

Toolkit for Volunteer Co-ordinators

Supporting volunteer co-ordinators based in Wales



- Recruiting and deploying volunteers
- Supporting and developing volunteers
- Valuing and retaining volunteers

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Introduction

This toolkit draws together a wide range of resources to support volunteer co-ordinators based in Welsh sporting organisations in their key activities of:

- **Recruiting and deploying volunteers**
- **Supporting and developing volunteers**
- **Valuing and retaining volunteers.**

These activities come directly from the **Give to Gain** principles developed by **Sport Wales** in partnership with the sports sector in Wales. They set out how people can be supported to play a part in volunteering, such that:

- Volunteers know exactly what is expected of them
- Volunteers are valued, developed and supported
- The mutual benefits of volunteering are clear to everyone.

The resources within this toolkit come from the Welsh sports sector, particularly **Club Solutions**, but also from the wider world of volunteering, for example the **WCVA** (Wales Council for Voluntary Action). A useful route into a wide range of information and advice on volunteering best practice can be found at **Volunteering Wales**.

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Photo: Steve Pope - sportingwales



The Role of Volunteer Co-ordinator

Few people within Welsh sporting organisations have the formal title of Volunteer Co-ordinator.

Titles can include Chair, Secretary, Junior Club Co-ordinator and many more. Sometimes the role is spread across more than one office holder, for example amongst a Head Coach and Team Managers. Regardless of titles, the activity fulfilled by people carrying out the Volunteer Co-ordinator role is vital to the success of most sports organisations. **In fact, the role is too important just to be tagged on to another role. It deserves to be a stand-alone role.**

So, what is a Volunteer Co-ordinator? It can be summarised as someone within the sporting organisation that:

- **Recruits and deploys volunteers**
- **Supports and develops volunteers**
- **Values and retains volunteers.**

What kind of person makes a good Volunteer Co-ordinator? There's no magic formula but research suggests many successful Volunteer Co-ordinators:

- **are organised**
- **are approachable**
- **have strong communication skills, both listening and talking**
- **have self-confidence**
- **take the lead to get things done.**

If Volunteer Co-ordinators are to be successful in their role, it helps if it is clear to them and the wider sports organisation what is expected of them. Having a written **volunteer co-ordinator role description** helps everyone achieve this. An example role descriptor, together with a brief introduction to the role and its benefits, can be found [here](#).

Even with a role descriptor, new Volunteer Co-ordinators might wonder where to start in practice. A good place to begin is the **help sheet for new Volunteer Co-ordinators**. This gives a list of practical suggestions, such as identifying all the current volunteers and their roles, ensuring their contact details are up-to-date and knowing how they prefer to be contacted. However, we'll go into a lot more detail of what needs to be done and how to do it throughout the rest of this toolkit.

Recruiting and deploying volunteers

Find out what needs doing

Volunteers are more likely to do a good job if they have been given clear guidance on what to do and how to do it. If that is to happen, the Volunteer Co-ordinator first needs to be clear about all the activities that need doing.

You probably won't be able to do this on your own. Have a chat with a wide range of role holders within the organisation and find out how things work and what needs doing. Then make a list and see where there is a need for more volunteers.

When you list the jobs that need doing, don't just list bigger jobs that may represent a full role, such as *treasurer or team manager*. Also list smaller tasks like 'set out flags on pitch on match days' or 'ensure there is enough tea, coffee, milk and sugar for meeting nights'. Not everyone has the time or confidence to commit to the bigger roles but they might be happy to take on a smaller job. As a well-known supermarket puts it, 'Every little helps'!

Finding the right person for a role

If the right volunteer is placed in the right role, it is likely they will enjoy their experience, do it well and keep on doing it. Everyone benefits. Find the wrong person and it can be a painful experience for the volunteer and the wider club. But how does a volunteer co-ordinator find the right people?

Research suggests successful volunteer co-ordinators get to know everyone at their club and get people to talk about themselves.

By simply chatting, you can learn what people do at work, what hobbies they might have and what activities make them feel good. Whether someone is involved in food preparation at work, has experience of organising social events or simply enjoys ironing, there's usually something that people could usefully contribute to the life of the sports organisation. Don't forget though, experience and qualifications may not be the most crucial indicators of whether someone will succeed in a particular volunteer role. Attitude and aptitude can be much more important.

