



SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE

Information for Local Sports Clubs

Education

INFORMATION FOR LOCAL SPORTS CLUBS

The views expressed in the booklet are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the Scottish Executive or any other organisation(s) by which the author(s) is/are employed.

The Scottish Executive is making this booklet available on-line in order to provide access to its contents for those interested in the subject. The Executive commissioned the research but has not exercised editorial control over the report.

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SECTION 1 WHAT IS THIS BOOKLET ABOUT, AND WHO IS IT FOR?

This booklet has been prepared to help anyone involved in the management of a sports club to do three things:

- Identify some of the issues your club may face on a day to day basis.
- Give information about the ways other clubs have tackled these sorts of issues.
- Point to sources of help, information and advice.

If you are a committee member, a team captain, a club secretary or a club administrator, this booklet is for you.

What issues does the booklet cover?

The booklet covers most of the issues involved in the day to day *running* of a club. It does not provide any information about playing or coaching. For more information about playing or coaching, you should contact either your Local Sports Council or your sport's governing body. Contact addresses for organisations mentioned are set out in the final section of this booklet. The issues covered by the booklet are:

- Structure and management
- Membership
- Facilities
- Volunteers
- How to find support

There are many good practice examples scattered throughout the booklet, and many suggestions based on ways others clubs have approached dealing with problems, but there is no substitute for good advice. It is impossible for the booklet to cover all of the issues in detail, so, in each section, there are suggestions about who you can talk to for more advice. As a general rule, a good place to start is your Local Sports Council or your sport's governing body.

How was the booklet prepared?

The booklet was prepared following a piece of research commissioned by the Scottish Executive and **sportscotland** in 2005. The research involved contacting more than 1,400 clubs, all of Scotland's local authorities and a large cross section of both Local Sports Councils and sport governing bodies to identify the management and administration issues clubs face, as well as good practice examples of how these issues are being tackled. A report describing the research is available from the Scottish Executive.

Resource	Research report "The Sustainability Of Local Sports Clubs In Scotland"
Available from	www.scotland.gov.uk/insight or 0131 2440894

SECTION 2 ROLES

Before looking at the key issues, it may be helpful to provide some information about the roles of some of the main organisations involved in the management of sport, as well as some organisations working with voluntary organisations. Full contact details for these organisations are provided in Section 7.

Sportscotland: is the national agency for sport in Scotland and is responsible for developing sport and physical recreation in Scotland. It administers funding on behalf of the Scottish Executive and is the licensed distributor in Scotland of the Lottery Sports Fund. **sportscotland** also runs three national centres. Through its web site and publications, as well as its network of staff, **sportscotland** is also a direct provider of advice and guidance to clubs, local authorities and governing bodies.

Local authorities: are major providers of sports facilities and are responsible for planning the development of sport in local areas. Local authorities also provide funding to sports clubs in various ways, including through small grant programmes and rates relief. Some local authorities run accreditation programmes for clubs and many also produce club registers and directories. Many local authorities employ sport development officers, whose role is to work directly to support clubs.

Governing bodies: are responsible for the governance of individual sports in Scotland, as well as providing a range of other forms of support. There are around 80 national governing bodies of sport in Scotland which will provide advice, support and information about participation in specific sports. Most governing bodies have systems through which local sports clubs can affiliate to them, and affiliation is often necessary to enable a club to participate in competitive events.

Local Sports Councils: In most areas, a Local Sports Council has been established to promote and co-ordinate sports activities at club and neighbourhood level. Local sports councils have a role in the development of clubs, and provide support, publicity, information and development advice to member clubs. They can also provide assistance with access to training, enable networking between clubs, provide support to events and generally promote sport in their local area.

There are a range of other organisations which can provide support to sports clubs:

- **Children 1st – Child Protection in Sport** has been established to provide advice on guidance to clubs, governing bodies and others on all aspects of child protection.
- **Volunteer Development Scotland (VDS)**, which has a key role in promoting and co-ordinating volunteering, as well as giving advice to clubs.
- **Volunteer Centres**, which coordinate volunteering opportunities locally.
- About 60 **Councils for Voluntary Service (CsVS)** whose role is primarily to provide support to voluntary organisations through giving information and advice, and by promoting events, including training.

- **SCVO** is the national body for the voluntary sector, and provides a good deal of useful information on its website on management issues.

SECTION 3 STRUCTURAL AND MANAGEMENT ISSUES

The vast majority of clubs are voluntary organisations, and this section deals primarily with the issues facing voluntary organisations. The structural and management issues identified by clubs which participated in the research fall into five main areas:

- Legal status.
- The management of clubs.
- Concerns about legal and policy issues.
- Staffing issues.
- Equalities issues.

Legal status issues

What are the most fundamental requirements for a voluntary organisation?

