

English Volleyball Association

Volunteer Strategy 2003 – 2008

CONTENTS

1. **Introduction**
2. **Background**
3. **Structure of the Strategy**
4. **The English Volleyball Association Volunteer Strategy**
5. **Action Plan**

1. Introduction

In recent years volunteering and the support of volunteers has risen on everyone's agenda and this work has been particularly supported by government policy. The Government's Plan for Sport (2001) recognises the importance of volunteers and has backed these words with a substantial amount of funding. The aim is to recruit 50,000 more volunteers into sport by 2004.

The project developed to help deliver some of these targets is called 'Step Into Sport' and it is through this initiative that a selected number of National Governing Bodies of Sport have been assisted to write and implement Volunteers Strategies. The English Volleyball Association has always recognised the importance of supporting its volunteers and welcomes the further development offered through the Step into Sport Programme.

In the first instance, the English Volleyball Association is being supported to write a National Strategy for Volunteering and it is then hoped that further funding can be secured to begin the implementation of this strategy.

2. Background

As a medium sized National Governing Body the English Volleyball Association is acutely aware of the central role of volunteers in the delivery of its services.

There had been over the past few years a perceived lack of volunteers at all levels within the organisation and within its member clubs. It was also noted that many volunteers were apparently doing more than one volunteering role and giving up much more of their time. This was especially difficult at a time when the demands of employment were rising.

In order to establish the situation three actions were taken.

A volunteer member of the EVA was seconded from his paid post for a few months to research the situation. At the same time a group of volunteers from a variety of levels within the Association was brought together for a day long brainstorming session.

Subsequently a volunteer questionnaire was produced and circulated by use of the EVA web-site from which it could be downloaded. 32 responses were received to this questionnaire. The results are attached and some commentary is made below.

The sport of Volleyball - Organised Volleyball is run in England by the English Volleyball Association. The core staff of the EVA comprises 4 full-time staff and 3 part-time staff. On occasion extra temporary or part-time assistance is contracted.

All other persons involved in Volleyball are volunteers (unpaid professionals).

The National Executive Board and Management Committee comprise 14 elected persons. There are 7 Commissions of the EVA representing various aspects of the game - e.g. referees, coaches, beach, competitions, etc, each with about 8 members on average. There are 10 regions of the EVA, each with their own committee, 42 areas (mainly county based) and 222 clubs. In addition 65 universities 15 colleges and 245 schools/juniors affiliate to the EVA. At the end of the 2002-2003 there were 288

registered referees and over 800 coaches. These officials are involved in a voluntary capacity, not receiving any remuneration and often, in the case of coaches, not even receiving expenses.

Thus volunteers operate at all levels from grass roots up to National level and there is a dearth throughout the spectrum. Volunteers involved at club level, are often in area or regional roles and many cannot or do not relinquish their club volunteer duties.

Volunteers tend to get recruited from within the sport, from ex-players, from parents and spouses. With the exception of some advertisements for coaches there is no mechanism in place for the active recruitment of volunteers.

At National level there are job descriptions or remits and person specifications for the most senior posts. At other levels there is doubt as to whether these exist in a majority of clubs and regions. The training and induction aspects of volunteering also need to be considered within the strategy.

The rewards for volunteering in Volleyball tend to be limited. The questionnaire responses indicated a need for reward, both as expenses to cover costs and by recognition. Referees are amongst those who get expenses most readily - but these come from the teams involved - even at National League level. National Officers are paid expenses as are persons invited to National Conferences, etc. Rewards can take other forms - tickets to the Cup Finals or to the infrequent home international matches, discounted affiliation where a club has assisted in organising an event. The resources of the Association, however, preclude the payment of generous expenses - even mileage is only at 15 pence per mile.

