

## THE GOOD CLUB GUIDE FOR A CLUB CHAIRPERSON

### WELCOME!

You have either been appointed as, or are considering a role as a club volunteer. We wish you a fulfilling and enjoyable experience in your role, and appreciate your commitment and time you are giving in developing the sport.

### HOW THIS RESOURCE WILL HELP YOU

This resource is intended to assist you in your role by providing:

- A guide to the roles and responsibilities of this position
- Templates/resources to assist you and save you time
- Top tips and good practice from experienced volunteers
- Further information and learning/training opportunities

This resource complements other national volunteer publications, which are listed at the back of this resource. The ASA Good Club Guides **EXTRA** will be particularly helpful, providing practical tips, questions and answers that will equip you with further knowledge and information as a club Chairperson.

### LINKS TO SWIM21

swim21 is the ASA's club development programme. The Good Club Guide is intended to complement swim21, by providing tools, templates and resources that will assist the running of a club, and ultimately assist in achieving or maintaining swim21 accreditation.

### ROLE OF THE CHAIRPERSON

The Chairperson of a club is seen to be a figure head, ambassador and a principal officer for a club. A Chairperson will chair and lead meetings within the club, and be responsible for key decision making and leadership within the club, in consultation with other committee members. (NB. In some clubs, a President may also fulfill some of the above duties)

### EXAMPLE ROLE DESCRIPTION FOR A CLUB CHAIRPERSON

#### DUTIES OF A CLUB CHAIRPERSON:

- To provide direction for the club by effective leadership and management
- To chair and control meetings of the management committee
- To act as principal officer within the club, and make decisions whenever the need arises, in consultation with other officers when appropriate
- To represent the club at external meetings when required
- To be involved, where appropriate, in the co-ordination of club activities
- To manage and oversee the work of officers and other club personnel
- To present the club's annual report, in association with the club secretary

## THE GOOD CLUB GUIDE FOR A CLUB CHAIRPERSON

- To present the club's annual accounts, in association with the club treasurer
- To determine the content and agenda for club meetings, in association with club secretary
- To ensure that club statutory documents and other returns are administered and filed on time
- To advise the treasurer on the use and investment of club funds

### **COMMITMENT / TIME FOR THE ROLE**

Will vary from club to club, but will include attendance at club meetings, and could include attendance at meetings with the Local Authority, pool operators, and ASA County and County Sports Partnership staff. In addition, there will be other time commitments to fulfill the above criteria.

### **SKILLS AND QUALITIES REQUIRED**

- Enthusiastic with a good knowledge of the club and its financial position
- A knowledge and understanding of aquatics
- Leadership and management skills
- Able to represent the club at external meetings
- Confident in public speaking
- Able to control meetings, follow meeting agendas, and ensure everyone has the opportunity to present their views
- Well-informed about agenda's of meetings and the items to be covered
- Ability to ensure that all business at meetings is completed and that all decisions are understood and recorded
- A good communicator, and is approachable, clear and concise

### **TOOLS FOR THE ROLE**

The following are deemed to be essential items for a Chairperson to have in order to do their role:

- Use of a computer and email address to produce letters, emails, reports, and to store and record information
- Filing system to record all letters and correspondence
- Notebooks for meetings
- Annual diary
- Club headed stationery
- Telephone with access to an answer phone facility

### **GETTING STARTED**

The following sections will guide a club Chairperson through the key areas of the role description above. This resource should be read in conjunction with the other ASA Good Club Guides produced, particularly the Good Club Guide EXTRA for a

## THE GOOD CLUB GUIDE FOR A CLUB CHAIRPERSON

club Chairperson, and the Good Club Guide for the club secretary, treasurer and workforce co-ordinator. See further information for more details.

### LEADING THE CLUB

The role of the Chairperson as described above, is to provide direction and leadership to the club. The ASA Good Club Guide **EXTRA** for a Chairperson provides additional information and support in this area

### CLUB COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Meetings can be a valuable management tool for planning, discussing, evaluating and communicating. Holding club meetings is normally a constitutional requirement too. Please see ASA Club Constitutional guidance for further information.

A meeting could provide opportunities to plan for the future, and save time by communicating information to a number of people who all get the same information, and for people to meet and work with others, to share ideas and information, debate concepts and ideas, and make group decisions.

Within a club constitution, it may state for a meeting quorum to be present. This will be in a constitution to ensure a minimum number of members are present for a meeting.

The club committee is a group of elected people who meet regularly to discuss and make decisions on the operation of a club. The business undertaken at a committee meeting is normally in 2 key areas:

- Items for information. This relates to events that have already happened or decisions already made. Verbal and/or written reports are given to inform members, who then have an opportunity to ask questions or seek clarification
- Items for debate. This relates to future events. This enables the whole group to discuss the issues and develop options.

Some clubs have formal procedures in place for committee meetings. The ASA has produced “Recommended club constitution and guidance notes for clubs in ASA Regions” (July 2006). Further details follow at the end of this resource.