All clubs should have a **constitution**. This sets out, for example, the purpose of the club, who can become members, how it will be run, how committees will be elected, and what will happen to any assets if the club ceases to operate. It is extremely unlikely that your club could obtain external funding unless it is properly constituted. A bank will require a constitution before it will consider opening an account for your club.

Your club should have a **written record** of a meeting of members at which it was decided to form a club. This is often known in the form of a Memorandum and Articles of Association, although it need not be in this form.

Your club should have at least an **Annual General Meeting**, and some mechanism to allow members to call meetings at other times where circumstances warrant this.

Although there is no legal requirement for your club to have a **bank account**, or to have your accounts at least checked over by a qualified accountant, this is good practice. Having a bank account helps protect committee members and allows clearer management and control of funds.

Finally, your club must have **adequate insurance** to cover all its activities. This must provide public liability cover for the club itself, officials, players, non-players and volunteers, and may cover coaches. If you employ staff, you must have employer's liability cover. You should seek advice on this from your governing body or Local Sports Council. Affordable group insurance schemes tailored to the needs of sports clubs are available through many governing bodies.

Resource	Information about the basic requirements for a voluntary organisation
Available from	www.scvo.org.uk, via the CVS network, or through any solicitor

What is the best type of organisation for my club?

There is no simple answer to this question. Voluntary organisations can choose a variety of legal structures. The most common across the sector is the unincorporated association. This is the least well-defined structure, and affords little protection to members (although some protection may be available through purchasing an insurance policy).

In the vast majority of cases, clubs face no problems in being unincorporated associations. The main problem with an unincorporated association is when something goes wrong. If a club becomes seriously in debt, the *members of the club* may personally become liable for these debts. Becoming “incorporated” (i.e. a company limited by guarantee) can provide protection to management committee members, but the disadvantage is that it brings some administrative and legal requirements.

If your club owns assets (for example, a ground or a clubhouse) or employs staff, it is a good idea to seek advice about your legal position.

Resource	Information about the implications of different legal structures
Available from	www.scvo.org.uk, via the CVS network, or through any solicitor

What are Community Amateur Sports Clubs?

Before April 2006, the vast majority of sports clubs were not eligible to apply for charitable status. The designation Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC) was introduced as a way of bringing some of the benefits of charitable status to sports clubs not eligible for charitable status. The main benefits of being a CASC come from rates relief (at least 80%) and exemption from corporation tax up to certain limits. For these reasons, becoming a CASC is particularly attractive to clubs with assets, or which generate income through trading. Other clubs are unlikely to see the same level of benefits. It is worth bearing in mind that there are some qualifying restrictions placed on becoming a CASC, including the need to be open to all members of the community and operate on a not-for-profit basis.

Resource	Information about Community Amateur Sports Clubs
Available from	www.helpforclubs.org.uk or www.hmrc.gov.uk (or any HM Revenue and Customs office). Advice can be obtained from Local Sports Councils, local authorities or sportscotland .

What about Charitable Status?

From April 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 introduced a new regime for the regulation of charities in Scotland. One of the key effects of this reform of charity law is that sports clubs are, from April 2006, eligible to apply for charitable status (assuming they satisfy other criteria). Although many voluntary organisations are registered charities, there are a range of legal and administrative

requirements which have to be satisfied. Clubs should seek detailed advice about the benefits and responsibilities of charitable status before embarking on this option.

Resource	Information about Charitable Status
Available from	There is a good discussion of the issues at www.scvo.org.uk . The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (www.oscr.org.uk or 01382 220446) will provide detailed information and advice. Practical help may be available through the CVS network, or your sport governing body.

The management of a club

What are the basic management needs of our club?

Your constitution should set out clearly how the club will be managed. The vast majority of clubs are managed by a management committee, with office bearers including a Chairperson, various secretaries (including, for example, club or match secretaries) and a treasurer. Members of the club should be made aware of how the committee is elected, and should participate in the election process.

A minute should be taken of all meetings, and this should be made available to all members.

Some CVSs and local authorities run development programmes for committee members. Although these are unlikely to be confined to sports clubs, they will help committee members become more aware of the issues involved in managing what is, in effect, a small business.

- ★ Some clubs make committee meetings open to all members, as a way of encouraging participation and transparency.

Your club should have a designated treasurer. While there is no legal requirement that the treasurer should have a relevant qualification, it is recommended that, wherever possible, either the treasurer should have this, or should be prepared to attend a suitable course.

As a very minimum, the treasurer should produce a statement of accounts quarterly, and ideally monthly.

- ★ Some clubs circulate financial statements to all members, again as a way of encouraging transparency.

Resource	Training for management committees and treasurers
Available from	Information on courses available may be obtained from the CVS network.

Do we need a business plan?