“ I look for people that are reliable and keen. They must be willing to show commitment to the club. The experience I look for will depend on the role. Having the right attitude is key ”.

Volunteer Co-ordinator, Athletics

While getting to know people in the club and matching their strengths to needs is the most used method of finding volunteers in sports organisations, wider thinking about getting the right people in the right role can be found at **annex A** at the end of this toolkit.

Don't forget to consider your younger club members for roles within your organisation. Young Volunteers are playing an ever-increasing role in Welsh sport and can bring new ideas and energy. Further information on engaging Young Volunteers can be found **here**.

Finding the right person is only part of the story. Volunteer Co-ordinators need to put in place the conditions that give the volunteer the best chances of success in the role.

Selecting to succeed

If you find someone willing to volunteer, it can be tempting to accept their offer without further thought. Nonetheless, we'd advise you to pause. Does the potential volunteer need to act as part of a team? Are the team members likely to get along well or might their personalities clash? Involving a member of this wider team in the decision to appoint a volunteer is likely to head off potential problems.

This begs the question, how formal should an appointment process be? Should there be a written role description? Do volunteers need to apply for a role? Should they be interviewed? We'll address each of those questions in turn.



Written role descriptions can be very helpful. Templates for some common volunteer roles in sports organisations can be found [here](#). Nonetheless, in considering role descriptions, it is wise to be both proportionate and consistent, ideas that are worth exploring in more detail:

Volunteer role descriptions

Earlier it was suggested that the Volunteer Co-ordinator is more likely to succeed if everyone is clear what they are being asked to do and they are given the right support to do it. The same is true for any volunteer.

Both the volunteer and the wider club will benefit if the volunteer has a clear role description. For a small, easily defined task, this can be verbal. For roles where there is any scope for confusion or ambiguity, a written role description is more helpful.

There's plenty of help on [how to write a volunteer role description](#) and [examples](#) of what they can look like in practice. As this 'how to' guide highlights, a volunteer role description is similar to a job description for a paid employee but there are some differences which are best understood so that you don't unintentionally create an employment contract with a volunteer. The issues are the same whether the role description is verbal or written.

Be proportionate

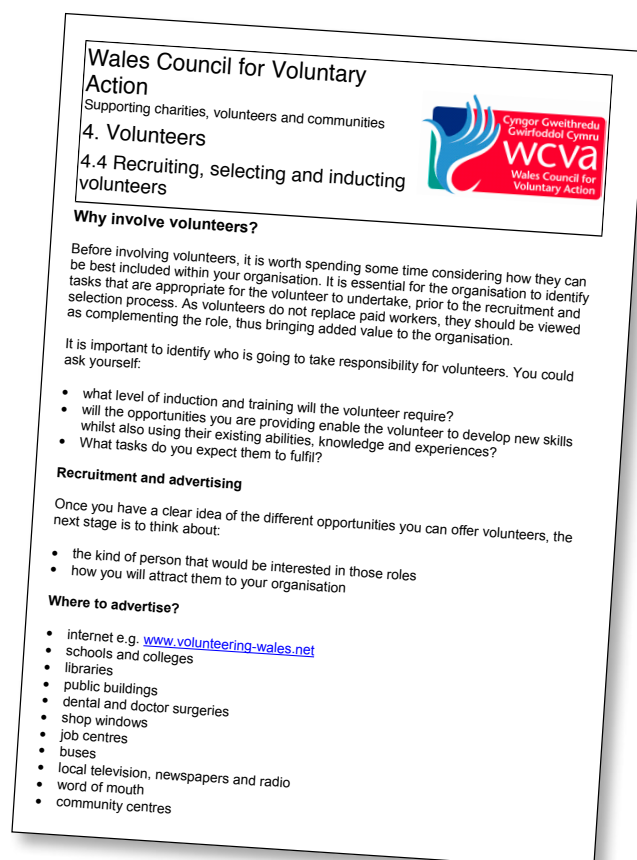
If you are asking team supporters to put out the flags on the pitch or a parent to help wash up after refreshments, a formal application form and interview may well be over the top. On the other hand, if a volunteer is considering a more substantial role, perhaps as a coach or events manager, completing an application form, conducting an interview and taking up references would be appropriate.

