

# YOUR GUIDE TO INVOLVING & SUPPORTING YOUNG VOLUNTEERS



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# INTRODUCTION

*This resource has been written by StreetGames UK to support England Athletics and their Clubs in understanding positive ways for recruiting, supporting and retaining young people in volunteering opportunities. With over 10 years of insight to offer, this resource provides best practice examples and top tips for engaging young people in volunteering.*

This resource was initially developed to support clubs who had been awarded funding through the Game Changers Programme to provide a positive experience for the young people involved. Funded by our partners Spirit of 2012, the **Game Changers Programme** offers clubs the opportunity to apply for a package of support, to involve more young people aged between 14-25 in volunteering opportunities at the club. However, the valuable information included in this resource can provide advice and guidance on recruiting, supporting and retaining young volunteers to all members of the Athletics and Running community, so has been made into an online resource which can be accessed by anyone wanting further information and support in this area.

A young volunteer can fulfill many roles with the right support package in place. This can vary from running local sport sessions or assisting at large-scale sports events, to learning how to coach and design youth-led activities. By contributing in this way, young people have the opportunity to support capacity at a club, helping more people to get involved. A strong volunteering programme also assists with developing their confidence, self-esteem and community leadership skills and they have the opportunity to gain awards and qualifications. This is known as the double benefit of volunteering – Giving & Receiving.





# **SECTION 1:** Understanding Youth Leadership and Volunteering

## WHAT IS YOUTH VOLUNTEERING?

A strong volunteering offer has 2 primary functions in supporting young people to make the most of their talents, skills and abilities:

- Supporting their personal development in delivering high quality opportunities in their community.
- Providing them with the training and opportunity to influence the development and future of their club.



## WHY INVOLVE YOUNG VOLUNTEERS IN YOUR ORGANISATION?

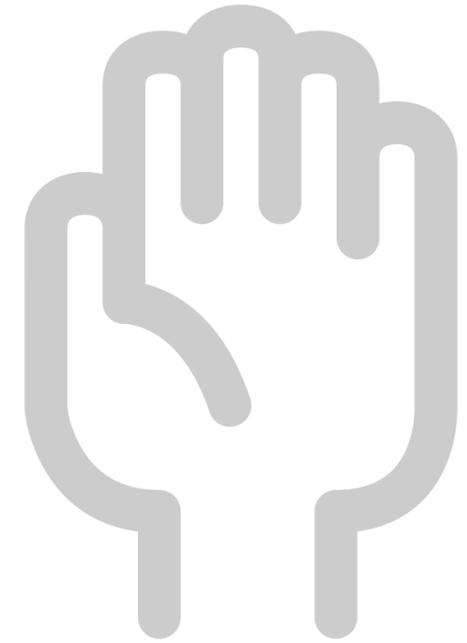
Young volunteers can play a pivotal role in any sports activity or organisation and by investing in their development this will contribute to the future growth of sport across the UK. The contribution and involvement of young volunteers can positively affect the work of a club.

The points below will help you understand why involving young people as volunteers is a positive step for any club. The benefits of setting up a youth volunteering programme have been split into 3 headings to illustrate the impact upon the volunteer, the club and also the local community.



## BENEFITS FOR THE YOUNG VOLUNTEER

- They develop new friendships, which is key to their retention at the club.
- They can work towards qualifications which will allow them to develop specific and generic skills that support their future employability. This often leads to them aspiring to progress to the next level.
- Transferable skills are developed such as communication, organisation and negotiation. These can undoubtedly be used in other areas of their lives such as home and work.
- They gain valuable experience to go alongside these skills & qualifications; learning how to apply and adapt their practice in a number of situations.
- Self-esteem is increased as a knock-on effect of the developments above. Young people feel better about themselves, widen their horizons and become more positive.
- Young people become far more employable as a result of volunteering – they have gained vital experience, qualifications and skills which can aid the recruitment process as well as preparing them for the challenges of holding down a job.
- Volunteering and the benefits listed above build confidence; the volunteers become aware of their strengths and believe in themselves, allowing them to move out of their comfort zone.



## BENEFITS FOR THE CLUB

- Young people bring energy to a club.
- Young people also bring enthusiasm for an activity or sport, an element that may have been lost by more experienced members of the team.
- A young person's sense of humour and fun outlook can be refreshing to the club and/or session.
- Young people can bring a modern perspective and new ideas to help refresh a club or session.
- Young people are the potential future generation of your club. Helping them gain valuable knowledge and experience can make them feel 'part of the team' and also create a pathway for other participants to follow in their footsteps. This generates a positive culture within the club, where young people know they are valued and involved.
- The young volunteers may be able to share the workload of team members that are struggling.
- The support and involvement of young volunteers can aid sustainability for a club in a challenging economic climate.
- Young people's skills and ways of working can be 'shaped' to suit your club.



- Volunteering provides young people with an opportunity to work with a variety of other people and may support them in changing negative stereotypes and prejudices.
- Young people are more likely to be in touch with current trends within communities and groups, therefore potentially supporting the development of positive relationships.
- Young people can become positive role models for other young people, therefore encouraging participation, regular attendance and often supporting a behaviour change in young people.
- Young people have a variety of skills and abilities which may suit various roles within your club, therefore bridging any skills gaps you may have and increasing capacity.
- Young people may have more free time in which they would prefer to fill with something more productive.
- By championing young people and valuing their contribution, your club's reputation can be enhanced in the local community and wider sports network.
- By involving young volunteers, clubs can apply for funding to support that investment.

## BENEFITS FOR THE WIDER COMMUNITY

- By engaging local young people as volunteers, the community will benefit from a number of positive role models living and working in the area
- If volunteers become qualified and increase a project's capacity this can lead to more positive activities being offered for young people to take part in.
- A club's legacy is often determined by the efforts of volunteers – they inspire a new generation of members and coaches.
- By involving young people who are representative of a variety of cultures and backgrounds, community cohesion can be encouraged.
- An increase in the number of young people volunteering and therefore participating can provide positive activities that may contribute to a reduction crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Young people taking up volunteering will often come into contact with adults and the elderly, increasing multi-generational respect and cooperation.



