

Herts Sports Partnership



# club resource guide

THE PEOPLE BEHIND YOUR CLUB



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The Herts Sports Partnership would like to thank team BEDS&LUTON who have kindly shared this information with us, enabling us to offer useful advice & support to community sports clubs in Hertfordshire.



## 1. SAFER RECRUITMENT

Every organisation should set up systems and processes to check and vet people working with them. The same standards of good practice should apply for both volunteers and paid staff, to ensure that those working in your club are suitable for the role you want them to undertake.

### BEFORE EMPLOYMENT

Check for relevant qualifications:

- If they are coaching do they have a National Governing Body qualification? Are they qualified to lead a session (Level 2 or above) or assist at a session (Level 1 or above)?
- Has the coach completed any further coach education courses, e.g. first aid, scUK's Safeguarding and Protecting Children, Equity In Your Coaching or How to Coach Disabled People in sport?

Has the club undertaken a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check of the individual? It is good practice that anyone who is likely to have direct/indirect contact with children and/or vulnerable adults should undertake a CRB check and that they do not start until this is cleared (see CRB checks FAQs for further information).

Check references before offering any employment:

- Ask current/previous employers/clubs to comment on role performance
- Check the suitability of working with children if applicable

### COACH COMPETENCY AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

Assessing the ability of a coach on how they deliver a session can sometimes be a sensitive issue, and the person undertaking this role needs to have the appropriate skills and expertise to do this. In terms of elements that you would look to assess the coach against on a practical level, a coach competency checklist should be used. An example of a checklist developed by sports coach UK is shown on the next page.



### TOP TIPS

- Remember that just because volunteering is unpaid, individuals do not automatically have 'the right' to volunteer. A formal application, interview and verification procedure is good practice for anybody looking to take up a role.
- If you are unsure about what checks you should be doing – ask your National Governing Body (NGB) or the Herts Sports Partnership.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

The Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) plays an important part in the NSPCC's long-term strategy for ending child abuse by helping sports and other organisations to: 1) recognise their responsibility to protect children and young people, 2) develop strategies and standards to protect children and young people, 3) identify and respond to adults who are a threat to children and young people and 4) develop child protection knowledge and skills among all staff and volunteers. Visit [www.thecpsu.org.uk](http://www.thecpsu.org.uk) for documents including draft child protection policies, further guidance around safer recruitment and links to National Governing Bodies of sport.

The Criminal Records Bureau's aim is to help organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors by identifying candidates who may be unsuitable to work with children or other vulnerable members of society. Visit [www.crb.gov.uk](http://www.crb.gov.uk) for more information on safer recruitment.

runningsports offer a range of additional resources. For more information including Top Tips, Quick Guides, Workbooks and Courses, visit [www.runningsports.org](http://www.runningsports.org)

## Coach competency checklist

Did you observe the candidate do or consider the following? Tick appropriate column and add comments if necessary:	Demonstrated (✓ if yes)	Comments
<b>PLANNING</b>		
• Produces session plan		
• Checks venue / environment / equipment		
• Checks participants		
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>		
• Introduces self		
• Identifies session aims / learning outcomes & reinforced at end of session		
<b>ORGANISATION</b>		
• Uses space effectively		
• Maintains involvement of all participants throughout		
• Enough equipment for participants		
<b>COMMUNICATION</b>		
• Gains attention of all participants throughout		
• All participants able to see and hear coach		
• Communicates clearly and concisely		
• Uses language appropriate to the age and level of the participants		
• Uses questions to encourage feedback and learning		
• Offers instructive feedback		
• Offers encouragement		
• Seeks and listens to contributions of participants		
<b>DEVELOPING SKILLS</b>		
• Provides effective demonstrations		
• Identifies key coaching points		
• Able to differentiate skills based on ability of participants		
• Activities demonstrate appropriate progression		
• Maintains good activity level throughout including adequate time to practise skills		
• Positions him/herself to allow observation of all participants from various angles		
• Able to advise and correct technique as required		
<b>COACH ATTRIBUTES</b>		
• Makes session fun		
• Demonstrates enthusiasm		
• Professional appearance		
• Makes individual contact with all participants		

MARK OUT OF 5: 1-poor, 2-below required standard, 3-satisfactory, 4-good, 5-high quality

## 2. CRB CHECKING - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The Home Office has recognised the need to safeguard the welfare of children and vulnerable adults through the establishment of the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) to help organisations make safer recruitment decisions. The following is designed to provide clubs with information on the most frequently asked questions.