There is no easy answer to this. All clubs, except the most informal groups of casual players, would benefit from having an annual business plan. Clubs which own assets, employ staff and generate income will almost certainly need a business plan. Without a business plan, it will be difficult to plan the levels of fees, or match fees required. It will be difficult to identify whether the club is facing a financial shortfall. The business planning process can help identify opportunities for the club. Most external funders also require some sort of business plan. A business plan need not be complex, but it must be reviewed at least quarterly, and updated at least annually.

- ★ Some clubs use their business planning process as a way of involving members in the agreement of the priorities for the club, and helping them to become clearer about the financial and administrative issues facing the club.

Resource	Help with business planning
Available from	Some governing bodies provide structured club development programmes which include business planning. The Business Gateway service runs seminars and can provide information. Similarly, the CVS network can provide advice and information. Larger clubs could benefit from seeking advice from an accountant or management consultant.

How can we raise funds for the club?

Many clubs are successful at fundraising. There are many ways in which this can be done, most of which will be familiar to all clubs. For example, you can try:

- Various forms of lottery, “200 clubs” or similar.
- Raffle tickets.
- Social events.
- Sporting events, such as open competitions.
- Selling goods on which the club takes a profit.

Some clubs have also been able to diversify their activities through, for example:

- Letting part of the club to community organisations (although there may be licensing issues involved).
- Letting facilities to other clubs.
- Selling surplus assets.

Some clubs are also successful in attracting sponsorship. This is rarely easy, and clubs will inevitably face many rejections.

- ★ Clubs which are successful in attracting sponsorship approach this in a very professional manner, identifying what the business sponsor can gain from the

deal, presenting the benefits in a clear and concise manner, ensuring that the business is well-treated and that feedback is given on what the money was used for. Poorly written letters which do not make clear what the money is for, and what the benefit to the business might be, are most unlikely to succeed.

Resource	Help with raising funds
Available from	There is good advice on raising funds on the www.helpforclubs.org.uk website. Scottish Business in the Community is a good source of information about how voluntary organisations and local businesses can support each other in a mutually beneficial way (www.sbcscot.com , or 0131 451 1100).

How can we get access to grants?

Grants are a perennial problem for sports clubs. Relatively few clubs are able to access grants, and those that do often receive only very small amounts. It is clear, however, that some clubs are very successful indeed in securing grants. Some of the keys to this success are to:

Be well-organised as a business: many external funders want to see evidence that their money will be well spent. Clubs with a business plan, a sport development plan and audited accounts are much more likely to be able to demonstrate this. These clubs are also much more likely to be able to cope with the administration requirements of the funder.

Invest in the skills of those making the applications: clubs' success in securing funding is nearly always down to one person, or a small group of people. These people develop an expertise in this area. Some local authorities and CVSs offer training in making funding applications. Increasing numbers of funders are also providing basic help.

Become acquainted with funding sources: there are many funding sources available (both large and small). Clubs which are successful in obtaining external funding usually have a person, or a group of people, who are charged with identifying funding sources, making contact with them and downloading information. At a basic level, it is usually a good idea to register to receive information about forthcoming grant programmes. Where roadshows or "meet the funder" events are promoted, clubs should make sure someone attends.

Cast the funding net wider than sport: some of the clubs who appear to be successful in securing external funding do so from non-sport sources (for example, health and criminal justice). Clearly, this may require a good deal of proactive effort on the part of the clubs concerned.

Read the objectives and rules carefully: virtually no grants are available for mainstream club expenditure. One of the key lessons learned by clubs who participated in our research was to ensure that applications conform exactly to the needs of the funder.

Always type the application, and always keep copies: it is clear that successful clubs can make more applications than other clubs simply because much of the information required already exists in Word or Excel files.

Ask for feedback: even the most successful clubs are rarely successful in all applications. It is always worthwhile asking for feedback, although this will not always be provided.

- ★ “Awards for all” is probably the easiest grant to apply for. It provides up to £5000 for a range of purposes, and many sports clubs would be eligible to apply (although relatively few appear to do so). Information is available from www.awardsforall.org.uk or on 0141 242 1400.

There are many other grants which may be available (which cannot be listed here), and there is plenty of advice available about grant sources.

Resource	Help with applying for grants
Available from	<p>There is a summary of grant givers available in a document called “Guide to Funding for Sports Projects” available in the Help for Clubs resources library (as well as basic information about types of funding). There are a number of publications in the “Running Sport” series about applying for funding.</p> <p>Many of the major funders offer basic information, much of which is often more widely relevant. (There is a list in the Help for Clubs document mentioned above.) Local authorities, CVSs and governing bodies can provide help and information about the process of applying for grants.</p>

Legal issues

What are the legal issues we need to be aware of?