## MOTIVATIONS FOR VOLUNTEERING

A continuous programme of research conducted with StreetGames Young Volunteers, their mentors and project staff over the last eight years; in which respondents were asked to share what they get out of volunteering; has provided great insight in to the motivations for volunteering. Some of the most common reasons are:

**SUPPORT** **Happy** **Rewarding** **Residential**  
**NEW THINGS** **New friends** **Enjoyment**  
**Friends** **Opportunities** **Team Work**  
**Fun things** **SENSE** **Gain** **Feel Good**  
**Qualifications** **Employment** **Lot** **Sports** **Community**  
**FUTURE** **Meet People** **PLACE** **Chance** **Fulfilled**  
**GIVING** **Job** **New Experiences** **Self Satisfaction**  
**Develop Skills** **Life** **Social** **Young Advisors**

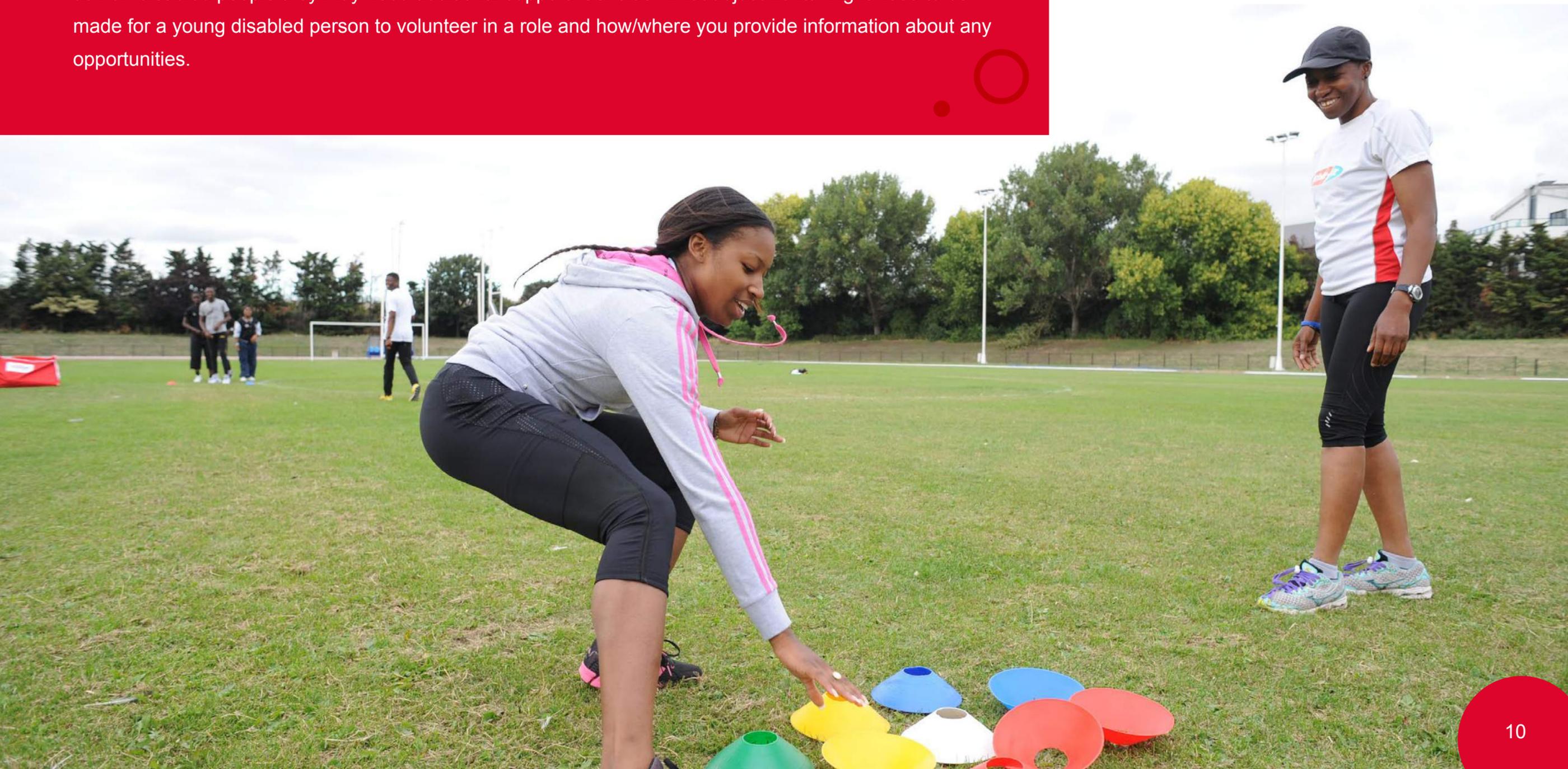
When developing volunteering opportunities for young people, it is important to recognise and consider these motivations to enable the programme design to meet some of these needs, whilst also applying a level of flexibility that accommodates and recognizes each volunteer and their individual motivations for volunteering.

It is also vital that you acknowledge the different motivations for girls in comparison to boys. Whilst some girls are as equally keen as boys to take up traditional leadership roles, others may need more encouragement and alternative support to engage them in a participant to volunteer pathway. The role of peer mentoring, informal volunteering ('helping out') and friendship groups are vital for motivating women & girls who don't associate with traditional leadership.

Also remember that whilst young disabled people's motivations for volunteering are likely to be the same as non-disabled people they may need additional support. Consider what adjustments might need to be made for a young disabled person to volunteer in a role and how/where you provide information about any opportunities.

*“The motivation for me being involved as a volunteer, is the enjoyment of allowing others to experience athletics”*

**(Liam, England Athletics Youth Panel Member)**



# THE FABS MODEL

The principles of engaging and retaining young people in volunteering can be summarised through the StreetGames FABS model.

