



England Athletics

# Volunteer Toolkit

Supporting the development of vibrant, welcoming & sustainable clubs





## Introduction

We have created this Volunteer Toolkit as a useful reference tool for clubs. It includes top tips and resources for recruiting and retaining volunteers and links to useful partners and organisations.

Templates of all the resources listed within this toolkit can be downloaded and tailored to your club's specific needs from [www.Englandathletics.org/volunteer](http://www.Englandathletics.org/volunteer)

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## Additional Resources

The Additional Resources can be downloaded as .pdf files and as editable Word files from: [www.Englandathletics.org/volunteertoolkit](http://www.Englandathletics.org/volunteertoolkit) – for more details of each item see pages 9-10.

- ◆ Volunteer recruitment posters
- ◆ Volunteer role descriptions
- ◆ Volunteer application form
- ◆ Volunteer induction checklist
- ◆ Volunteer progress review
- ◆ How is your club structured?
- ◆ Volunteer of the Month poster
- ◆ Young Volunteer of the Month poster



## Recruitment

As a club, do you often say to yourselves “we haven’t got enough volunteers” or “it’s always the same few people”? In this section of the Volunteer Toolkit we will aim to give you a few ideas on how to boost the number of volunteers helping out at your club.

New volunteers can bring a wide range of benefits to your club including:

- ◆ Increased club capacity
- ◆ New and differing perspectives to the club
- ◆ Once fully integrated into the club they can make a significant contribution to the day-to-day work, longevity and sustainability of your club.

A survey conducted by the Sports and Recreation Alliance found that 31% of the 3,000 sports clubs who took part believed that they might not have enough coaches to meet the demand from members over the next two years (Sports Club Survey 2013).

To support the development of the sport we need to take action ensuring that clubs and their volunteers have the following attributes:

- ◆ Right People
- ◆ Right Skills
- ◆ Right Number
- ◆ Right Place

### Before you start recruiting

Like an athlete you need to prepare!

Step one is to make a wide range of people, including people such as the parents of athletes, aware of the good work done by your club so that you have a range of people you can then potentially tap into for help with small, one-off jobs, (e.g. race marshalling or decorating the club house) or bigger roles.

Use club newsletters, emails and social media to get people feeling part of the club long before you have a task you want them to do. This will also help you to identify people suitable for all kinds of different roles. If people already feel involved as an important part of the community then the step to volunteering becomes a much smaller and more obvious one.

### When the time comes to recruit

It’s sometimes very easy to say “we need more volunteers”, however, think about why your club needs more volunteers and what roles need to be filled. The basic questions to ask prior to recruiting are:

- ◆ Why do we want more volunteers at our club?
- ◆ How do we find them?
- ◆ What is the best way of attracting people to the available roles?
- ◆ How do people move to becoming a club volunteer?

### Resources to help you

You may find our ‘How is Your Club Structured’ document a useful way of assessing the current set up at your club and identifying areas/positions that need additional volunteers. This document can be found in the Additional Resources section of this toolkit and you can download an editable version from the England Athletics website: [www.EnglandAthletics.org/volunteertoolkit](http://www.EnglandAthletics.org/volunteertoolkit)

In the Additional Resources section you will also find recruitment posters, role descriptions and an induction checklist. Again, editable versions of these documents are available to download from the England Athletics website: [www.EnglandAthletics.org/volunteertoolkit](http://www.EnglandAthletics.org/volunteertoolkit)



## Other things to think about

Here are some further prompts that may assist you:

- ◆ Who are our potential volunteers? Parents of club members? People outside of the sport? Who have we already built links with?
- ◆ What roles/tasks do we want volunteers to undertake?
- ◆ What might they want to get from their role? For example: feeling they make a difference; a social dimension; an opportunity to use or develop their skills; or giving something back – whether for themselves or their child
- ◆ Have we got role descriptions? (see Additional Resources)
- ◆ How many volunteers do we need? (see Additional Resources)
- ◆ Attracting new recruits can be easier if it is a smaller commitment to start with. Could some of the roles be divided up to make recruitment easier?
- ◆ Is it an indefinite role or for a period of a year or two?
- ◆ Will the volunteer need any additional support or training (e.g. shadowing an experienced coach or attending an introductory officials course)?
- ◆ Do we have the resources to provide support for new volunteers?
- ◆ Will our current club volunteers accept new volunteers?

