Following the First Minister’s announcement on Monday and having met with Welsh Government and all other sports across Wales since then, the Welsh Rugby Union can confirm the following changes to the various levels of Welsh Rugby during the forthcoming ‘firebreak’ lockdown:

* The international and professional game will continue during this period. Wales' professional teams - Wayne Pivac's Wales squad and the four professional Welsh Regions will continue to prepare for and compete in the international against France this Saturday, the Guinness Six Nations match against Scotland on October 31, the Autumn Nations Cup and the Guinness Pro 14.
* Having sought clarity from Welsh Government, the WRU can confirm that Wales Women will continue to prepare for and play their final Women's Six Nations match, against Scotland on Sunday 1 November.

**All of these teams will continue to operate under the strict protocols that have been in place since they returned to train during the summer months.**

* All aspects of the community game are captured fully by the Welsh Government's 'firebreak' lockdown and as such all community rugby activity is paused between Friday 6pm and Monday 9 November. All exercise during this period, other than in the above category, should take place locally, wherever possible from your home and with members of your household only during this period.
* The WRU has written to all its member clubs with details of a further emergency funding payment of £450k. This includes an allocation from the WRU’s Emergency Fund to specifically help ease the running costs incurred by clubs who own or manage facilities and £280k from Sport Wales to help clubs return to rugby.

**WRU Operations Director Julie Paterson** said, “We fully support the Welsh Government’s firebreak to protect the NHS and the public in the fight against Covid-19 at this time.  
“We respect that the measures mean we must stay at home wherever possible and do all we can to limit risk in terms of the transmission of the virus at this time.  
“Our international and professional teams have the strictest possible health and hygiene protocols in place which include weekly COVID-19 tests and thorough health screening ahead of every training session.”   
**WRU Community Director Geraint John** added, “We are all looking forward to supporting our Wales teams from home this autumn as they look to end 2020 on a high note. We understand there will be disappointment that we can’t get together in our local rugby clubs to do this, and that we need to pause our return to community rugby plan for the time being, but we must do all we can to support the NHS and protect our wider communities during this period. We will be in touch with our clubs before the end of the Firebreak before any community rugby activity resumes. We hope that the latest allocation of the WRU emergency fund will assist clubs who still need to meet running costs for their facilities and we are grateful to Sport Wales for providing £280k to help clubs and community teams return to rugby.”  
This allocation does not replace the usual core or development grants but is an additional payment to help support clubs and they will receive further information on the payment of the development grant in due course  
  
The firebreak will be in force across Wales from 6pm on Friday 23 October to Monday 9 November in the fight to tackle COVID-19 and protect our NHS.