In these preliminary investigations there was a feeling of a lack of succession planning and mentoring. Encouragement and retention issues were also addressed. A source of potential problem was with individual volunteers doing too much rather than not enough. If the workload was not shared it was felt that this would discourage others from filling these positions once they became vacant. Replacement also was beset with problems - the difficulty of removing a volunteer from office, the 'sacking' of a volunteer, and then search for a suitable replacement. Players were tending to extend their playing careers and this also

contributed to the smaller pool of potential volunteers from which to call upon. Legislation and bureaucracy were also identified as elements which discouraged persons from volunteering.

Though there was a shortage of volunteers identified in all areas - at National level there had been a long-term vacancy on the Board, and unconfirmed postholders filling gaps on the Management Committee. Not all Regional and Area Associations were as active as they could or should be. Not all clubs were as well organised as some would wish. This all contributed to a lack of development work to extend the scope of volleyball. Not only are there geographical variations in the need for volunteers but also varying demands at different levels in the Association. The focus group meeting was firmly of the opinion that the initial concentration should be on the development of volunteers at grass roots, club and development levels. This would allow for existing volunteers who wished to contribute at regional and national levels an opportunity to relinquish their 'lower' level roles. Another consideration was that the grass roots roles could be made attractive to potential volunteers of all ages and all abilities - retirement from active playing should not be a pre-condition for volunteering and that volunteering should start earlier! This issue is being tackled by the Referees Commission with their Junior referees award and by the Coaches Commission through the CSLA and the bolt-on CSLA which is in preparation.

VOLUNTEERING QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

A volunteering questionnaire was drawn up and posted on the EVA web-site. Responses came from 32 persons at many levels within Volleyball.

The questionnaire was in two sections - one seeking quantitative data, the other qualitative data.

Analysis of the quantitative data showed that most volunteers (who responded to the questionnaire) were male - 84%, middle-aged 81% between 35 and 59 years old, in full-time employment, in IT, managerial or highly skilled employment.

They had been long serving 53% having been volunteers for over 15 years.

Only 22% were members of the VIP programme. Was this a reflection of not being aware of the VIP programme, or of a feeling that they felt they were already competent in their role, or that they had enough knowledge base from their full-time employment.

Between 32 persons over 153 positions were covered - an average of 5 each. The emphasis was higher at club level than at regional level and above

Having responded to an electronic questionnaire most, naturally, communicated through that medium to their clubs and others.

As regards the qualitative answers there were recurring themes which came out. The most common responses are listed below.

How and/or why did you first become involved in volunteering?

- Asked to help, 'volunteered' to help
- Give something back
- Club would have folded, job needed to be done
- Promote the sport to youngsters, to coach
- Learn new skills
- Seek enjoyment

What do you enjoy about being a volunteer?

- Helping others, youngsters, mutual help
- Social mixing
- Improvement of skills - involvement
- Enjoyment, enthusiasm, team work

What problems, if any, do you encounter in volunteering?

- Time
- Money
- Conflicts
- Ingratitude
- Lack of knowledge

What resources/support would help you in your volunteering?

- Money - funds
- Time off
- Clarity of objectives
- Better structures at local - regional level
- Better communication - from EVA - via the internet
- More other volunteers
- Transport

What do you think discourages people from volunteering at your club?

- Time required
- Being overloaded if offering to volunteer
- Lack of reward or response or support
- Lack of confidence

- Bureaucracy
- Direction lacking
- Commitment lacking
- Obstruction from existing committee/personnel
- People only want to play

What you think your club could do to recruit, develop and retain more volunteers?

- Reward and recognition
- Ask them and tell them what is involved - clear guidelines - protocols and job descriptions
- Subsidise the volunteers - offer coaching and refereeing courses
- Better marketing
- More support from EVA National Office
- Develop the social aspect of the club

What tangible rewards should be given for volunteering?

- Money - expenses - cheaper membership - discounts - free registration - cheaper access to facilities
- Recognition - thanks but not necessarily certificates

Additional comments: Is the nature of volleyball clubs operating in hired facilities with no permanent home an issue for establishing the social side and recruiting volunteers?