Be consistent

People generally don't mind an element of formality if it is explained to them why it is necessary, and they feel that everyone is being treated the same. If it is decided that it is necessary to take up references for an appointment, this should apply whether the volunteer has been at the club for many years or whether it is their first contact with the club. If the volunteer engages with young or vulnerable people in any way as part of their role, they must be [DBS checked](#), regardless of how well they are known within the club.

A wider selection of [top tips](#) have been compiled to help volunteer co-ordinators select the right people for the right roles. This includes a template volunteer application form, if it is decided that level of formality is appropriate for the role.

There may well be people in your club with experience of recruitment within their working lives. It may be helpful to get advice from such people if you don't have experience in this area. Alternatively, the WCVA has a useful [help sheet](#) based on good practice which includes all the issues you might want to consider, including topics you might want to explore at an interview. As the help sheet points out, that word 'interview' can be really off-putting to volunteers. So, perhaps it would be better to invite potential volunteers for a 'chat to explore whether it is the right role for them'.



Induction

A good induction provides the background enabling a volunteer to succeed. It is not a one-off discussion, rather a process over a period of time.

A volunteer co-ordinator or other inductor should meet with a volunteer at the start of induction.

Any uncertainty arising from the role descriptor can be clarified and any concerns that the volunteer might hold can be addressed.

The volunteer should be provided with a **volunteer welcome booklet or pack** at this meeting. Rather than asking the volunteer to go away and read the pack, the inductor should introduce the main themes of the welcome pack, highlighting mutual expectations and points of contact for support. The volunteer can then be asked to read the booklet and to explore key policies, such as Health & Safety and Safeguarding, as appropriate.

A follow up meeting should be scheduled to address any queries the volunteer may have from consideration of these policies. The follow up meeting might be a good time to consider whether the volunteer might benefit from any relevant training sessions planned by the sports organisation or the **National Governing Body** (NGB).

Induction also includes introducing volunteers to other members of the sports organisation.

This can involve introductions to both paid staff and other volunteers. It is essential to introduce volunteers to people with whom they will be in regular contact, including anyone mentoring them. However, it greatly adds to the sense of well-being of volunteers and helps to build/maintain a sense of community, if introductions can be made to a wider circle of people. New volunteers, for example parents of club members, may not know anyone in the club.

Finally, volunteers should be shown how to carry out their role. Ideally, they should be mentored by someone experienced in the role.

It should never be assumed that people know how to carry out any task, even if they have been associated with the sports organisation for years.

How many people would know where the washing up liquid and tea towels are kept or how to use the dishwasher if they had not helped out in the club's kitchen? The same is true of any task. Nothing is 'obvious' if it is the first time you undertake a task.



Supporting and developing volunteers

Sources of Support for Volunteers

Support for volunteers begins at induction. The contacts within the **volunteer welcome booklet** are there to provide on-going support.

The volunteer co-ordinator typically provides general support. This varies from organisation to organisation but can range from keeping in contact with all volunteers to ensure things are working out as planned, to keeping all volunteers up-to-date on plans for general training or social events.

Commonly, support is not restricted to that from volunteer co-ordinators.

Many sports organisations set up buddy systems or mentoring for volunteers, particularly those new to a complex role, such as coaching, officiating or team manager.

This can be a highly effective means of sharing the experience and developing skills within the club.

“When young gymnasts reach 12 or 13, we ask them if they’re interested in training to be a coach. Those that are will be buddied with a trained coach and start volunteering alongside him/her. Gradually they lead more and more of their own coaching sessions and are mentored through the levels of coaching qualifications”

Volunteer Co-ordinator, Gymnastics

Bangor Gymnastics Club



Most sports organisations hold training sessions from time-to-time. These can include visiting experts from other clubs or sessions provided by the National Governing Body (NGB). Equally, NGBs hold regional or national training sessions which may be of benefit to volunteers. You can keep up to date with these sessions by visiting your NGB's website. Indeed, NGB websites and **Club Solutions** are good sources of information and advice, useful in developing volunteers.

While NGBs can be great sources of training, there are often alternative sources which can be equally low cost or no cost. We've put together a **list of suggestions** to get you started.

Accessing training

In the interests of transparency and consistency, it is helpful if sporting organisations have defined policies regarding external training courses. Some clubs pay for training courses as a means of recognising a certain amount of time volunteered. Other clubs share the cost of training with the volunteer. Others may pay expenses associated with training course attendance.