The complexity of your club’s legal position depends on two main things: whether you employ staff, and whether your club owns assets. Among the areas which you need to be aware of are:

- Employment law.
- Tax and VAT.
- Equalities legislation.
- Child protection.
- Health and Safety legislation.
- Environmental legislation.

- Data protection.
- Charitable status.

This is only a selection of some of the main areas. This booklet is not intended to give you detailed legal advice, but it is important that you seek this out. It is also in everybody's interest that clubs follow good practice in these issues.

Resource	Help with legal issues
Available from	www.helpforclubs.org.uk and www.scvo.org.uk both have a good summary of the main issues. Advice specific to individual sports is generally available from governing bodies. Local authorities can also be a good source of advice.

What about child protection?

Child protection policies are absolutely essential for all clubs, whether or not you currently have children who are members. For example, your club may have children as spectators, and children of members should also be covered. Again, even though the club may not have children as members, schools may use the facilities.

Children 1st – Child Protection in Sport has been established to provide detailed advice and guidance to sports clubs about all aspects of child protection. Each local authority and each governing body issues specific guidance on child protection policies and the need for Disclosure Scotland checks. It is essential that all clubs seek advice, and put policies in place.

- ★ Most clubs have provided some training and guidance to all coaches and volunteers, as well as, in some cases, parents, on child protection issues.

Resource	Help with child protection issues
Available from	For basic advice and framework policies, contact your local authority or governing body. Most also provide training courses for club office bearers, including child protection officers. Children 1 st provides advice and guidance to clubs on all aspects of child protection – their website is www.children1st.org.uk/about/services/sport_contact.html

Staffing issues

Relatively few clubs employ staff, and those that do tend to be concentrated in a relatively narrow range of sports. According to the survey of clubs, most employees are in bar and catering and ground maintenance posts. Relatively few are employed in administration functions (other than in golf clubs). Increasing numbers of clubs are employing coaches.

Do we need to employ staff?

In most cases, the answer will be no. For the most part, only clubs with grounds to maintain, or clubhouses to manage are likely to need staff, but there are many ways that staff can benefit a club.

- ★ Employing a staff member can bring considerable benefits to a club, for example in terms of encouraging the use of facilities by young people and ensuring that facilities are kept to a high standard. As an example, a club in the Highlands which employed a full time administrator / coach for the first time has seen a wide range of benefits from doing this.

What help is available to recruit staff?

Both the Help for Clubs and SCVO websites have a great deal of useful information about employing staff (as do many governing bodies). Clubs can get access to a wide range of good practice guidance and specimen documents, such as job descriptions, application forms etc.

Practical help with recruitment is available through the JobCentre Plus network. In some cases, financial support may be available through either JobCentre Plus or local authorities.

Help with employment law is perhaps less easy to come by, but would always be available through solicitors (and may be available through the CVS network and governing bodies).

Resource	Help with recruiting staff
Available from	www.helpforclubs.org.uk and www.scvo.org.uk both have a good summary of the main issues and provide specimen policies etc. The Jobcentre Plus network can provide practical help via local offices or www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk

Is help available for training?

Sourcing training is usually possible through local colleges or training providers. Some training providers specialise in particular areas (for example, hospitality) and so it may be necessary to approach a college or other provider outwith your local area. Advice on training may be available through the Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise networks (for larger clubs) and through the CVS network (for smaller clubs). Most governing bodies also provide advice on training as it relates to their sport, although much work – related training is generic, rather than specific to individual sports.

Learndirect provides a considerable amount of online training, as well as facilitating access to training through a network of other providers. Learndirect also provides advice to businesses and voluntary organisations on training development issues.

- ★ Some larger clubs have developed structured training plans, based on a training needs analysis and an assessment of the skills needs of the club. Some clubs, again, usually larger clubs, have been accredited through Investors in People.

Training for coaches is available from local authorities and governing bodies.

Resource	Help with training
Available from	www.helpforclubs.org.uk and www.scvo.org.uk both have a good summary of the main issues and provide specimen policies etc. The Jobcentre Plus network can provide practical help via local offices or www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk. Learndirect is accessible through www.learndirect.co.uk.

Equalities issues

Why should we address equalities issues?

Promoting equality for your members, volunteers and staff is good practice for any club. Removing barriers to participation can help recruitment and retention. Registration as a Community Amateur Sports Club, or seeking to become a Registered Charity (as well as many local authority and sport – specific accreditation schemes) require that the club operates in an open and fair manner, and can be used by all members of the community. Saying that the club is “open to all” is rarely enough.

sportscotland has recently launched the Equity Standard for sports clubs. This framework is designed to help clubs take a structured approach to becoming open and fair in all aspects of their operation. The standard is offered at four levels. The basic, “foundation” standard requires that the club is committed to equality, has a policy which has been communicated to all staff and key volunteers, and that the club monitors its staff, players and volunteers. There are three other levels, leading to an “advanced” level, with a set of stringent requirements. The achievement of the standard should be regarded as a key indicator of a “good” club, and should help to attract both members and volunteers.