### WHAT IS A CRB CHECK?

The CRB provides three levels of criminal record check:

- A criminal conviction certificate (basic disclosure)
- A criminal record certificate (standard disclosure)
- An enhanced criminal record certificate (enhanced disclosure)

Each disclosure will provide a different level of information and their provision will be related to the degree of supervision or access an individual has to children.

Disclosure	What is provided?	Who would be appropriate?
Basic Disclosure	All non "spent" convictions	Those working with the club in a position that bring them into indirect contact with children. Fund raisers, ticket sellers
Standard disclosure	All convictions, cautions, reprimands or warnings plus information held by DoH and DoEE	Those working directly with young people and always under the direct supervision of a senior official.
Enhanced disclosure	All above information plus information from local police records relating to current and past investigations or allegations	Any individual involved in a position E.g. club coaches, teachers, team managers.

### WHO NEEDS TO BE CHECKED?

It is recommended that anyone who will come into contact (directly or indirectly) with children or young people should undergo a CRB check.

### WHEN SHOULD SOMEONE BE CHECKED?

It is best practice to check an individual before they begin any work at the club or come into any contact with children. Consideration should also be given to seeking disclosures where an individual is being considered for a change in role which increases their contact with children within the sport. It must be ensured that all individuals are aware of the clubs intention to CRB check before applying for a position. Due to the high demand for checks across the country it can take up to 8 weeks for a check to be completed (possibly longer if the individual has ever lived abroad or has a foreign passport).

### HOW MUCH DO CRB CHECKS COST?

The CRB will issue a disclosure free of charge if the person for whom a disclosure is required satisfies the following criteria:

"a volunteer is a person who is engaged in any activity which involves spending time, unpaid (except for travelling and other approved out-of-pocket expenses), doing something which aims to benefit someone (individuals or groups) other than or in addition to close relatives".

Clubs and organisations must be aware however that some registered CRB bodies do charge an administration fee for completing CRB checks, which can be up to £30.00. For anybody else who does not fit into this definition, enhanced and standard checks cost £36.00, and both will normally have an additional administration fee on top.

### WHAT HAPPENS IF A CRB CHECK COMES BACK POSITIVE?

Clubs and organisations must accept that when they receive information relating to an individual's previous behaviour they have a duty to use that information in assessing an individual's suitability for working with children/young people and/or vulnerable adults. There are obvious cases where the information provided by the CRB will lead to an application being rejected, for example a conviction for a serious sexual or physical assault on a child. However, the provision of information from police records of investigations, other non-conviction information or "spent convictions" may make this a more difficult process. When assessing information, it must be considered in relation to both the nature and seriousness of the allegation and the position the individual is being considered for.

The Herts Sports Partnership has Child Protection Officers who can provide advice and support for clubs and organisations assessing disclosures.

### HOW DOES THE CLUB GO ABOUT GETTING STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS CRB CHECKED?

CRB checks can only be made by organisations that are registered and recognised with the CRB. Many National Governing Bodies (NGB) of sport are now registered bodies with the CRB and can therefore process CRB checks on clubs' behalf. This should therefore be the first port of call for any club requiring CRB checks. If NGBs are unable to support this process, they will be able to direct clubs to a suitable registered body in order to apply for CRB check.

### HOW LONG ARE CRB CHECKS VALID FOR?

It is important to remember that CRB checks have no period of validity as the information on the disclosure is a snap shot in time at the point that the checks were completed. It is good practice therefore for clubs and organisations to repeat CRB checks on a three-yearly cycle.

