

# THE GOOD CLUB GUIDE: YOUNG PEOPLE – THE FUTURE OF VOLUNTEERING

## How this resource will help you?

This resource will assist you in developing a competent and confident workforce with the inclusion of young volunteers. By developing the younger members you will ensure the sustainability and success of your club within future years. This resource will provide you with:

- Top tips on how to target, recruit and retain young volunteers within your club,
- Information on the positive effects of a volunteer mentor,
- Guidance to help you set up, develop and make effective use of a Youth Forum,
- Guidance on where to find further information and learning opportunities.



## Links to swim21



Swim21 is the ASA's club development programme. The Good Club Guide is intended to compliment Swim21 by providing tools, templates and resources that will assist the running of the club and ultimately assist in achieving or maintaining Swim21 accreditation



## Why strive to include more young volunteers?

Volunteers are essential for the sustainability of a swimming club, it is important to develop the club workforce and ensure that young people are engaged behind the scenes and not just in the pool. To guarantee the survival of any club it is important to consider what lies ahead. Ask yourself the question – where will our club be in 10 years time?

Young volunteers can bring fresh new perspectives, energy and enthusiasm and have a positive influence on a club's dynamics. It is healthy for a club to bring in new volunteers, it is important to consider who will be keeping the club running in the future. Combining volunteers of differing age and experience ensures that an effective club workforce is created. This also helps to bridge the gap between the younger swimmers and the older volunteers; a gap often perceived to be the cause for communication barriers between club members. Young swimmers will have someone to relate to as well as someone to look up to. Young people want to learn from those more knowledgeable and share their experiences, enabling them to have the opportunity to flourish under close guidance and support.

24 year old David has been a volunteer at his local swimming club for many years. He is a technical official and a coach, and for the past few years has also been involved with the club committee.

*"I believe that clubs need to engage and encourage as many young volunteers as possible, young people are the next generation and without volunteers then a lot of things in the sport would not happen. I have been encouraged by my local swimming club to help out with everything from day to day activities, to planning our club's first open meet competition. As a young volunteer I have taken on the role of being my club's newsletter editor, membership officer and have assisted with the electronic timing, with the website and with regional and national events.*

*My club has helped me develop not only my administration skills but more personally my ability to communicate with others and has increased my confidence levels. Not only can volunteering in sport develop a young person's skills but I have found that it is also a great way to make amazing friends that all share similar interests to myself. Volunteering has also provided me with an opportunity to travel all over the UK. In order to prevent volunteer numbers from reducing in the future it is vital that more young people are encouraged to take part. If I had not been encouraged to stay involved within my local club by volunteering then not only would I not have met so many amazing people, but my personal skills would not have developed as well as they have."*

David went on to become a member of the ASA's National Youth Forum, working alongside the ASA to help discover new ways of involving and engaging young people in aquatic sport. David has been encouraged and supported by his club members and has become a real asset to his local swimming community.

## Young Volunteer Recruitment

Understanding the motivations for why young people want to volunteer is an important step in helping your club to recruit more young people. Greater knowledge of these motivations will allow you to tailor your offer to appeal to the intended target audience.

### Volunteering provides young people with:

- The opportunity to meet new people,
- The opportunity to have fun,
- Both personal and social development – improving confidence, the ability to work as a team and develop social skills,
- Educational opportunities – D of E, Sport Leaders UK and similar awards,
- Extra curriculum activities – enhancing their CV,
- A sense of responsibility and satisfaction knowing they are helping to make a difference.

When recruiting club volunteers you must ensure that you outline the volunteering roles which need to be filled along with the details of what the role will include. The young volunteer will want to know that they will be able to put their skills to good use, and understand the impact they can have through being a part of the club.

How the volunteering role is promoted is an important deciding factor in determining a young person's involvement. Any promotional material should be directed to the audience that you want to attract, and be produced in a manner that will relate to young people on a personal level; for example, the type of language that is used. Think about getting the younger club members to help with the marketing. Who knows better than a young person on how to send the right message to reach their peers?



### How do I find young people?

- Advertise through your local newspaper, approach schools, colleges and universities,
- Put up a poster in local sports and leisure centres,
- Existing volunteers and club members promoting through word of mouth,
- Social media is a great way to spread the message to young people. Promote your opportunities through a club facebook or twitter account. The ASA social media guidance contained in Wavepower (ASA Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures) should be adhered to at all times. Wavepower and further guidance on using Twitter and Facebook is available at [www.swimming.org](http://www.swimming.org)
- Holding an open day and taster volunteer sessions,
- Visit the local volunteer centre so that they can promote your opportunities,
- Get help from your ASA County Workforce Development Officer, Contact your ASA Region who can promote your opportunities – contacts can be found at [www.swimming.org/asa/regions](http://www.swimming.org/asa/regions)



## Retaining Young Volunteers

Once you have recruited young people, it is important that from the offset they have a fulfilling and enjoyable experience. Volunteers should have an informative induction so that they feel welcomed and part of the team from the word GO! It is important that young people know where to find support, should they need it. This will help to retain volunteers creating a sustainable workforce.