## How to find volunteers

### Start close to home...

Unless you are addressing an entirely new audience, don't forget to start by targeting those people you already have contact with. How many parents sit and watch their children training on a club night? They could potentially be your new volunteers!

Get them involved. Look for ways to get them working as part of the club that will make them feel part of the organisation, help them understand what goes on, and act as stepping stones to wider roles. It could be something as simple as giving out the newsletter, helping to carry the tuckshop food to and from the store, taking a cup of tea to a coach or official, or updating the fixture lists for the noticeboard.

For a number of reasons, athletics as a sport has a significant post-16 drop out rate – the England Athletics AthleAcademy programme can help to address this by giving your U17s an opportunity to see the different aspects of the sport. For more information about the AthleAcademy Programme please visit [www.Englandathletics.org/athleacademy](http://www.Englandathletics.org/athleacademy)

The best way to recruit volunteers is to verbally ask people to help. Statistics show that 41% are more prepared to volunteer if they are directly asked. You will never insult someone by asking them to volunteer. Rather, you may even be flattering them by implying they have the skills to help the club.

### Cast the net wider

Think who else may be able to volunteer. You may be able to contact different organisations depending on what the role is. For example, looking for a once a year group of 12 helpers and marshals for a road race is very different to finding a new club secretary. There are different groups who you may be able to tap into:

- ◆ Local companies with a community engagement or corporate social responsibility programme
- ◆ University students looking to develop skills and improve their CV
- ◆ Former club athletes – those who have hung up their spikes but still have some contact with the club through old friends, Facebook etc, who may see it as a good way to get involved again
- ◆ People who have signed up to volunteer via Join In (see below)
- ◆ Participants in local parkruns – it may be a good way of getting their first contact with your club





## England Athletics pro-active recruitment

England Athletics also pro-actively recruit volunteers to deploy into the structure of affiliated clubs. Potential new volunteers can register their interest on the England Athletics website:

[www.EnglandAthletics.org/volunteering-signup](http://www.EnglandAthletics.org/volunteering-signup)

Prospective volunteers are asked to complete a short survey highlighting their areas of interests. They are also given the option to receive England Athletics' volunteering e-bulletin.

After completing the survey they will be contacted by their local Club and Coach Support Officer who will put them in touch with their local club representative.

## Join In

If you want to cast your net further afield outside of the club setting then Join In are likely to be able to help! Join in helps community sports clubs and groups to find more volunteers and supporters in their local area. Thousands of local sports clubs and groups have already added their own page on Join In.

To find out more about Join In please see [www.EnglandAthletics.org/join-in](http://www.EnglandAthletics.org/join-in)

Start today and visit [www.joininuk.org/register](http://www.joininuk.org/register) to create a Join In page for your club and find more volunteers in your local area!

## Get the message right

Recruitment messages that simply say 'volunteers needed' are rarely successful because they don't provide the specifics that raise people's interest or remove concerns. Here are some tips to help you with your recruitment message:

- ◆ Build relationships – make people aware of the good work the club does and the roles involved before you need volunteers
- ◆ Start small – look to get people involved with a manageable role
- ◆ Statement of need – why is the role important to your club? What will happen if it's not done?
- ◆ What does the role involve? How much of a commitment is there? What skills are needed? What support will be given?
- ◆ Show benefits to the volunteer – Training? Skills? New friends? Experience? Giving something back?