### ARE CRB CHECKS PORTABLE BETWEEN ORGANISATIONS?

Portability refers to the re-use of a CRB check obtained for a position in one organisation and later used for another position in another organisation. The CRB no longer facilitates portability, therefore clubs and organisations that choose to accept a previously issued disclosure do so at their own risk. It is always recommended that clubs or organisations complete their own CRB checks.

### CAN CHECKS BE MADE ON OVERSEAS APPLICANTS?

Yes, however the CRB will not reveal overseas convictions, only those that have been recorded in the UK. Clubs must therefore be aware of this and consideration must be given to how long an individual has been resident in the UK. The CRB does however provide an overseas information service that can help customers to obtain this information.

## 3. WHERE TO FIND NEW VOLUNTEERS

Once your club has identified the volunteer roles needed and matched up existing volunteers' skills with these roles, there may still be some gaps. If so here are some ideas on where you can look to fill these:

### VOLUNTEER CENTRES

Volunteer Centres provide support at a local community level for volunteer-involving organisations. They are often the first point of contact for anyone interested in finding out about local volunteering opportunities. Whether volunteers can offer a regular commitment, one-off, occasional or seasonal help, every volunteer has a unique contribution to make. The primary function of Volunteer Centres is to match individuals and groups interested in volunteering with appropriate opportunities in their local community, which includes local sport clubs. Volunteer Centres also offer advice, information and support on all aspects of volunteer recruitment and management, as well as helping volunteer-involving organisations to develop and promote clear volunteer policies and good practice.

### YOUNG VOLUNTEERS

Step into Sport is an exciting scheme available to young leaders who are currently taking part in leadership courses (usually through their school/FE college). The scheme provides a pathway for 14 - 19 year olds looking to get involved in sport to move from school-based volunteering to supporting clubs and events in the local community. To match this demand, school mentors are always looking for suitable clubs to host placements. To find out more about this scheme please contact the Herts Sports Partnership direct.

### THE UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE

The volunteering programme here aims to provide a link between the University and the wider community through a volunteer placement service, and to offer students the opportunity to develop themselves through voluntary and project work, including working in sports clubs/organisations.

### BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY

Business in the Community inspires, engages, supports and challenges companies to continually improve the impact they have on society and the environment. The support on offer ranges from business teams completing one-off tasks within a community group, e.g. a pre-season make-over to the club house, to ProHelp which offers community clubs free professional advice.



### TOP TIPS

- Appoint a Volunteer Coordinator within your club who can act as the first and single point of contact for volunteer recruitment and management
- 20% of people state that they would be interested in volunteering in a sports organisation, but less than 5% of volunteering opportunities registered with the Volunteer Centres are from sports organisations - make use of this valuable resource.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

The Herts Sports Partnership can offer additional support and runs an extensive education and training programme for clubs, volunteers, coaches and teachers. Visit the Herts Sports Partnership website for more information [www.sportinherts.org.uk](http://www.sportinherts.org.uk)

runningsports offer a range of additional resources. For more information including Top Tips, Quick Guides, Workbooks and Courses, visit [www.runningsports.org](http://www.runningsports.org)

The University of Hertfordshire Students' Union Volunteer Centre exists to provide opportunities for students to contribute to the community through a variety of projects and activities. Please contact Naomi Marsh at the Volunteer Centre on 01707 285001 or visit <http://volunteer.uhsu.co.uk> for more information.

ProHelp is a national network of over 800 professional firms who are committed to making a difference in their local community by providing free advice and professional support. For more information visit [www.prohelp.org.uk](http://www.prohelp.org.uk)

## 4. WRITING A MARKETING STRATEGY FOR YOUR CLUB

### DEFINE VOLUNTEER ROLES

Before actively working to recruit and attract new volunteers to your club it is important to have a clear idea of what roles the club requires and the commitment you are asking the volunteer for. Use a role description as guidance for volunteers, accurately describing the role and trying to make the role sound enticing and not too daunting.

