early designs simple to limit initial spending, as project approval is not guaranteed.

Stage	Key Tasks & Stakeholders
3. Costing	• Appoint a Quantity Surveyor (QS) or Estimator to draft budget estimates and confirm project viability. • Agree on fixed professional fees across your project team to prevent budget overruns.
4. Planning	• If necessary, engage a Planning Consultant alongside your Architect to liaise with the Local Authority. • Commission specialized technical or environmental reports required for the planning application.
5. Funding	• Meet with your **RFU Facilities Manager**, **D&W RFU Club Support Chair**, and potential third-party funding bodies. • *Re-confirm adherence to RFU Minimum Standards for changing rooms and floodlights.*
6. Tendering	• In coordination with your Architect and QS, invite a minimum of three qualified contractors to tender for the project.
7. Negotiation	• Review submitted bids with your Architect and QS to evaluate proposals and select the preferred main contractor.
8. Commencement	• Appoint a designated Club Point of Contact for site communication. • Assign a Project Manager (or delegate overseeing duties to your Architect or Main Contractor). • Ensure all contractor payment requests are formally approved by your QS before disbursement.
9. Completion	• Conduct formal inspections and complete the final handover of your new facility.
10. Official Opening	• Host a launch event inviting local media and key community leaders (MP, Mayor, Councillors, Headteachers, and Sports Directors) to celebrate the opening and maximize publicity.

Project Timeline & Milestone Template

This timeline breaks down a typical 12-to-18-month facilities project into manageable phases. You can adapt the estimated durations based on your club's specific scope.

Key Milestone Checklist

Phase	Milestone Target	Key Deliverable / Gate Gatekeep	Responsible Lead	Notes
Phase 1: Feasibility	**Concept Sign-off**	Agreed scope statement; Initial contact with RFU & D&W Club Support Chair	Project Lead	
	Skills Audit	Internal member professionals identified (Architect, QS, etc.)	Club Secretary	
Phase 2: Pre-Build	**Draft Scheme & Costing**	Basic draft drawings & initial QS budget estimate	Architect / QS	
	Planning Submission	Planning permission lodged with Local Authority (if needed)	Planning Lead	
	Funding Secured	RFU grant and external funding approvals confirmed	Treasurer	
Phase 3: Execution	**Contractor Appointment**	Minimum 3 tenders reviewed; Contract signed	Project Lead / QS	
	Groundbreaking	Construction starts; Club liaison point agreed	Project Manager	
Phase 4: Handover	**Facility Handover**	Snagging completed; Formal handover sign-off	Project Lead / QS	

Phase	Milestone Target	Key Deliverable / Gate Gatekeep	Responsible Lead	Notes
	Official Launch	Opening event hosted with local dignitaries and press	PR / Media Lead	