The Way Forward

This report will be circulated to the volunteer group for comment and then be translated into a strategy for the Association to adopt to achieve the aim of achieving the plan of the EVA 2002-2006. Among the published Business Management targets of the Association is - 'to recruit and retain the professional staff and volunteers necessary for the delivery of the programmes. To provide a programme of staff and volunteer training and continuing professional development'

The English Volleyball Association was invited to be part of the programme which is supporting Governing Bodies develop Volunteer Strategies in March 2002 and has been working towards this objective actively since July 2002.

A consultant was allocated to the English Volleyball Association by Sport England and from that point a small Working Group was formed to address the issues of volunteering in Volleyball (inclusive of all of its disciplines).

Although the English Volleyball Association already has a support and education system for coaches, and this will continue to be guided and directed by the relevant committees, it is acknowledged that a majority of coaches are volunteers, often take more than one role and should have some recognition and support through this strategy.

3. Structure of the Strategy

In order to achieve the vision it is important to have a well structured strategy which is easily translated into an Action Plan.

The Volunteer Strategy will follow the format below:

Aims

Objectives

Action Plan

The Action Plan will show how the EVA seeks to translate the aims and objectives in to practical solutions.

4. The English Volleyball Association Volunteer Strategy

The strategy will follow the broad headings of Recruitment, Retention, Recognition and Rewards.

The Aims

1. To ensure that volunteering is addressed at every level of the EVA from National through to Clubs.
2. To increase the number of volunteers involved in Volleyball.
3. To improve and retain volunteers within the sport.
4. To recognise the work done by volunteers.
5. To ensure a suitable reward structure is in position.
6. To monitor and evaluate the Strategy.

The following table shows the Aims and broad areas of the Objectives:

EVA VOLUNTEER STRATEGY 2003 - 2008

Volunteer Structures	Recruitment	Retention	Recognition & Reward	Young People	Research, Monitoring & Evaluation
-----------------------------	--------------------	------------------	---------------------------------	---------------------	--



**P
A
R
T
N
E
R
S
H
I
P
S**

<p>To ensure that volunteer structures are in place at all levels in Volleyball</p> <p><i>Club Development; County & Regional Structures</i></p>	<p>To increase the quality & quantity of volunteers involved within Volleyball</p> <p><i>Tutor Training; Mentoring Module; Welcome Pack; Intro course – judges; Child Protection</i></p>	<p>To improve & retain the volunteers in Volleyball</p> <p><i>Volunteer Pathways; Buddying; Mentoring; Deployment; Communication</i></p>	<p>To recognise and reward the volunteers in Volleyball</p> <p><i>Rewards for each strand of volunteers; Marketing; Communication</i></p>	<p>To increase the number of young people involved in volunteering</p> <p><i>Step into Sport; Child Protection; Tracking Young People</i></p>	<p>To research further issues in volunteering and to monitor & evaluate the strategy</p> <p><i>Further Research on volunteer statistics; Tracking System</i></p>
---	---	---	--	--	---

**I
N
C
L
U
S
I
O
N**

Sport England	Clubs	Volunteers	National Board	Professional Staff	Facilities
----------------------	--------------	-------------------	-----------------------	---------------------------	-------------------

5. The Action Plan

The following Action Plan shows how the EVA intends to support its Volunteer Strategy

AIM 1 To ensure that volunteering is addressed at every level of the EVA from National through to Clubs.

Objectives	Actions	Targets	Time	Lead Responsibility	Partners
1.1 To approve the National Strategy and seek the means to implement the Actions.	1. To submit the Strategy to the National Board.	Strategy Approved	September 2003	Chief Executive	Working Group
	2. To submit an application to Sport England for support funding.	Application Submitted Funding Secured	By December 2003 By February 2004	Consultant Chief Executive	Working Group
1.2 To provide supporting information on Developing Volunteering.	1. To develop information packages for developing volunteers at all levels (using Sport England Running Sport and VIP).	Various Information Packs sent out to Clubs etc. All Club Committee members aware of VIP	By May 2004	National Volunteer Coordinator (NVC)	Sport England, NCVO
			By May 2004	NVC	Sport England
	2. To provide training on the development of Volunteers.	A programme of Volunteer Development Workshops completed	By July 2004 then a bi - annual programme	NVC	RTU's
1.3 To support and encourage Clubs to achieve Club Mark	1. To devise an example Club Structure.	Structure approved by Board	By July 2004	NVC	Sport England, CCPR
	2. To send out to all Clubs.	Information with all Clubs	By Sept 2004	NVC	

