



# CLUB DEVELOPMENT HANDBOOK

## Introduction

### Background

In Holyoke, Massachusetts, in 1895, a YMCA physical education director invented the game known today as volleyball. William G. Morgan originated the game to provide recreation and relaxation for businessmen. The game Morgan developed in the Holyoke gymnasium was called *Mintonette*. He borrowed the net from tennis, but decided to raise it 1.98 m (6ft. 6ins) above the floor, just above the average man's head. He asked A.G. Spalding to make the first ball. During a demonstration game, it was remarked that because the looked to be volleying the ball back and forth over the net, perhaps the game should be called *volleyball*. Morgan accepted the suggestion, and on July 7, 1896, at Springfield College, the first game of volleyball was played.

The game began to spread world wide reaching Canada in 1890, and England in 1918 when it was taught in the London Y.M.C.A. In 1922 Czechoslovakian Volleyball Federation became the first of its type, soon to be followed by the Bulgarians and the Soviets. During the period between the two world wars, many countries were playing and enjoying Volleyball, but there were no international rules, and no international organisation to provide unity and direction to the game, In 1947 14 countries in a congress in Paris formed the F.I.V.B., which set out to:

- Provide publicity for Volleyball in all countries.
- Create a set of unified rules.
- Organise International championships.
- Include Volleyball in the Olympic games.

In 1955 the Amateur Volleyball Association of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was formed. In 1968 it split up into 4 separate associations. In the early 1960s Irish troops were sent to the Congo on a peace-keeping mission with the United Nations. There they discovered volleyball as it was played by the troops of other countries. As early as 1945 the game was listed in the Army School of Physical Culture Handbook but was never played as no one knew how it was played. On returning to Ireland the soldiers who had played the game in the Congo continued to play and an Army Championships was set up. When the first National Championships were held they were dominated initially by the Army teams. In February 1968 the Volleyball Association of Ireland was formed.

Since 1964 Volleyball has been an Olympic sport, and massive growth has been witnessed world-wide. Now there are 218 affiliated National Federations, and there are over 33 million card-holding athletes as well as over 980 million other active volleyball players in the world.

There has been a notable increase in recent years in the number of people playing indoor sports, and Ireland currently has a very strong base of players in schools Volleyball.

### VAI Membership Services & Insurance (what it entitles you to)

For a set Registration Fee, every member of the Volleyball Association will receive the following entitlements:

1. Appropriate licence to play/coach/referee etc.
2. Access to VAI amenities such as coaching library
3. Personal accident insurance
4. Members will be kept up to date with information about Volleyball in Ireland with the monthly newsletter - VolleyNews

### Strategic Plan

The VAI is currently implementing a 5 year Strategic Plan 2002-2007. The main aim of the plan is to "Increase Participation". A copy of the plan can be obtained by contacting the VAI office.

## **Club Development Handbook**

What is it and why has it been created?

The Club Development Handbook has been created - to be used as a guide for new and existing clubs so that they can be successful as a club and grow.

Why should Clubs use it?

Clubs should use this book because it demonstrates proven methods of how a good club should operate.

### **The Recommended Club Structure**

All clubs want to develop and be successful. However this is not possible if there is not a good club structure in place. When we say a good club structure in place we mean that a good committee should run the club, which ensure that the workload is spread, and that all aspects of the club are looked after. We envisage a good committee consisting of a Chairperson, a Secretary, a Treasurer, Children's Officer, a PRO, and a Fundraising Co-ordinator. The roles of each position will be explained further in the following pages.

The whole point of the above committee positions is to ensure that the workload is organised and spread around and that not everything is left up to the one individual. This situation has resulted in many clubs folding in the past. Involving as many people as possible in the running of the club i.e. delegation, spreads the workload and helps members to feel more of a part of the club. Many members may feel honoured to be asked to perform a certain role and may rise to the task.

The use of delegation means giving someone the responsibility for a specific task. The VAI have come up with some ideas to make it work for their clubs and have found these ideas, to be very successful when implemented.

#### **Delegation:**

Many clubs have folded due to everything being left to one or two key people to do. Inevitably they get fed up with the situation or feel that they cannot cope anymore and so leave the club with no one having the knowledge or desire to take over the running and organisation of the club.