The FABS model proposes that there are four overlapping areas of need for volunteers – Fun, Altruism, Belonging and Self-Development (FABS). development of volunteering opportunities for people of all ages.

## FUN

Enjoyment pure and simple, smiles and laughter, feeling good in one's skin, mirroring other people's enjoyment, (feeling good in doing good, extending and challenging yourself).

## ALTRUISM

Giving/paying back to the community, doing good, feeling good in doing good, feeling valued by the community, (helping and being helped).

## BELONGING

Being a member of a group, team, club or family (of your own volition, not through any external compulsion or peer pressure); being affiliated to, allied to, associated with this team; increasing friendship networks; feeling valued by the community, having a place in the community, having people around you whom you can trust and who will support you when times turn tough, (helping and being helped).

## SELF-DEVELOPMENT

Maturing and developing through life as an individual, increasing your stock of life-skills – confidence, resilience, communication including listening, empathy and fellow-feeling, (helping and being helped), growth in aspirations and ambitions and self-improvement, extending and challenging yourself, increasing technical skills e.g. sports, leadership, gaining experience and qualifications – for themselves and for helping opening up careers.

These four principles should not operate in isolation, but should be used to shape the development and sustainability of volunteering. This was built predominantly on the learning from working with young volunteers aged 14 – 25, but it has been successfully applies by many local organisations in the development of volunteering opportunities for people of all ages.



A key question to ask when developing a youth volunteering offer is: **Are the volunteering opportunities on offer to young people FABs?**

See the diagram below for understanding the four principles in action:

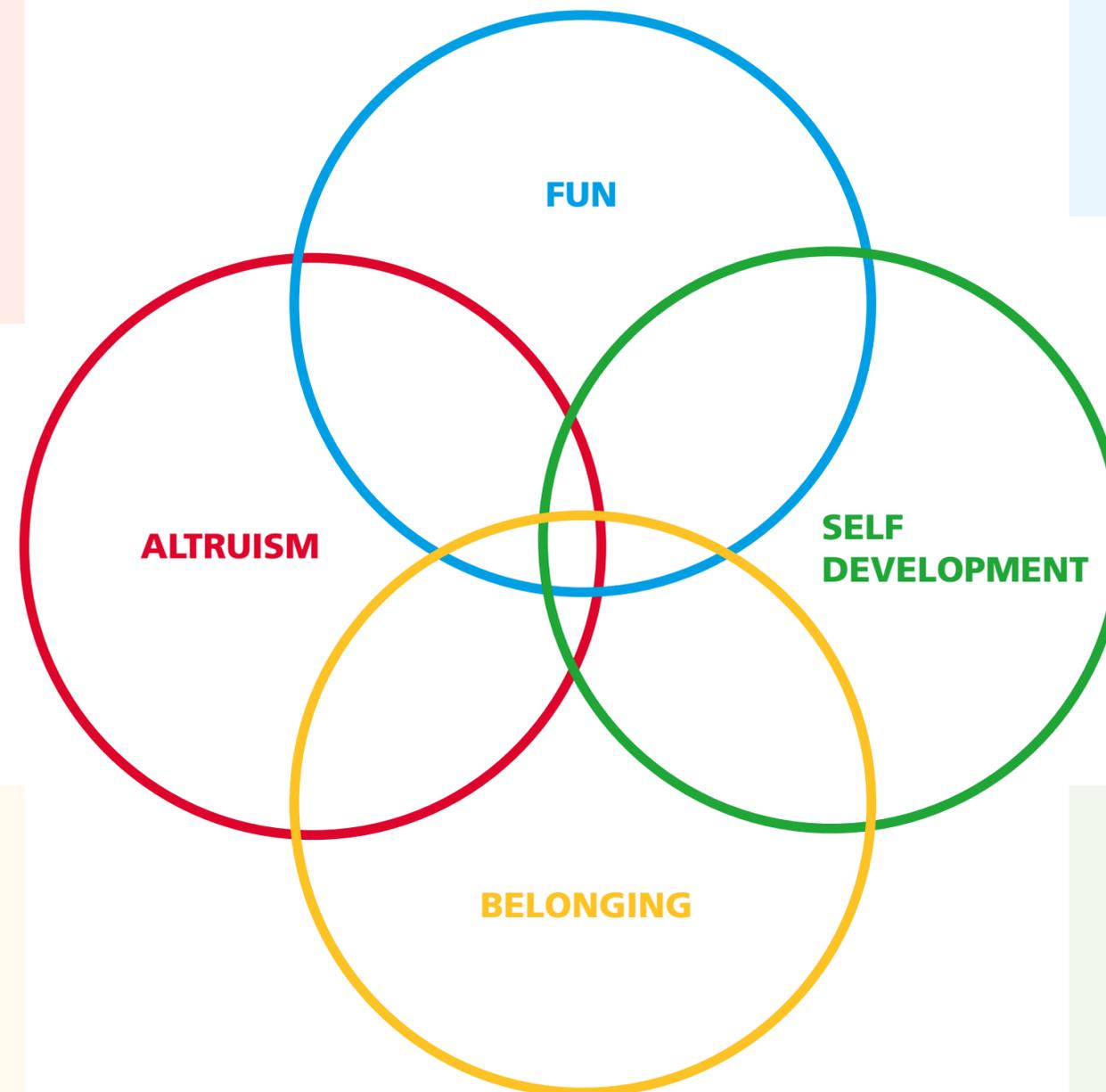
## FABS IN ACTION

### Relates to:

- Motivations for taking part
- Longer term personal development
- Sense of belonging
- Building sense of achievement and impact

### Relates to:

- Role development
- Recruitment of volunteers
- Sustainability of volunteering
- Length of engagement



### Relates to:

- Recruitment of volunteers
- Social aspect of volunteering
- Community cohesion
- Sustainability of volunteering
- Length of engagement
- Wellbeing

### Relates to:

- Recruitment of volunteers
- Sustainability of volunteering
- Length of engagement
- Increasing volunteering responsibility
- Increasing volunteering impact



# **SECTION 2:** Recruiting Young Volunteers



Recruiting young people to give up their time can sometimes feel like an impossible task. Sometimes this comes from a place of trust and respect in that young people 'couldn't possibly do that'; other times it comes from thinking the role is too mundane and young people 'would never want to do that'. Both of these can be overcome with the right level of planning and using the FABS principles.