These issues of transparency and consistency are important for all volunteer co-ordinators to consider. No one likes to feel they are being left out or overlooked. Openly publicising training opportunities to all helps people feel included. Group e mails, texts or private groups on a social media platform, such as Facebook, can be relatively easy ways of getting the message out to everyone.

Funding to develop volunteers

Many clubs have benefited from the **Community Chest** which provides grants towards improving participation or improving standards. It is worth considering all volunteer training needs for a 12-month period and determining how this source of support might help your overall training requirements.

While important, **Community Chest** is not the only source of funding available to clubs. For example, **Volunteering Wales Grants** is a scheme funded by Welsh Government and administered by WCVA to promote volunteering in Wales. An annual cycle of applications promotes volunteer projects aimed at meeting specific themes, such as engaging with young people, under-represented groups or promoting the Welsh language.

Support for Volunteer Co-ordinators

Of course, volunteer co-ordinators need support too. If possible, it is helpful if the previous volunteer co-ordinator at the club could mentor you. Alternatively, people new to the role may be able to identify volunteer co-ordinators at other clubs to act as their buddy (potentially but not necessarily within your sport).

Even if such people don't have the time to mentor you, it can be helpful to have someone on whom you can call to *pick their brains* from time to time. Your NGB may be able to help by putting you in touch with someone.

Indeed, NGBs can be a good source of help and advice for volunteer co-ordinators. Each NGB operates slightly differently but most have a named person who acts as a point of contact and support for clubs. Alternatively, your local authority **Sports Development team** may be useful sources of advice.

“ I knew we needed a team to do the different roles and empower them. I read up on advice on the Welsh Athletics website. I had a mentor through a ‘thinking clubs’ programme within the borough. He was from the University of South Wales. He was very impartial – he looked at the facts – and was very much there for me. The council also had a sport development officer. She would sit with me and talk; take on a few tasks and help build a plan ”.

Volunteer Coordinator, Athletics

A complementary guide to supporting volunteers is available [here](#).

Valuing and retaining volunteers

A good introduction to **retaining people** can be found within Club Solutions. It makes a good point that first impressions and welcoming people are vital. That's one reason why an effective **induction** to a volunteer role is so important.

Communication

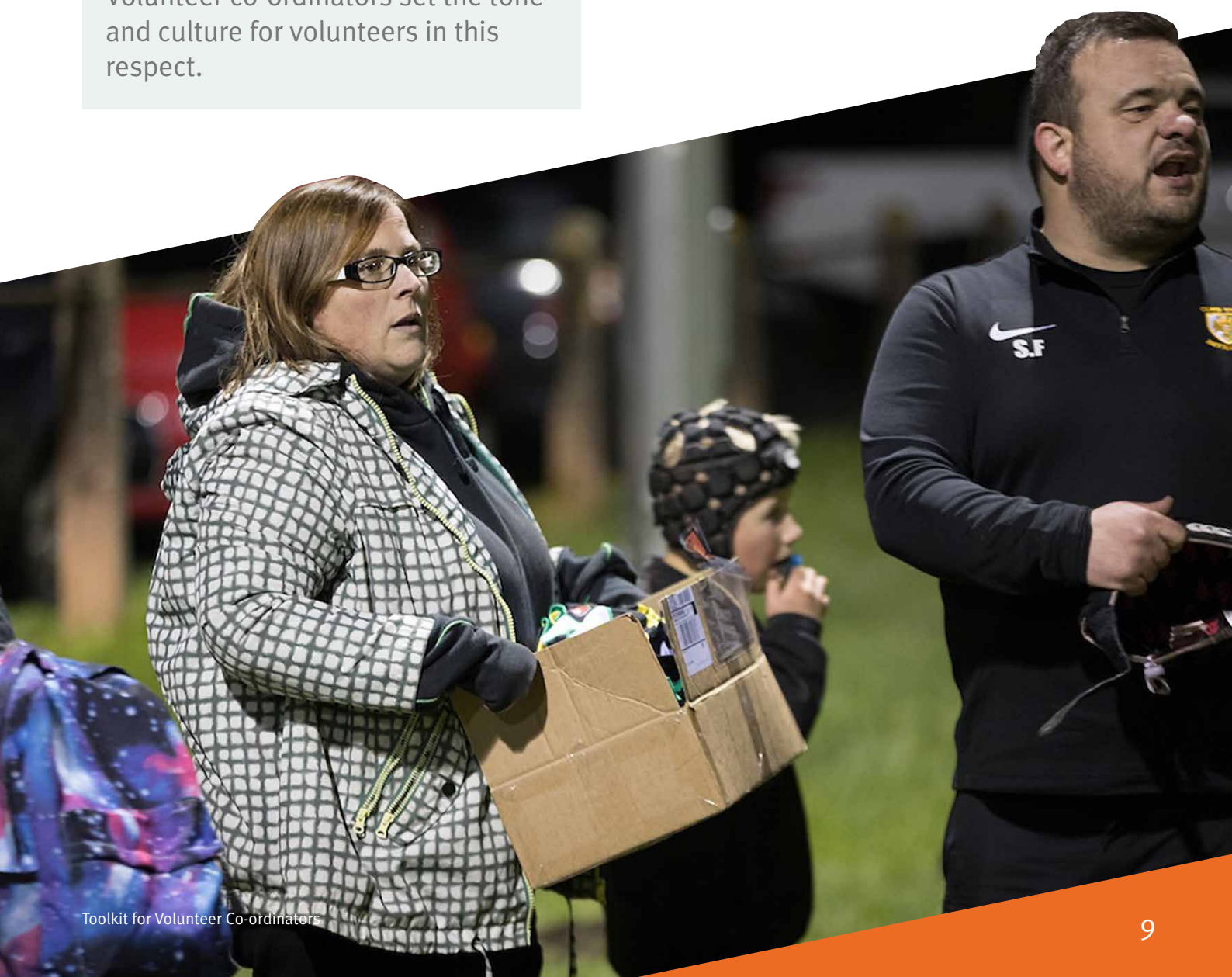
Volunteers usually gain satisfaction from seeing *a job well done* and seeing how the organisation benefits from their contribution. Nonetheless, we all like to feel valued - a 'thank you' goes a long way.