This situation can be avoided by the use of delegation- this does not mean passing the buck- it means giving someone the responsibility for a specific task. Here are some easy ideas to make it work in your club:

- Make sure that your club has a full committee.
- Divide up the key roles - don't just have a secretary, have an assistant secretary, a minute secretary, fixtures secretary etc.
- People are more likely to take on jobs if the job is small and has a defined role.
- Look at the strengths of your club members and try to allocate jobs based on these criteria:
- If you have someone who works with computers, ask them if they have the skills to set up a website.
- If you have an accountant as a member, they are ideal to be or help the Treasurer.
- Limit the time that you can hold a post and stick to it! For example: the chairperson must retire after 2/3 years or allow a maximum of 5 consecutive years on the club organising committee in any/various roles.
- Make it compulsory that at least 2 posts out of 5 on a committee must change every year- this allows for a smooth transition and people don't get left with posts for long periods of time.
- Appoint shadow posts to work with the existing posts to learn the job and then take over smoothly knowing everything that needs to be done.

- Appoint short term working groups to take on specific tasks - for example the running of an annual internal club competition.
- Set up a good communication system to pass on knowledge and information to all those involved - stop the "Knowledge is Power" Syndrome where one person has all those information and will not share it leaving everyone else in the dark.
- Actively seek out new people to take on jobs for the club- if you don't ask you don't get and many people will be flattered to be asked who wouldn't have pushed themselves forward.
- Don't leave everything to one person just because they have always done it.

REMEMBER- NO ONE IS INDISPENSIBLE AND CLUBS THRIVE ON CHANGE AND NEW IDEAS.

### **Necessary Posts on Any Club Committee**

Club Chairperson:

The Chairperson is invested with the authority and power to direct the business and the conduct of the meeting. They are there to prevent meetings from becoming a free for all and to ensure that meetings follow the set agenda. The chairperson should be elected at the AGM along with the other key positions in the club.

A chairperson should possess certain attributes for he/she to be able to carry out their role. In summary, a chairperson should be elected on the basis that they possess the following attributes:

- Have strong and fair leadership skills
- Be an excellent communicator
- Be able to make important decisions
- Be able to maintain harmony
- Be very knowledgeable about the Club and structures of the VAI
- Be able to delegate fairly and effectively
- Be able to generate a good team atmosphere
- Be able to keep the debate focused
- Be unbiased and impartial
- Be able to involve all the committee in the decision making process

The main role of the Chairperson is at meetings. Prior to the meeting the chairperson should always discuss agenda items with the secretary and ensure that they are circulated before the meeting

The Chairperson must

- Ensure that the meeting starts and ends on time
- Note who wishes to speak
- Decide when discussion is brought to an end
- Try to stay impartial until their decision is sought
- Delegate further work

Don't just call meetings for the sake of it, and make sure that everyone sticks to the set agenda. The length

of time spent on each item should be calculated in advance so that everyone has time to prepare his or her thoughts.

Meetings are an essential part of any club as well-run meetings can generate a motivating team atmosphere with everyone being consulted and involved in the decision making process.

The chairperson takes charge of the discussion, makes sure that everyone has a fair chance to speak and be heard, that decisions are made and that everyone knows and understands what those decisions are.

When a chairperson is being elected, the following skills should be kept in mind:

- Strong and fair leadership skills
- Excellent Communicator
- Be able to generate a good team atmosphere
- Be able facilitate discussion and keep the debate focused
- Be able to take decisive action
- Be able to delegate tasks fairly and effectively
- Be well informed about all aspects of the club
- Be unbiased and impartial
- Be able to involve all on the committee in the decision making process
- Be able to maintain the harmony of the group even when there is disagreement

Chairpersons should also start meetings on time and indicate a finish time and stick to it. If there are items on the agenda that do not get discussed within the set time frame, place them at the start of the next meeting agenda.

**Don't call meetings just for the sake of it.** Make sure that everyone sticks to the agenda items which should be circulated in advance so that everyone has time to prepare their thoughts. If a single decision is required, notice could be sent by memo to the committee with a suggested decision and a reply by date if they object to the suggestion.