You could ask people what would encourage them to volunteer, what is preventing them and what has led them to volunteer in the past. The England Athletics Volunteer Progress Review sheet may be a useful tool to assist you with this. An editable copy of this document can be found in the Additional Resource section of this toolkit and can be downloaded from the England Athletics website

[www.EnglandAthletics.org/volunteertoolkit](http://www.EnglandAthletics.org/volunteertoolkit)

You can also be quite specific: for example, 'Would you be more likely to volunteer with us and assist with your son's training group?'

There might be relatively simple things you can do; for example, offering one-off 'taster' sessions for those reluctant to make a big commitment, such as asking a parent of a club athlete "we are organising an intra-club event next weekend, would you mind helping with the results?".

Offering opportunities for a range of smaller commitments can help you to contact and build relationships with more people. It means that they have more chance to spot the role that is right for them. You will also get to know what skills and interests people have; a project such as building a new club website would be impossible for many people, but it could be just the project someone else would love.

Use a sign-up chart for helping at a specific event. Make sure all the names of people already committed to taking part are on the list when it goes up so people see others are doing their bit. Put a name against more than one task if someone is doing multiple roles.



Use time slots so people don't feel they have to be there all day and may be more likely to sign up for where there is a gap. If you still have gaps you can approach people to ask if they could be there a bit earlier or stay a bit later.

## See what other clubs are doing

Why not take a look at the case studies section on the England Athletics website to see how other clubs around the country have recruited new volunteers? Visit: [www.EnglandAthletics.org/volunteer](http://www.EnglandAthletics.org/volunteer)

## Using social media

While the traditional approach to recruitment, using methods such as word-of-mouth, leaflets and advertisements, is still valid, some sports clubs are finding new ways to attract volunteers.

Social media can be a powerful tool for engaging people with an interest in your cause. If you need any further assistance with how to optimise the use of social media in your club then please contact your local CCSO who will be happy to offer help in this area – visit [www.EnglandAthletics.org/yourarea](http://www.EnglandAthletics.org/yourarea)

In addition, advice on using social media to communicate effectively and promote club activities and events is available from the England Athletics website. To access this information and find out more please go to: [www.EnglandAthletics.org/socialmedia](http://www.EnglandAthletics.org/socialmedia)

## How to recruit student volunteers

Students in higher and further education can be a great source of volunteers. In the UK, over 42,000 students volunteer through volunteering programs at higher education institutes. This is a great source that clubs should be recruiting from.

### Things to consider:

- ◆ Why target students? – establishing links with higher and further education institutes can be a great way of recruiting volunteers. There are a number of benefits to targeting students.
- ◆ Volunteer centres – most universities and colleges have their own volunteer centres or societies. This means that once you provide them with the information they will do most of the work.
- ◆ Volunteer Fairs – most universities host volunteering fairs to advertise volunteering opportunities. These are usually free to attend along with other free promotion throughout the year.
- ◆ Continuous supply – once you have established the link with the institute you will have access to a continuous supply of volunteers, as new students enrol each year.
- ◆ Development/qualifications – some universities offer to subsidise costs of coaching qualifications for their students. Clubs can benefit from this.
- ◆ Young and enthusiastic – you will have access to young volunteers. Students are always told they should volunteer to enhance their employability so clubs can capitalise on this enthusiasm
- ◆ Flexibility of Services – university volunteer organisations offer a wide range of services. Whether you just want to advertise roles or want a group of students to lead a project at the club, the universities and students can help.
- ◆ Who to contact? – in order to establish a link the club should contact the volunteering centre/organisation, the athletics union and/or the sport department. This information can be found on education institutes websites. First point of contact should be the volunteer organisation.
- ◆ How to tailor your approach – when producing your promotional material you should try to target it towards your audience. Consider that they are young and the benefits should be tailored to them. Empathise how the opportunities can enhance their employability.
- ◆ Student Recruitment Poster – this resource is part of the Additional Resources and can be used by clubs. There are spaces to add local information/contacts.