1.4 To provide Regional Committee development structures.	1. To devise an example Regional Committee Structure and roles.	Structure and Roles agreed	By April 2004	NVC	Board, Sport England
	2. All Regional Committees aware of Structure and roles.	Training and communication complete	By June 2004	NVC	Chief Executive, Sport England, RTU's
1.5 To develop the Volunteer Coordinator Positions.	1. To encourage all EVA Clubs to create a Volunteer Coordinator post on their main committee.	75 % of all Clubs with a Volunteer Coordinator	By end 2006	NVC	Sport England, Local Authorities
	2. To provide on going support to all Volunteer Coordinators.	Regular training provided	On going programme from April 2004	NVC	Sport England, RTU's, Local Authorities
		Regular Communication from HO maintained	On going from April 2004	NVC	
	3. To ensure Volunteer Coordinator posts include responsibility for mentoring young volunteers.	Posts including mentoring role for Young Volunteers	from April 2004	NVC	
		All post holders checked Training for all posts provided	from April 2004 From August 2004	NVC NVC	YST, BST, RTU's

AIM 2 To increase the number of volunteers involved in Volleyball.

Objectives	Actions	Targets	Time	Lead Responsibility	Partners
2.1 To support the Clubs in the development of their structures.	1. To provide training on packages developed in 1.2.1 and 1.3.1	At least 75% of EVA clubs to have received training	By end 2006	NVC	Sport England
	2. To provide example job descriptions.	Job Descriptions provided	By May 2004	NVC	Sport England
	3. To provide various examples of information e.g. constitutions, Child Protection policies etc.	Information provided	By May 2004 and when reviewed	NVC	Sport England, CCPR
2.2 To provide support information for the recruitment of Volunteers.	1. To provide information and promotional material useful in the recruitment of Volunteers.	Information developed/ collated Information with the Volunteers	From June 2004 then on going	NVC	Sport England
			From June 2004 then on going	NVC	
2.3 To ensure Clubs have the relevant legal and child protection policies in place.	1. To communicate the importance of Child Protection Policies to the Clubs. 2. To continually update the material and procedures.	Regular information and updates sent out Child Protection Policies reviewed	From April 2004 then on going	EVA	
			Annually from 2004	EVA	
2.4 To develop a Young Volunteer Programme.	1. To ensure all clubs have a young volunteer mentor (this could be the	All Clubs to have a young volunteer mentor	By end 2008	NVC	YST, BST

	volunteer coordinator).				
	2. To devise a programme for young volunteers to become involved in.	Programme designed Young Vol. Mentors trained to deliver	By July 2004	NVC	YST, BST
	3. To develop a leadership award suitable for young people.	Award designed All Young Volunteers achieving the award	By May 2004 By end 2008	NVC NVC	YST, BST Clubs

AIM 3 To improve and retain volunteers within the sport.