**Good communication with your volunteers is essential. Without clear communication mistakes are easily made. You should ensure that:**

- You regularly communicate with your volunteers and send them updates via the following methods of communication:
  - Face to Face
  - Phone call
  - Text message
  - Email
- Hold regular meetings to update your volunteers,
- Have a volunteering page on your club website; update it regularly with volunteering news. Upload case studies of volunteer achievements. Acknowledge their dedication and commitment,
- Identify skills and training that will benefit the individual as well as the club.

TOP TIP – First impressions count, a warm welcome will bring volunteers back!

An important part of retaining volunteers is making them feel valued and respected by the club. There are many different ways in which a club can show appreciation to its volunteers. In order to create a happy workforce appreciation for the time and commitment of these individuals is vital. Thank them in an appropriate manner; a happy workforce is a productive one!

**Below you will find a few examples of how you could say thank you, but remember this list is not by any means exhaustive:**

- A face to face thank you,
- Give them a phone call to thank them,
- Send a thank you card,
- Provide volunteers with positive feedback; ask experienced volunteers to share their knowledge with younger club members,
- Recognise volunteer achievements on the club website to highlight hard work,
- Support volunteers in their personal development by providing training opportunities for them,
- Nominating exceptional volunteers for the ASA Aquaforce Awards,
- Recognising volunteers during National Volunteering Week.

## Becoming a Volunteer Mentor

Becoming a volunteer mentor or allowing young volunteers to shadow you in action is a great way to encourage learning. It allows young volunteers to share and learn from the experiences of others who may be more knowledgeable than themselves. Offering sufficient guidance is the key to creating confident and competent young people that will have the ability to benefit your club. Asking club members to become a mentor is a great way to bring all members of the workforce closer together, it creates unity as both older and younger volunteers feel valued as a result. Like all volunteers, young people want to know that they are respected and appreciated, existing volunteers want to ensure the years of experience they have and their hard work is still valued, so make sure your workforce understand each other and work together.

Having a mentor provides the volunteer with a sense of continuity. With effective mentoring you can develop a volunteer's strengths and ensure that they grow in confidence. It is important that good practice is shared and volunteers learn from one another. By sharing knowledge and experience they become the volunteer's point of contact and a friendly face. This can help reduce the concerns of young people when becoming a part of something new. Offering a volunteer mentor is a great way of attracting new members to the club.



**When appointing volunteer mentors you should ensure that they show, some if not all of the following qualities:**

- A positive role model
- Supportive
- Friendly
- Approachable
- Enthusiastic
- Patient
- Able to motivate others

## Create your own Youth Forum

The drop out of young people from organised sport, either as participants or volunteers is a long standing challenge. One reason for this decline is that young people are not sufficiently engaged in their activities and clubs. As a result they instead turn to alternative interests over which they have greater control.

Giving young people positions of responsibility and encouraging them to develop their own ideas ensures club sustainability through the ongoing recruitment and training of young leaders. Establishing a club Youth Forum gives young people the chance to participate in the decision making process of the sport and as a result encourages more young participants,

volunteers and leaders to stay involved with aquatics as the decisions that they make, will ultimately impact upon their enjoyment, achievements and commitment to the sport.

The purpose of creating a Youth Forum is for the group to represent the interests of young people participating or volunteering within aquatics. Youth Forum members would become a voice for all young athletes', officials and volunteers. The group would be able to assist on club projects and ASA programmes, as well as becoming ambassadors for the sport on a local level and getting the opportunity to link with the National ASA Youth Forum building a network of proactive young people within the sport.



### 1. Preparation required prior to creating a Youth Forum.

- The purpose of the group needs to be defined. You should ask yourself the following questions:
  - What outcomes do you want from the Youth Forum?
  - How will the Forum be utilised to benefit the club?
  - What projects will the Forum work on? (Think long term)
  - Targets and goals (Short term and long term)
- The correct level of support must be in place for the group to be effective; a club member who will lead the group and facilitate all meetings should be identified:
  - They must be enthusiastic about the goals of the Youth Forum,
  - Understand in advance the level of commitment that will be required,
  - Have experience of working with young people and leading a team of individuals,
- Determine the number of young people that will be recruited.
- Have a clear role description for a Youth Forum member:
  - How many meetings will be held throughout the year – level of commitment?
  - Determine the length of time the Youth Forum member will be in post for.





## 2. Recruiting Youth Forum members

Youth Forum members should look to portray the following qualities:

- Passionate and enthusiastic about all things aquatic,
- They should have knowledge of club volunteer roles,
- Be an excellent communicator,
- Have good organisational skills,
- Be able to work effectively within a team,
- Have a good knowledge of the issues faced by young people,
- Have some knowledge and understanding of the current initiatives and programmes that influence young people within sport,
- Be committed to involving young people within the decision making processes then act upon them.