Sample role descriptions can be found on the runningsports website [www.runningsports.org](http://www.runningsports.org) (see Further Information for more detail).

### IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES FOR RECRUITMENT

Once the role has been defined, think where the best place would be to find the right person for the job.

For example, if you require someone to update the website, think about what people would be interested in and therefore where the best place to reach them would be. For example, Website Administrator:

- A young person who has an interest in IT and has a good level of IT skill, could be found by displaying a poster in the IT department of a local FE College, Sixth Form or University, or the IT professional who works for one of your sponsors.

There are many different ways of attracting volunteers into your club. It may be that you require a number of volunteers to help with a one-off event or that you need to recruit a person with certain skills and abilities for a specific role within the club committee. Below are some examples of how you might go about recruiting volunteers for your club. This is not an exhaustive list and you may have some more effective methods of your own.

- **Existing volunteers** - ask those already involved in the club to help - if you don't ask, you don't get! Try producing a job sheet entitled "Many hands make light work" defining all the job opportunities, and distribute this amongst parents, carers and members.
- **Young volunteers** - encourage junior members to complete voluntary placements within the club. This may involve working with the younger age groups as a 'coaching helper' alongside a qualified and experienced coach. More often than not this voluntary work helps juniors to fulfil other aspects of their volunteering, e.g. Duke of Edinburgh Award, Step into Sport and V-Involved.
- **Contact local schools and colleges** - citizenship classes now involve a volunteering element. Students may also be able to use volunteering and the work it entails on their CV or even as part of their coursework.

- **Raise the profile of volunteers** - use a social event, such as a dinner or awards evening, to highlight the good work that has been done. For example, a club reward scheme could be developed giving certificates to volunteers. Make sure you use this opportunity to provide information about all the different volunteering roles that are required.
- **Press releases** - combine a volunteer recruitment request with a press release or do it as an article in its own right. Information needs to be specific to the role you want to recruit for and should include contact details, location of opportunity, a brief description of what is involved and benefits to the volunteer.



### TOP TIPS

- It's important not to expect too much of too few, which often happens when people offer their help. For larger roles consider a job share approach.
- Clearly identify the volunteering roles within your club/organisation – It is very important that your volunteers are clear on what they are supposed to be doing.

The Herts Sports Partnership can offer additional support and runs an extensive education and training programme for clubs, volunteers, coaches and teachers. Visit the Herts Sports Partnership website for more information [www.sportinherts.org.uk](http://www.sportinherts.org.uk)

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## 5. SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTING CHILDREN

Sport helps children and young people to grow and develop, and can provide opportunities for enjoyment and achievement. Through sport, children can develop valuable qualities such as leadership, confidence and self-esteem. Every child and young person has the right to have fun, be safe and free from harm whether training for a local team, playing for a local club or representing a sport and country at international level. It is essential that sports clubs/organisations adopt good practice when dealing with children and ensure that their safety is paramount.

### POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

It is the responsibility of the organisation to ensure that the relevant policies are in place and that they are communicated effectively to everyone involved. The following should be in place or integrated in other documents:

- **Child Protection Policy** - including guidelines on reporting a concern or allegation, use of cameras and video equipment, contact details for the Club Welfare Officer, physical contact, recruitment of volunteers and people working within the clubs and the collection of children by parents/carers.
- **Code of Conduct** - this should be in place for coaches, volunteers, spectators, parents/carers and participants.
- **Health and Safety** - including details of risk assessment procedures, participant consent forms, how to respond to an incident or accident and who to contact if there is a concern.
- **Equity Policy** - reflecting that the rights, dignity and worth of everyone should be respected and everyone should be treated equally.

### CLUB WELFARE OFFICER

It is good practice for clubs to appoint a Club Welfare Officer to deal with issues relating to child protection. It would then be the responsibility of this person to:

- Oversee the production and review of a club child protection policy
- Communicate child protection information through the club
- Complete CRB checking and be the point of contact within the club should a child protection issue/case arise

It is essential for this person to attend, as a minimum, a Safeguarding and Protecting Children course.

### PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOING

All photography and videoing needs to comply with a club/organisation's Child Protection Policy. There is evidence that certain individuals are known to visit sporting events/activities to take inappropriate photographs or video footage of sports people in vulnerable positions. Any concerns during an event should be reported to a designated Child Protection/Welfare Officer.

### TOP TIPS

- It is not the responsibility of the club/organisation to decide if a child is being abused, but it is your responsibility to act on any concerns you may have.
- Don't be put off by information relating to child protection, just make sure you have a procedure in place which is being followed and all of the club members know who to contact.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

The National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) is a charitable organisation with a purpose to end cruelty to children. Their website has a large amount of information offering support to young people and adults as well as raising the profile of events that they are involved with. Visit [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

The Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU) plays an important part in the NSPCC's long-term strategy for ending child abuse by helping sports and other organisations to: 1) recognise their responsibility to protect children and young people, 2) develop strategies and standards to protect children and young people, 3) identify and respond to adults who are a threat to children and young people and 4) develop child protection knowledge and skills among all staff and volunteers. For more information visit [www.thecpsu.org.uk](http://www.thecpsu.org.uk)

The Local Safeguarding Children Board for Hertfordshire has produced a guide for professionals working with children and young people. For a copy of this guide, please contact the Herts Sports Partnership.

The Herts Sports Partnership can offer additional support and runs an extensive education and training programme for clubs, volunteers, coaches and teachers. Visit the Herts Sports Partnership website for more information. You can also view a template child protection policy and further guidance documents.

runningsports offer a range of additional resources. For more information including Top Tips, Quick Guides, Workbooks and Courses, visit [www.runningsports.org](http://www.runningsports.org)

## 6. INDUCTING VOLUNTEERS

A volunteer's first experience within a club is vital in their retention. A comprehensive induction should enable volunteers to settle into a new club more easily, with all the information at hand, which will in turn aid retention and give volunteers a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Volunteers need to feel welcomed and valued and they need to know from the outset what is expected and involved within their role.

### WHAT TO INCLUDE IN AN INDUCTION

As a minimum, a volunteer induction should include:

- An overview of the organisation with contact details for key persons e.g. Volunteer Coordinator, Club Manager, Child Protection Officer/Welfare Officer.
- The volunteer's role description.
- Details of relevant club policies and procedures e.g. Child Protection, Health and Safety, Equal Opportunities, Incident/Accident reporting.
- Details of how to claim expenses.

All this information may be given in a 'Welcome Pack'. It will also help with the integration of the new volunteer if they have a single point of contact in the club; this is when the appointment of a Club Volunteer Coordinator is really useful.

However, it is important that volunteers are not overwhelmed with information too soon and therefore it may be advisable to introduce the information over a period of time. If existing volunteers are unaware of some of the key sections within the induction it is recommended that they too are provided with copies of any club induction resources.

Once inducted, it is vital to continue to communicate clearly with all your volunteers. Nothing frustrates a volunteer more than not being kept up to date or 'in the loop'.



### TOP TIPS

- Communication should flow two ways and the volunteers need to be encouraged to keep in touch with the club, as well as the club keeping in touch with them.
- Hold volunteer briefing meetings as a useful way to communicate with your volunteers. These can be useful once or twice a year but not too often.
- Send messages by text and e-mail, which are often particularly popular with younger volunteers.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

The Herts Sports Partnership can offer additional support and runs an extensive education and training programme for clubs, volunteers, coaches and teachers. Visit the Herts Sports Partnership website for more information. Specific information can also be found in the volunteer resources section, including a club induction checklist [www.sportinherts.org.uk](http://www.sportinherts.org.uk)

runningsports offer a range of additional resources. For more information such as Top Tips, Quick Guides, Workbooks and Courses, visit [www.runningsports.org](http://www.runningsports.org)

Volunteering England is an independent voluntary agency committed to supporting, enabling and celebrating volunteering in all its diversity. Their website has a number of downloadable resources, general information and case studies. Visit [www.volunteeringengland.org.uk](http://www.volunteeringengland.org.uk)

