

Press release: Northern Powerhouse at the heart of Rugby League World Cup 2021

- Rugby League World Cup 2021 has announced that nearly 90% of the tournament's games, including all three finals, will be held in the Northern Powerhouse
- Tournament backed by £25 million of government funding to maximise benefit to communities
- Northern host locations announced include Newcastle, Doncaster, Leeds, Sheffield, Liverpool, Trafford and Hull

Northern Powerhouse Minister Jake Berry MP has welcomed news that around 9 in 10 (87%) Rugby League World Cup 2021 tournament games will be held in the North, exceeding the organiser's original commitment to host 80% of the games in the North of England.

In 2016 the government committed £25 million towards the tournament and its legacy with up to £15 million pledged to support the staging of the event and up to £10 million for Rugby League's facilities through large community projects, such as refurbishing changing rooms and installing new artificial pitches, as well as smaller-scale initiatives including supplying new kit or equipment to clubs.

A total of 16 northern towns and cities – including Newcastle, St Helens, Doncaster, Sheffield, Liverpool, Trafford and Hull – will play host to the tournament which will take place over five weeks in October and November 2021.

Leeds will host more games than any other city while Preston has been revealed as the tournament's first training base.

The tournament is anticipated to host a million spectators and is set to be one of the most inclusive and diverse events ever hosted in England. The men's, women's and wheelchair Rugby League World Cups are to be staged together for the first time with all three finals being played in the North.

Government funding for the tournament will focus on four key areas: creating welcoming environments, encouraging more players, building community engagement and cultivating further investment resulting in an innovation fund for the community game.

Northern Powerhouse Minister Jake Berry MP said:

The Rugby League World Cup 2021 will firmly put the Northern Powerhouse on the world stage and I am proud we are a partner in this landmark event.

Thousands of visitors will come from far and wide to enjoy the games and organisers predict the tournament will deliver £75 million of economic benefit to the UK through tourism and opportunities for local businesses, with a significant amount coming to cities and regions of the Northern Powerhouse.

The foundations of Rugby League were built in the North before becoming one of this country's greatest sporting exports. Now, thanks to £25 million of government investment, it is coming home to the Northern Powerhouse.

Minister for Sport and Civil Society Mims Davies MP said:

The UK is renowned for putting on some of the biggest and best sporting events in the world and the Rugby League World Cup 2021 will be no exception. This tournament will provide a stage for the world's best players in the men's, women's and wheelchair game to shine in cities and towns across the country.

It is an exceptional opportunity to grow the sport. We are investing £25 million to help put on a fantastic event, reach new fans and improve facilities, so the tournament leaves a real legacy.

Chief Executive of the Rugby League World Cup 2021 Jon Dutton said:

RLWC2021 will be the sport's biggest and best ever tournament and the Northern Powerhouse will play a pivotal role in helping to deliver this global event.

For the first time ever, the men's, women's and wheelchair tournaments will be played concurrently and the North will stage all of the marquee events including all 3 Rugby League World Cup finals and the respective opening ceremonies. The Northern Powerhouse is the perfect setting to host one of world sport's biggest and most inclusive tournaments.

The Rugby League World Cup 2021 and their governing body the Rugby Football League, are official members of the Northern Powerhouse Partners Programme. This network of businesses and organisations share our vision to for harnessing the economic potential of the North, and support the need for the government and business to work together to achieve it.

Full list of Northern Powerhouse game venues/hosts across men's, women's and wheelchair fixtures:

North-west

Bolton – The University of Bolton Stadium will host two men’s games, including an England group game and quarter-final. Liverpool – Anfield will host the marquee quarter-final tie along with the women’s opening ceremony and initial England game. M&S Bank Arena Liverpool will host the wheelchair Rugby League final. Preston – First training base to be revealed. St Helens – The Totally Wicked Stadium will host three men’s group games. Trafford – Old Trafford will host both the men’s and women’s finals as a double-header event. Warrington – The Halliwell Jones Stadium will host three men’s group games. Leigh – Leigh Sports Village will host three men’s group games.

Yorkshire

Doncaster – The Keepmoat Stadium will host three men’s group games. Kirklees – The John Smiths Stadium will host a men’s quarter-final. Hull – The KCOM Stadium will host two men’s games, including a quarter-final. Leeds – Hosting more games than any other city, Elland Road will host a men’s semi-final and Emerald Headingley Stadium will host three men’s games and two women’s games. Sheffield – Bramall Lane will host an England men’s group game. The EIS Sheffield will host a group and both semi-finals in the wheelchair tournament. York – The Community Stadium will host a women’s group game and both women’s semi-finals.

North East

Middlesbrough – The Riverside Stadium will host a significant men’s group game. Newcastle – St James’ Park will host the opening England men’s group game including the men’s opening ceremony

West Cumbria

Allerdale – The Workington Community Stadium will host three men’s group games.

The Northern Powerhouse is our vision for a more prosperous North with well-paid jobs for working people, better transport with faster roads and more efficient trains, high-performing schools and world-beating universities.

The Northern Powerhouse Partners Programme is an essential part of creating the Northern Powerhouse. The government is looking to build a network of partners who all believe strongly in the economic potential of the North, and support the need for a combined effort by government and business to realise that potential. There are nearly 200 businesses and organisations signed up to the Partners Programme.

Prospective partners can email NorthernPowerhouse@communities.gov.uk for more information about the Partners Programme and how to apply.

For more information about the Rugby League World Cup 2021 tournament and locations of games visit www.rlwc2021.com or contact enquiries@rlwc2021.com