The agenda is a list of topics to be discussed which should be sent out in advance along with any information that is needed.

This agenda is followed in the order that topics are placed on the list and each issue must be resolved before moving on to the next.

A motion is a recommendation that is presented to the meeting for debate and approval.

The Proposer is the person who presents the motion and the Seconder is another person who expresses support for the motion. Some club constitutions require that motions must be seconded to be open for discussion.

Most issues can be decided by a show of hands.

A secret ballot is sometimes required on sensitive issues where members vote anonymously on paper

If a vote is tied, some clubs allow the chairperson a second vote to make the final decision

A quorum is the minimum number of members needed to make a decision- this is normally stated in a club constitution

Sometimes clubs will also have a President. The difference in these roles is that the chairperson takes an active role in the everyday activity of the club. The President has little or no involvement in the day to day

affairs and attends meetings in a neutral and uncommitted capacity. They are to be a public face for the club and sometimes chair the General Meetings.

### Secretary:

By definition the Secretary is "Elected to oversee the general day to day running of the club and all of the meetings".

The secretary has what many would consider the most important role in the Club. A good secretary is vital to the successful management of any club or association. He/she is the principal administrative officer and provides the link between the members, the committee and outside agencies such as other clubs the governing body and media.

When electing a secretary the members of the club should look for the following qualities in that person as these qualities are essential for a good secretary.

- Excellent Organisational Skills
- Reliability
- Excellent communication skills
- Can maintain confidentiality
- Be methodical and reliable
- Be able to delegate tasks
- Be enthusiastic about all the organisation activities
- Work to time-scales

The secretary is the person that will generally receive and deal with all written and oral communication from outside agencies. Therefore they need a system which can effectively deal with enquiries and correspondence. The system should include the following:

- The keeping of a diary which records the date of incoming mail and replies and general correspondence
- The creation of standard letters that can be re-used
- The keeping of notes of important conversation including telephone calls

Make notes of the letters sent including dates (In general letters and enquiries should be dealt with promptly)

The secretary has a wide range of tasks that take place before, during and after meetings. The Secretary should prepare well in advance a schedule of meetings for the year and get approval from the Committee. Give plenty of notice of the proposed meeting time and date as if enough notice is not provided then it becomes necessary to consult all members about their availability. This notice also should ask members what issues they wish to raise at the meeting, which gives the Secretary adequate time to prepare the agenda. Over a month and a half for general meetings should be more than adequate with less notice needed for smaller committee meetings.

General logistical arrangements have to be made for the meeting venue. Issues such as seating arrangements, admission to the building, and use of services such as catering, toilets, photocopying etc need to be addressed.

Final notice of the meeting should be given approx. ten days in advance. This notice should include the agenda for the meeting. The agenda may be prepared in consultation with the Chairperson and should clearly indicate what decisions need to be made. The minutes of the previous meeting should also be enclosed if they haven't been circulated already.

### **A Typical Agenda**

Apologies for absence

Minutes of last meeting

Matters arising

Report on past season Chairperson

Report on Accounts

Proposed programme for next season

Subscription of officers for next season

Any other business

Club Treasurer:

In this day and age, the keeping of accurate and transparent details of all the clubs financial transactions is very important. This is the responsibility of the Treasurer. He/she is responsible for, paying the bills, issuing receipts, preparing year end accounts, and keeping up to date records of all financial transactions. Also they must be aware of any future costs to be paid and prepare the accounts so that the club will be able to meet these costs.

A trained accountant, who is a member of your club would ideally be the one to take on the role of Treasurer. If this person however feels unable to take on that role then hopefully they would be able to provide support and advice to the Treasurer.

As in the case of the chairperson and the Secretary, the treasurer should be elected at the AGM. Members electing a treasurer should look for certain qualities, in the person to be elected.

A treasurer should be:

- Well Organised
- Confident in dealing with figures
- Very honest and trustworthy
- Take great care when handling money and che
- Keep up to date info and be able to answer any questions on the accounts
- Be able to keep accurate records.

Club members have a right to feel that their money is handled with care and the treasurer must always be seen to be scrupulously honest.

