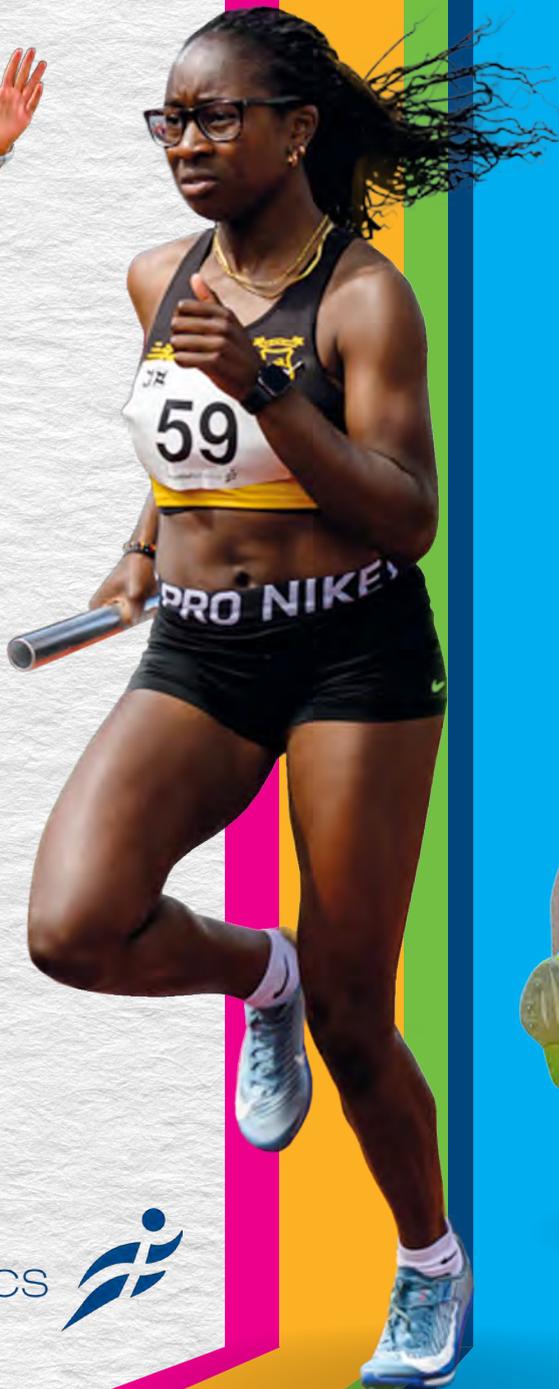


Commonwealth Games Legacy



# Support for Athletics Clubs



scottishathletics



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## 1. Introduction and Background

With the Commonwealth Games returning to Scotland in 2026 athletics clubs in Scotland once again has an unprecedented opportunity to benefit.

It is important as a sport we create a lasting legacy. Together as a sport we can build a legacy which engages people of all ages to promote our sport to build stronger clubs, recruit volunteers, and to improve participation levels.

Before the London Olympics in 2012 and the Commonwealth Games 2014 we asked clubs 'Are you ready?' The excitement, energy and buzz those events created were remarkable. In many cases athletics clubs benefited and managed to increase membership – both volunteers and athletes – through some fantastic work by dedicated volunteers and coaches. A number of athletics clubs reported that they had an additional 100 – 150 contacts looking to take part in athletics around those events.

Over the last ten years athletics club membership has increased significantly, by over 20%, and the member clubs have stepped up remarkably to strengthen their operations and infrastructure.

However, we also understand there is major ongoing work required to continue to strengthen clubs, volunteering and coaching structures – the key building blocks – in ensuring clubs can recruit more athletes and provide a quality experience.

**scottishathletics** aim in producing this resource is to help support clubs with the potential effects of the 2026 Commonwealth Games. It highlights the key success pillars for clubs, provides a range of ideas on how they could be implemented and highlights some real-life case studies from Scottish Clubs.

**scottishathletics** believe that Legacy doesn't just happen at one event or on one day however this is something that we require to work on seven days a week and 52 weeks of the year through our clubs.

Much of the resource will not just support clubs for the short term, however having these strong pillars will aim to support clubs become strong clubs for many years to come.