## 7. MOTIVATING YOUR VOLUNTEERS

**All volunteers, however dedicated to your club, will need help with their motivation. Motivation will be gained in a number of ways and you need to establish why people are volunteering in order to cater for their needs.**

Motivating your team of volunteers will depend on:

- Their enjoyment of the roles
- The variety and challenge offered
- The recognition and reward programmes you have in place
- Good communication
- Meeting their needs, as well as those of the club
- Ensuring they feel wanted and valued
- The provision of training for them

### SKILLS AND TRAINING

Skills and training can be a key motivational tool. However, it should be recognised that whilst some people are keen to develop their knowledge and skills, others just want to turn up, do their task and go away. Skills and training should always be 'sold' as a positive reward for volunteers. Training people will increase retention of your volunteers through helping individuals to focus and feel confident in their contribution. Most people feel more secure in their role if they have received some form of training and support on the technical area in which they are involved, even if it is basic information about what to wear, how to manage people at an event etc.

### MENTORING

Mentoring is nothing new, particularly in sport. We have all turned to an experienced friend or colleague for advice, especially when we are learning something new or are facing a new challenge. What is new is the concept of using a mentor in a more structured way to help guide you through a challenging learning process.



### TOP TIPS

- Don't be afraid to deliver in-house training by your own team/staff. Whilst this won't be accredited training, sometimes the most effective learning is through drawing on the experiences of others.
- Local Volunteer Centres deliver an array of training, often free of charge, which local clubs and volunteers can access.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

The Herts Sports Partnership can offer additional support and runs an extensive education and training programme for clubs, volunteers, coaches and teachers. Visit the Herts Sports Partnership website for more information. A specific resource that can be accessed is a downloadable guide to mentoring within clubs.

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## 8. CLUB VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

**Volunteers are an essential part of any sports club, so by appointing a Volunteer Coordinator to oversee the area of volunteer recruitment and development, the club will be able to grow and develop. Volunteer Coordinators will be crucial for interface with club volunteers and the processes involved around recruitment, retention, recognition and reward.**

### WHAT DOES THE ROLE INVOLVE?

This post is a key role within the club. It provides an opportunity for the post-holder to get to know a wide range of people and to contribute to the development and support of a strong volunteer team.

For clubs that are accredited through an NGB Clubmark Award it is recommended that they have a Volunteer Coordinator in place to support volunteers and their development. Those clubs without Volunteer Coordinators should look to recruit an individual, who should be trained to become equipped with the knowledge and skills to carry out this role.

The role of a Volunteer Coordinator may include the following:

- Supervise/oversee all club volunteers
- Act as the main contact for all volunteers
- Safer recruitment of new volunteers (see section one of this guide)
- Ensure that opportunities for volunteer feedback and training are provided
- Ensure that volunteers are appropriately assigned to tasks with role descriptions
- Liaise with the local Volunteer Centre and the Herts Sports Partnership to link with volunteer recruitment schemes/processes (e.g. Step into Sport)
- Maintaining volunteers' motivation through recognition and reward

### WRITING A VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT PLAN

A volunteer development plan encourages a club to consider its volunteer workforce and create an action plan in order to adequately support and develop the 'human resource' element of a club and its activities. A Volunteer Coordinator should write a development plan which will help to:

- Define the direction, focus and purpose for a club and its volunteers in the future.

- Communicate more effectively to the volunteers and club members about how they can get involved and contribute to the club's success.
- Target recruitment to match volunteers with vacancies that they will enjoy, succeed in and can manage in the time they have to offer.
- Clearly identify volunteer roles to prevent putting too much pressure on or demanding too much time from a small number of individuals.

Although the Volunteer Coordinator would take overall responsibility for the planning process, everybody who is involved with volunteers needs to be consulted and have an input into the writing of any volunteer development plan to ensure the plan is as comprehensive as possible.

Clubs should review their volunteer development plans on a regular basis to ensure they are following the desired path.