This ASA guidance provides information on how often, and how to conduct committee meetings, including guidance on voting and elections.

### TOP TIPS FROM CLUBS FOR GREAT CLUB COMMITTEE MEETINGS

1. **Start and finish meetings on time.** This will promote a message that business is important, and so is the time that volunteers give.

## THE GOOD CLUB GUIDE FOR A CLUB CHAIRPERSON

2. **Allocate rough timings to each agenda item** to ensure good time keeping, and allow time for discussions where needed on the agenda
3. **Ensure everyone has the opportunity to contribute.** Ensure people do not dominate discussions, and encourage others to express their point. The ASA has issued guidance for clubs in adopting rules for debate (please see further information section)
4. **Keep discussions focused.** Should people become sidetracked or stray off the point, try bringing someone else in to discussions to re-focus, or move on. Some clubs do this by presenting written reports in advance of the meeting in order to save time, and keep focused on key issues
5. **Involve everyone with decision making at the meeting.** Ask the whole group a question or to confirm a decision. E.g ask the group “Are we all in agreement to...(the decision)..?” as this will give those that may not have contributed, the time and opportunity to disagree or ask further questions.
6. **Set up the meeting space to get the best out of the group.** Could the meeting room be set up in a different way to be less formal and more inviting? e.g remove tables which act as a barrier, encourage people to sit in a different chair/space than the last time, encourage small group discussions
7. **Try to allow time and space for people to chat, exchange ideas and socialise before and after the meeting,** but do balance this with ensuring you get business done too
8. **Keep meetings productive.** Could reports be done in a written format and circulated prior to the meeting to save time? Are meetings too frequent that there is not enough to discuss, or are they so infrequent that people lose momentum and focus?
9. **Ensure meetings are equitable/representative.** Ensure the club has representation of the club’s membership on the committee ie. gender, ethnic origin, disability
10. **Having an athlete representative on the committee.** This will provide great input from the club athletes’ and provide a young persons viewpoint on behalf of the membership

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

This is an annual open meeting for any club member to attend. The purpose of an AGM is to:

- Present key information about the club, such as the finances and achievements throughout the year
- Elect officers for the club
- Discuss and vote upon amendments to the constitution or rules
- Consider the previous year’s annual report
- Hear the views of club members regarding the way the club is being managed

Prior notice should be given to matters that members wish to discuss.

AGMs are also an ideal opportunity to combine an annual awards event, a club social event, or a thank you to all the volunteers, teachers, coaches and athletes.

## THE GOOD CLUB GUIDE FOR A CLUB CHAIRPERSON

The ASA has produced guidance on procedures for AGMs in the document "Recommended club constitution and guidance notes for clubs in ASA Regions" (July 2006). Further details follow at the end of this resource.

### **SPECIAL (EXTRAORDINARY) GENERAL MEETINGS**

These may be called at any time by the club committee, or a specified number of members, to discuss issues that require consultation with, and decisions by the club membership, for example changes to the constitution which will not wait until the AGM. Further details are provided in the ASA club constitution document

### **MINUTE TAKING**

At all meetings, someone should be appointed to record minutes. This would normally be the role of the secretary, or a designated minutes secretary within a club, but could be a nominated person should a secretary not be in attendance. Meeting minutes should be clear and concise and be a true reflection of discussions. Decisions and actions should be clearly recorded and agreed by members of the committee.

Minutes of a meeting should be typed and circulated to all members of the committee. The minutes are normally agreed and corrected at the next subsequent meeting when members have had the opportunity of reviewing them. Minutes and reports from meetings can often be used as a method of communication to the rest of the club to inform members of action and decisions the committee have made. Some clubs display meeting reports on club notice boards, others communicate key information via club newsletters.

Please see the Good Club Guide for a club secretary for further information on minute taking

### **MOVING ON FROM YOUR ROLE.....**

Have you thought about how you will ensure all your knowledge and experience is passed onto a person taking over from you, when you decide its time to move on?

Here are some suggestions to ensure a smooth transition, and to ensure the person taking over from you has the information and resources they need:

- Try to give as much notice to the club that you are moving on, in order to allow the club to recruit / elect another volunteer
- Assist in developing an up to date role description and advert for the post based on your experience in the role, and think of any people that may be interested
- Think about the type of information you would like to receive if you were to volunteer for this position, and the format you would like to receive it in eg.

## THE GOOD CLUB GUIDE FOR A CLUB CHAIRPERSON

one big file, a face to face hand over meeting, hand over in a 2 week period to not overload with information

- Prepare an information pack for the new volunteer to assist them in their role
- Prepare a list of any outstanding work/issues
- Prepare a top tips or similar list to help a new volunteer
- Provide a list of key contacts or people who can assist a new volunteer
- Hand over hard copies of any files or important correspondence. Put electronic information onto a USB stick or disk
- Offer to mentor the new volunteer in this role for an agreed period of time

### SUMMARY

We hope you have found this guide informative in supporting you in your role, and providing you with information and helpful tips. We wish you a great experience in your role and thank you once again for all your time and commitment you are giving to the sport.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

The ASA accepts no liability for any errors or omissions in this resource. Further, whilst it is hoped that volunteers will find this resource useful, no liability arising out of it's use can be accepted by the ASA or the club.