## Retention & Recognition

Once you've recruited volunteers it's important to help make their experience with your club a positive one.

### Communicate with your volunteers!

Communications can play a key role! The most important method of communication is face-to-face. Whatever activities your volunteers are undertaking, make sure they have someone they can talk to if they need to ask questions or raise concerns. Someone should also be asking them how they are getting on and saying 'thank you' for the time they are giving.

### Build a culture of recognition

Encourage those who benefit from a volunteer's role to thank them. Build a culture of recognising volunteers. Address any situations where you feel volunteers (whether long serving or newcomers) are taken for granted or unfairly criticised.

### Email newsletters and social media

Most people who volunteer at your club are likely to be keen to sign up to some form of regular email bulletin or join the club's Facebook page.

Regular emails and posts on social media can be a good way of keeping volunteers up to date with anything that directly affects them and also the broader work of the club. People tend to feel more motivated when they can see how their work fits in with broader objectives and achievements, so don't limit communications solely to their area of activity. Email can also be a good way to ask for feedback and comments.

Social Media is a great way for clubs to share information and recognise the work of volunteers. If you need any further assistance with how to optimise the use of social media in your club then please contact your local CCSO ([www.EnglandAthletics.org/yourarea](http://www.EnglandAthletics.org/yourarea)) who will be happy to offer further assistance in this respect. In addition, advice on using social media to communicate effectively and promote club activities and events is available from the England Athletics website. To access this information and find out more please go to [www.EnglandAthletics.org/socialmedia](http://www.EnglandAthletics.org/socialmedia)

### Recognise their contribution

#### Certificates

In the Additional Resources part of this toolkit you will find 'Volunteer of the Month' and 'Young Volunteer of the Month' certificates which can be used by your club to regularly show your appreciation – you can download an electronic version via [www.EnglandAthletics.org/volunteertoolkit](http://www.EnglandAthletics.org/volunteertoolkit)

#### Club awards nights

Club awards nights are a great opportunity to bring club members together and say 'thank you'. They also provide a chance for the club to get informal feedback from volunteers about how things are going.

Why not include a Club Volunteer of the Year Award, Best Newcomer and Young Volunteer of the Year Award at your next club awards evening?

#### England Athletics Awards and Hall of Fame

Athletics in England is built on the work done by people in communities across England. The England Athletics Regional and National Awards, supported by Sweatshop, Athletics Weekly, Track & Field Tours and the AAAs, provide a unique opportunity to recognise the outstanding contributions made to our sport by these people who give their time, energy and expertise to our sport.



The awards programme invites all involved in the sport to nominate those people and clubs who should be honoured for their work. At the Regional Awards, winners are chosen in six categories each year. These awards cover clubs, volunteers, officials, coaches, disability athletics, partnership and networks.

Regional winners will go on to be considered for a National Award and a Services to Athletics Award will also be made based on consideration of all nominations received. National Awards are presented at the England Athletics Hall of Fame and National Volunteer Awards evening held each autumn.

The awards give us as a sport the opportunity to reward the contributions and commitment to our sport these people have shown.

For more information about the England Athletics awards please visit [www.Englandathletics.org/volunteer](http://www.Englandathletics.org/volunteer) and [www.Englandathletics.org/hall-of-fame](http://www.Englandathletics.org/hall-of-fame)

## Useful Links

### **Join In**

Join In is the nation's charity who's aim is to put more volunteers into community sport  
[www.joininuk.org](http://www.joininuk.org)

### **I-volunteer**

A social network that connects volunteers, charities and volunteer managers across the UK  
[www.i-volunteer.org.uk](http://www.i-volunteer.org.uk)

### **Volunteering England**

For a guide to the rules and regulations surrounding volunteers.  
[www.volunteering.org.uk/resources/publications/volunteersandthelaw](http://www.volunteering.org.uk/resources/publications/volunteersandthelaw)