Volunteer co-ordinators set the tone and culture for volunteers in this respect.

A 'thank you' is a good start but is just one element of communication contributing to a positive volunteering culture.

Keeping volunteers 'in the loop' about developments at the club, decisions that are being made and changes to policies that might affect them can be equally important.

Different sporting organisations will use different means to achieve this. Some volunteer co-ordinators hold occasional briefing sessions with volunteers, perhaps providing some refreshments or a light buffet. Others make use of closed groups on a favoured social media platform, like Facebook or WhatsApp. Yet others have volunteer sections on their websites.



Flexibility

A volunteer role may require a certain number of hours commitment every week. What if you identify the right person for the role but they cannot commit to all the hours or every week? Job-sharing is a possibility. It needs good communication between all the people involved but can be a good way of benefiting from the shorter periods of time people can commit. Alternatively, a rota enables people to contribute, even if they cannot be there every week.

Even the most committed volunteers suffer illnesses, take holidays and face unexpected issues. Setting up a *buddy* system, where other people know how to carry out their role and can step in at short notice, can be helpful.

When a reliable volunteer cannot participate unexpectedly, the best response is to be understanding and caring. It might be inconvenient for you to find another volunteer at short notice, but you are more likely to retain the longer-term commitment of the volunteer if they feel their problems are taken seriously.

“It is fixed that the coaches need to commit to their weekly session and the first aider and ‘cook’ needs to be present at the matches (we give free coffee and bacon rolls to volunteers and players). I plan six months ahead and ask for that duration of commitment only. I also have back-up rotas in case a volunteer can’t make it”.

Volunteer Co-ordinator, Rugby

Get social

Research suggests occasional social events are a good way of building volunteer commitment to the organisation. Some organisations pitch such events as a ‘thank you’ for people’s contributions, perhaps by providing a buffet or refreshments. A lot of clubs tend to organise an event around Christmas or the end of a season. Some have a meal, others may go ten-pin bowling. The interests of the volunteer group will dictate what works best for your club.

Awards

Some sports organisations include awards for volunteers at their annual awards nights. There are several local, regional and national sports awards held each year. Nominating someone from your organisation is a good way of raising the profile of your organisation and the excellent work that your volunteers are doing. So, keep an eye on your local authority sports development team or National Governing Body websites and see if someone within your organisation meets the criteria for the different categories.

Other clubs feel that rewarding some volunteers and not others can be divisive. A small token of appreciation to all volunteers at the end of the season, such as a bottle of wine, flowers or chocolates, can be a great way of making all volunteers feel appreciated.

