



CLUB SUPPORT FACTSHEET

CREATING A CLUB DEVELOPMENT PLAN

This factsheet aims to help clubs devise an effective club development plan.

Why create a club development plan?

A club development plan helps clubs establish a more sustainable long-term vision and structure that can further support the development of the club, athletics and running within the local community.



The club development plan is an essential tool to map out the direction that the club aspires to go in. It will provide the club with a clear action plan of what needs to be accomplished in order to attain its goals.

What should be in a club development plan?

An effective club development plan should establish the club's vision and strategy over a period of time. The club development plan should look at all aspects that impact the club and set-out a long term plan for improving the club.

Although the club development plan should encourage and embrace innovative and ambitious plans, ultimately it is important that the plans are realistic and attainable.

Once the long-term vision and aims for the club have been agreed, the club development plan needs to establish clear identifiable objectives and tasks in an action plan that helps to set the club on the right path to achieving their goals.

Typically this action plan will highlight each main objective, breaking this down into smaller tasks that will need to be delivered, specifying the individuals at the club responsible for implementing these tasks, along with the timeframe for the objectives to be completed by.

Every club's development plan should be different, as it should be specifically tailored to meet the needs and requirements of each individual club.

However, there are some key themes that will be relevant for most clubs when developing their plans:

- Governance
- Leadership
- Financial management
- Welfare
- Places
- Athlete and runner offer
- Performance and pathways
- Volunteers
- Marketing and communications
- Sustainability and the wider impact

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6 stages to creating a club development plan

Step 1: Who should be involved in developing the plan?

Before you start the planning process an important thing to consider is 'who needs to be involved in developing the plan?'

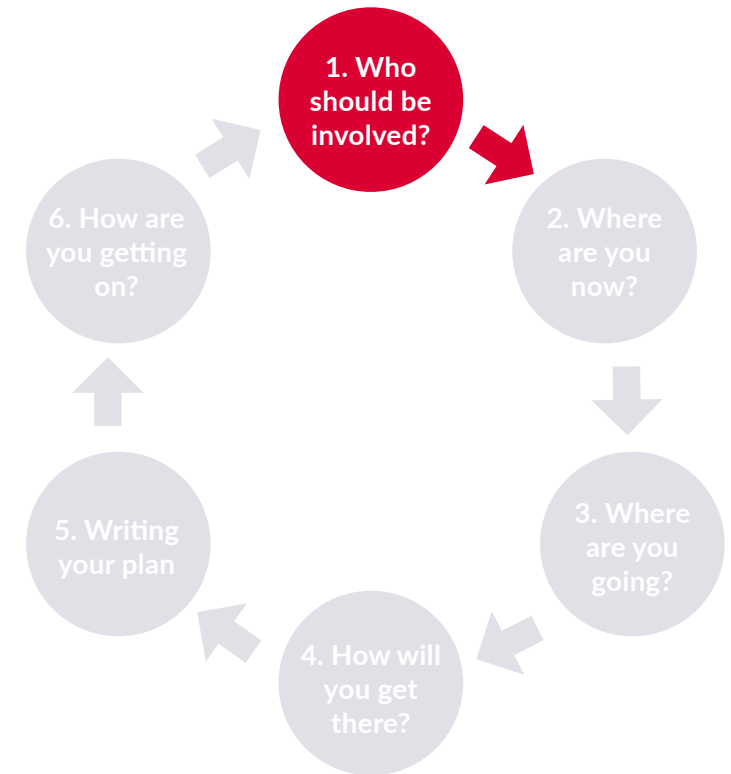
Although it may be quicker for one person to write the plan, success depends on a handful of people with the right skills and knowledge shaping it.

A small group of people should be identified as 'drivers' in developing the plan and they should all be on board at the start of the process.

Although the process will be led by this committee, it is important that club members and other partners are consulted and involved in the process as much as possible.

For example, the planning committee may wish to consult:

- Club members
- Lapsed members
- Volunteers and coaches
- Active partnership
- Facility provider
- Community groups
- Schools, colleges and universities



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Step 2: Where are you now?

Once you have set up your planning committee, the next stage is to identify where you currently are as a club.