## 2. Key Success Pillars for Clubs

Work by **scottishathletics** with clubs has demonstrated that the most important focus areas for a club to achieve success are: Club Structure; Volunteer Recruitment and Retention; Coaching Structure and Pathway; Age and Stage Athlete Development; Athlete Recruitment as well as fundraising and facilities.

The order of these pillars of success is important if clubs are to be fit for purpose and able to face the challenges ahead, for example increased athlete recruitment will not succeed if the club does not have an adequate coaching structure; the coaching structure will not survive without the recruitment and retention of suitability qualified and licensed individuals to coach and so on. The pillars below identify some of the key focus areas for clubs if they too are to achieve the success they have identified in the future. We must be clear here – this is not a short-term fix and success will only be achieved over the longer term if blocks are in place as identified below.

**For Key Pillars of Success, what success look like, see appendix one.**

| Key Pillars of Success  |   |   |  |  |  |  |
|---|---|---|--|--|--|--|
| Committee/ Board  | Volunteers  | Officials   | Coaching   | Athletes   | Communication  | Community  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Right People</li> <li>• Planning</li> <li>• Capacity</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment</li> <li>• Retention</li> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Capacity building</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competition</li> <li>• Provision and Organisation</li> <li>• Recruitment</li> <li>• Retention and rewards</li> <li>• Qualifications and development</li> <li>• Innovative competition opportunities</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coaching Structures</li> <li>• Recruitment</li> <li>• Qualifications &amp; development</li> <li>• Athlete retention</li> <li>• Athlete improvement</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased participation</li> <li>• Retention</li> <li>• Improved performances</li> <li>• More athletes competing</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective internal communication</li> <li>• Effective external communication</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School – club links</li> <li>• Local community engagement</li> <li>• Community hubs</li> <li>• Further education/ Higher education links</li> </ul> |

### 2.1 Coaches, Officials and Volunteers – Recruitment

Recruiting coaches, officials and volunteers is the starting point for increasing your club’s capacity, improving structures and creating the foundations for a successful club.

**Some questions you may consider before starting on recruitment of coaches, officials and volunteers:**

- Do you know how many coaches, officials and volunteers you need to effectively meet the demand?
- Do you know what roles that you require to fill?
- Do you know your parents and what they can offer?

### Ideas and methods you should consider:

- **Targeting your coaches, officials and volunteers** – It is important to be specific and highlight the specific role (s) you require to be fulfilled, the requirements of the role, the time commitment and what benefits they may receive for undertaking the role. It is important to consider who you are targeting with, and the messaging, wording and pictures should be tailored to the specific audience for maximum effect.
- **Safer recruitment** - Taking time to recruit the right people helps create a positive and secure club environment. Always follow safe recruitment practices, including clear role descriptions and appropriate checks including PVG/Self Declarations, to ensure everyone shares the club's values and commitment to keeping sport safe. Further information can be found at this [link](#).
- **Induction process to recruit parents** – A useful idea can be to use an induction evening for junior members to target parents as volunteers. When junior members want to join the club invite them and their parents to attend an induction evening. At the evening provide information about the club as you normally would and on the volunteer structure within the club. This will show parents the reliance on volunteers and how they may be able to help along with the support they will receive, highlighting the enjoyment that will result from volunteering. Remember this may be the parent's first impression of the club – make it a good one! scottishathletics have a club support section on their [website](#) and there is support available from the National Club Managers.
- Also, you could do a similar parents' evening for existing parents within the club. This would be a great opportunity to reinforce key messages from the club and an opportunity again to highlight the importance of volunteering.
- **Volunteer co-coordinator** – Have a specific role just for this – recruiting volunteers. As the volunteer coordinator, you're responsible for recruiting club volunteers, arranging training for them and making sure they're engaged enough to be retained by the club. It's one of the most important roles in any club. Once this position is filled the club will have much better management and structure of volunteers leading into the retain, rewards and results strands of the initiative. Volunteer role descriptions can be found in the scottishathletics club support section on the [website](#).
- **Advertising coach, officials and volunteer roles** – Coach, officials and Volunteer positions should be advertised and promoted when vacant and filled. To help promote the volunteer structure within your club, use the role profile resource to send to members and put on the noticeboard. When looking to fill a position, advertise the role in various ways such as word of mouth, flyers, club website, a range of social media platforms, emails etc. As well as advertising for specific positions, always make it clear you are looking for new volunteers.
- **Publicity and communications** – Communicating with your local community is vital to successful recruitment. This should be done through your website, various social media platforms etc. Advertising for volunteers could also be done through the local paper to promote that your club and it's volunteer opportunities.
- **Older junior athletes within the club** – this group are already involved and interested in athletics/the club. They could be encouraged to help directly before their own training or on a different evening/day to help add additional new activity and sessions. It would not only be excellent for the club however also great experience and confidence building for these young leaders.
- **Wider community** – Athletics clubs should reflect the people in their local area. That means thinking about who is involved and making sure underrepresented groups—like different ethnicities, ages, abilities, and backgrounds—feel welcome. Clubs can do this by reaching out to their communities, removing barriers, and creating an inclusive, friendly environment for everyone.