This resource is not a contract of employment and the role you undertake as a volunteer will not create an employment relationship between you and the club or the ASA.

Copyright © ASA 2007. All rights reserved. Except as permitted under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, this publication may not be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by any means without the prior permission of the ASA.

#### **Amateur Swimming Association**

Harold Fern House  
Derby Square  
Loughborough  
Leics LE11 5AL  
Tel: 01509 618700  
Email: [info@swimming.org](mailto:info@swimming.org)  
Web: [www.britishswimming.org](http://www.britishswimming.org)

#### **runningsports**

3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Victoria House  
Bloomsbury Square,  
London WC1B 4SE  
Tel: 0800 363373  
Email: [info@runningsports.org](mailto:info@runningsports.org)  
Web: [www.runningsports.org](http://www.runningsports.org)

#### **Sport England**

3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Victoria House  
Bloomsbury Square,  
London WC1B 4SE  
Tel: 0845 850 8508  
Email: [info@sportengland.org](mailto:info@sportengland.org)  
Web: [www.sportengland.org](http://www.sportengland.org)

#### **CCPR – One voice for sport and recreation**

Fourth Floor  
Burwood House  
14-16 Caxton Street  
London  
SW1H 0QT

#### **Child Protection in Sport Unit**

NSPCC National Training Centre  
3 Gilmour Close  
Beaumont Leys  
Leicester LE4 1EZ

#### **SkillsActive**

Castlewood House  
77-91 New Oxford Street  
London WC1A 1PX  
Tel: 0207 632 2000  
Email: [skills@skillsactive.com](mailto:skills@skillsactive.com)  
Web: [www.skillsactive.com](http://www.skillsactive.com)

## THE GOOD CLUB GUIDE FOR A CLUB CHAIRPERSON

Tel: 020 7976 3900  
Email: [info@ccpr.org.uk](mailto:info@ccpr.org.uk)  
Web: [www.ccpr.org.uk](http://www.ccpr.org.uk)

Tel: 0116 234 7278  
Email: [cpsu@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:cpsu@nspcc.org.uk)  
Web: [www.thecpsu.org.uk](http://www.thecpsu.org.uk)

### **National Association of Councils for Voluntary Service (NACVS)**

177 Arundel St  
Sheffield S1 2NU  
Tel: 0114 278 6636  
Email: [nacvs@nacvs.org.uk](mailto:nacvs@nacvs.org.uk)  
Web: [www.nacvs.org.uk](http://www.nacvs.org.uk)

### **Sportscoach UK**

114 Cardigan Road  
Headingley  
Leeds  
LS6 3BJ  
Tel: 0113 274 4802  
Email: [coaching@sportscoach.org](mailto:coaching@sportscoach.org)  
Web: [www.sportscoachuk.org](http://www.sportscoachuk.org)

### **Volunteering England**

Regents Wharf  
8 All Saints st  
London N1 9RL  
Tel: 0845 305 6979  
Email: [information@volunteeringengland.org](mailto:information@volunteeringengland.org)  
Web: [www.volunteering.org.uk](http://www.volunteering.org.uk)

### **Youth Sport Trust**

Sir John Beckwith Centre for sport  
Loughborough University  
Loughborough  
Leics LE11 3TU  
Tel: 01509 226600  
Email: [info@youthsporttrust.org](mailto:info@youthsporttrust.org)  
Web: [www.youthsporttrust.org](http://www.youthsporttrust.org)

### **County sports Partnerships**

(located all across England. Contact details available via ASA Regional Offices.

### **In addition:**

**runningsports** has a series of top tips that can be downloaded for free. These include tips on health and safety of volunteers, recruiting young volunteers and older volunteers. Available at [www.runningsports.org](http://www.runningsports.org)

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

Did you know the ASA website has a dedicated section for volunteers? To find this section, go to [www.britishswimming.org](http://www.britishswimming.org), and click on the “club” tab at the top of the home page. When you are through to the “club” page, click on the “volunteers” link on the left hand side of the page.

Your **ASA County Workforce Coordinator** may be able to provide guidance and assistance to you in your role. Further details are available on the British Swimming website.

ASA Club Constitutional guidance. Link to page on ASA website:

<http://www.britishswimming.org/vsite/vfile/page/fileurl/0,11040,5157-182967-200185-120448-0-file,00.pdf>

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The ASA are grateful for the contributions and input from the ASA Volunteer working group in ensuring these resources are written and reviewed by volunteers, for volunteers. These resources also draw upon the work developed by swim21 clubs, **runningsports** and Volunteering England. The ASA would like

## THE GOOD CLUB GUIDE FOR A CLUB CHAIRPERSON

to acknowledge and thank these organisations for their support and permission in using the work they have completed.