Objectives	Actions	Targets	Time	Lead Responsibility	Partners
3.1 To develop an education package to support the development of all volunteers.	1. To develop a coordinated Education Package using available resources and other work from other parts of this Action Plan.	National Volunteer Education Package available	By end 2004	NVC	Sport England, YST. BST. NCVO
3.2 To ensure support structures are in place for volunteers.	1. To employ a National Volunteer Coordinator.	NVC employed Support Programmes in place	From April - Dec 2004 By end 2004	Chief Executive NVC	Sport England, DCMS

<p>3.3 To encourage succession planning at all levels of the organisation.</p>	<p>1. As part of the information produced to support volunteers, training and support material on succession planning produced</p> <p>2. To ensure the National Board have a succession planning policy.</p>	<p>More Volunteers retained in the Sport Succession Planning material produced Training available</p> <p>National Board publish its policy on succession planning</p>	<p>By 2008</p> <p>By end 2004</p> <p>By July 2005</p> <p>By end 2004</p> <p>By end 2005</p>	<p>Development Director</p> <p>NVC</p> <p>NVC</p> <p>Development Director</p> <p>NVC</p>	<p>Sport England, NCVO</p> <p>Sport England</p> <p>Sport England</p> <p>Sport England</p>
<p>3.4 To provide clear pathways for volunteers to take as part of their personal development.</p>	<p>1. To produce clear development pathways for volunteers.</p>	<p>Volunteers planning their route on the volunteer pathway</p>	<p>By end 2005</p>	<p>NVC</p>	<p>Sport England</p>

AIM 4 To recognise the work done by volunteers.

Objectives	Actions	Targets	Time	Lead Responsibility	Partners
4.1 To provide promotional material to both recognise volunteers directly but also to help clubs etc do the same.	1. To research the best material to recognise Volunteers.	Research completed	By June 2004	NVC	Sport England, the Clubs, NCVO, CCPR
	2. To provide promotional material for Clubs and Regions to use and adapt for their needs.	Promotional Material Available	By Oct 2004	NVC	
4.2 To provide information on how to promote Volunteers with the media.	1. To develop and produce guidance on how to increase the profile of volunteers in the media.	Guidance available	By Nov 2004	NVC	Sport England, NCVO
4.3 To launch the Volunteer Management Scheme.	1. To organise a conference which is used as both a training opportunity and a promotional tool.	Conference held Volunteer Programme Launched	May/June 2004	NVC	Chief Executive, NISA Board, Sport England
	2. To encourage EVA Clubs to attend.	At least 50% of EVA Clubs to have attended.			

AIM 5 To ensure a suitable reward structure is in position.

Objectives	Actions	Targets	Time	Lead Responsibility	Partners
5.1 To develop a National Award scheme which recognises volunteers of all ages.	1. To develop a National Award Scheme which recognises all level of volunteers	Scheme developed	By April 2005	NVC	Sport England
	2. To launch and run the National Award Scheme.	National Awards presented	By July 2005	NVC	Board
5.2 To encourage Clubs to develop reward scheme.	1. To design a Club Scheme template.	Club Scheme template designed.	By end 2004	NVC	Sport England
	2. Clubs to include Volunteer Awards as part of their activities	Clubs including Volunteers as part of their awards.	By end 2005	NVC	The Clubs
5.3 To become involved in the VIP Awards.	1. To make all Clubs and other groups aware of the VIP Awards.	All Clubs and other groups aware of the VIP Awards	By end 2004	NVC	Sport England
	2. To have Volleyball making submissions to the Award Scheme.	At least one Group/Club from each Region making a submission to the Awards	By end 2008	NVC	

AIM 6 To monitor and evaluate the Strategy.

Objectives	Actions	Targets	Time	Lead Responsibility	Partners
6.1 To monitor the effectiveness of the National Volunteer Strategy.	1. To review the progression of the Strategy.	Review completed	Sept 2004 then annually	NVC	Sport England, the Clubs, YST, BST
6.2 To evaluate the National Volunteer Strategy.	1. To evaluate the finding of the review.	Evaluation completed	Oct 2004 then annually	NVC	
	2. To produce an annual report.	Report written	Oct 2004 then annually for AGM	NVC	
	3. To submit the report to the Board.	Report submitted and accepted	Nov 2004 then annually	Chief Executive	
6.3 To amend the National Volunteer Strategy.	1. To amend the Plan if necessary.	Plan amended Changes agreed by funding partners and Board	Dec 2004 then annually	NVC	Sport England