**These are some other contact groups that you may like to contact:**

- **Higher and further education links** – Colleges and Universities can be a great source for volunteers. Their skills set vary from coaching skills to students studying business or management.
- **Establishing links with local businesses** – There are many places of work and other organisations that can be targeted for volunteers locally.
- **Semi-Retired and retired people** – There are various local groups and businesses that will operate support schemes for the skilled generation who are about to retire.
- **Volunteer centres** – There are a number of different volunteer centres across the country which can be of use to clubs. Most local volunteer centers can be found online or contact your local council who will be able to steer you.

Recruitment is only the first step and clubs should carefully consider retention and rewarding volunteers.

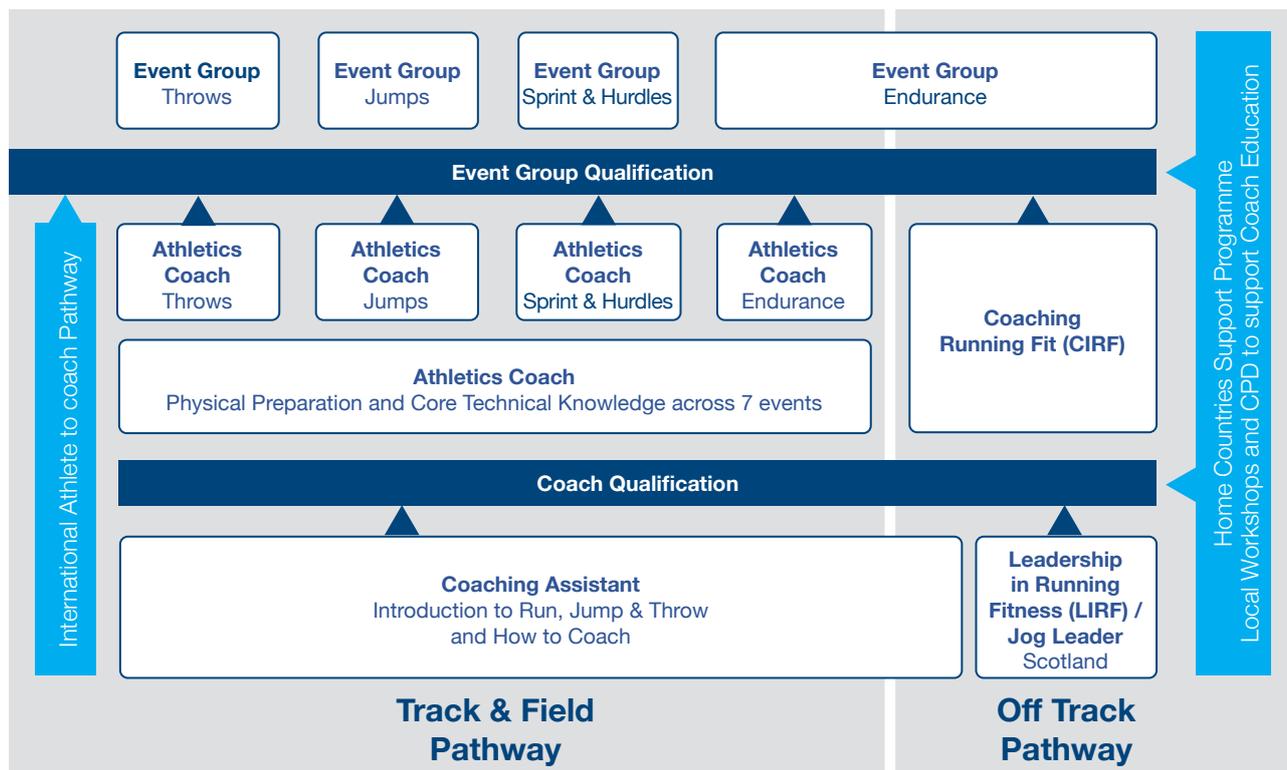
## 2.2 Coaching Structure: How to create an effective coaching structure