If you are keen to have a formal reward system, it is common within volunteering to reward people for the number of hours they contribute rather than make any judgements about the value of one volunteer’s contribution relative to another. Perhaps your club might like to model a scheme on the Millennium Volunteers programme. This recognises the volunteering efforts of young people by providing certificates on reaching 50, 100 and 200 hours of time volunteered. WCVA has put in place an all-Wales **on-line volunteer platform** which is managed by the volunteer centres within each **Third Sector Support Wales** organisation. This is free to use for Welsh organisations involved in volunteering. It enables management of volunteers, including hours logging and awards of digital badges for 50, 100, 200, 500 and 1,000 hours volunteered. Another option for volunteers to log their hours is the **Volhours** app that Sport Wales have helped develop.

Alternatively, there are **time banking** schemes that provide credits in exchange for hours volunteered. These credits are recognised as an alternative to cash by retail, leisure or social enterprises signed up with that time bank. One example of a time bank based in Wales and supported by Welsh Government is **Spice**.

“We signed up to the Gwirvol Millennium Volunteers Scheme. There are 15 volunteers on the scheme, some of whom have already done 200 hours volunteering to reach the Millennium Award level. The Award is a real motivator – 200 volunteer hours gets them a certificate and even the 15 to 17-year olds are excited and motivated by this. The Club also runs its own Young Volunteer Scheme for those under 14”.

Volunteer Co-ordinator, Gymnastics

Dealing with Difficulties

It is possible to minimise certain difficulties with volunteers through planning. For example written expectations in a **Volunteering Policy**, role description and/or club code of conduct can prevent misunderstandings.

Nonetheless, sometimes things go wrong and issues need to be addressed. When someone is giving their time as a volunteer, it can be daunting to challenge them. However, that may be necessary for the wider good of the club. Sometimes difficult conversations need to be held with volunteers or sometimes their parents. Many people find this challenging but there are plenty of good quality **sources of guidance** in approaching difficult conversations.

Time to leave

There may come a time when a volunteer chooses to give up their role or even leave the club. They may do this if their children stop participating in the sport. Work or family commitments may put pressure on time. It is a good idea to have an exit interview with volunteers who are leaving their role to understand their reasons.

An exit interview need not be formal, a chat over a cup of tea is fine. Find out why they are leaving. Are there issues at the sports organisation that need to be addressed?

Were there misconceptions about the volunteering role that need to be considered when looking for a replacement volunteer?

Regardless of why a volunteer leaves their role, it is a good idea to part on good terms. They can be an advocate for volunteering within the club or the wider community. Not only that, they may be able to return when life becomes a little less hectic for them. To encourage that continued sense of belonging, it is a good idea to ask whether they would like to continue receiving occasional updates about the progress of the club. Perhaps a card at Christmas would be a good way to retain contact?

Succession planning

Volunteers sometimes leave or may be unavailable with little or no notice. This can be challenging to manage and can be a situation where an active mentoring system can make a real difference.

If possible, identify other people that could grow into a role when the current role holder decides they want to do something else. Over time, perhaps the main role holder and their mentee could share the role. At the very least, this would help with managing holiday or sickness cover.

This area of succession planning needs to be handled sensitively. Some people can feel that their position is being threatened or undermined if they feel someone else is being trained to replace them. Help them to feel valued by emphasizing that other people would benefit from their experience and guidance and that this will add to the role holder's contributions, not replace them.



Best Practice

There are a couple of key documents that help to hold together the activities of a Volunteer Co-ordinator:

- **Volunteering Policy**
- **Volunteer handbook or welcome booklet**

The details of these documents will reflect the nature and culture of their respective sport organisations, however templates may be helpful for those wanting to develop the documents for the first time.

The WCVA has developed a model **Volunteering Policy**. There is an expectation that sporting organisations will choose to adapt this model policy to reflect the practices of their organisation. Possibly, consideration of the model policy will lead the organisation to challenge itself about some current practices.



Photo: Steve Pope - sportingwales

The model **Volunteering Policy** sets out the way the organisation behaves towards volunteers and expectations that the organisation can reasonably have from volunteers. It also refers to important policies that all responsible organisations should hold, such as **health and safety** and **safeguarding** of vulnerable individuals, such as children. At the heart of the model policy is the idea of fairness. All volunteers associated with the organisation should be treated equally well, regardless of whether that involves **reimbursement of expenses** or **guidance and support** for their volunteering activities.

