



## PRESS RELEASE

### **CHELTENHAM RFC WIN PRESTIGIOUS RFU PRESIDENT'S XV AWARD, SUPPORTED BY QBE**

**London, 10 May 2010**

Cheltenham RFC has won a President's XV Award, supported by specialist business insurer QBE, in acknowledgment of their initiative to promote the development of rugby at a grassroots level.

Cheltenham was presented with the President's XV Community Links Award for successfully turning the previously disused Smith Industries site into a thriving social hub that now sits at the heart of the local community.

The club bought the freehold of 19-acre Newlands Park two years ago when it was in a state of disrepair, and have since completely transformed it into a state-of-the-art sports, leisure and business centre. The centre is now home to six football pitches, six rugby pitches and indoor facilities including a dance studio and business seminar room. Thanks to the club's modest hire charges, the amenity acts as an invaluable meeting place for a number of local sports and community groups.

Each year the President's XV Awards, supported by QBE, recognise and reward projects that have been run in a voluntary capacity at rugby organisations.

Amongst some stiff competition it was Cheltenham's innovative thinking that set them apart from the other entries. The RFU received a record 296 entries this year, representing a 33% increase on 2009 entries.

The club was awarded with a cheque for £500 and a special trophy to mark the achievement, handed over by the RFU at a special awards night presented by RFU Junior Vice President Willie Wildash.



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The President's XV judging panel this year included RFU President John Owen, Immediate Past President Brian Williams, Senior Vice President Richard Appleby, Junior Vice President Willie Wildash, Rugby Football Union for Women President Gill Burns, England's most-capped player Jason Leonard and Paul Morgan, editor of Rugby World magazine. QBE was represented on the day by Senior Underwriter John Warwick.

*David Evans, Club Honorary Secretary, Cheltenham RFC, said: "To receive this award is a very proud achievement for the club, and we were also congratulated by our Mayor and local councillors for the valued contribution the Newlands Park Centre is making for the benefit of the local community.*

"The awards will not only inspire and motivate the club to achieve our ambitious development plans at Newlands Park, but also give us the opportunity of acquiring more valued volunteers."

*John Owen, President of the RFU, commented: "It's gratifying to see clubs like Cheltenham RFC coming up with creative solutions to help develop and progress our game. There are so many volunteers across the country working hard to support rugby in their area, who all deserve praise for their ongoing commitment".*

"The winning President's XV schemes have demonstrated a great deal of creativity in coming up with imaginative ideas to benefit rugby in the community, and Cheltenham is no exception. We are delighted to be celebrating and rewarding their success. No doubt the example they set will be followed by volunteers across the country.

*Steven Burns, CEO of QBE European Operations, added: "As Official Insurance Partner of England Rugby, QBE is proud to be involved with such a prestigious scheme. Supporting the President's XV Awards forms part of our commitment to supporting rugby at a grassroots level."*

"The innovative thinking demonstrated by Cheltenham RFC is typical of the dedication shown by club volunteers all over the country, and we are pleased to be able to recognise their achievements.



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For more information on the President's XV Awards, please visit [www.qbeeurope.com/rugby](http://www.qbeeurope.com/rugby)

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### **Notes to editors**

#### **About QBE**

Founded over 100 years ago, QBE is a specialist business insurer, now operating out of 47 countries across the globe. We have been active in the UK since 1904, originally within the marine insurance market, but branching out more recently to offer commercial insurance to companies across the UK. At the end of 2009, the Group's turnover was over £7.2bn.

We provide insurance for a broad range of business categories, including property, motor (commercial, bus and fleet), public and product liability insurance, employers liability insurance, professional indemnity, leisure and sport, marine, energy, aviation, and bloodstock.

#### **About the RFU**

The Rugby Football Union is the National Governing Body for rugby union in England and supports participants and fans from the grassroots to the national team.