- ★ Some clubs have developed equalities policies and strategies which are proactive in promoting equality rather than simply being passive in avoiding discrimination. Some clubs also have strong links with local community organisations of and for members of various “equalities” groups.

Resource	Help with the equity standard
Available from	www.sportscotland.org.uk Basic information about equalities issues is also available through governing bodies, local authorities and Local Sports Councils.

SECTION 4 MEMBERSHIP ISSUES

The majority of the issues faced by clubs in relation to membership are in three main areas:

- How to recruit members.
- How to retain members.
- How to manage membership.

How can we recruit members?

This is an issue facing clubs across a number of sports. Many clubs are facing declining membership, and often the age profile of members is increasing. There is no magic formula for recruiting members, but there are some basic approaches which other clubs have found can help:

Be open and welcoming: sometimes clubs can appear intimidating and unwelcoming to new members. Some clubs have tried to address this by, for example:

- Having open days, or “come and try” days.
- Hosting open competitions which non-members can take part in.
- Offering trial memberships on a reduced cost basis.
- Having volunteers from the club attend, for example, local community groups to promote the club.
- Demonstrating the club is welcoming to women, children and young people, disabled people and people from minority ethnic communities.
- Inviting prospective members to meet with current members.

Offer a “professional face”: generally people will be more attracted to clubs which appear business-like, for example in responding promptly to requests for information, returning telephone calls etc. Information produced should look professional and be well-written.

Develop marketing materials: many clubs prepare leaflets, brochures and other marketing materials. It is important to ensure that these are distributed effectively, and do not simply lie in a cupboard!

Advertise: some clubs advertise for new members. Advertising can be paid for or can be obtained through a press release. There is a good booklet on securing publicity for clubs published in the “Running Clubs” series.

Work with local schools: clubs across a range of sports are now working with primary and secondary schools to introduce pupils to sport. The schools benefit from coaching and, in some cases, access to facilities. Clubs benefit from the flow of new members.

Target former members: some clubs send marketing materials to former members, to encourage them to rejoin.

Offer discounted fees: some clubs offer discounted fees to new members, sometimes for more than one year. Many clubs have removed their joining fees.

Consider ways of reducing the initial cost of playing the sport: some clubs offer discounted equipment purchases, or can lend equipment to allow a member to decide whether or not the sport is right for them. Some football and other clubs for young people operate a “boot room” where children who have outgrown footwear and other kit can pass this on to younger members.

Develop a website: many clubs now have a website, sometimes as part of a sport-wide initiative (as with the Scottish Rugby Union). It is almost stating the obvious that the site should look professional, be up to date and properly maintained.

- ★ Some clubs have developed a membership or recruitment strategy, which sets out clearly how the club will target new members and what the costs are likely to be.

Resource	Help with recruiting members / help with website development
Available from	<p>There is a good summary of these issues on www.helpforclubs.org.uk. There is also a good booklet in the “Running Clubs” series (available from www.sportengland.org.uk). There is more general advice on the SCVO website (www.scvo.org.uk). Much of the material described in the “volunteers” section can be adapted to suit membership issues.</p> <p>There is a vast amount of help available in relation to website design. Many clubs may have a website designer among their members, or college departments may be able to provide assistance through student projects. There are a huge number of professional website designers. These can usually be identified through either yellow pages, or through the Business Gateway.</p>

How do we manage our current members?

Some clubs still do not have a formal or structured approach to managing their membership. Most clubs, however, use some form of database to store details of members. The benefit of a database is that it makes it easier to send information to members, and to store details of any skills the members have, or any specific requirements. For clubs to conform to the Equity Standard, some sort of database is probably essential.

Many successful clubs communicate regularly with their members. The use of a website and e-mail, rather than post, can represent a significant cost saving to clubs.

★ Some clubs have developed lists of e-mail addresses for all members.

Resource	Help with managing membership
Available from	There is a good summary of these issues on www.helpforclubs.org.uk . Local colleges can be a good source of help with database development.

How do we retain members?

Again, there is no magic formula for retaining members. As with attracting new members, it may be worthwhile setting out some of the ways other clubs have addressed this. In general terms, members who feel valued, and whose aspirations are satisfied, are likely to remain as members.

Communicate regularly with members: many successful clubs communicate regularly with their members. Many also provide members with open access to committee minutes, accounts and similar documents.

Seek, and listen to, members' views: again, clubs which are successful in retaining members appear to ask for, receive, and act upon members' views about a range of issues. This appears particularly important where the club is facing important decisions, for example, relating to capital projects.

