

THE GOOD CLUB GUIDE FOR A CLUB SECRETARY

WELCOME!

You have either been appointed as, or are considering a role as a club volunteer. We wish you a fulfilling and enjoyable experience in your role, and appreciate your commitment and time you are giving in developing the sport.

HOW THIS RESOURCE WILL HELP YOU

This resource is intended to assist you in your role by providing:

- A guide to the roles and responsibilities of this position
- Templates/resources to assist you and save you time
- Top tips and good practice from experienced volunteers
- Further information and learning/training opportunities

This resource complements other national volunteer publications, which are listed at the back of this resource. The ASA Good Club Guides **EXTRA** will be particularly helpful, providing practical tips, questions and answers that will equip you with further knowledge and information as a club Secretary.

LINKS TO SWIM21

swim21 is the ASA's club development programme. The Good Club Guide is intended to complement swim21, by providing tools, templates and resources that will assist the running of a club, and ultimately assist in achieving or maintaining swim21 accreditation.

ROLE OF THE SECRETARY

The Secretary of a club provides the central point of administration, information and communication. It is the Secretary who initially deals with all correspondence and communications, and is a key person to the smooth running of a club. The Secretary is also a link between members, potential members and external organisations e.g. pool operators, local authorities, and the ASA Regions. The club Secretary should report to the club Chairperson.

DUTIES OF A CLUB SECRETARY:

- To act as a main point of contact for the club, maintain records and information in relation to queries, all administration and communications including competition events, affiliations, subscriptions, memberships, bookings, training of volunteers and mailings.
- To deal with the day to day running of the club including all correspondence (both internally and externally)
- To process and deliver appropriate correspondence and information to and from County, Region and National ASA
- To organise committee meetings and AGMs, preparing agendas, taking minutes, and distributing and communicating these as appropriate
- To liaise with other club committee members to ensure all appropriate administration is in place
- To represent the club at meetings
- To have a knowledge and understanding of roles and responsibilities of other club committee members

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- To maintain up to date contact details of all members, committee members, other key club personnel and ASA secretaries at national, regional and county level

COMMITMENT / TIME FOR THE ROLE

Will vary from club to club, but will include ongoing weekly responsibilities, particularly in dealing with correspondence.

SKILLS AND QUALITIES REQUIRED

- Enthusiastic with a good knowledge of the club, and people within the club
- Be an excellent communicator, with good verbal and written skills
- Administration skills, including word processing, and minute taking
- Sound organisational skills
- Able to maintain confidentiality
- Able to work in partnership with others, both within and outside of the club
- Able to represent the club at external meetings

TOOLS FOR THE ROLE

The following are deemed to be essential items for club secretaries to have in order to do their role:

- Use of a computer and email address to produce letters, emails, reports, minutes, and to store and record information
- Filing system to record all letters and correspondence
- Notebooks for minutes and meetings
- Annual diary/chart to record the club's activities, meetings, competitions, training times
- Club headed stationery
- Telephone with access to an answer phone facility
- ASA checklist for new club secretaries (see ASA good club guide for a Secretary)
- ASA administrator calendar (see ASA good club guide for a Secretary)

ASA CHECKLIST FOR NEW CLUB SECRETARIES

The ASA has published a helpful checklist for new secretaries. There are certain documents which club secretaries should have in their possession, and there are documents which other club officers may hold, but club secretaries should be aware that they exist, and where to locate them.

Documentation	Notes	From whom
ASA Handbook	Sent annually to club Secretary	ASA office: Operations department. Also available on the website
ASA Insurance Certificate and information	Sent annually following payment of membership fees. May be held by the Treasurer	ASA office – systems department
Accident and incident book	Replaced on request when full. To be held by named officer within club	ASA office – customer services department
Other insurance policies	Separately arranged with the Insurance brokers – may be held by the Treasurer	Insurance company
Wave power: Child	May be held by the Welfare officer and	ASA office – customer