The following are some general tips that will be helpful in the managing of your clubs finances:

- Ensure that all cheques and cash received are deposited in the bank ASAP, as it can earn interest and reduce banking charges.
- Keep a record of invoices sent and note when they are paid
- Note when bills have to be paid, and when they are paid
- Statements should be obtained on a monthly basis and these should tally with the records kept by the treasurer.

When choosing a bank for your account (which some banks offer free to clubs) consider its proximity and whether it offers 24 Internet banking, telephone banking etc.

The Treasurer, Secretary and Chairperson are roles that are absolutely essential in the running of a successful club. However if a club is to develop and expand and continue to be successful in the future, then these are other roles, which have to be filled. These are Children's Officer, PRO, and Fundraising Co-ordinator.

Children's Officers: (necessary if there are children in the club):

The Club Children's Officer should be child centred in focus and should have as his/her primary aim the establishment of child centred ethos within the club. He / She is the link between the children and the adults in the club. S/he also takes responsibility for monitoring and reporting to the club management committee on how club policy impacts on children and their sports leaders.

Given the need to ensure that children are valued within all sporting contexts a Children's Officer should be appointed by all clubs, subject to appropriate selection and recruitment procedures as recommended within this code. S/he should have as his/her primary aim the establishment of a child centred ethos within the club. S/he should be introduced to the children in an appropriate forum. The Children's Officer should have the following functions.

- To promote awareness of the Code of Ethics and Good practice for children's sport in Ireland within the club and particularly among the children and their parents/guardians. This could be achieved by the production of information leaflets, the establishment of children's (age group specific) notice boards and by regular information meetings for the children and their parents/guardians
- To influence policy and practice within the club in order to prioritise children's needs
- To provide an accessible resource to children through the creation forums
- To see that children know how to make concerns known to appropriate adults or agencies.

Information disclosed by a child to the children's officer or any adult within the club should be dealt with in accordance with the Department of Health and Children's Guideline "Children First" and the Department of Health and Social Services and Public Safety "Our duty to Care" as outlined at 5.13 in this code

To encourage the involvement of parents/guardians in the club activities and co-operate with parents /guardians in ensuring that each child enjoys his/her involvement in sport

- To act as an advisory resource to Sports Leaders on best practice in Children's sport
- To report regularly to the Club Management Committee
- To monitor changes in membership and follow up any unusual dropout, absenteeism or club transfers by children or Sports leaders

Children's officers do not have the responsibility of investigating or validating child protection concerns within the club and has no counselling or therapeutic role. The statutory authorities as outlined in Children first and our Duty to Care fill these roles. It is however, possible that child protection concerns will be brought to the attention of the children's officer. In this event, it is essential that the correct procedures be followed i.e. that reports are passed on immediately to the designated person with responsibility within the club for reporting to the statutory authorities. (See 5.13)

### **Fundraising co-ordinator**

In order to run a club effectively, and particularly to develop new programmes to attract members, a club needs money. Very often the amount collected by way of subscriptions and nightly fees only just cover the day to day costs of running the club and organising teams for competition.

A Fundraising Co-ordinator tries to obtain money for specific projects and club activities and Events. He/she manages this process with either the support of other members or a fundraising committee.

There are many ways of raising money:

- Sponsorship



- Fundraising events and activities
- Applying for grants and awards
- Financial Donations
- Membership Subscriptions
- Running Lotteries

NOTE: Later in this Handbook there is a section on Fundraising.

A good Fundraising Co-ordinator must be:

- An excellent communicator
- Have the ability to negotiate with potential sponsors and funding agencies
- Able to maintain budgets
- Able to think creatively and be able to turn ideas into reality
- Determined and patient-don't let one rejection stop you applying for more

Sit down and plan an annual calendar of events and activities well in advance. This will give a list of targets for the coming year so that fundraising and applications can be completed in time.