Give members a game! it almost goes without saying that members who join a club to play a sport will not be happy if they cannot play. Many clubs have developed social teams, and many youth teams have an inclusive selection policy which guarantees all members a game each week.

Offer discounts to people who can only play at odd hours: some clubs, such as some bowling and golf clubs, offer various categories of membership to encourage people who can only play irregularly, or at odd hours, to stay as members.

Offer coaching: more clubs are now offering coaching to average or "social" players.

Promote social activities: many clubs have provided social activities for many years, but some clubs are recognising the value of family-oriented events, both as a way of retaining adult members, but also encouraging partners and children to join. To support this, many clubs now support a "family" category of membership.

When members leave, ask them why?: clubs can learn a great deal from members who leave. Perhaps the fees were too high. Perhaps the committee didn't appear to listen to members. Perhaps the first team is not being picked on merit. The answers to the questions may not always be comfortable, but good clubs will generally learn something and should act to address any issues identified.

Resource	Help with retaining members
Available from	There is a good summary of these issues on www.helpforclubs.org.uk . Most governing bodies offer advice or information on ways to improve members' experiences.

SECTION 5 FACILITIES ISSUES

Many of the problems clubs face cannot be easily solved. For example, many clubs are in outdated premises, with few resources available to invest. Clubs which hire facilities are to some extent at the mercy of local authorities or landlords.

Our clubhouse / ground / car park is needing attention – what can we do?

Unfortunately, for many clubs, the answer is relatively little. There are only limited amounts of funding available for remedial works, and clubs may find it difficult to raise loan funding. It may be worth identifying some of the ways in which other clubs have addressed this:

Call on volunteers: Some of the clubs which responded to our survey reported achieving quite astonishing things with the help of volunteers. One rugby club and one shinty club, for example, reported that new clubhouses had been built wholly, or largely by volunteers. At a less rarefied level, many clubs call on volunteers for activities as diverse as “litter picks” or “painting parties” (often associated with providing food or fun activities).

Call on trades people who are club members: clubs should, however, be sensitive to the fact that, although joiners / plasterers / plumbers may be club members, they also have a business to run, and may not be able, or willing to provide extensive free assistance to their clubs, particularly if this involves other staff or materials.

Approach a college or employment training programme: colleges and employment training providers rely on work experience and real life examples to provide training to students. It may be possible to find a project within the club which can be carried out by students on work experience (although clubs should be aware of any insurance or supervision requirements imposed by the training provider).

Consider whether a development project may be feasible: for many clubs, a major capital project will be daunting, but help may be available from governing bodies, or through local sports councils to carry out basic feasibility studies, and to assemble the package of works prior to submitting a funding application.

Consider selling assets: although a radical option, some clubs have addressed the need to invest by either selling some assets (for example, land), or by moving lock, stock and barrel to another site (usually funded by a house builder).

Look for “planning gain”: in some cases where a housing development is taking place adjacent to a club, clubs have been able to work with the developer to improve their facilities, on the basis that this will help market the development to prospective buyers. This may also be a means of securing support with, for example, access roads and boundary fences (which are unlikely to be readily fundable from other sources).

Resource	Help with improvement and redevelopment
Available from	Local authority planning sections can provide advice. Governing bodies generally are able to provide technical and practical assistance in relation to capital projects.

Our club plays at a sports centre / playing field and the facilities are poor – what can we do?

This is a common complaint of sports clubs throughout Scotland. In some cases, there is little that can be done in the short term except to make elected members and senior managers aware of the issues. Local sports councils work with local authorities to ensure that the sports facilities in their area meet clubs’ needs. Again, this is unlikely to be a short- term solution. Some clubs have taken innovative approaches to this problem, and these are worth summarising here:

Work with other clubs to carry out an audit of facilities and prepare a development plan: in one town in Ayrshire, all the football clubs came together and agreed to carry out an audit of football facilities in the town. This was then presented to the local authority. In the event, the clubs then developed their own facilities. A similar approach was undertaken in a town in the Borders, this time involving all sports clubs. This resulted in a statement of needs, which is being carried through by clubs, the local authority and the local sports council (with the support of central agencies in terms of funding).

Consider sharing with another club: some clubs previously based in municipal facilities have agreed ground sharing arrangements with clubs owning their own facilities (to their mutual benefit). A small number of clubs also identified that they had gained access to the facilities of more senior clubs through becoming, in effect, feeder clubs.

Consider buying somewhere: it may be possible to secure support to purchase land to build new facilities.

Enter into an exclusive arrangement with the local authority: although this approach is not always popular with other clubs, it may be possible to enter into an arrangement with a local authority to secure either exclusive or preferential access to a facility. A long- term access agreement may allow the club to invest in the facilities, even though these are actually owned by the local authority.

Consider a neighbouring area: in our survey of clubs, a small number of clubs identified that they had moved their home base to another town, or another local authority area, in order to secure access to better facilities.