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protection guidelines and procedures	displayed on a club notice board	services department
Video log book	Replaced upon request when full. May be held by Welfare officer or Competition Secretary	ASA office – customer services department
Copy of club membership return	May be held by Membership officer	ASA office – systems department
Club constitution	May be referred to as the club rules	Own club
Club minute books	Current minute book may be held by minute Secretary. Historical minutes should be with club Secretary or known archives	Own club
Club account books	May be held by treasurer	Own club
Swimming Times	Copy sent to Secretary each month	ASA – Swimming Times office
Wavelength	Copy sent each month to Secretary with Swimming Times	ASA – Swimming Times office
ASA Annual report and financial statement	Sent annually to club Secretary	ASA – marketing department
Handling internal club disputes	Copy sent to club Secretary upon affiliation	ASA – customer services. Also available on website
Regional Handbook	Sent annually to club Secretary	Regional office

CLUB COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The committee is a group of elected people who meet regularly to discuss and make decisions on the operation and activities of a club. The business undertaken at a committee meeting is normally in 2 key areas:

- Items for information. This relates to events that have already happened or decisions already made. Verbal and/or written reports are given to inform members, who then have an opportunity to ask questions or seek clarification
- Items for debate. This relates to future events. This enables the whole group to discuss the issues and develop options.

Some clubs have formal procedures in place for committee meetings. The ASA has produced “Recommended club constitution and guidance notes for clubs in ASA Regions” (July 2006). Further details follow at the end of this resource.

This ASA guidance provides information on how often, and how to conduct committee meetings, including guidance on voting and elections.

TOP TIPS FOR ORGANISING MEETINGS

1. Prepare a schedule of club meetings a year in advance to ensure everyone is aware of dates and you can book venues. Great practice to hold these on a set day, or set week each month to be consistent and help others to remember
2. Consult with the Chairperson on the agenda for the meeting
3. Provide confirmation of meeting dates (some constitutions will require you to do this, particularly AGMs)
4. When booking meeting venues, ensure good accessibility/ transport links and provision for catering (tea/coffee/water)
5. Keep up to date information regarding availability, costs and booking procedures of suitable venues

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6. Provide an agenda for meetings, and where possible timings for agenda items to guide people in their planning and preparations for meetings. Also confirm date, time and venue information to all attendees
7. Circulate minutes of the last meeting, along with any papers or reports to be read in advance of the meeting
8. Agree with the attendees of the meeting what an acceptable time is to circulate information in advance of a meeting. Good practice is 7-10 days, although AGMs will have set timescales for information
9. Work with the Chairperson on the layout and style for the meeting, and set up the room to get the best out of the group. Is it a formal round table meeting, or could you set the room up in a different way to be less formal and more inviting? e.g. remove tables which act as a barrier (may not be practical)

MINUTE TAKING

At all meetings, someone should be appointed to record minutes. This would normally be the role of the Secretary, or a designated minutes Secretary within a club, but could be a nominated person should a Secretary not be in attendance. Meeting minutes should be clear and concise and be a true reflection of discussions. Decisions and actions should be clearly recorded and agreed by members of the committee.

TOP TIPS FOR MINUTE TAKING:

1. List the people present, and those who sent apologies. Circulating a list for people to sign in will save you time here if there are large numbers
2. At the end of a discussion during the meeting, summarise what you have recorded to ensure you have interpreted the conversations correctly. Also confirm who is responsible for any actions, and a date to be completed by
3. Write the minutes in the same order as the agenda, and keep them short and concise
4. Be objective in writing the meetings, and not biased towards any decisions
5. Write up minutes straight after a meeting, whilst memories are still fresh
6. Circulate minutes to the committee as soon as possible after the meeting, so that those that were absent know what happened, and those with actions are prompted to follow up as appropriate
7. Make a diary note to follow up actions with people after 2 weeks to check progress
8. Follow the ASA constitutional guidance for producing minutes of AGMs
9. Great words to use consistently in minutes are as follows:
 - a. Agreed: indicates a strong consensus to support a recommended course of action
 - b. Noted: indicates that a matter was reported, but no decision was necessary
 - c. Received: indicates that a report was presented and accepted
 - d. Approved: indicates that a recommendation has been endorsed
 - e. Recognised: indicates that information was accepted, but no decision was taken
 - f. Resolved – indicates that a motion was formally proposed, voted upon and passed.
10. Circulate and publicise non-confidential reports from Committee meetings to demonstrate the Club's progress and achievements