Key to success in delivering the club's vision are coaches. A vital tool in ensuring your club is successful is to create an athlete-focused coaching structure that provides a seamless pathway for coaches and athletes alike.

**Ideas and methods you should consider:**

- **Have you got a coach coordinator, lead or head coach.** – The Coach Coordinator, Lead or Head Coach will lead in the creation of a vibrant coaching structure to assist athletes to improve their performances as well as arranging mentors to support coaches to progress to the level they aspire to. This role would work alongside the Volunteer Coordinator to help identify gaps and recruit new coaches to the club.
- **The coaching structure should reflect the athlete development pathway** – create a structure in a way that reflects best practice within the athlete development pathway. Your structure should reflect the needs of the athletes and participants in your club.
- **A visible coaching structure and athlete pathway** – illustrate your club's coaching structure and athlete pathway to the athletes and members of the club. In many cases, it is also very difficult for new members to understand the athlete pathway within the club. Clubs should create a club coaching structure diagram to **illustrate the pathway for all athletes**
- **A programme of qualifications and development opportunities for coaches** – [scottishathletics](#) provides a calendar of coach education courses throughout the year, for coaches at all levels. There are also CPD opportunities including event specific Regional Development Days. Full details and further information can be found at this link: [Coaches - Scottish Athletics](#)

The table below shows the pathway for coaches through the different qualifications:



Further information can be found on each individual website page: [Qualifications](#). Additional guidance can also be found in the ‘Qualifications Defined’ document which can be found on the following page: [Important Information for Leaders and Coaches](#)

## 2.3 Officiating and Competition Pathway

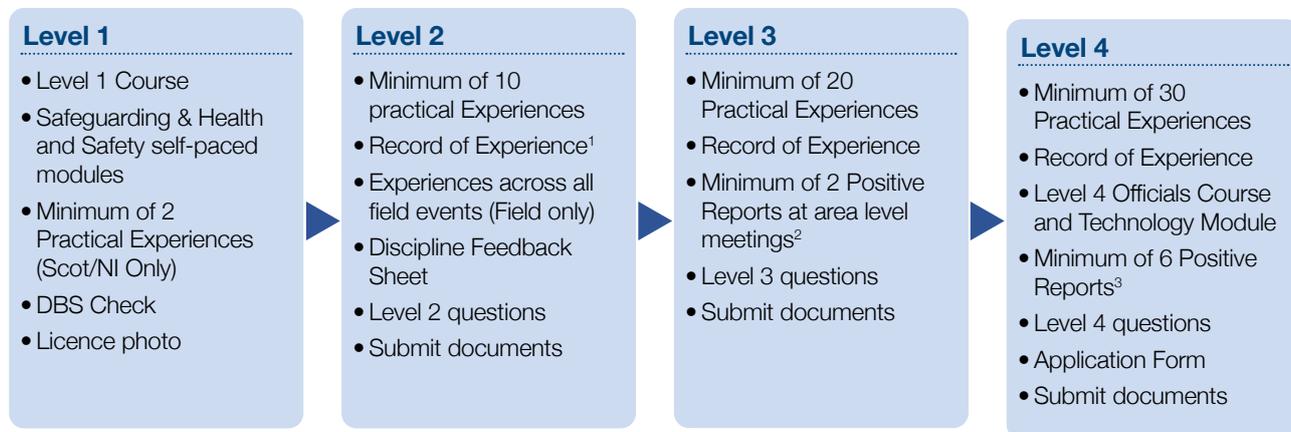
Key to a club’s success is providing quality enjoyable competition opportunities for all members at each stage of their athletics journey. Competition cannot happen without the input of skilled and qualified technical officials. Qualified Technical Officials can be supported by volunteers to deliver competition across all levels and disciplines.

