



Club Guide to sports volunteering



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HAMPSHIRE & IOW

Club Guide to Sports Volunteering

This document has been designed to help and support clubs with all aspects of volunteering. It provides examples of good practice on recruitment, retention and recognition as well as highlighting some of the less well known issues related to utilising volunteers.

This guide is intended as a reference point for clubs and will enable you to assess whether you are utilising and supporting your volunteers in the most appropriate way. Support and guidance beyond this document is available, and all relevant contact details can be found on the back page.

Without volunteers commitment and dedication, most opportunities for people to participate in sport would cease to exist. However, at a time when the demand for sports volunteers is at an all time high, the changing pressures on peoples personal time and busy lifestyles is threatening the sustainability of volunteering at the levels we currently enjoy.

Volunteers in sport play a key role in providing millions of people with the opportunity to participate and enjoy a massive range of sporting activities.

Volunteering in sport is defined as;

'individual volunteers helping others in sport and receiving either no remuneration or only expenses. This includes those volunteering for organisations (formal volunteers) and those helping others in sport, but not through organisations (informal volunteers). However, it does not include time spent travelling, which may represent significant additional time inputs'

(Young Volunteers: Making A Difference To Sport In England, Sport England)

The sporting sector makes the single biggest contribution to total volunteering in England, with 26% of all volunteers citing 'sport' as their main area of interest (Sports Volunteering in England in 2002, Sport England). Recent research by Sport England identified that there are 5.8 million sports volunteers, representing 14% of the adult population, and these are undoubtedly the lifeblood of nearly all sports clubs.

Volunteering gives everyone a chance to share their skills and talents, helping to improve and support their local communities. Sport is recognised for making

significant and effective contributions to health, community regeneration, community safety and educational attainment and is a very powerful tool. It is vital that volunteers are given the reward and recognition that is so richly deserved, in order to retain them and therefore benefit from their expertise.

Volunteering in sport is extremely diverse but can often be seen as characterised by the following things:

- It is a way to help improve things and make a difference
- It offers volunteers a way of influencing how things are done and why, which they may not be able to do through other mechanisms due to bureaucratic or professional barriers
- Volunteering increases the overall resources available and in many cases, makes things possible which would not exist without the commitment of volunteers. This is often true in the case of sports clubs which generally have no paid staff
- Volunteering provides a way for individuals to use their talents for the benefit of others as well as to develop life skills, gain confidence, develop new skills and experiment with new career directions
- Volunteering can often provide resources to explore new avenues and develop services/methods of working. Through such processes, new paid employment can arise
- Volunteering is based on free choice and should be mutually beneficial to both volunteer and the club/individual for whom they work
- Volunteering in sport is often based on personal interest in a specific activity or parental concern. Due to this volunteers are usually club members or related to club members prior to volunteering
- Volunteers can bring new skills and a fresh perspective to a club

Volunteering Benefits...

People volunteer for many different reasons and often the motivation for their desire to make a voluntary contribution will have a major impact upon the form that their volunteering eventually takes. It is vital that volunteering is mutually beneficial to both the individual and the club in order for both parties to get the most out of the experience.



Some of the benefits of volunteering include:

- Meeting new people
- Improving self confidence and esteem
- Helping others and the local community, a chance to give something back
- Developing interests and knowledge
- Developing new skills (communication, leadership, organisational skills etc)
- Gaining experience and improving job prospects
- Opportunity to gain a nationally recognised award and add to your CV
- Gives experience of taking responsibility and valuing achievements
- The chance to get involved in local, regional and even national events/activities
- Combats boredom!
- Access to support from different agencies and organisations
- Have fun
- Try something different
- Sense of achievement

Volunteers and the Law...

The legal status of volunteers can be a very complex area as often volunteers are not covered by the same protections as paid staff. Therefore it is important that clubs keep up-to-date with good practice, guidance and volunteer issues.

Contracts

A volunteer may be classed as an employee if a contract of employment is seen to exist. This does not have to be a written or verbal agreement, but refers to a description of a relationship between an individual and the club that may be judged to be contractual. In order for a contract to exist there are two legal conditions that must be met: consideration and intention.

Consideration: The volunteer and the club exchange something of material value (even if this is minimal).

Intention: The volunteer and the club intend to enter into a legally binding contract.

Obligation: The employer has an obligation to provide work and the employee has an obligation to do the work.

Employment Rights: Protection from unfair dismissal, redundancy, racial, sexual and disability discrimination and also some rights to sick pay, maternity leave, trade union activity and holidays.

A volunteer may be deemed to have a contract of employment if the conditions of consideration and intention are met.