Taking the time to consider the following elements will support the recruitment process of young people:

*“Involving young volunteers has helped us to clear our year 5 waiting list as an additional 2 coaching groups can run mid-week.”*

(Caroline, Game Changers Project Coordinator, Bracknell AC)

What volunteer roles are available at your club?

What support and training is required for young people to fulfil those roles?

What are the benefits to the young person?

What are the benefits to the club?

Are they FABS?



## TOP TIPS FOR RECRUITING YOUNG VOLUNTEERS

- **Develop a Participant to Volunteer Pathway**

Using current or ex-club members as volunteers is the most effective way to recruit volunteers. These young people already have a connection with your club as they enjoy the sport, they feel a sense of belonging as a member of the club, they are able to see the benefit of volunteering that has helped them over the years and are more likely to want to give back and they should have the opportunity to develop their skills through training and opportunities provided. All of these meet the FABS principles.

- **Recognise and plan for informal**

Non-traditional forms of volunteering will encourage younger participants to understand the importance of 'helping out' and prepare them for future volunteering opportunities. This is also important for women & girls who may not perceive the traditional format of volunteering and leadership as something they can engage with. This informal type of volunteering doesn't necessarily have to be named as such an opportunity, it can be done in peer groups but should still link in with the FABS principles.

- **Word of mouth is a powerful recruitment resource**

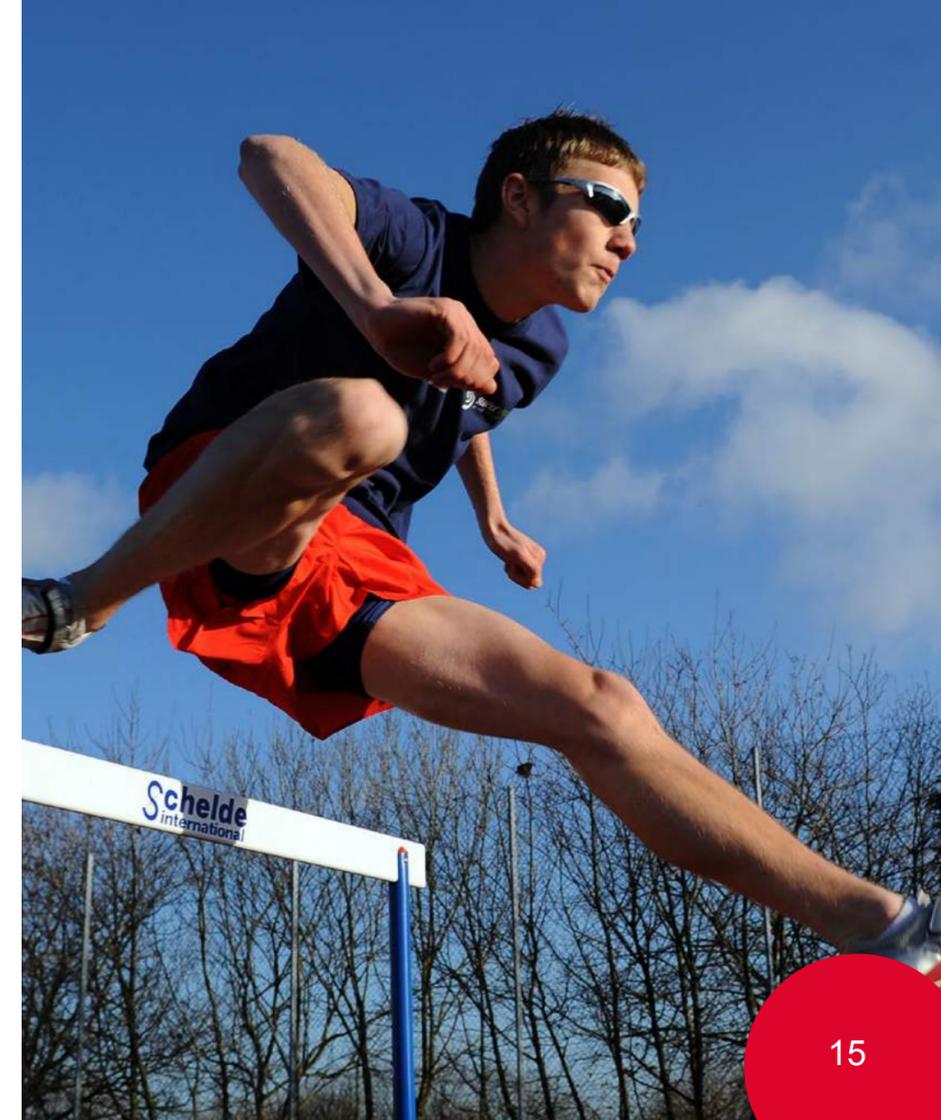
Use current coaches, volunteers and young people in your club to speak to family and friends. Young people especially like to volunteer with their peers, so consider ways in which young people get to volunteer with their friends to build their confidence and commitment to the club. If you have young people already involved in volunteering at your club, let them take information to their friends and get them involved in recruiting new young volunteers.

- **Use a variety of mediums**

Social media, emails, website, Internet. We live in a world of technology; young people are more likely to use the Internet and social media than read a poster on a notice board or advert in the local paper.

- **Activities are a way to entice young people**

Holding open days, events or 'come and try' sessions as a way to let young people have a taster of your club and to see what goes on.





- **Use partners to help with recruitment**

If you have links with external partners (schools, colleges, universities, leisure centres, Sports Development Units) ask them to support you in promoting your opportunities or referring young people.

- **Consider the timing of your recruitment**

Young people between the ages of 16-25 have many commitments that will determine their level of commitment to volunteering. Considering peak times of the year in your recruitment plan, such as exam periods (recruitment of young volunteers will not be successful between May & June), will help your club recruit young people.