The **volunteer handbook or welcome pack** fulfils several functions. It seeks to make volunteers feel welcome and assured that their contribution is valued. It provides information that helps the volunteers fulfil their role, for example a fixture list. It also provides contact details for key role holders in the sports organisation and the

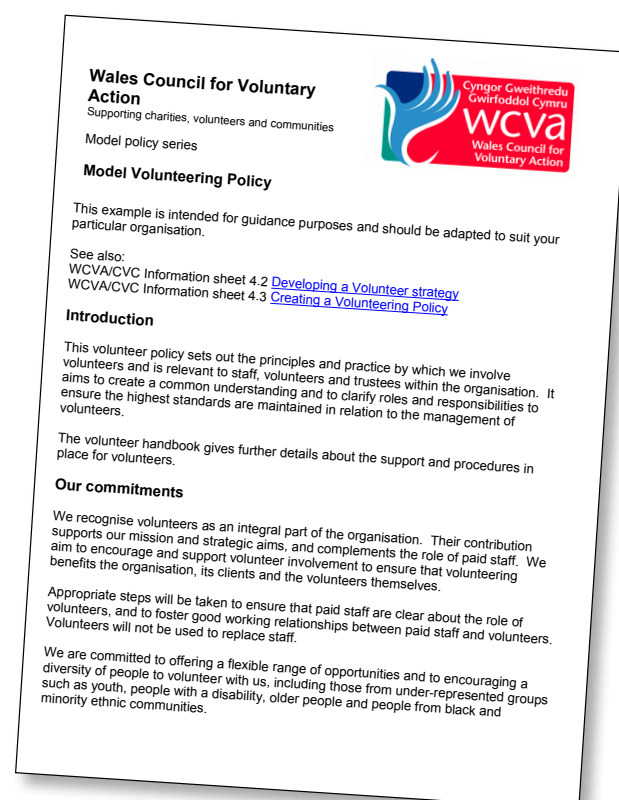
specific person they can approach for help in their volunteering activity.

Historically, volunteer handbooks may have been relatively large, printed documents as they may have included all relevant policies and procedures produced by the sporting organisation. Increasingly, policies and procedures are placed on organisational websites where they are freely available and can be updated easily. This enables volunteer handbooks to be produced as concise booklets or welcome packs that are more user-friendly for the reader.

A template volunteer welcome booklet may be found **here**. Alternatively, there are examples of more general **club welcome packs**.

There are references to key policies within this template welcome booklet. Your sports organisation will have developed most or all of them. Where such policies need to be developed or if your sports organisation want to refresh thinking about policies, there are plenty of resources available.

Club Solutions has introductions and **template policies** to all the key policies from Health & Safety to Safeguarding, Data Protection through to First Aid. Alternatively, the WCVA has a wide range of **model policies** and a wider list of **information sheets** (including templates) on topics ranging from 'Keeping Volunteers Safe' through to 'Volunteer Expenses'.





Annex A – Finding Volunteers

Most volunteer co-ordinators suggest the need to be proactive in finding volunteers. You might be lucky and the right person comes forward if you put up a poster at the club or post a social media request to club members asking for a volunteer...but in all likelihood you won't get any volunteers or at least not the right ones for the role you require.

Earlier, we suggested the best route is for the volunteer co-ordinator to chat to everyone at the club, drawing them out to learn about their skills, experiences and talents. And when we say, 'chat to everyone', we mean everyone.

One of the best sources of volunteers are parents who bring their children to participate in the sport. While some parents may be keen to watch their child participate, others may have little interest in the sport and may just be 'killing time' while they wait to take their child home. As it is their child that is a member of the club, the parent may not realise volunteer jobs need doing or may not feel confident to offer to help as they don't belong. However, if they are asked to carry out a specific task, they might be all too pleased to help.

Parent Volunteer to Head Coach

Amy works full time and has two teenage children.

“My daughter joined the club as a gymnast and I got talking to the two people who used to run the club. They were desperate to get volunteer coaches to join the club, so I decided to get involved and went on the coaching courses. I used to be a gymnast when I was younger, so I had previous knowledge of the sport and I fancied taking up coaching”.

