

Events - Information for Event Organisers Working with Volunteers

Introduction

Nearly six million people in England are sports volunteers and without them many sports events in England simply would not happen. They are vital to all events be they large scale such as the Olympic/Paralympic Games or small community activities.

So what is different about the Event Volunteer?

Event volunteers have the same reasons for getting involved as any other volunteers but they particularly enjoy the excitement and the 'buzz' of events. They may have a particular skill that they want to develop or make use of e.g. strong organisational or presentation skills. They sometimes want to develop their skills quickly to make them more employable or want a short introduction to possible new areas of work. It is also a suitable role for those who do not have the time for long-term or regular volunteering commitments and is a great way to meet new people.

It is important to help your volunteers achieve at least some of their own objectives as well as running a successful event

What are the Steps you need to take?

Steps to Take	More Detail	Extra Tips
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Function Areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These will include things like Health & Safety, Performer Support etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve volunteers experienced in past, similar events in this
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decide how many roles are required and produce Role Outlines for each one 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role Outlines should show main duties, skills/qualities required and what commitment is required and support given 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be very specific regarding what each role covers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoint an Event Coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This may be you! If your club has a Volunteer Coordinator, also use their expertise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider having a Deputy Event Coordinator, just in case – also for future training and continuity.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit your Event Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not all the volunteers involved need to be on the committee, include key post holders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A mix of experienced and new volunteers often gives the best of both worlds
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce a Volunteer Handbook (or information pack for all volunteers involved in the event) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This should include Code of Practice, Health & Safety information etc. See Information for Event Volunteers Top Tips for full list of Volunteer Handbook contents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Volunteer Handbook can be updated after each event, and can be useful for a variety of events

Top Tips

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Recruit all other volunteers needed for the event	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ These can be from within your club and/or outside your club – see ‘Further Information’ at foot for organisations that can help with recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Get your event volunteers in place well in advance of the event
<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Briefing and training of Volunteers	<p><i>Pre-event:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Induction or pre-event briefing on requirements❖ Any training needed (inc. CRB checks if young people are involved)❖ Orientation on event❖ Key dates for diaries <p><i>On the Day:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Event briefing – make sure everyone knows what is expected of them <p><i>Post-event:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Post event briefing – a chance to look at what went well or not so well❖ And a chance to thank the volunteers for their hard work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Allow enough time to answer any questions that volunteers might have❖ You might want to “walk the course” to familiarise everyone with the venue and facilities❖ Always say thank you!

Other good sources of volunteers include: Volunteer Bureau; Uniform Groups; Schools; Higher Education Establishments; Other Local Organisations/Clubs; Local Authority Leisure Departments; Colleges and Universities, Large companies (some of which have volunteering schemes).

Remember that although Event Organisers really do not like disciplining volunteers (because they are so valuable to them) there are reasonable standards of behaviour, which should be adhered as per your code of practice. Volunteers should be aware of what the rules are before the event and what the consequences of breaking them will be. If you are using young volunteers, you will need to be aware of and adhere to child protection policies.

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Further Information

The runningsports website (www.runningsports.org) has useful resources, including Quick Guides “Managing Events”, “Promoting and Marketing your Club”, “Effective Communication”, “Organising Fixtures and Competitions”, “Fundraising, Grants and Sponsorship”, and “Volunteers”, along with other downloadable Top Tips “Finding New Volunteers”, Role Outlines and information on available training including workshops and workbooks. Alternatively, telephone the runningsports Hotline on 0800-363373.

Other Organisations worth checking out

Name	Telephone	Website
Local Authority details		www.direct.gov.uk
Local Volunteers centres	0845 305 6979	www.volunteering.org.uk
Sport England NGBs/CSPs	0845 850 8508	www.sportengland.org
TimeBank	0845 456 1668	www.timebank.co.uk
British Universities and Colleges Sports (BUCS)	020 7633 5080	www.bucs.org.uk
Child Protection in Sport Unit (CPSU)	0116 234 7278/7280	www.thecpsu.org.uk
Criminal Records Bureau	0870 909 0811	www.crb.gov.uk
Do It Org	0207 226 8008	www.do-it.org.uk

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