Whilst your club might be concerned about entering into a contractual arrangement with volunteers, it is still important that volunteers are managed and supported effectively. The management of volunteers does not have to be as formal as that of paid employees. Practical ways to minimise the risk of contract situations can include:

- Making documents less formal.
- Reviewing the language used (e.g. volunteer agreement not contract, volunteer role description not job description, reimbursement not payment etc).
- Reimbursing actual expenses.

Benefits

Undertaking voluntary work should not affect a person's entitlement to any benefit. However, volunteers who receive benefits should talk to their local social security office before they begin volunteering to find out exactly what impact volunteering will have on their benefits as each individual case is different.

Rules concerning some of the most common benefits are:

Jobseekers Allowance: claimants are fully entitled to volunteer as long as they remain available for work and are actively seeking employment. There is no limit on the number of hours people can volunteer provided they are still actively seeking work and can be contacted quickly.

Income Support: claimants can volunteer for as many hours as they like but must not receive any income from volunteering. However, volunteers can receive reimbursement of genuine out of pocket expenses but must tell the social security office that they are volunteering and also if they receive any benefits in kind.

Incapacity Benefits: claimants are fully entitled to volunteer and there are no limits to the number of hours.

Disability Living Allowance: claimants are fully entitled to volunteer and it will not effect their entitlement to this allowance. However, volunteers must inform social security that they are volunteering.

Invalid Care Allowance: claimants are fully entitled to volunteer as long as the volunteer can care for the severely disabled person for at least 35 hours per week.

Expenses and Taxation

If volunteers only receive out of pocket expenses, then this will not have tax implications. The expenses that the Inland Revenue allows to be reimbursed are:

- Travel to and from the place of volunteering
- Meals taken while volunteering
- Care of dependants, including children, during volunteering
- Travel in the course of volunteering
- Cost of protective clothing necessary for the volunteer role
- Cost of phone calls, postage etc. if volunteering from home

Clubs should be able to demonstrate that volunteers only receive out of pocket expenses. Receipts and records should be kept where possible and it is helpful to have an expenses claim form for volunteers to fill out.

Health and Safety

Volunteers may expose themselves to risk from time to time and clubs do have a duty of care towards them and to ensure these risks are kept to a minimum. Reasonable steps should be taken to reduce the probability and seriousness of injury to volunteers. Good practice could include:

- Good recruitment and selection practice which places the right volunteers in the right roles
- A full induction process for all volunteers
- Suitable training to enable volunteers to carry out their role and work safely
- Volunteers should be informed of any risks within their role
- Appropriate support and supervision for volunteers

Insurance

It is important that all volunteers are sufficiently insured and therefore it is vital to ensure all policies are extended to include volunteers. The two most important insurances are employers' liability and public liability.

Employers Liability Insurance: Covers employees for injuries suffered in the course of their work. Volunteers are not employees and therefore will not automatically be covered by this insurance (it is possible to include volunteers in this type of insurance).

Public Liability Insurance: Is sometimes referred to as third party insurance and protects against legal liability arising from accidents that cause injury to persons or damage to property.

Volunteer's Rights

Good volunteer management should respect the rights of volunteers and these should be fostered within a volunteering agreement made between the club and the prospective volunteer. The rights of volunteers include:

- If there is a delay in commencing the placement (due to police checking etc) volunteers should be informed and the club should continue to remain in contact with them until this is resolved
- Volunteers have the right to a well organised and structured induction to ensure that they are ready to commence their role. This should include information regarding the overall club and where volunteers fit into this
- All information regarding the volunteer (CRB, references, medicals etc) should remain confidential unless authorised by the prospective volunteer.
- Volunteers should not be discriminated against on the grounds of sex, race, sexuality, age, class, disability or history of illness
- Volunteers are entitled to a clear written description of their role and how this work is to be reviewed and evaluated. Volunteers should not be required to undertake tedious and repetitive tasks as matter of course and volunteers' hours of work should be mutually agreed and confirmed in writing in a volunteer agreement



- Volunteers should be informed as to who they are responsible. This person should be approachable and willing to talk through any concerns that the volunteer may have
- Volunteers should not be required to work in an unsafe or unhealthy environment and a Health and Safety Policy should exist which meets the organisations/clubs legal requirements
- Volunteers should be adequately insured by the organisation
- Volunteers should not be required to undertake tasks for which someone has previously been paid to do
- Volunteers should be provided with any special equipment or clothing required to undertake their role by the organisation/club
- Volunteers should be entitled to holidays and time off for emergencies and a system should be established to cope with these occurrences
- Volunteers should be given the opportunity to receive training and develop their skills
- Volunteers should be consulted regarding any changes to their role
- Volunteers should be involved in the life of the club
- Volunteers should be reimbursed for any expenses incurred in the course of their work
- Volunteers work should be reviewed with the nominated volunteer co-ordinator within six weeks of commencement and regularly after this
- Volunteers are entitled to receive recognition for their services including a reference and a record of achievement as applicable

Attracting and Supporting...