### **V-Inspired**

an independent charity dedicated to helping you people volunteer in ways that matter to them.  
[www.vinspired.com](http://www.vinspired.com)

### **Club Matters**

A new one stop shop for impartial support and guidance for your club  
[www.sportenglandclubmatters.com](http://www.sportenglandclubmatters.com)

### **AthleAcademy**

A leadership academy programme for England Athletics registered athletes providing an opportunity to learn about the various roles available within the sport, from coaching to volunteering and from club management to media and promotion.  
[www.Englandathletics.org/athleacademy](http://www.Englandathletics.org/athleacademy)



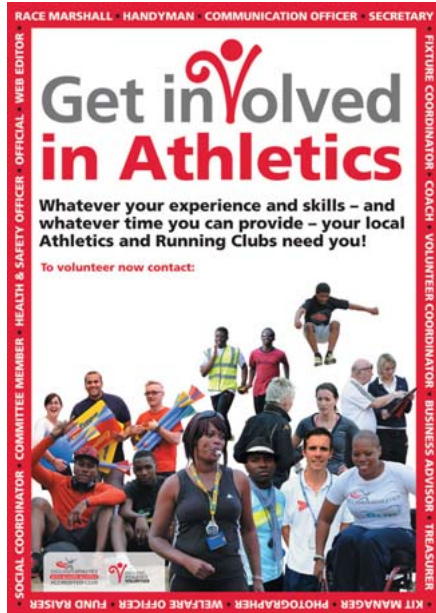


## About the Additional Resources

The Additional Resource which form part of this toolkit are described below. They can be downloaded in printable pdf format and as editable Word files from our website: [www.englandathletics.org/volunteertoolkit](http://www.englandathletics.org/volunteertoolkit)

### Volunteer Recruitment Poster

To help with the general recruitment of volunteers – add your own details.



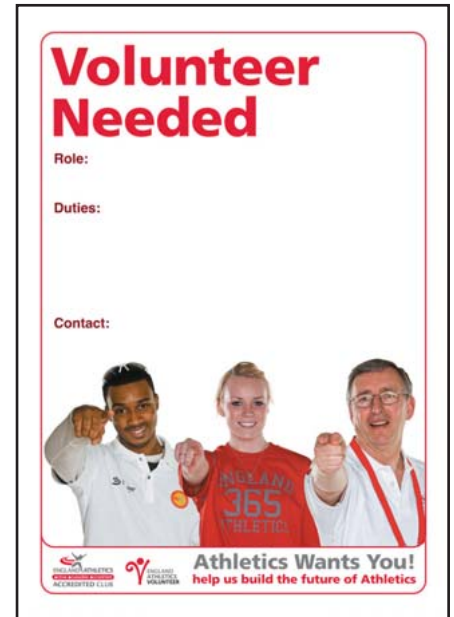
### Student Recruitment Poster

This poster is specifically tailored to help with the recruitment of student volunteers.



### Volunteer Needed Poster

An editable poster to help with the recruitment of volunteers for specific roles.



### Volunteer Needed Poster

Another editable poster to help with the recruitment of volunteers for specific roles.



### Volunteer Role Descriptions

Fill out and display/email round to promote the volunteers in the club and improve communications.

Form titled 'England Athletics Volunteer Toolkit - Volunteer Role Descriptions' with a table for recording volunteer details.

### Detailed Role Descriptions

Helps to define the role of new volunteers. For more information – see the editable Word file.

Form titled 'England Athletics Volunteer Toolkit - Volunteer Role Descriptions - Full' with fields for Name, Role, Volunteering hours, Roles and functions, and Other notes.



# England Athletics Volunteer Toolkit

## Volunteer Application Form

Use this form when you recruit volunteers, or as an example on which to base your own form.

England Athletics Volunteer Toolkit

### Volunteer application form

Please fill the form out and return it to the club. Alternatively there is an online form at [www.EnglandAthletics.org/volunteer](http://www.EnglandAthletics.org/volunteer) but this doesn't go directly to a club so may take longer.