SAMPLE CLUB COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

There will be a meeting of the Committee, at(place) on
(date), from (time) to..... (time)

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1. Welcome and introductions
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes: to approve the minutes of the last meeting
4. Matters arising: to consider any matters arising not included on the agenda
5. Reports– to receive report/updates from:
 - a. The Treasurer
 - b. Development officers
 - c. Disability officer
 - d. Swim21 officer
 - e. Workforce co-ordinator
 - f. Welfare officer
 - g. Competition Secretary
6. Administration and correspondence
7. Equity update
8. Any other requested agenda items
9. Any other business
10. Date of next meeting

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

This is an annual open meeting for any club member to attend. The purpose of an AGM is to:

- Present key information about the club, such as its finances and achievements throughout the year
- Elect officers for the club
- Discuss and vote upon amendments to the constitution or rules
- Consider the previous year's annual report
- Hear the views of club members regarding the way the club is being managed

Prior notice should be given to matters that members wish to discuss.

AGMs are also an ideal opportunity to combine an annual awards event, a club social event, or a thank you to all the volunteers, teachers, coaches and athletes.

The ASA has produced guidance on procedures for AGMs in the document "Recommended club constitution and guidance notes for clubs in ASA Regions" (July 2006). Further details follow at the end of this resource.

SAMPLE CLUB AGM AGENDA

The Annual General Meeting of the (Club), will take place at(place) on (date), from (time) to..... (time)

1. Opening of meeting
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of last year's AGM
4. Presentation of Annual report
5. Approval of Annual report

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6. Presentation of Treasurer's financial statement
7. Approval of Treasurer's financial statement
8. Election of officers
9. Vote of thanks to outgoing executive
10. Annual membership fees
11. Any other business (prior notice required)
12. Closure of meeting

SPECIAL (EXTRAORDINARY) GENERAL MEETINGS

These may be called at any time by the club committee, or a specified number of members, to discuss issues that require consultation with, and decisions by the club membership, for example changes to the constitution which will not wait until the AGM. Further details are provided in the ASA club constitution document

ASA ADMINISTRATION CALENDAR

The ASA has produced this calendar to assist the organisation and administration of clubs

Month	Activity
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New national and regional rules become effective • Clubs return affiliation to Counties • Regional handbooks go to printers
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional handbooks to Clubs • Regional form for requesting extra handbooks
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clubs and associations return membership fees to ASA
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insurance documents sent to clubs having paid membership • Clubs and associations suspended for non-payment of membership fees • Regional posts nomination papers to clubs
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nominations for ASA Volunteer awards
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last date for suggested rule changes by clubs
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last date for nominations for Regional posts to Regional Directors
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motions and proposals to Regional Directors for Regional ACM • Last date for notice to clubs of Regional ACM
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Club AGMs usually in Sept/Oct/Nov • Last date for detailed questions to Regional Directors • Last date for amendments to proposed Regional rule changes • Regional AGM
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Club AGMs • ASA Council meeting • The regions notify clubs and associations of any changes to Regional affiliation or National membership fees. • Counties involved in "one fee collection" shall also inform its membership
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Club AGMs • County AGMs
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County AGMs • Regional Handbook last updates, new secretaries and changes of address • Membership renewal packs sent by ASA

MOVING ON FROM YOUR ROLE.....

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Have you thought about how you will ensure all your knowledge and experience is passed on to a person taking over from you, when you decide its time to move on?