Moving forward in the recruitment of your Youth Forum members you will first need to create an Expression of Interest form:

- Using the template below create an Expression of Interest Form,
- When promoting the position – send the correct message and use appropriate language to target and appeal to the intended audience,
- Set a firm deadline for application forms to be returned – do not accept late forms,
- Select Youth Forum Members using the role description that you have created,
- Send letters confirming whether or not the young people have been successful.

The ASA would recommend a Youth Forum consists of 5 to 12 members aged between 16 and 25. (Exceeding 12 the group has greater potential to lose productivity). Youth Forum meetings should not take place with less than 5 members or if the facilitator is not present.

All of the above should be carefully considered to not only ensure that all members are fully engaged but ultimately the overall success of the Youth Forum.

The ASA would recommend using a personal statement instead of interviewing for Youth Forum positions. This gives the young person the opportunity to share those reasons why they want to be involved, along with their experiences that would make them suitable, will avoid putting the young person outside of their comfort zone. It must be remembered that the young people will be volunteers so they should be treated as such. They must enjoy the work that they are doing in order to stay engaged.

Once you have appointed your Youth Forum members they should be provided with an informative induction, including:

- Meeting club members or ASA staff (in particular the club committee),
- Detailed overview of the role of the Youth Forum and information on how they will work with the club,
- Aims and outcomes of the Youth Forum – project plans for the next few months, an insight into what they can expect over the coming months.

During meetings avoid using language that an outsider might not understand, this could lead to young people feeling alienated. It is important to create a team atmosphere from the offset. Creating an identity for the group is a great way to reassure members and make them feel they belong to something special. This is also a great way to promote the group to the local community:

- Identify a team / group name,
- Create an emblem which represents the group and can be used on any promotional material along with meeting minutes and agendas,
- Youth Forum t-shirts which include the emblem or perhaps the young person's name. Making the group recognisable,
- Use team building activities to help the group bond and build team morale.



### 3. Planning a youth forum meeting

In order to ensure all Youth Forum members attend, provisional dates should be distributed in advance. Do not expect full attendance if you provide short notice.

- Have clear outcomes from each of the meetings to ensure that they are as productive as possible,
- Prepare the meeting agenda – send to Youth Forum in advance,
- Have all information, notes or documents that are relevant to the meeting printed and hard copies disseminated within the meeting, including hard copies of the agenda,
- Select a Youth Forum member to write the minutes or blog for the meeting to keep the rest of the club informed of what they are up to.

Ian Mackenzie Management Board Member of ASA Hertfordshire is currently developing and engaging young people within his region in a Youth Forum.

*“The young athletes in our clubs are the ones who inspire the adults to ensure that a swimming club works. There is an abundance of talent within our athletes and it is important to listen to what they have to say - running volunteer courses and getting young people more involved in the administration and organisational side of the club is one way to make use of that talent.*

*Young people can help their peers and relate better to young swimmers when supporting on poolside. Using their skills on computers, as marshals, officials, or as helpers at the end of the lane cannot be over emphasised as an asset to the club. It is easy for us to say what young people should be doing, but it is even better is to give the 16 to 25 year olds the chance to have a voice. Now is the time to let the young people and athletes have this opportunity to drive the next generation of volunteers forward, and the best way for that to happen is via a Youth Forum. They simply need the support, encouragement and blessing of the County and Region. Young people need to feel valued and have this voice to be able to inspire us all to better things. The Youth Forum is the way forward.”*



## Expression of Interest Form

### Personal Details

Title:

Surname:

Forename:

Address:

Postcode:  Date of Birth:

Tel: (Day)  (Evening)

Email:

### Information to support your application

Please give details of the reasons why you are applying for the position on the Youth Forum, and state any relevant experience that supports your application.

I confirm that the information given in this application is complete and correct.

Name:  Date:

Please complete this form and return it to (email address) by (date of deadline).

Please contact (same name as email) if you have any questions about your application.

## Summary

We hope that you have found this guide informative; we would once again like to thank you for the time and commitment you are giving to the sport. Keep volunteers committed to your club, remember the following:

- Encouragement
- Support
- Guidance
- Enthusiasm
- Appreciation
- Respect

## Further Information

The ASA accepts no liability for any errors and omissions in this resource. Whilst it is hoped that volunteers will find this resource useful, no liability rising out of its use can be accepted by the ASA or club.

This information is intended as a general guide, based on legislation at the time of publication. Neither the ASA nor its staff can accept any liability for any loss arising as a result of reliance upon the information contained herein. Readers are strongly advised to obtain professional advice on an individual basis.



## In addition

### ASA website pages dedicated to volunteers...

For more information visit [www.swimming.org/asa/volunteering](http://www.swimming.org/asa/volunteering) where you will find everything you need to know about volunteering in aquatics.

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### Running Sports

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### Sport England

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### SkillsActive

Email: [www.skillsactive.com/contact-us](http://www.skillsactive.com/contact-us)

Web: [www.skillsactive.com](http://www.skillsactive.com)

### Sportscoach UK

[www.sportscoachuk.org/contact](http://www.sportscoachuk.org/contact)

Web: [www.sportscoachuk.org](http://www.sportscoachuk.org)

### Sport Leaders UK

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