Young Volunteers

- Use positive images of volunteering to attract young people to your club
- Make volunteering opportunities attractive and appealing – don't forget to highlight the fun element!
- Create a variety of different roles for young people which are clear and progressive
- Make sure the volunteering opportunity provides benefits in terms of skills, new challenges, work experience etc
- Ensure the young volunteers feel valued and respected by all the other club members
- Provide a friendly, relaxed and supportive environment for the young person to work in
- Ensure the young person is recognised and rewarded for their voluntary contribution
- Ensure that your club follows good practice in the management of its young volunteers with regards to recruitment, selection, training and support etc
- Reimburse volunteers for their travel and expenses.

Older Volunteers

- Ensure your club has an equal opportunities policy which encourages older people to volunteer and become involved
- Offer a wide range of volunteering opportunities
- Ensure that the opportunities offered are flexible so that older people can incorporate them with their existing lifestyles
- Offer new and different tasks and try to match older people to tasks based on their interests, abilities and skills
- Reimburse volunteers for their travel and expenses
- Ensure that your club follows good practice in the management of its older volunteers with regards to recruitment, selection, training and support etc.

Volunteers with Disabilities

- Actively encourage people with disabilities to volunteer through targeted promotion
- Ensure that your clubs facilities are accessible to every form of disability
- Develop volunteering opportunities which can be carried out by people with disabilities
- Ensure staff and volunteers are trained and kept up-to-date in equal opportunities and disability awareness
- Ensure your club meets the needs of the volunteer and match them to tasks
- Provide clear information on welfare benefits so that fear of losing benefits is not a barrier

Volunteers from Ethnic Minorities

- Ensure that your club has an equal opportunities policy which encourages people from ethnic minorities to volunteer and become involved
- Ensure your club is innovative and creative when advertising and recruiting for volunteers
- Ensure that any images used on promotional material is diverse and would attract potential volunteers from black and ethnic minorities
- Organise training for club staff to help promote understanding and respect for cultural awareness

5 Steps Towards Successful Volunteering In Sport...

Step 1

- Analyse your clubs needs and determine if hosting volunteers is suitable
- Check that your club is properly organised and able to manage new volunteers appropriately

- Ensure that adequate provision has been made to pay any agreed expenses to the volunteer whilst commencing club duties

Step 2

- Devise a role description and person specification for the role that you would like your volunteers to undertake. The role description should detail exactly what tasks your club is expecting the volunteer to complete.
- Advertise and promote the vacancy that the club is hoping to fill. This could be done in a number of ways both internally (through writing to club members and advertising in the club newsletter) and externally (through press releases and registering with Volunteer Bureaux) For information on Volunteer Bureaux, see back page.

Step 3

- Once you have identified your volunteers ask them to complete a registration form and meet with them to discuss both the clubs needs and any individual needs or concerns they might have
- Ensure that all volunteers are Criminal Records Bureau checked and all relevant references have been undertaken.

Step 4

- Ensure that all volunteers are properly inducted and know who to see if any problems or issues arise.

Step 5

- Make sure that your clubs volunteers have the adequate support and training that they need to go about their tasks and duties
- Arrange regular update meetings to discuss and evaluate their role as well as identifying any training or additional assistance that might be needed.

Recruitment Tips...

- ASK! Most volunteers say they were recruited because somebody asked them if they were interested in helping. This doesn't mean just putting up a notice, people like to be asked personally, they feel more valued.

- Ask members to complete a volunteering profile form, to help you to gather information about the time that they might be able to give and any particular skill that they can offer the club. Adapt your membership form to gather this information as people join. The fact that you are asking for this information might just prompt somebody to offer their help.
- Hold an annual recruitment meeting linked to a social event and make sure people know who to contact to follow up their initial interest, find out more about the job and know what steps to take next.
- Make volunteering a condition of playing, even if people can only give one hour a month or help out once a year.
- Encourage the current post holder to identify people who may be interested in taking over from them, and encourage them to involve others throughout the year to ease the transition if they move on.
- Produce a club information leaflet that explains how the club operates and the range of jobs that need to be done and the possible time commitment involved in the various tasks.
- Use notice boards, newsletters and word of mouth to publicise the need for more volunteers and don't just assume that everybody knows what is going on. People won't always know unless you make a point of telling them.