- **Be clear but flexible about the roles and responsibilities you require young peoples support with**

Your club may require a volunteer to fulfil a marshalling role at an events which may be an unattractive offer for a young person. Consider building this element of the role in to a wider event volunteering offer that includes an opportunity to try other activities and roles as this will keep them engaged. Also consider the power of friendship groups, doing something with friends makes things more attractive and fun.

- **Be upfront about rewards and expectations**

Let young people know what they can expect from your club if they volunteer. Good examples include: assigning a mentor and/or buddy that will support them in their role, inform them of any formal or informal qualifications and awards they may gain, give them tangible rewards (kit, out of pocket expenses, vouchers/discounts for spectator events, etc).

- Provide a named person for people to contact for more information and include both an email address and phone number

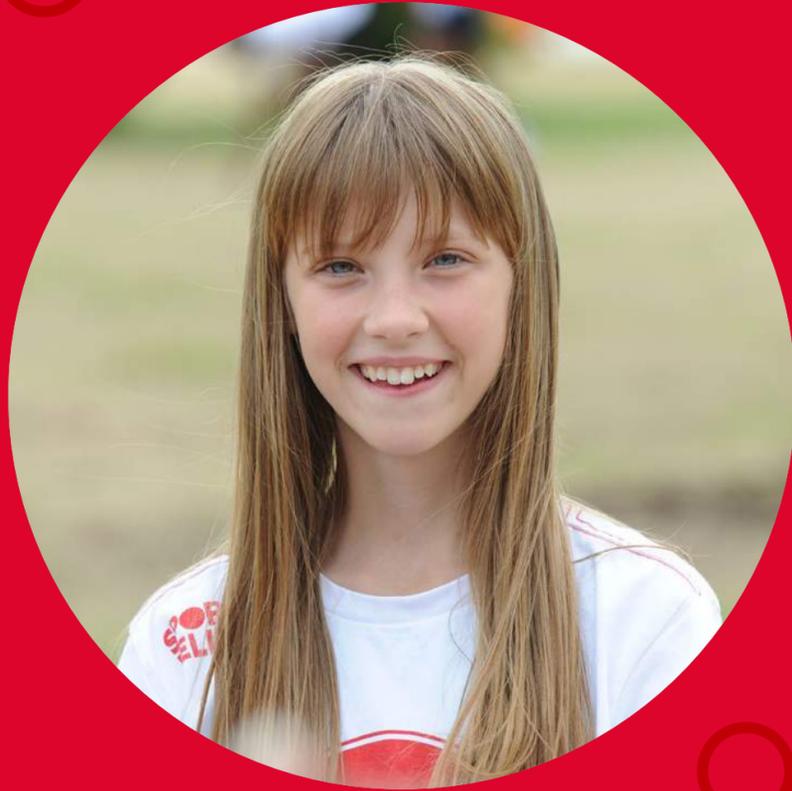
- Make the recruitment process as easy and simple as possible and outline what it involves.

- Make sure you ask young people if they require any additional support within the role, for example because of a disability.



# SECTION 3:

## Supporting Young Volunteers



Once you have recruited young volunteers it is essential that you have a support package in place to guide them through their volunteering opportunity.

**There are a number of important factors to include when supporting young people:**

- A comprehensive welcome & induction to volunteering.
- A personal mentor who will offer regular 1:1 support, advice & guidance in their role.
- A training package (informal & formal) that will support the personal development of young volunteers.
- A reward & recognition offer to ensure young people feel appreciated and their contribution is recognized.
- Opportunities for young people to influence and be involved in decision making.

## A WELCOME & INDUCTION PACKAGE

Getting your volunteers off to a good start can be as simple as providing them with a welcome and induction pack. This doesn't need to be too complicated but is effective in outlining expectations, from both the club and volunteer perspective, as well as providing them with all the relevant forms you may need them to complete.

**A basic induction pack should include:**

- A welcome letter
- A role description
- Key contact details
- Outline of training and development opportunities
- Explanation of how they can claim out of pocket expenses
- Other benefits and opportunities for them to engage with

This is also the perfect opportunity to introduce them to their mentor and have a social/fun activity for them to engage in to start to build the relationship.



## A TRAINING OFFER

Having a training and development offer in place links in with the 'Self-Development' element of FABS and will allow young volunteers to see how the club will support them in gaining new skills and qualifications that will enable them to build a good CV.

Training can be informal and low cost or formal and incur a cost. Having both in place as part of your commitment to young volunteers enables them to see the value your club places on them as individuals and also on the development of the club itself.

### Informal training could include:

- Shadowing/buddying a more experienced volunteer/coach.
- Allowing them to experience a variety of roles.
- Hosting youth development sessions delivered by club members.
- Allowing young volunteers to present ideas or be involved with board meetings.

### Formal training could include:

- Generic qualifications or awards – First Aid, Safeguarding, etc.
- Sports specific qualifications – coaching Level 1 or 2 etc.

Having a blended training package demonstrates the club's financial and personal commitment to developing young volunteers.

## PROVIDING A MENTOR

Ensuring each volunteer has a mentor is key to their long term engagement with your club.

Experienced coaches, officials and leaders are vital to act as a mentors and role models providing ongoing practical and emotional support for volunteers at times when they need it. Mentoring can be done in a number of ways, both formally (assigned 1:1 times, with protected time to discuss how things are going and development opportunities) & informally (adhoc conversations before/during/after sessions or activities as and when an issue or concern has arisen). A mixture of both is considered the most effective way to build a trusted and respected relationship.

### This kind of support to volunteers provides:

- Someone to listen to them.
- Someone to help identify strengths and developments.
- Someone to help them think about the consequence of their decisions and actions.
- Opportunities to new experiences and to provide praise and recognition of their achievements.
- Opportunities for mentors to show care, trust and belief in the volunteer.
- An environment to 'feel safe' whilst developing skills and trying new experiences without the fear of failure.
- Direct one to one support to offer guidance and advice where needed.
- Make sure that mentors have an understanding of how to support young disabled volunteers. This will mainly involve speaking to the young volunteer directly to see if there is any additional support they require.