**Ideas and methods you should consider to ensure athletes have access to the right competition are:**

- **A Competition Coordinator** to collate an annual fixture list with guidance on the differing formats.
- **An Officials Coordinator** to assess and administrate the needs of the club and the competitions it is involved in to ensure all relevant requirements are met.
- Do the existing leagues and competitions that the club is involved in meet the needs of the membership. Both in terms of elite / serious performers and more recreational athletes?
- Competition formats and opportunities away from leagues and Open Graded Meetings could be:
  - Regional SUPERteams – primarily for Run, Push, Jump and Throw for Under 12s, but no age limit and flexible delivery options.
  - Mob Match / parkrun takeover – informal endurance competitions for club members
  - Friday Night Compete & Eat - introductory athletics in a relaxed environment with social interaction.
  - Christmas / Easter / Summer / Winter Club Relays – no limit to the format or number of teams, but an opportunity to bring all members of the club together.

The tables below show the Officiating pathway for Track & Field and Endurance officials.

### Track & Field Official's Pathway



1. 'What did I learn' section (optional) and evidence of shadowing an event leader/chief judge/referee at a league/county meeting
2. From a level 4 Official or a level 3 Official of 2+ years experience- including 1 report as a team leader/chief/referee (except Photo-Finish and Starter) and 1 report as team member using technology (field).
3. From a level 4 Official active at national level and has been a level 4 with 2+ years experience. Must include (1) Team Member, (2) Team Member (3) Out of Area, (4) Technology report - EDM or Photo-finish, (5) Referee or Chief Report, (6) Clerk of Course

### Endurance Official's Pathway



1. 'What did I learn' section optional
2. Level 3 report (by a Level 4 Official or a Level 3 Official with 2+ years experience) OR Level 4 report (by a Level 4 Official with 2+ years experience)
3. Must include the following duties: (1) Referee/Assistant Referee (2) Start Area Coordinator/Start Director (3) Finish Area Coordinator/Finish Director (4) Clerk of Course/Course Director.

**Further information can be found at the following links**

**Competitions and Organising an Event:**

<https://www.scottishathletics.org.uk/events/organising-an-event/>

**Officials Qualifications:**

<https://www.scottishathletics.org.uk/officials/officials-qualifications/>

## 2.4 Athlete Recruitment:

### A. They might just come. After Glasgow 2014 this happened across the Country.

How ready are you for this?

- Are the building blocks above in place?
- Do you have a plan in place for the extra emails, telephone calls and enquiries from parents after the Commonwealth Games? Is your website ready to direct interested participants.
- Have you considered setting up an extra induction session for introducing parents and potential athletes to the Club. For example a Commonwealth Games Special Induction Programme two weeks after the Closing Ceremony on the 2nd August 2026.

### B. Special Promotional Event - If there are spaces for new members what about some special promotional coaching Come and Try events or low-key competition opportunities - for example:

- 100 Days countdown – 12th February 2026
- Commonwealth Day – 9th March 2026
- Opening Ceremony Festival – 23rd July 2026

**C. Don't forget the parents and guardians.** For the success of any club in Scotland we rely on volunteers. When new athletes are joining on it would be easy to forget about the parents and guardians as so much is going on. A parents information session as part of the induction programme is a very good idea to help engage them partly to provide background information on the club and also to recruit volunteers – see volunteer recruitment section.

### 2.4 Athlete recruitment tips:

- Has the club considered offering Run, Push, Jump and Throw sessions ( **Run, Jump, Throw - Scottish Athletics**) which are aimed at 5 – 12-year-olds and a good introduction to athletics? These can be delivered prior to the main club sessions which makes the transition from these sessions into the main club smoother or could be delivered in a new geographic area or on a different day.
- There are great examples of these sessions taking place in various clubs/areas across Scotland. Please speak to your National Club Manager to find out more
- **scottishathletics** have launched the Let's Go Run, Push, Jump, Throw national programme (**LET'S GO!**) which is aimed at U12's. This comes with an app and the ability to register your sessions on the Let's go website. For further information on Let's Go, email: [letsgo@scottishathletics.org.uk](mailto:letsgo@scottishathletics.org.uk)
- Both programmes are an excellent way to increase capacity without impacting on the clubs main sessions.