Here are some suggestions to ensure a smooth transition, and to ensure the person taking over from you has the information and resources they need:

- Try to give as much notice to the club that you are moving on, in order to allow the club to recruit / elect another volunteer
- Assist in developing an up to date role description and advert for the post based on your experience in the role, and think of any people that may be interested
- Think about the type of information you would like to receive if you were to volunteer for this position, and the format you would like to receive it in eg. one big file, a face to face hand over meeting, hand over in a 2 week period to not overload with information
- Prepare an information pack for the new volunteer to assist them in their role
- Prepare a list of any outstanding work/issues
- Prepare a top tips or similar list to help a new volunteer
- Provide a list of key contacts or people who can assist a new volunteer
- Hand over hard copies of any files or important correspondence. Put electronic information onto a USB stick or disk
- Offer to mentor the new volunteer in this role for an agreed period of time

SUMMARY

We hope you have found this guide informative in guiding you in your role, and providing you with information and helpful tips. We wish you a great experience in your role and thank you once again for all your time and commitment you are giving to the sport.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The ASA are grateful for the contributions and input from the ASA Volunteer working group in ensuring these resources are written and reviewed by volunteers, for volunteers. These resources also draw upon the work developed by swim21 clubs, **runningsports** and Volunteering England. The ASA would like to acknowledge and thank these organisations for their support and permission in using the work they have completed.

FURTHER INFORMATION

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.

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 it's use can be accepted by the ASA or the club.

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**Amateur Swimming
Association**

runningsports
3rd Floor, Victoria House

Sport England
3rd Floor, Victoria House

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Harold Fern House
Derby Square
Loughborough
Leics LE11 5AL
Tel: 01509 618700
Email: info@swimming.org
Web: www.britishswimming.org

CCPR – One voice for sport and recreation

Fourth Floor
Burwood House
14-16 Caxton Street
London
SW1H 0QT
Tel: 020 7976 3900

Email: info@ccpr.org.uk
Web: www.ccpr.org.uk

National Association of Councils for Voluntary Service (NACVS)

177 Arundel St
Sheffield S1 2NU
Tel: 0114 278 6636

Email: nacvs@nacvs.org.uk
Web: www.nacvs.org.uk

Youth Sport Trust

Sir John Beckwith Centre for sport
Loughborough University
Loughborough
Leics LE11 3TU
Tel: 01509 226600

Email: info@youthsporttrust.org
Web: www.youthsporttrust.org

Bloomsbury Square,
London WC1B 4SE
Tel: 0800 363373
Email:

info@runningsports.org
Web:

www.runningsports.org

Child Protection in Sport Unit

NSPCC National Training Centre
3 Gilmour Close
Beaumont Leys
Leicester LE4 1EZ
Tel: 0116 234 7278

Email: cpsu@nspcc.org.uk
Web: www.thecpsu.org.uk

Sportscoach UK

114 Cardigan Road
Headingley
Leeds
LS6 3BJ
Tel: 0113 274 4802

Email: coaching@sportscoach.org
Web:

www.sportscoachuk.org

County sports

Partnerships
(located all across England. Contact details available via ASA Regional Offices.

Bloomsbury Square,
London WC1B 4SE
Tel: 0845 850 8508

Email: info@sportengland.org
Web: www.sportengland.org

SkillsActive

Castlewood House
77-91 New Oxford Street
London WC1A 1PX
Tel: 0207 632 2000

Email: skills@skillsactive.com
Web: www.skillsactive.com

Volunteering England

Regents Wharf
8 All Saints st
London N1 9RL
Tel: 0845 305 6979

Email: information@volunteeringengland.org
Web: www.volunteering.org.uk

In addition:

runningsports has a series of top tips that can be downloaded for free. These include tips on health and safety of volunteers, recruiting young volunteers and older volunteers. Available at www.runningsports.org

ASA website pages dedicated to volunteers.....

Did you know the ASA website has a dedicated section for volunteers? To find this section, go to www.britishswimming.org, and click on the “club” tab at the top of the home page. When you are through to the “club” page, click on the “volunteers” link on the left hand side of the page.

Your **ASA County Workforce Co-ordinator** may be able to provide guidance and assistance to you in your role. Further details are available on the British Swimming website.

ASA Club Constitutional guidance. Link to page on ASA website:

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<http://www.britishswimming.org/vsite/vfile/page/fileurl/0,11040,5157-182967-200185-120448-0-file,00.pdf>