## REWARD & RECOGNITION

Reward and recognition is often mistaken for a training offer and can therefore be overlooked in terms of its importance and role in supporting young volunteers on their volunteering journey. Training and qualifications can and should form part of your reward and recognition package, but that is just one element.

There are two differences that are important to acknowledge – Rewards are tangible and usually associated with a financial cost (qualifications, kit, tickets to events, etc); Recognitions are intangible and usually have no or low financial costs (saying thank you, providing references, award nominations etc).

The table below highlights just some of the rewards and recognitions you can include as part of your clubs offer to young volunteers:

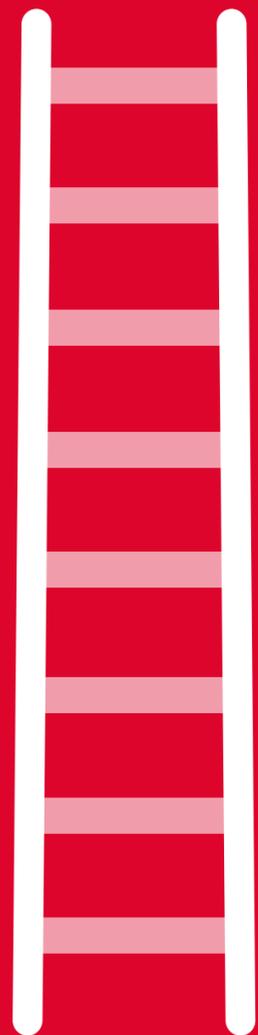


<b>Certificates</b>	<b>References</b>	<b>Attending National Events and Youth Conferences</b>	<b>Young Advisors</b>
<b>Kit - Hoodies &amp; T-shirts</b>	<b>Youth Volunteering group activities</b>	<b>Full Time Volunteer Placements</b>	<b>Paid Casual Work</b>
<b>Remembering to Say Thank You</b>	<b>Award Nominations</b>	<b>Freebies (Football, Pens, Pencils, Key rings)</b>	<b>Media/Publicity</b>
<b>NGB Qualifications</b>	<b>Youth Led Funding</b>	<b>External Training Courses</b>	<b>Representative role</b>

## YOUTH SOCIAL ACTION

Youth social action is about empowering young people to be actively involved in the design and development of opportunities at their club. Providing opportunities for young people to influence the youth offer is a great way to demonstrate trust and respect for young people's views and ability to make creative, wise choices that will engage other young people.

This is, however, not designed to be an offer for all young volunteers but should be an available opportunity for those who have demonstrated an ability and desire to influence and lead. These opportunities can also vary, which will appeal to different young people and skill sets. The ladder of participation below, demonstrates the level of engagement and youth ownership in decision making. At the bottom (number 8) young volunteers are not empowered at all and at top (number 1) young volunteers are taking full ownership in social action; designing and delivering opportunities/activities for their peers.

