

ASA
VOLUNTEER
ENGAGEMENT

The Good Club Guide to
Inclusivity





Welcome

Welcome to the ASA Good Club Guide to Inclusivity.

This resource has been designed to support you in making your club environment more inclusive when involving and developing your volunteer workforce.

Volunteers are hugely important within the sport, and a great asset to any club. This guide will help to ensure that you can maximise each volunteer's potential regardless of age, gender, race, ability or any other characteristic.

How this resource will help you

This resource will:

- Highlight the importance of being inclusive.
- Outline why having a diverse volunteer workforce will benefit your club.
- Provide you with information and support, to ensure your club is 'open to all'.
- Guide you to organisations and resources that support and promote inclusivity in sport.



Why be inclusive?

Ask yourself; is your club as inclusive as it could be? Does it open its doors to any volunteer who wants to get involved and help? Does your club truly reflect the local demographics to the greatest extent possible?

Being inclusive means that regardless of age, gender, race, ability or any other characteristic, your club allows all volunteers to have an equal opportunity to participate at a level they choose. Being inclusive means welcoming everyone.

Opening your club to everyone will aid with sustainability. It will add new dimensions to the club's social element, and you may even find talent in many different forms, perhaps where you least expect it.

Benefits of being inclusive:

- Increased membership of your club.
- Increase in the number of volunteers, administrators, and participants who can help contribute to the success and running of the club.
- Increase in the level of skills and abilities within your club.
- Provides positive role models – particularly for younger members.
- Clubs benefit from a widespread understanding and experience of diversity.
- A richer club environment in which members appreciate and learn from each others' backgrounds and experiences.
- Strengthening of the community as a whole by encouraging everyone to contribute to building a stronger society.

By offering your members the opportunity to learn from others or the ability to relate to others similar to themselves in a sporting environment can be positively life-changing. You may also to gain access to a whole new group of potential members too!

Being more inclusive could involve having to change your clubs culture; a task which requires strong leadership and a real commitment to change.

The ASA's commitment to providing a sport for all

The ASA is fully committed to the principles and practice of equality of opportunity and we consider the aquatic disciplines to provide sport for all. Aquatic sports can and should be made accessible to everyone of any Protected Characteristic under the Equality Act (2010), to the greatest extent possible.

Read more about the ASA's commitment to equality and diversity and find further support for clubs at this link: www.swimming.org/asa/about-us/equality/.





Working with disabled volunteers

Working with disabled volunteers may at first feel quite daunting, but it's important to remember that it's okay to ask the individual what support or help they may need. It's important to ensure you treat the disabled person no less favourably because of their disability. As with all volunteers, every individual brings their own skills, knowledge and experience, and disabled people are no different.

Ensure that you and your club:

- Always address the disabled person first, not the person they are with.
- Are aware of personal needs and preferred ways of communicating and respect individual requirements.
- Work around an issue, rather than avoid it.
- Do not underestimate the intelligence or ability of the disabled person.
- Do not assume that all disabled people require assistance. Ask in the first instance if they require your help and how best to assist, or wait to be asked.
- Demonstrate what you mean if you are not successfully getting the message across verbally.
- Respect the individual and their needs. Do not interrupt, correct, speak for the person or be tempted to finish sentences off for them.

- Understand that a wheelchair or mobility aid should be viewed as part of the user's body space – keep an appropriate distance and never use a wheelchair as something to lean on.
- Understand that it is perfectly acceptable to offer to help!

Many people are unsure of the language they should use when talking to disabled people and fear they are going to offend. The English Federation of Disability Sport have created a language and etiquette guide to support you.

Top tips for being inclusive

- Ensure your marketing makes it clear that anyone can volunteer (and ensure you follow the Wavepower safe recruitment policy when recruiting volunteers).
- Market your volunteer opportunities in a variety of places to widen your potential audience – you could advertise in your local volunteer centre, local faith centres, schools/colleges, leisure centres, etc., or by using recruitment portals such as Join In or Do-It.org.
- Provide an induction for all volunteers as standard procedure to make all new volunteers feel welcome.
- Provide volunteers with a mentor if they feel this would support them to familiarise themselves with the club and their volunteering role.
- Establish from the volunteer at the offset if they require any additional support and what this looks like.
- Ensure that you establish how the volunteer would like to be communicated with.



