

**Cullompton Rugby Club are delighted to announce the launch of a night landing site for Devon Air Ambulance.**

A new night landing site has been created at Cullompton RFC, one of 60 such community landing sites now operational across Devon. The Club has been working with Devon Air Ambulance to get the first of such sites live in Cullompton, as Debbie Whiteway, the Club's Juniors Chairman, explained:

*"This project has been some 12 months in the planning and came about after a fundraising effort by one of our Club players, Joshua Withey, who was then in the under 12 team. Joshua organised a series of fundraising initiatives in aid of Devon Air Ambulance Trust. It was at the Trust's family day in October 2016 that the Withey family learnt of the need for community landing sites to be identified. So, the idea was born. Now to turn it into a reality!"*

Working with Devon Air Ambulance staff, the Club established that the existing floodlighting on one of their rugby pitches would be suitable for use as a night landing site, subject to a remote switching system being installed at the Club.

Debbie went on to explain: *"Funding was required to enable the installation of an electrical device which would enable the Air Ambulance dispatchers to switch the floodlights on remotely, when the crew are en route to the site. Thankfully Cullompton Town Council stepped in to fund that work alongside a grant, provided through DAA, from the Libor Bank Fines monies.*

*The Club are very grateful to the Town Council for helping to fund this work which meant we could progress the project on behalf of the whole of Cullompton".*

*"Cullompton Town Mayor Cllr Iain Emmett explained that Cullompton Town Council is extremely is grateful to Joshua and his family for getting the ball rolling with a number of fundraising events and to the Rugby Club for allowing the use of their playing pitch as a landing site. The Council is pleased that it was able to secure the funding needed to complete the project as Cullompton will soon have a safe venue for the Air Ambulance to land in case of an emergency".*

Toby Russell, Community Landing Sites Development Officer at Devon Air Ambulance, said: *"We are really pleased to see the first night landing site established in Cullompton and would like to extend our grateful thanks to Cullompton Rugby Club and Cullompton Town Council for their work in making this landing site become operational. Devon Air Ambulance can now reach the residents of the town until midnight every day and later into the night when the service is extended in the future".*