Think about areas such as **your offer to members (including volunteers, parents, athletes and runners), the health of your club membership, your volunteers or workforce, your facilities, the state of your finances and who you work in partnership with.**

The easiest way to identify your starting point is to work through a SWOT analysis. A SWOT analysis consists of four main sections:

Strengths: Characteristics of your club that give you an advantage

Weaknesses: The limitations of your club or areas where you could improve

Opportunities: External opportunities available to your club that could help you expand or develop

Threats: External factors that could create problems or barriers for your club

Once you have completed the SWOT analysis it is important to discuss the findings and implications. You may decide to do this in one or more of the following ways:

- Agenda item at the next committee meeting
- Agenda item at your next AGM
- Arrange a club meeting for all committee members, coaches and volunteers, members and parents
- Questionnaire to members, coaches and volunteers
- Informal discussions with all club members and personnel



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Step 3: Where do you want to be?

Having a clear vision and values will help you create a club development plan. It's important that this is shared with those involved with creating the plan as well as club members.

It is therefore important at this stage that you identify

- A clear vision for your club
- Key goals for the next 3-5 years
- Longer term goals

Step 4: How will you get there? Identifying your objectives

This stage focuses on how your club is going to achieve its vision and can be broken down into objectives.

Objectives

Club development planning works best when the overall club vision is broken down into smaller, more manageable objectives that are realistic and achievable. You should ensure that these objectives are spread across all the main areas required to run your club.

We recommend that you follow the SMART principle when setting your objectives:

- **Specific:** Identify what the club wants to achieve
- **Measurable:** Is the club able to measure whether it is meeting the objectives or not?
- **Achievable:** Are the objectives achievable and attainable?
- **Realistic:** Can the objectives realistically be achieved with the resources it has?
- **Timed:** When does the club want to achieve the set objectives?



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Step 5: Writing your club development plan

The next and final step in the planning process is to write-up the plan using the information produced from Steps 1 – 4.

Ideally, your club development plan should:

- Be linked to the overall 'vision' for the club
- Review the current position and health of the club
- Highlight key short, medium and longer term goals
- Highlight projected actions, resources, finances and timescales to achieve these goals
- Allow for a review of progress and outcomes throughout the year

Your plan should be easy to use, review and amend.

Below is a sample structure for a club.

Clubs can establish their own format and style that suits them.



Theme: Governance

Objective (what needs to be done)	Tasks/Activities (how you intend to achieve your objective and what specific actions need to be undertaken)	Responsibility (the people responsible for delivering or who can assist)	Timescales (when you will complete your objective)	Finance (how much it is going to cost)	Progress Status

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Objective:

The objective is the headline outcome that the club aims to achieve in order to complete an important step towards the club's long-term vision. These objectives should be high-level strategic outcomes that significantly contribute to establishing a core component of the club's development.



Tasks / Activities:

Each objective will need to be broken down into smaller more specific tasks that will need to be accomplished in order to complete and achieve the objective.



Responsibility:

Each task needs to have a person from the club identified as being responsible for delivering that particular activity. In some cases there may be a number of people required to deliver a task.



Timescale:

It is important to align each objective and task to a specific timescale. Many of the objectives and tasks will be interlinked and dependent upon other elements of the plan being delivered in preparation for that particular activity. Subsequently, it is essential that the people responsible for delivering a part of the plan understand the timeframes that they need to complete their task within.



Finance:

Accurate and realistic costs need to be associated to each task of the plan to enable the club to understand the financial implications. Long-term financial planning is an integral part of the club development plan.

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6 stages to creating a club development plan

Step 6: How are you getting on?

Regular review of your club development plan, at least annually, is essential to ensure you are on your way to achieving your aims and overall vision.

It is very common for clubs to spend time and effort preparing a good action plan and then putting it in a filing cabinet to collect dust.

Your planning committee and club members have invested time and effort into developing the plan, so use it.

Furthermore, your club development plan is an excellent tool to update local sports networks and funding agencies of your clubs intentions and aspirations and regular review can help to keep a club moving forward.

Provided that the targets set in the plan are measurable, the process should be simple and not too time consuming.



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