“The couple who ran the club then decided to move away and the club would have closed if I hadn’t taken on the responsibility of running the club. I thankfully had two parent volunteers who were willing to help me run the club and we’ve grown it since then. Over the last 10 years, the club has grown from 20 to 110 members”.

It is not just parents that may be willing to volunteer. Sometimes a brother or sister of a participant is brought along because there’s no other child care. They may be really bored and would welcome something to keep them occupied and interested. Of course, young volunteers require greater consideration due to **safeguarding** issues. Nonetheless, there are some great examples of youth volunteering within sports organisations.

“We wanted to grow our own workforce, so set up a coaching mentor programme. At 13 a young person can do the level 0 coaching award. This means they can assist with coaching, alongside an assigned coach-mentor. By 16, the young person will be ready for level 1 coaching”.

“The second aspect is the Leadership Academy, which gymnasts (or their siblings) can access from 11. They essentially learn event management. They organise fundraising events which support the expansion of the club. Twice a year they run recreational gymnastics competitions. These activities feed into Duke of Edinburgh and Welsh Baccalaureate portfolios”.

Volunteer Co-ordinator – Gymnastics

Some sport organisations can be put off by the perceived bureaucracy associated with young people volunteering. However, the benefits to the young people, the club and wider society generally outweigh any downsides. **Safeguarding** is simply what it says – keeping young people and the adults looking after them safe from harm. We all want that!

There is plenty of help available if you are thinking of engaging with volunteers that are **young people**. Another good starting point is the WCVA’s information sheet on **Involving Young People as Volunteers**. Someone else in your club probably looks after safeguarding but if you or they require more detailed information, the WCVA has a dedicated mini-site devoted to safeguarding which can be found at <http://www.wcva-safeguarding.org.uk/>.

Many sports organisations restrict their search for volunteers within the club. This can stem from concerns about safeguarding if the history of external volunteers is unknown or simply because the club wants to attract people with an interest in the sport. Nonetheless, there are plenty of examples of sports organisations recruiting volunteers externally.

One good way to recruit volunteers is to build a **relationship with a local school, college or university**. While many sports organisations develop such relationships to promote participation in their sport, a broader view may lead to young people from these organisations volunteering. Many young people from business studies to catering students are keen to gain work experience, even if that is unpaid. Others need to volunteer as part of their **Welsh Baccalaureate** studies, while others are simply helpful and like meeting new people!

Wales has a network of local and regional organisations that support volunteering – **Third Sector Support Wales**. These organisations can advertise for volunteers and provide excellent advice on best practice, not only in volunteer recruitment but in management, support and retention.

A major development is the creation of an **on-line volunteer platform** that enables all voluntary organisations, including sports organisations, to have their own page. There they can advertise for volunteers, accept on-line applications and volunteers can log their volunteering hours, if they wish. The volunteering platform is free for organisations working with volunteers. The volunteer centres within each **Third Sector Support Wales** organisation manages access to that platform. These volunteer centres are your local experts on volunteering and are a good first point of contact for advice on volunteering in your area.



Photo: Steve Pope -
sportingwales



Annex B –

A starting point to source training

Research suggests sports organisations commonly source their training from National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and experts from other clubs. Some volunteer co-ordinators circulate useful articles from trusted websites allied to the sport.

However, there are many more options available. On-line training, for example, can be a great way for people to get important certificates at a time and pace that suits them. It is not difficult to find on-line providers of food hygiene, fire safety, first aid and health & safety training, for example. Such training is often relatively inexpensive when only one or two people need to be trained. Non-accredited training may be available on-line at no-cost, with subjects ranging from project management to social media usage.

On-line training doesn't fit everyone's preferred learning style. Many people prefer to learn with a trainer so that they can ask questions. Your local **FE college** or **university** can often help. Some may be able to help in specialist areas from sports coaching to nutrition.

It is often worth thinking broadly about the training you need. For example, while first aid training may be accessible via the NGB, on-line or via the local FE college, there may be other options such as a local, private training company, the **Red Cross** or **St John**.

Research amongst volunteer co-ordinators suggested that an open-mind is helpful in looking for any advice. That applies equally to training. Provision does not need to be tailored specifically for people in sports organisations to be useful. Some volunteer co-ordinators in a piece of research commissioned by Sport Wales strongly suggested looking for training and mentoring beyond their sport or indeed beyond any sport. The workplace was the most cited place where volunteer co-ordinators said they had learned the skills they needed.