### TOP TIPS

- Make sure that the Volunteer Coordinator is encouraging regular communication
- Highlight training opportunities as it is unlikely volunteers will ask/know where relevant courses can be located

### FURTHER INFORMATION

The Herts Sports Partnership can offer additional support and runs an extensive education and training programme for clubs, volunteers, coaches and teachers. Visit the Herts Sports Partnership website for more information including a template for writing a Volunteer Development Plan and a template Volunteer Coordinator role description. Visit [www.sportinherts.org.uk](http://www.sportinherts.org.uk)

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## 9. RECOGNISING AND REWARDING VOLUNTEERS

**It is fundamental that volunteers' efforts are recognised and valued to aid retention and develop mutual respect between all parties. Someone who does not feel that their efforts are of worth will not gain satisfaction from their work and will be less likely to show the commitment that is required. Because volunteers can expect no remuneration for the time they give, their efforts must be recognised in other ways.**

### HOW CAN VOLUNTEERS BE RECOGNISED?

Ensuring that people feel their roles and actions are important should be seen as an integral part of the recognition system. Actions that can be taken to support this type of recognition may include:

- A simple thank you from a senior committee member – probably the simplest method of all but often not used enough.
- At the end of each season, ensure every volunteer receives a personal letter of thanks from the club.
- A mention of their contribution at a committee meeting and recorded in the minutes or a short news article in the club newsletter or article.
- Display photographs of volunteers on a club notice board making sure all volunteers are pictured including those who help out occasionally.
- Have a 'volunteer of the month' award. You could use your notice board, match programme or newsletter to advertise it. If you have a website, use this as a format for featuring volunteers.
- Give volunteers an identity with t-shirts, badges etc.
- Support volunteer development opportunities by helping volunteers with the costs of training courses.
- Ask regularly for opinions and feedback from volunteers to not only make people feel valued, but also to help create a people-led volunteer experience.
- Hold volunteer social evenings and award dinners to particularly highlight the work of the "behind the scene" volunteers.

### REWARDING VOLUNTEERS

It is important to reward all of your volunteers, whether this is done publicly or not. There are many ways in which you can reward volunteers, and some ideas are listed below:

- Ensure expenses are available, if required.
- Give or send a 'thank you' certificate (this is also useful for volunteers who are using their experience to add to their portfolios/CVs).

- Provide meals, particularly if you are asking the volunteers to be at a venue for longer than half a day.
- Nominate them for both club and external awards which recognise the contribution of volunteers and consider introducing long-service awards.
- Award membership deals (e.g. one month free or a lower membership rate for regular volunteers) or life membership for long-standing service.
- Buy them a small present.
- Ensure their ideas are listened to, and act upon them where practically possible.
- Write references for them (if asked) quickly and efficiently.
- Ensure the management of their role and tasks is good, and support them – this can be a great reward!

Most volunteers get intrinsic pleasure, i.e. they aren't necessarily looking for external acknowledgements from volunteering, but we all like to be treated well and thanked when we have given our time up for free. It is therefore an essential part of retaining your volunteer workforce.

### TOP TIPS

- Many National Governing Bodies, Community Sport Networks and Local Authorities have excellent reward mechanisms for volunteers working in sport. Be sure to find out about the rewards on offer and get nominating to give your volunteers the local, regional or even national credit they deserve.
- Look into what other local clubs do to reward their volunteers – sometimes the best ideas are so simple you may have overlooked them.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

The Herts Sports Partnership can offer additional support and runs an extensive education and training programme for clubs, volunteers, coaches and teachers. Visit the Herts Sports Partnership website for more information.

runningsports offer a range of additional resources. For more information including Top Tips, Quick Guides, Workbooks and Courses, visit [www.runningsports.org](http://www.runningsports.org)

Volunteering England is an independent voluntary agency committed to supporting, enabling and celebrating volunteering in all its diversity. Their website has a number of downloadable resources, general information and case studies. Visit [www.volunteeringengland.org.uk](http://www.volunteeringengland.org.uk)



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