Resource	Help with rented facilities
Available from	Local authority sport development teams may be able to assist clubs to find more suitable premises. Local sports council can raise issues with local authorities, as can governing bodies. Governing bodies may also be aware of opportunities to, for example, ground share. There is some basic advice on finding facilities on www.helpforclubs.org.uk .

SECTION 6 VOLUNTEER ISSUES

Without volunteers, many clubs would cease to exist. It is fair to say, however, that it is becoming more difficult across the entire voluntary sector to recruit volunteers. There are many reasons offered for this, including increasing costs, the need for more volunteers to have qualifications, pressures from work and, in the view of some clubs, concerns about child protection.

The main concerns expressed by clubs were in two main areas:

- recruiting volunteers.
- managing volunteers.

Recruiting volunteers

How can we be more effective in recruiting volunteers?

Clubs' experiences suggest that some of the ways to develop the recruitment of volunteers include to:

Plan how volunteers will be used: some clubs, as part of a wider approach to recruiting volunteers, have assessed clearly the roles volunteers can play in a club. This, in turn, makes it easier to tell prospective volunteers what will be available to them (and makes it more likely that their aspirations will be met).

Audit club members' skills: a number of clubs have carried out audits of the skills of club members, and made this information available to those coordinating volunteer efforts in the club.

Be welcoming to volunteers: some clubs can appear unwelcoming to volunteers who have not been members, or who have not played the sport concerned.

Develop marketing materials for volunteers: many clubs prepare leaflets, brochures and other marketing materials for members but some also prepare versions for volunteers.

Advertise your opportunities: this should be done as widely as possible, through circulating materials in places where prospective volunteers are likely to see them. You should also tell your local Volunteer Centre that you are looking for volunteers.

Provide information to prospective volunteers: volunteers should be provided with proper information about the club, and about the possible roles they might play.

- ★ The Scottish Rugby Union and Volunteer Development Scotland have cooperated to develop a structured programme, supported by training, to ensure a flow of volunteers into rugby. An outline of the programme is available on the SRU website (www.scottishrugby.org) and could be readily adapted by clubs playing any sport.

Resource	Help with recruiting volunteers
Available from	There is a great deal of assistance available through Volunteer Development Scotland, as well as, locally, through Volunteer Centres (in terms of recruiting volunteers). Some governing bodies provide advice on this, as do local authorities. Both www.helpforclubs.org.uk and www.scvo.org.uk have extensive resources for organisations wishing to recruit volunteers.

Managing volunteers

How can our club manage our volunteers better?

Few clubs take a structured approach to the management of volunteers, although those that do appear to benefit from this. Among the steps clubs can take are:

Develop a volunteering policy: a volunteering policy helps to define the roles of volunteers, the way they are managed and what support is available to them. This should allow a clearer estimation of the overall need for volunteers in the management and operation of the club.

Appoint or nominate a volunteer coordinator: as part of the development of a volunteering policy, many organisations have appointed a volunteer coordinator, who can take an overview of the management of volunteers within the club, and act as a first point of contact for all volunteers.

Develop job descriptions etc.: there are framework job descriptions (as well as application forms and other materials) available through www.helpforclubs.org.uk and www.scvo.org.uk. The use of job descriptions makes volunteers' roles clearer and makes their management by office bearers more transparent.

Support volunteers: the evidence from surveys of volunteers is that those who feel valued, are properly managed and provided with support and training, are those most likely to remain with a club.

Provide training to volunteers: although many clubs provide training on child protection, few provide other forms of training.

Reward volunteers: again, surveys of volunteers have suggested that some lose heart when they are not valued.

Pay expenses: Good practice suggests that volunteers' out of pocket expenses should be met.

- ★ Volunteer Development Scotland has recently launched a standards-based accreditation "Investing in Volunteers".

Resource	Help with managing volunteers
Available from	There is a great deal of assistance available through Volunteer Development Scotland, as well as, locally, through Volunteer Centres (in terms of recruiting volunteers). Some governing bodies provide advice on this, as do local authorities. Both www.helpforclubs.org.uk and www.scvo.org.uk have extensive resources for organisations wishing to recruit volunteers.

SECTION 7 KEY CONTACT INFORMATION

Local sports clubs are an important part of Scotland's social and economic life, and bring many benefits to communities. It is in all of our interests that they thrive into the future. This booklet should have given you some ideas for your club, and is a starting point for you to get further information.

We have not tried to cover every issue in each section, but to suggest some ways of tackling some of the common problems, and to help you find useful resources. There are a considerable number of sources of information and advice to clubs. This section of the booklet brings together some of the main sources, and points you in the direction of how to find others.