### Other considerations:

- Add in extra days and times for new sessions
- Work in partnership with Local Authority/Leisure Trust to deliver Run, Push, Jump Throw, creating stronger pathways into the club.
- Have you a specific role to link with Schools – School to club Rep?
- Strong links with local Active Schools Coordinators/Sports Development?

If you are looking for promotional materials, there is a section on our website with template posters aimed at a range of different participants: **Promotional Resources - Scottish Athletics**

## 3. Case Studies

A number of athletics clubs in Scotland have highlighted some excellent practice in different areas such as community spirit, building capacity, inclusion. These can be found here: [Club Case Studies - Scottish Athletics](#)

These are not exclusive, and we would be delighted to add any other case studies to our website by emailing [development@scottishathletics.org.uk](mailto:development@scottishathletics.org.uk)

## 4. Further Information:

### 4.1 scottishathletics National Development Team – Contact Information

If you are looking for further information or if you have any questions, email: [development@scottishathletics.org.uk](mailto:development@scottishathletics.org.uk) or a list of all staff contact details can be found here: [Staff - Scottish Athletics](#)

### 4.2 Useful Links and further Legacy Information:

For more information on Commonwealth Games 2026 and joining in - [Glasgow 2026 Commonwealth Games](#)



## Appendix One

### Key Success Pillars for Athletics Clubs

| Pillar               | Focus Areas   | What Success Looks Like   |
|----------------------|---|---|
| <b>Committee</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Right People</li> <li>• Planning</li> <li>• Capacity</li> <li>• Communication</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear club vision, mission, and values understood by all.</li> <li>• Active, skilled committee with defined roles and succession plans.</li> <li>• Annual development plan with measurable goals.</li> <li>• Strong financial and governance systems in place.</li> <li>• Transparent, two-way communication across the club.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Volunteers</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment</li> <li>• Retention</li> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Capacity Building</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer roles clearly defined and promoted.</li> <li>• Positive volunteer culture with recognition and support.</li> <li>• Induction and training provided for all roles.</li> <li>• Good retention levels and succession planning in key positions.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Officials</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competition Provision and Organisation</li> <li>• Recruitment</li> <li>• Retention and rewards</li> <li>• Qualifications and development</li> </ul>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Officiating roles and requirements clearly defined and promoted.</li> <li>• Positive officiating culture with recognition, support and rewards</li> <li>• Opportunities for continuous professional development</li> <li>• Support and organise competitions at home and away</li> <li>• Innovative competition opportunities</li> </ul> |
| <b>Coaching</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coaching Structures</li> <li>• Recruitment</li> <li>• Qualifications and Development</li> <li>• Athlete Retention</li> <li>• Athlete Improvement</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balanced coaching team covering all age groups and abilities.</li> <li>• Ongoing coach development and mentoring.</li> <li>• Clear athlete pathways from beginner to performance level.</li> <li>• Evidence of athlete progression and enjoyment.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Athletes</b>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased Participation</li> <li>• Retention</li> <li>• Improved Performances</li> <li>• More athletes competing</li> </ul>                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growth in membership and participation across ages and abilities.</li> <li>• High retention rates.</li> <li>• Clear pathway through the club.</li> <li>• Inclusive environment supporting health, wellbeing, and enjoyment.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Communication</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective Internal Communication</li> <li>• Effective External Communication</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular, open communication between committee, coaches, officials, volunteers, athletes, and parents.</li> <li>• Active use of digital tools (email, social media, website) to share updates and successes.</li> <li>• Consistent branding and positive club image in the community.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Community</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School-Club Links</li> <li>• Local Community Engagement</li> <li>• Community Hubs</li> <li>• Further education/</li> <li>• Higher education links</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong partnerships with local schools, colleges, and universities.</li> <li>• Club visible at community events and initiatives.</li> <li>• Collaboration with local authorities and community hubs.</li> <li>• Clear pathways into club membership from community sessions.</li> </ul>  |



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