Full Name:

Email:

Telephone:  Date of Birth:  /  /

Please select the areas of volunteering you are interested in

Coaching  Yes  No

Officiating  Yes  No

Committee  Yes  No

Events  Yes  No

Admin  Yes  No

Occasional helper  Yes  No

Do you have your own transport?  Yes  No

Do you have a current DBS check?  Yes  No

Do you have any experience of volunteering in sports clubs?  Yes (please specify below)  No

Do you have any coaching qualifications?  Yes (please specify below)  No

Are you interested in gaining any coaching qualifications?  Yes  No

England Athletics VOLUNTEER

## Volunteer Induction Checklist

Use this check list to help with the induction of new volunteers.

England Athletics Volunteer Toolkit

### Volunteer Induction Checklist

Here are some things you should include in your induction process of volunteers alongside the Volunteer Brief Resource.

**Overview**

- Why volunteers are an important part of Athletics
- Why volunteers are important to a club
- Club volunteer support structure
- Tour of the facility or training venue

**The Club**

- Age groups catered for
- What competitions they take part in
- Who's who - introductions to other volunteers
- Contact list of key people within the club
- Dates of meetings they need to attend, including social events
- Where to find the things they need - equipment, startery, first aid kit etc.
- External club contacts, if relevant to role
- Club financial procedures, if relevant to role

**Club Guidelines**

- Volunteer codes of conduct
- Child protection
- Health and Safety
- Insurance
- Fire instructions/evacuation
- Confidentiality
- Claiming expenses
- Enhanced DBS (formerly CRB) applied for
- Club rules

**Their Role**

- What they hope to gain from this?
- What they will be doing - checking if it suits their skills
- Who their main contact is (including support meetings, mentor, supervision) etc.
- Their responsibilities, including days, hours etc.
- Qualifications checked
- Training needs assessed
- Training arranged
- Club benefits for volunteers

**What to do about**

- Any problems that arise

This is just a guide to clubs. Not all points are relevant for all clubs and there may be points missing for others. Your induction process should be tailored for your own club, its members and volunteers.

England Athletics VOLUNTEER

## Volunteer Progress Review

Review the progress of volunteers. For more information - see the editable Word file.

England Athletics Volunteer Toolkit

### Volunteer Progress Review

Club Name

Name:

Role:

Date:

Are you happy in your role?

Are you interested in another role?

Are you interested in doing any qualifications or training?

Any issues you want to discuss?

England Athletics VOLUNTEER

## How is Your Club Structured?

This sheet will help you to understand the structure of your club, its strengths and weaknesses.

England Athletics Volunteer Toolkit

### How is your club structured?

Club  Date

Chairperson			Secretary			Treasurer					
Membership Secretary	Volunteer Coordinator	Junior Coordinator	Health & Safety Coordinator	Coaching Coordinator							
Team Managers	Fundraisers	Disability Coordinator	Communications Coordinator	Fixtures Coordinator							
First Aid Coordinator	Kit/Store/Headline Coordinator	Social Events Coordinator	Welfare Officer	Officials Coordinator							
Officials											
Head Coach											
Lead Coach Endurance	Lead Coach Speed	Lead Coach Endurance	Lead Coach Jumps	Lead Coach Throws							
Induction Coaches	Speed Coaches	Endurance Coaches	Jumps Coaches	Throws Coaches							

England Athletics VOLUNTEER

## Volunteer of the Month

Customise this sheet to create certificates to recognise the achievements of volunteers.

Volunteer of the Month

photo here

Name:

Date:

Reasons for award:

Signed:

Building the Future of our Sport

England Athletics VOLUNTEER

## Young Volunteer of the Month

Customise this sheet to create certificates to recognise the achievements of volunteers.

Young Volunteer of the Month

photo here

Name:

Date:

Reasons for award:

Signed:

Building the Future of our Sport

England Athletics VOLUNTEER