Disability language and etiquette: inappropriate and appropriate language guide



Inappropriate	Appropriate
The Disabled	Disabled people
People with disabilities	Disabled people
Children with disabilities	Disabled children
Invalid	Disabled person
Severely disabled	Requires substantial or significant personal help
Disabilities	Impairments (or state actual medical condition)
Suffers from	Living with (state medical condition)
Mental illness/mental health problems	Living with a mental health problem or diagnosis as appropriate but being referred to by name is preferred
Mentally handicapped	People with learning difficulties
The deaf	Deaf people/hard of hearing people (specify which group) or hearing impaired people
The blind	Blind people/partially sighted people (specify which group) or visually impaired people
Care	Personal help/personal support
Carers (only to be used when the individual disabled person cannot make decisions for him/herself)	Family members, relatives and friends
Carers (meaning paid home carers)	Personal assistants
Special needs	Specific requirements (state what these are)
Disabled toilet	Accessible toilet
Disabled parking	Orange/Blue Badge Holder parking
Wheelchair accessible	Wheelchair/scooter user or accessible to wheelchair/scooter users
For wheelchairs	For wheelchair users
Wheelchair bound or confined to a wheelchair	Wheelchair user or person who uses a wheelchair

Communicating with your volunteers

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

- Communicate regularly with your volunteers and send them updates via their preferred methods of communication (this should be identified during the induction and if the volunteer is under 18, consent must be given by a parent(s) or guardian(s)) which can include:
 - › Face-to-face.
 - › Phone call.
 - › Email.
 - › Social media.
- 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 to acknowledge their dedication and commitment.
- Identify skills and training that will benefit both the individual and the club.

What you can do

Encourage all club members and volunteers to:

- Support inclusive behaviour and practices.
- Provide and promote a welcoming environment.
- Befriend new members and take time to develop relationships.
- Offer support and advice.
- Be sensitive to diversity.
- Be aware that people who speak English as their first language tend to speak quickly, which may be difficult for a person currently learning English to understand. Try to speak clearly and avoid using slang.

Top Tip: Be open, honest and don't be afraid to ask questions!

Clubs and committees

- Provide inclusive training and support for volunteers and staff to ensure that everyone feels welcome.
- Incorporate diversity in committees and boards by encouraging people from a mix of backgrounds, ages and gender to become involved.
- Promote a welcoming attitude amongst members and develop plans, policies and procedures to support inclusion.
- Consider members' needs when planning and delivering training sessions.
- Promote local public transport links to help all to attend training and competitions.
- Display posters/images on your website/social media pages and club notice boards that reflect the diversity of your club.
- Serve food and/or play music at social events that reflect members' cultural backgrounds, e.g. halal food.
- Offer welcoming messages in different languages reflecting the membership of the club.

- Build good links with local community organisations that are connected with the groups you are aiming to work with, e.g. youth organisations, multicultural agencies and disability service providers.
- Keep up-to-date with changes in your local community, such as changes to local population and demographics, barriers to participation and what programmes/initiatives exist in your area.

Complete this simple checklist to see how accessible your club is:

Is it easy to find out about your club?	
Is it easy to join your club?	
Is your signage easy to read?	
Are existing members and staff friendly and open to new members?	
Do existing members and staff offer advice and support?	
Are staff available and willing to help people fill out the membership forms if they have difficulties reading English?	
Do you have an induction for new members?	
Does your club have a buddy system for new members?	
Do training session times correspond with public transport?	
Does your organisation advertise via local Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) community centres or in community newsletters?	

Opportunities available to volunteers

All volunteering opportunities should be open to everyone. If volunteers display enthusiasm and commitment to developing their knowledge and skills, the ASA strive to support them to do so.

Please see our selection of Good Club Guides and volunteering role descriptions to find out more information on what roles could be available to you.

Should you have any questions regarding volunteering opportunities or how to access training, please contact the Volunteer Engagement Team by emailing volunteering@swimming.org.

Case study: Craig McNeil



Age: 18

Disability: Talipes

Volunteering roles:

- Official.
- Club Helper.
- National Youth Forum member.

How did you first get involved in volunteering?

I applied for the ASA Youth Activator programme and was accepted, which was my first step into the volunteering world. I undertook my timekeepers

and Judge 1 as an official under the watchful eye of some very experienced referees. I also took my lifeguard exam with the support of my club and began to volunteer at galas and competitions when not officiating.

What roles have you taken on?

I've become a member of the ASA National Youth Forum, officiating in both swimming and open water events and I'm currently training as a Judge 2 being mentored by Colin Evison. I have supported my first Regional event and I'm a Level 1 Swimming Coach. In addition to this I've been involved at the National Sainsbury's School Games as Team Attaché for Ulster Hockey in 2014 and as volunteer venue manager in 2015.

What barriers/challenges have you faced (if any)?

I have had to juggle things to enable me to volunteer and be a competitive swimmer at the same time; recently I competed in the morning and then officiated in the afternoon as a Judge 1.

My physical disability has never stopped me from volunteering. However, I have faced barriers such as processing and understanding information that's written down. I am shy in new environments and when meeting new people, as I don't know how they will react to me, but I am becoming more confident and feel that the volunteer roles have helped me overcome this. I had never delivered a presentation until taking on the volunteer roles and this has been a valuable learning curve.

What advice would you give to others thinking of starting volunteering?

I'd say that anything is possible! If you struggle with anything, there are always people to support you however they can. It's a great way to get the best out of your sport and give something back to aquatics.