Main websites of interest to clubs

There are several websites which provide key information for sports clubs. These are listed below:

Help for Clubs (run by **sportscotland**) www.helpforclubs.org.uk is the main source of information for sports clubs in Scotland.

There is also a great deal of wider policy and practice information on the main **sportscotland** site www.sportscotland.org.uk.

Although much of the information is based on the circumstances of English clubs, the Sport England site is also a valuable source of information. The Running Clubs series of booklets has been found to be very valuable by clubs in Scotland: www.sportengland.org.uk.

The best source of information about issues facing voluntary organisations, as well as about managing a voluntary organisation, is the SCVO website: www.scvo.org.uk.

The best source of information about recruiting and retaining volunteers is the Volunteer Development Scotland site: www.vds.org.uk.

There is also a great deal of information relevant to volunteers (which is also relevant to clubs) at www.volunteerscotland.org.uk.

National bodies

sportscotland

Address: Caledonia House, South Gyle, Edinburgh EH12. 9DQ

Telephone: 0131 317 7200

Website: www.sportscotland.org.uk

Volunteer Development Scotland

Address: Stirling Enterprise Park Stirling FK7 7RP.

Telephone: 01786 479

Website: www.vds.org.uk

Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations

Address: 18/19 Claremont Crescent Edinburgh EH7 4QD.

Telephone: 0131 556 3882.

Website: www.scvo.org.uk

Children 1st – Child Protection in Sport

Child Protection in Sport Development Worker

Address: CHILDREN 1ST, Sussex House, 61 Sussex Street, Glasgow G41 1DY

Telephone: 0141 418 5674

e-mail: cpinsport@children1st.org.uk

Website: http://www.children1st.org.uk/about/services/sport_contact.html

Sport governing bodies

There are nearly 80 sport governing bodies in Scotland. A directory is available at the following address:

www.sportscotland.org.uk/ChannelNavigation/GetActive/TopicNavigation/Governing+Bodies/

Most have websites (which are listed in the directory) and most also have e-mail as well as telephone contact addresses.

If you do not have access to the internet, you should contact **sportscotland** at the number above for advice on how to contact your sport's governing body.

Scottish Sports Association

The Scottish Sports Association (SSA) represents the interests of governing bodies of sport in Scotland, developing positive consultation between its members and the Scottish Parliament, key agencies and voluntary organisations on key policy issues. It is also responsible for encouraging and enabling co-operation amongst its membership and providing access to relevant information to assist and strengthen their operations.

Address: Caledonia House, South Gyle, Edinburgh EH12 9DQ

Telephone: 0131 339 8785

e-mail: mail@info-ssa.org.uk

Website: <http://www.scottishsportsassociation.org.uk>

Government departments and agencies

The main Scottish Executive website is www.scotland.gov.uk. The Scottish Executive is spread over many sites, and the best way to contact the department you require is via the central switchboard on 0131 556 8400

Many UK government departments provide services relevant to sports clubs. Those with a local presence (including HM Revenue and Customs and JobCentre Plus) are always listed in the phone book. A directory of government departments is available at the following address: www.open.gov.uk

The main Scottish Enterprise website is www.scottish-enterprise.com. The main helpline number is 0845 607 8787. The helpline will direct you to the most relevant contact.

The main Highlands and Islands Enterprise website is www.hie.co.uk. The main switchboard number is 01463 234171. The helpline will direct you to the most relevant contact for your area.

Local bodies

Local authorities

There are 32 local authorities in Scotland. Local authorities generally have large display adverts in telephone directories, as well as detailed listings of numbers. There is a list of local sports councils available at the following address:

<http://www.sportscotland.org.uk/ChannelNavigation/GetActive/TopicNavigation/LocalSports+Councils>

If you do not have access to the internet, you should contact **sportscotland** at the number above for advice on how to contact your local authority.

Local sports councils

There are Local Sports Councils covering most areas of Scotland. Details of your Local Sports Council are available from the Scottish Association of Local Sports Councils. There is also a complete list of Local Sports Councils on the SALSC website.

Scottish Association of Local Sports Councils
Address: David C. Arnott, F.I.L.A.M. (Administrator), 1 Lumsdaine Drive, Dalgety Bay
Fife KY11 9YU
Tel: 01383 820950 Mobile - 07768176761
email: david@salsc.org.uk
Website: www.salsc.org.uk

Volunteer Centres

There are Volunteer Centres in each local authority area (and often more than one in larger areas). A list of local contacts is available at the following address:

www.volunteerscotland.org.uk/vc_contact_list.asp

If you do not have access to the internet, contact Volunteer Development Scotland at the address above. They will be able to provide you with details of your nearest Centre.

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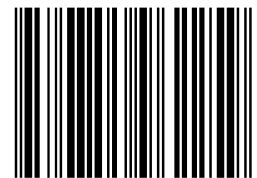
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