

Berkshire Rugby Union Referees Ltd (Operating as Berkshire Rugby Referees)



APPOINTMENTS REPORT – SEASON 2025/26

Midweeks

As well as the University of Reading men's section being unavailable to participate, early indications suggested there may be a further decline in fixtures. Encouragingly, this did not prove to be the case. A total of 77 matches were appointed during the season, with 24 different referees contributing across these fixtures.

The increase in appointments can largely be attributed to a greater number of Friday evening fixtures, together with Rams 2nd XV scheduling its matches on Wednesday evenings. Of the fixtures that could not be covered, seven were U15 school cup matches.

Appointments in this area continue to present a significant challenge, and Dave would like to place on record his appreciation to those referees who consistently made themselves available to officiate these fixtures.

	Appointed	Cancelled	Missed Opportunity
2025/26	77	16	10
2024/25	51	9	9
2023/24	88	22	16
2022/23	69	23	26

Exchange Appointments

Dave Elliott has worked tirelessly throughout the season to ensure that our referees have access to the strongest possible development opportunities, with exchange appointments continuing to represent an important area of focus. These appointments not only provide referees with the benefit of independent external assessments, but also expose them to new environments, differing styles of play, and the challenges associated with officiating outside their usual competitions.

There was a modest shift in exchange appointments from Level 8 to Level 7 fixtures during the season, reflecting the strength and progression of referees currently operating within BRR at that standard. Referees who achieved promotion during the 2024/25 season have continued to perform strongly throughout 2025/26 and, consequently, required appointments at a higher level on a more consistent basis.

Berkshire Rugby Union Referees Ltd (Operating as Berkshire Rugby Referees)



Founded 1948

The growth in Level 5 and Level 6 appointments was largely driven by Federation and Regional 1 fixtures. Historically, a number of these appointments may have been returned due to availability or coverage constraints. However, with a reduced number of Level 6 clubs within the area this season, BRR was able to retain and fulfil a greater proportion of these fixtures. This represents a positive development and one that it is hoped can be sustained in future seasons.

2025/26	L5	L6	L7	L8	L9	L10	L11	Total
Incoming	1	7	7	8	3	0	1	27
Outgoing	5	15	12	7	6	0	0	45

2024/25	L6	L7	L8	L9	L10	L11	Total
Incoming	10	13	17	10	1	0	51
Outgoing	5	18	11	7	0	1	42

Travel continues to remain a concern in relation to exchange appointments, particularly with regard to journey times and travelling distances. While exchanges with neighbouring societies are naturally preferred by many members due to the reduced travel demands, exchange appointments cannot be limited solely to neighbouring areas if referees are to receive the breadth of experience and development opportunities required at higher levels. It should therefore be recognised that a degree of extended travel remains an unavoidable and necessary aspect of the exchange programme.

Our thanks go to all the Referees Societies we exchanged with; this includes Hertfordshire, Somerset, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Hampshire.

Appointments Summary

Berkshire referees covered a total of 481 fixtures during the season, compared with 529 in 2024/25 (-9%) and 470 in 2023/24 (+2%). Delivering this level of coverage is only possible through the continued commitment, availability, and support of our refereeing membership, and their contribution is greatly appreciated.

It is recognised that the current league structures present a number of challenges, particularly at Level 10, where fixtures can often be sporadic. However, BRR can only operate within the structure provided. At Level 9, greater use of exchange appointments is required, as repeated appointments involving the same teams on a regular basis are not ideal for either referee development or club experience. Despite these challenges, we continue to identify and develop referees who are progressing successfully through the grading structure.

Berkshire Rugby Union Referees Ltd (Operating as Berkshire Rugby Referees)



Both Saturday and Sunday fixture numbers declined during the season, although the number of cancellations remained broadly consistent with previous years. Contributing factors included the absence of fixtures from Henley 3rd XV, Rams amateur sides, Tadley Colts, and Abbey Colts.

2025/26		Appointed	Cancelled	Missed Opportunity
Midweeks		77	16	10
Saturday		260	53	13
Sunday		144	57	20
Total		481	126	43

Special Mentions

Luke Schembri-Burch transferred into BRR from Buckinghamshire and, as a result, undertakes significantly greater travel commitments than many others to fulfil his appointments. Despite this, he has consistently demonstrated exceptional commitment and availability throughout the season, frequently officiating both morning and afternoon fixtures on Saturdays. BRR is extremely grateful for the contribution of Luke and others like him, whose dedication is vital to maintaining fixture coverage and supporting the wider refereeing programme.

Dave Elliott has once again worked tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure the smooth operation of appointments throughout the season. His commitment has involved countless late Friday evenings and early Sunday mornings to guarantee fixtures were appropriately covered and supported. BRR, and its members, owe Dave sincere thanks for his dedication, professionalism, and the considerable time and effort he continues to devote to this role.

Andy Green

Appointments Lead

appointments@berkshirerugbyrefs.co.uk