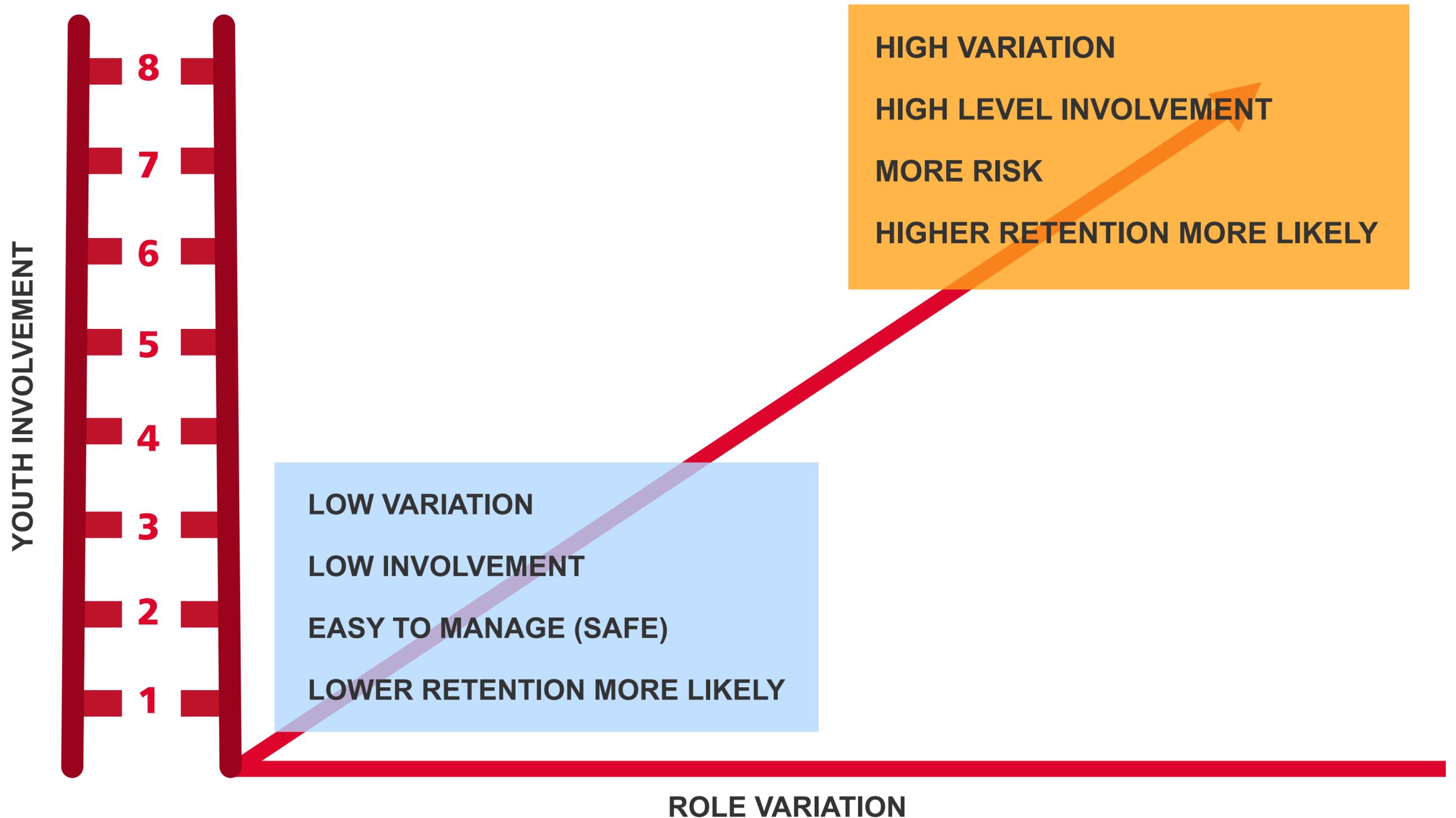


1. A new idea is generated by volunteers for what should take place, where, when, etc. Final decisions are made with the advice of staff, but very much left up to the young volunteers.
2. Volunteers lead the planning and design of the activity, but can consult staff on their ideas. Staff are involved to ensure that risk/errors are minimized
3. A new local sports session is to be created and the volunteers are involved in every step of planning the activities and sports that should take place, where it should happen, etc.
4. A new local sport session is to be created and volunteers are consulted by staff members on what should take place. This is still led by the coach.
5. An activity session is led by a club coach. The session is supported by young volunteers, but they are directed by the club coach.
6. Club Coaches ask young people what sports they would like to participate in or try. These are ignored and others put on.
7. Volunteers are asked to perform/attend an event for partner organisation/funders as it gives a good look for the event.
8. Volunteers at the club are given ideas/things to say from club staff members and used to pass off as the idea of the Volunteers.

It is important to recognise where your club currently sits on this ladder of participation and where your club would like to be. Not all organisations have the ability to deliver a social action offer akin to number 1. If your club is starting at number 5, it is realistic to strive for moving towards steps 3 or 2.

## THE RISK AND REWARD OF SOCIAL ACTION

When considering the opportunities for volunteers within your club and the levels of participation or social action that could take place there are 'risks' to consider, but with those risks, bring 'rewards' to the community and your organisation.





# **SECTION 4:** Retaining Young Volunteers

*Retention is an important part of volunteering programmes and should be considered at the outset of designing your young volunteer offer. Adopting the FABS principles is paramount to retention – if your opportunities are Fun, provide an opportunity for Altruism, create a sense of Belonging and offer Self-Development opportunities then young volunteers will want to continue volunteering.*

At the outset it is important to find out why young volunteers want to get involved, then the right rewards and recognition can be sought for each individual. Every young person has different needs and identifying these can improve retention of young volunteers. Discovering the 'why volunteering' for each young volunteer can be built in to the welcome and induction process; this way an agreed and outlined development pathway can be set along with expectations on each part.

## TOP TIPS FOR RETENTION

**Reward young people in a variety of ways to ensure they feel valued:**

- Certificates – certificates to say thank you for their hard work always work well with volunteers, particularly those who may not be in education or lack qualifications. These can be inserted into a volunteer personal folder to demonstrate what they have achieved.
- Rewards – give the young volunteers some non-financial rewards for their work, e.g. include them in trips out with the club, thank-you letters for special occasions or free access to other elements of your club. Be creative and think about what you could offer volunteers - this could include taking advantage of your NGB links to create a 'Give and Go' programme which allows young volunteers to access tickets to watch top class sport.
- Expenses – offer expenses to cover the volunteers for their out of pocket expenses. Covering travel expenses for young people who volunteer at events can be important, particularly for young people who may be socially excluded for financial reasons. If your volunteers are helping out at an all-day event, try to provide them with some refreshments such as sandwiches, fruit and drinks to keep them going.





## OFFER PROGRESSION ROUTES AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- This can be as simple as giving the volunteer more responsibility in what they do with your club or at events.
- Progression can be formalised by looking at ways for young volunteers to access training courses, either for particular roles in your organisation such as coaching, officiating or for general roles like first aid or marshalling.
- Involve the young people in decision making within your club. This can be a great way of developing new ideas for your club too.

Retention isn't just about keeping volunteers forever; it also includes the consideration and acknowledgement of exit routes. It has to be expected that young people and volunteers will move on from your club to new things. Volunteering is an excellent way to build skills and gain work experience. It is to your advantage if you are aware of exit routes for young volunteers so that you can provide a full experience for the young volunteers.

### These exit routes can include:

- **Education**  
Knowledge of your local schools/colleges/universities and courses which might be applicable can be useful for the young volunteers. If you contact the admissions units of these establishments they will be able to help you.
- **Employment**  
Any knowledge of local employment for the volunteer to apply for, either with your own club or within the local area would be very attractive to the young volunteer.
- **Training**  
An idea of other local training available for young volunteers will also help them broaden their knowledge base and further opportunities.



# SECTION 5:

## Key learning points

- Young people like to volunteer and get a lot out of it. They also improve a club's sporting offer and attractiveness to other young people.
- The base for developing your club offer for volunteers should be built using the FABS principles – are opportunities FABS for people?
- Local leadership is an excellent progression from more traditional volunteering. Furthermore, the young volunteers like to take ownership of social action projects that deliver change for the benefit of their peers.
- Volunteers increase their skills and capacities and enjoy themselves.
- Feeling part of a group of volunteers is very important and so are the symbols of belonging – like club kit and other rewards that promote their belonging to the club.
- Many women and girls are reluctant to step apart from their peers and become a volunteer. New investment programmes should be mindful of this gender difference while not underestimating the number of girls who want to lead in the mixed environment.
- Volunteers value being stretched and will offer-up imaginative solutions to issues or concerns that may be present within the club, such as recruiting volunteers.
- Young disabled people have the same motivations as non-disabled people to volunteer. Make sure they are supported appropriately, and adjustments made for them to take part. If you require any additional information on a specific impairment and the support they might need please email [disability@englandathletics.org](mailto:disability@englandathletics.org).



## ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

StreetGames also provides training workshops across a range of different topic areas. If you are interested in learning more about growing young people's leadership, volunteering and social action 'know-how' you may be interested in the following workshops:

- Volunteer Manager Training
- Mentoring Volunteers
- Youth Action with Volunteers





- 🏠 [www.streetgames.org](http://www.streetgames.org)
- 🐦 [@StreetGames](https://twitter.com/StreetGames)
- 📘 [/StreetGamesSportsCharity](https://www.facebook.com/StreetGamesSportsCharity)

## STREETGAMES

Thank you to StreetGames for developing the content for the England Athletics Youth Volunteering Resource.

The StreetGames charity was set up by half a dozen organisers of neighbourhood sports projects. In 2005 they came together to make sport more widely available for disadvantaged young people and to maximize the power of sport to change young lives and to change disadvantaged communities.

Two years after deciding to set up the charity, StreetGames secured funding from the Sport England Lottery and officially launched in January 2007.

StreetGames promotes Doorstep Sport – that is sport in disadvantaged communities that takes place at the right time, at the right place, in the right style and at the right price. Through sport the StreetGames Network changes lives, changes sport and changes communities.



- 🏠 [www.spiritof2012.org.uk](http://www.spiritof2012.org.uk)
- 🐦 [@Spiritof2012](https://twitter.com/Spiritof2012)
- 📘 [/spiritof2012](https://www.facebook.com/spiritof2012)

## SPIRIT OF 2012

Spirit of 2012 is a funding charity, established by the Big Lottery Fund with a £47m endowment from the National Lottery. Spirit was founded to continue and recreate the spirit of pride, positivity and social connectedness that people experienced during the London 2012 Games.

Spirit funds projects that bring people together – to learn something new, do something different, or experience something unique – and that leave behind a social legacy of increased wellbeing at an individual level, as well as happier and more connected communities.

### Opportunities funded by Spirit of 2012 include (but are not limited to):

- A number of engagement events, including the annual Team Spirit Conference, the first of which took place on Saturday 3rd February 2018
- Our Youth Volunteering programme, Game Changers
- Team Spirit Champions

# ENGAGING YOUNG VOLUNTEERS – BRACKNELL ATHLETICS CLUB



## Background

Bracknell Athletics Club applied for funding through the Game Changers Programme to support 10 young people to attend their Coaching Assistants Course and following on from this, regularly help with the delivery of the weekly coaching sessions at the club. The club have been extremely successful in recruiting, supporting and retaining these young people and the impact on both the club and the young people involved, has been huge.

## Recruitment

The 10 Young Volunteers were recruited from inside the club, all of whom had demonstrated a passion and motivation for developing their skills as coaches and wanting to give something back to their club.

## Supporting the Young Volunteers

- **A comprehensive welcome and induction session** – The club organised an induction and team building session for the Young Volunteers which provided information on the project, expectations from both the Young People and Club & an opportunity to plan for future seasons/events the young volunteers would be involved in.

- **Mentors** – The club used experienced coaches to act as mentors for the Young Volunteers, which has helped support and develop the Young Volunteers throughout the project

*“Andy my coach, mentors me and we discuss my sessions and it is nice to hear things that I did well and areas that I could improve”*

(Joel, Young Volunteer, Bracknell AC)

- **Giving the Young People Responsibility** – The young volunteers taking part in the project had the opportunity to plan and deliver Year 3 & 4 Taster sessions to children on the club’s waiting list throughout the school holidays. This responsibility gave the Young Volunteers a goal and something to aim for, as well as being a very rewarding experience for them.

*“I have really enjoyed being able to get children involved in something that I am passionate about and it has been really rewarding to see them progress.”* (Natasha, Young Volunteer Bracknell AC)

## Retaining the Young Volunteers

- **Social Activities** – The club organised regular social activities for the young people, from a team building session at the start of the project through to pizza nights as part of their planning sessions!
- **Communication** – The club set up a whatsapp group for the young volunteers, so they could regularly keep in touch and have any questions or worries they might have throughout the project, answered.
- **Reward and Recognition** – The club have provided regular CPD opportunities for the young volunteers throughout the programme, such as attendance at national workshops, conferences and events and are now looking to enhance their experiences and development further through first aid courses and local coach development workshops. They are also being offered the opportunity to become mentors for future young people they look to involve in coaching courses.

## Impact of Engaging Young Volunteers

The impact the project has had on the club is huge, as it has enabled Bracknell to clear their year 5 waiting list as an additional 2 coaching groups can run mid-week. The project has also had a huge impact on the young people involved.

*“Not only has the club benefited hugely but so have the Game Changers. I can see they have grown in confidence, they are proud to be coaches and give back to their club.”* (Caroline, Game Changers Coordinator, Bracknell AC)

# GAME CHANGER



# ENGLAND ATHLETICS YOUTH PANEL

The England Athletics Youth Panel consists of a group of 20 young people aged between 16 – 25, from across the Country who are passionate about influencing the development of Athletics and Running for other young people.

England Athletics (EA) are committed to providing a platform for young people to be involved in ensuring that the development of our sport best meets their needs. The Youth Panel works in partnership with EA to represent young people currently active in sport and to feedback and input into projects, services and products to ensure they are relevant to the needs of young people of all backgrounds, roles and experience. The overall Mission of the Youth Panel is to support the development of athletics and running with young people, for young people.

This will be delivered through the following 3 core objectives;

1. By championing the role of young people in athletics and running
2. By inputting their views into the development and delivery of our sport
3. By growing the skills and experience of young people involved in our sport

The Youth Panel can help with providing support and guidance to clubs who might be looking to recruit more young volunteers, as well as helping to mentor and support your current young volunteers. To get in touch with the Youth Panel please email [youthpanel@englandathletics.org](mailto:youthpanel@englandathletics.org) or follow the panel on twitter [@EAYouthPanel](https://twitter.com/EAYouthPanel).



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