Case study: Peggy Etiebet

Club: Otter Swimming and Water Polo Club (London)

Volunteering roles:

- Assistant Coach of the England Talent 2001/2 girls.
- Coach of Otter at the National Age Group Water Polo Championships 1997s (silver) and 1999s (gold).
- Coach at the Crystal Palace Beacon Programme 2000 and under girls.
- Board Member on the ASA London Swimming Board.
- Team Manager with 1998s GB squad on two training camps (Hungary and Crystal Palace).
- Member of the Otter Women's Water Polo subcommittee, in an administrative/team manager type role.

How did you first get involved in volunteering?

I've played water polo with Otter for over 10 years. The club is run by volunteers and I believe that all athletes should help contribute to the running of their club. As players we get a lot of fun out of the games and training, but there is a lot of work that happens behind the scenes. I believe that all players should be prepared to chip in to help run their club and at least in Otter, if you stay in the club long enough, eventually a volunteer role will be thrust upon you!

With regards to coaching, I've benefited from the dedication, passion and experience of a number of coaches without whom I would not have been able to achieve my dream to play for GB. There are a large number of youngsters out there with the same dream – if I can do just a little to help them achieve it then I want to. I took my Level 1 and Level 2 coaching qualifications and then I was asked by Nick Buller (Coach at Otter and Head Coach at the Crystal Palace Beacon Programme) and Norman Leighton (ASA Talent Development Officer) to help coach the younger girls at Crystal Palace and England Talent.

What barriers/challenges have you faced (if any)?

I've not experienced any barriers as a result of being a mix of Nigerian, Canadian and British. I can see that from the outside it may seem difficult to penetrate what appears to be a cohesive group running a club. But I would say just ask to help – no club is going to turn away a willing volunteer and you will see that they will welcome you with open arms. We all want to progress our sport and benefit the athletes – and that aim takes precedence over any other issue.

The main challenge has been balancing my career at the bar with my volunteer roles! Because I have benefited so much from the sport I find it difficult to say no especially where the sport relies so much on volunteers. However, any volunteer role can be as big or as little as you make it – I don't think anyone should be put off by thinking they do not have much time to spare – even an hour a week will be welcomed by your club.

What advice would you give to others thinking of starting volunteering?

- Start with what you are comfortable with – for coaching, I acted as an assistant coach or poolside helper first for one session a week. It helped me gain confidence to take on a team by myself.
- Bring a friend – not only will you have less to do but you will have fun and it eases the way until you make friends with all the other volunteers.
- Just do it! In sport you automatically have one thing in common with the other athletes, coaches, officials and parents, and that sporting interest will allow you to find common ground whatever your differing backgrounds, to build not just effective working relationships with your fellow volunteers, but lifelong friends in aquatics.

Summary

We hope you have found this guide informative. Thank you for taking the time to learn more about how you can make your club inclusive. Club support ensures that the ASA can continue to provide sport for all.

swim21

swim21 is the ASA's quality mark for the development of effective, ethical and sustainable clubs. The opportunity to gain swim21 accreditation is available to all ASA affiliated clubs, across any of the aquatic disciplines, regardless of size or activity delivered. swim21 is about creating the best possible aquatic experience for all and raising the quality of aquatic provision across all areas. The swim21 programme enhances club management, strengthens the structures and unites the club with shared goals to ensure the best environment is available for all swimmers.

To find out more about swim21 and the associated benefits, please visit www.swimming.org/asa/clubs-and-members/swim21-accreditation/.

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 its 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.

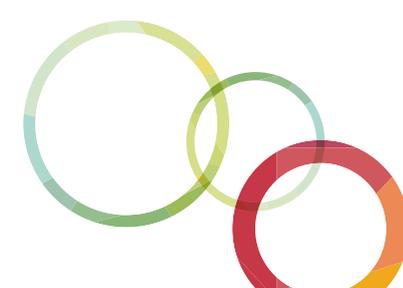
ASA Volunteering Hub

Did you know that the ASA has a dedicated hub for volunteers?

To access this hub, go to www.swimming.org/volunteering or email us at volunteering@swimming.org.

Acknowledgements

The ASA Volunteer Engagement Team are grateful for the contributions of both staff and volunteers who supported the creation of this resource. The knowledge and experience of those involved is vital to ensuring these materials are as beneficial as possible.



Useful links

If you feel like you would like more information on working with a more diverse volunteer workforce then please take the time to look at the following external resources:

ASA Equality & Diversity Support
www.swimming.org/asa/about-us/equality/

Sport England's Club Matters guidance on creating an inclusive club
www.sportenglandclubmatters.com/club-people/members-participants/inclusivity/

The English Federation of Disability Sport
www.efds.co.uk

EFDS Advocacy and Activity Buddy Scheme
www.efds.co.uk/resources/case_studies/419_advocacy_and_activity_buddy_scheme_aabs

Volunteering England
www.volunteering.org.uk/component/gpb/disabled-people

Women in Sport
www.womeninsport.org

Sporting Equals
www.sportingequals.org.uk

Equality in Sport
www.equalityinsport.org

Age UK
www.ageuk.org.uk

Pride Sports
www.pridesports.org.uk



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