



## 1 Introduction to Volunteering

Volunteers have an important role to enable many groups to operate. This Guidance Sheet offers some ideas on how to recruit and support new volunteers.

### What's the current challenge?

There are some groups that are struggling to operate due to the lack of volunteers and committee members. Their committee may have been made up of parents with children who use the service and these children will likely have moved on to nursery or school over the past year. Other volunteers may have lost interest or have too much on, and are no longer in the same frame of mind to continue. These are all valid reasons for people to move on, but it can leave a group in a difficult situation.

### It's a perfect time to recruit new volunteers.

Some people may have been indoors without much activity for months and are looking for a new opportunity. Others may have taken the opportunity to retire and due to restrictions, not yet committed to any other projects, activities or volunteering. Whilst there are some people who might have had life changing experiences, which has made them reflect and want to change where they focus their time or retrain. Young people are possibly one of the hardest hit, with finishing school / university and trying to find a job, so there may be many young people looking for opportunities to gain work experience.

### Recruiting new volunteers

- **Social media** is a good place to look for volunteers and new committee members. Many local areas have dedicated pages to share what's happening within their community and don't mind requests for help being posted.
- You will have a **Volunteer Centre** within a broad locality of your group. Research them online to see where you will be able to post your opportunity.
- With **new children, come new volunteers!** Spend some time marketing your group, again on social media, but also in some traditional ways such as posters in the doctors surgery or local shops. There are always new parents looking for groups to join. More information about marketing your group can be found in issue 3 of this series.
- List the skills they will develop in any advert, make the role attractive and show how rewarding it will be.

### What's in it for the volunteers?

Not only do volunteers help to support your groups to be able to run but there is a huge benefit to volunteering. Volunteering can provide a stepping stone to give people confidence and gain new skills. This could provide a potential opportunity for the volunteer to also decide if this was the type of job role they would enjoy doing / being paid to do.

Being a volunteer when having been out of work for a while or a change in career is great. This allows the individual to gain experience in a safe environment and use those experiences to refer to when interviewing for a new role in future.

### Top Tips

- Have robust policies in place for recruiting volunteers and to clearly outline their roles and responsibilities.
- Arrange an informal chat to learn what the volunteer is interested in and the skills they could bring.
- Provide a welcome pack on their arrival. However, try to remember that there may be those who could find reading and completing forms difficult.
- Produce a good induction plan including telling them what your group is out to achieve (outcomes, support group for parents, play for children, etc.). Also be clear from the outset what is expected of them and what responsibilities they will have.
- Management of your volunteer is important, you need someone who will take responsibility for overseeing their work and any necessary support.
- Support your new volunteer, considering their needs, recognize their abilities and encourage their efforts.
- Offer basic training for the role, such as equal opportunities and diversity, health and safety and child protection awareness. You will need to regularly review and assess the training needs of your volunteers, and a good way to achieve this is to set up a regular support and feedback meeting.



## Volunteer Committee Members

There is a differences between volunteers to help out with your group on a daily basis and being a volunteer committee or Board member. This section summarises a few key thoughts to consider around this topic along with some useful links.

### What are Charity Trustees?

As quoted from OSCR "Charity Trustees are the people in overall control and management of a charity. They may be called directors, management committee members or committee members, but the law considers them to be 'charity trustees'. They are responsible for the charity's governance and strategy, and for making sure that the charity is administered effectively. They must account for its activities and outcomes."

### Charity Trustee Duties

There are legal duties and responsibilities under the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) 2005 Act. Within this act the general duties are the following:

- You must act in the interests of the charity.
  - You must operate in a manner consistent with the charity's purpose.
  - You must act with care and diligence.
  - You must manage conflict of interest between the charity and any person or organization who appoints charity trustees.
- You must comply with the 2005 Act including
  - Charity details on the Scottish Charity Register.
  - Reporting to OSCA when making changes to your charity.
  - Financial records and reporting.
  - Fundraising.
  - Providing information to the public.

### Recruiting Board Members

There are many ways to recruit Board members that are similar to the ways you would recruit a volunteer (as summarised on page 1). It is important to remember the level of experience and skill set that you require from your new Board member when recruiting. If you are a membership organization, consider advertising through your current membership network. This is a big benefit as your members will already be passionate about your work and understand the ethos of your group.

### General Support

There are many things to consider when recruiting for a Board member as it's a key role within the organisation. We have included some useful links within the 'Further Information' section that go into more detail about the roles of a Board member and good practice for new Board members.

Smart Play Network can also provide you with support on a one to one basis on Governance in general including recruitment and retention of Board Members.

## Further Information

### General Volunteering

<https://scvo.scot/support/running-your-organisation/staff-volunteers/volunteers>

<https://scvo.scot/support/milo/training/volunteer-registrations>

<https://volunteeringmatters.org.uk/category/scotland/>

### Volunteer Committee Information

<https://www.oscr.org.uk/managing-a-charity/trustee-duties/>

<https://www.oscr.org.uk/guidance-and-forms/guidance-and-good-practice-for-charity-trustees/>

<https://scvo.scot/support/running-your-organisation/governance/roles-responsibilities>

## Smart Play Network Members Support

Member you have access to telephone and email support. For more information about the topics covered in this guidance sheet, or any other queries you may have about your project, please contact us using: 0131 554 2620 or [admin@smartplaynetwork.org](mailto:admin@smartplaynetwork.org)