



ROYAL LONDON AND THE BRITISH & IRISH LIONS CONTINUE TO INVEST IN WOMEN'S AND GIRLS' GRASSROOTS RUGBY WITH LATEST £40K AWARD

- **The 2025 Championing Women & Girls' Rugby Award winners include Athlone based club Buccaneers who have received a £10k grant to support their work in women's and girls' rugby.**

Royal London, the UK's largest mutual pensions, protection and investment provider has announced its latest Championing Women's and Girls' Rugby Award winners, in partnership with The British & Irish Lions, with Buccaneers RFC from Athlone one of four clubs across the Home Unions to receive an equal share of the c.€47,200* (£40k) fund for 2025.

The award, now in its second year, will provide funding to the latest cohort of successful clubs; Buccaneers RFC (Ireland), Lancaster Lionesses (England), Greenock RFC (Scotland) and Ynysddu BG RFC (Wales), who each receive a trophy and a €11,800* (£10k) grant to invest in their rugby programmes. The grants demonstrate Royal London's commitment as [Founding Partner](#) of the first British & Irish Lions Women's Team to invest in grassroots rugby and support the next generation of future Lion's Women's players.

The [Championing Women and Girls' Rugby Award](#) goes to a club in each Home Union that has driven inclusion, equality, and growth for women's and girls' rugby through innovation and impact, and the newly awarded clubs are really leading the way.

Buccaneers RFC, who were awarded the €11,800* (£10k) grant in Ireland, are committed to ensuring that women and girls of all ages and backgrounds feel welcomed, supported, and inspired to play rugby. They actively promote the game through outreach in primary and secondary schools, community groups, sports partnership groups and youth organisations.

Buccaneers are also cross pollinating with other sports, offering fun and inclusive ‘give rugby a try’ sessions designed to break down barriers and spark interest. Female coaches, mentors and international role models at the club provide a visible and achievable pathway, showing that rugby is for everyone, regardless of culture, ability or experience.

Susie Logan, Group Chief Marketing Officer at Royal London comments: “As Founding Partner of The British & Irish Lions Women’s Team, we’re proud to continue to work with the Lions on our Championing Women and Girls’ Rugby Award.

“The decision of which club to award in each of the unions is getting more difficult as there are so many amazing applications. The amount of work, time and effort being put in across women’s and girls’ rugby clubs by coaches, players, parents and club volunteers is phenomenal. We are committed to playing our part in shaping the future of women’s rugby, and I can’t wait to see what the winning clubs will do with the funds to make a difference to their players and their communities.”

Amy O’Connor, Senior Women’s Team Manager at Buccaneers RFC, said: “Winning the Royal London Championing Women and Girls’ Rugby Award and its €11,800 (£10,000) grant will transform how we support our female players. Every Buccaneers athlete, from minis to seniors, will benefit from enhanced welfare initiatives, improved facilities, and greater opportunities to thrive both on and off the pitch. This funding will help us increase participation and retention, support parents and guardians with education and resources, and demonstrate our commitment to excellence in rugby.

“At Buccaneers RFC, we don’t just celebrate our women’s and girls’ teams — we honour and elevate them. This is not just an investment in sport — it’s an investment in people, in equality, and in the future of women’s rugby in our region.”

The award is a flagship element of Royal London’s sponsorship as [Founding Partner](#) of the first ever British & Irish Lions Women’s Team. Alongside the grassroots award, the sponsorship includes a ‘Levelling the Playing Field’ investment of £3 million, which is designed to inspire more women and girls to participate in rugby and to foster equality and opportunity at every level of the game.

Findings from recent Royal London research⁺ show that while overall sentiment for women’s sport is positive, there is still more funding and support needed. The research exploring public sentiment around women’s sport in the UK, particularly the accessibility of team sports for

women and girls, shows there is a significant opportunity to inspire and increase the number of women and girls playing sport across the Home Unions.

-ENDS-

Notes to editors:

*Approximate figure based on 6 June 2025 GBP to EUR exchange rate

†Research conducted for Royal London by Censuswide amongst 3,001 UK adults between September 5 – September 9 2025. Results have been weighted to a national representative criteria.

For more information visit: [Our partnerships - Royal London](#)

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About Royal London

Royal London is the largest mutual life, pensions and investment company in the UK, and in the top 30 mutuals globally**, with assets under management of €211 billion, 8.1 million policies in force and over 4,800 employees. Figures quoted are as at 30 June 2025.

Royal London supports partnerships aligned to its values as a purpose-driven, modern mutual. This includes our work as the only Founding Partner of the first British & Irish Lions Women's Team, where we are investing in women's and girls' rugby across both grassroots and elite levels to support the development of the next generation of players and coaches. Learn more at royallondon.com.

**Based on total 2022 premium income. ICMIF Global 500, 2024

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