Retention Tips

- Produce a basic information pack for new volunteers that includes a copy of their role description and immediate points of contact (e.g. predecessor, people with whom they are most likely to work), details of expenses that can be claimed back and how to claim them and an overview of the organisation (e.g. management structure, summary of development plan) so they can see where they fit and the contribution they are making.
- Do not assume that just because people have been involved in the organisation for some time, they know how everything works! It is safer to provide information that people don't need than to make assumptions about their level of knowledge.

- Most volunteers want to do a good job and will appreciate knowing what standards the organisation expects early on, rather than being told they are doing something wrong after the event. These may include:- commitment, extent and limits of their responsibility, Child Protection policies and the organisations good practice guidelines for working with children and working relationships with others - respect other volunteers.
- The ideal way to introduce a volunteer to a new job is to encourage them to shadow their predecessor for a few months, with a gradual handover of responsibility. If this isn't possible, consider using a buddy, mentor or a Volunteer Coordinator.
- Value people's time and wherever possible, arrange meetings to suit the needs of the majority of volunteers rather than a small minority.
- Volunteers are an important part of your organisation. Try to ensure that you aren't only a top down organisation by encouraging volunteers to contribute to decision-making. They will be more comfortable about implementing policies or ideas that they have contributed to or been consulted about.
- Sport organisations have traditionally worked within a committee structure. However, a team approach is much more effective. Use team strength both on and off the playing field; think about ways in which you can organise your volunteers into small working teams.
- Help people to develop the skills and knowledge they need to do their job.
- Remember, training isn't just about formal courses. Volunteers can sometimes find the word 'training' off putting.
- There are times when life doesn't go strictly to plan. Allow for the fact that a voluntary role is only one small aspect of a persons life and that sometimes, other things (e.g. work and family) demand 100% of their time. Volunteers should be able to take time out when necessary, without feeling as if they have let the organisation down. It's much better to find a substitute or some additional help for a short while, than to lose a good volunteer permanently.

Recognition Tips

Say thank you by:

- making a personal telephone call
- sending a thank you card
- presenting a certificate of recognition
- buying the occasional small gift
- providing goodies (e.g. Kit bags, t-shirts, sweatshirts)
- holding a social evening just for volunteers
- giving volunteers priority tickets for major events
- taking an interest and keep in touch

Award volunteers internally for their work, for example:

- volunteer of the month/year award
- young volunteer award
- long service award

Nominate volunteers for external awards, for example:

- VIP Awards
- National governing body volunteer awards
- sports coach UK's Coach of the Year Award
- District sports council sport volunteer awards

Communicate the value of volunteers throughout the organisation:

- Include regular features about people behind the scenes and the impact of their work on your organisation in your newsletter/magazine/website.
- Submit articles on the work of volunteers to your local newspaper.

Offer perks:

- trips with the teams
- free tickets to social events
- discounts on clothing

www.spothampshireiow.co.uk

Useful related websites and further information...

Volunteering England	www.volunteering.org.uk
Do-it	www.do-it.org.uk
TimeBank	www.TimeBank.org.uk
Millennium Volunteers	www.millenniumvolunteers.gov.uk
CSV	www.csv.org.uk
Sport England	www.sportengland.org
Sport Hampshire and IOW	www.spothampshireiow.co.uk

Local Volunteer Bureaus in Hampshire and IOW...

Volunteer Bureaux provide support at a local level for individual volunteers and those organisations utilising roles:

- Basingstoke Volunteer Bureau: tel 01256 423850
- East Volunteer Bureau: tel 01730 710017
- Eastleigh and District Volunteer Bureau: tel 02380 902457
- Fareham Volunteer Bureau: tel 01329 231899
- Gosport Volunteer Centre: tel 02392 588347
- Hart Volunteer Bureau: tel 01252 815652
- Havant Volunteer Bureau: tel 02392 481845
- Island Volunteers Group: tel 01983 527333
- New Forest Volunteer Bureau at Community First: tel 01425 482774
- Portsmouth - ACE (Active Community Exchange): tel 02392 820954
- Rushmoor Volunteers: tel 01252 540162
- Southampton Voluntary Services: tel 02380 228291
- Test Valley Volunteer Centre (Andover): tel 01264 362600
- Winchester Volunteers: tel 01962 848030

Further Information

Please contact Debbie Timberlake (Club and Volunteer Development Officer)
Sport Hampshire & IOW - 01962845168 or email: debbie.timberlake@hants.gov.uk

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