### **Public Relations Officer**

This person deals with the publicity of the club. The best way to do this is to have a promotional plan. This should involve:

- Advertising for members: posters with images of men/women /juveniles on them and flyers to targeted areas i.e. schools, libraries and housing estates close to the club location. In local papers include club times, location and contact person
- Good signage so that the club is easy to find-this is advertising in itself
- Regular updates as to club activity in local papers and radio
- Get photographs in local papers- a picture paints a thousand words and is more likely to catch peoples attention than an article

Ensuring those results, of competitions is give to the local papers and radio

- Use parish and community newsletters and bulletins to let people know about the club
- Advertise Volleyball classes at the beginning of the season in order to bring new members in and then they can feed into the club once they have grasped the basics
- Establish your own Webster - no matter how simple. Many club members have the knowledge to do this if just asked. Search for other club Web sites for ideas. They can also be linked to the Volleyball Association Website
- Make visits to local schools to encourage new membership in the club.
- Invite people to watch important match's etc to create a better atmosphere and awareness of the sport, this also brings new people into the sport. Remember children are not the only ones who like to try something new and volleyball is a sport that can be taken up and enjoyed at any age. People are more likely to come along if they already know someone.
- Run promotional events such as open days, fun days and try it out days

- Consider a reduction in club fees for those who are unemployed, Juveniles and older adults.

Don't just advertise the volleyball activities of the club- if other social events are organised especially fundraising events, advertise and get as many other people involved as possible

Promote OFTEN AND REGULARLY AND IN EVERY WAY POSSIBLE

Publish a Club Newsletter on a regular basis. A sample format could be:

<b>Front</b>	<b>Middle</b>	<b>Back</b>
Exciting News	News from Club	Coaches Section
Main Sponsor	Activities	Information on Training
How to contact the editor	Adverts	Courses
Advice section-	Upcoming fixtures	Training tips etc

1. A useful size for a club newsletter is A5 (A4 folded in half will allow for four pages of information)
2. Think about who the newsletter is to go to - sponsors, members, to be used as a form of advertising in the local community etc
3. Appoint an editor who can assign various club members to do articles depending on their own involvement in the club
4. Keep to publication dates that should be set out at the start of the season
5. Keep articles and reports short-this will keep the readers attention
6. Use graphics and photos where possible
7. Try to get advertisers that have products relevant to your club membership

Do not publish anyone's personal details without their approval

### **Club Constitution**

All clubs must have a constitution for a number of reasons:

It clearly states the conditions of the club should arguments arise

It lets new or potential members see the outline of the running of the club

When applying for funding, many organisations ask for a copy of a club constitution in order to see the aims and objectives of the club and also to show that the club is organised enough to deal with the funding in the correct way

This document needn't be long or complicated. Below is a sample of what could be drawn up:

#### **SAMPLE CONSTITIUTION**

1. The Club name is "The XXX Volleyball Club"
2. The Club will meet on XXX and XXX between the hours of 00.0..and 00.0.at XX hall (include address)
3. The aim of the club is ...(to encourage and foster the game of Volleyball and provide playing opportunities for all levels of play)
4. The objectives (how you will achieve your aim) are: (samples)

- A - to provide coaching for beginners to encourage more players to take up the sport
- B - to enter competitions at all levels of play to provide for all standards to compete
- C - To run club nights that allows for all levels of participation
- D - to run a juvenile section as part of the club to ensure those new players will continually join the club
- E - to advertise the club and its activities so that peoples in the locality is aware of these

5. Membership is open to anyone who wishes to play

6. Club membership may be restricted to a total of XX. The limitation is based on a number which will ensure members attending the club do not have too long a wait between games

7. If the membership limit is reached a waiting list shall be drawn up and offers of membership made in order as vacancies arise.

8. The clubs affairs will be governed by a committee of X0 - consisting of a chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary, PRO and X0 others

9. An Annual General meeting (AGM) shall be held each year in the month of XXX

10. The agenda shall consist of the following items:

Apologies

Minutes of last AGM

Matters arising

Report on past season Chairperson

Report on Accounts

Proposed programme for next season

Election of officers for next season

Any other business

11. All members shall be advised of the date, time and location of this meeting at least two weeks in advance. For a motion to be passed there must be a majority of X0 in the vote

12. Extraordinary General Meetings (EGM) may be called by committee and must be called within 14 days if a written request signed by one quarter of the club membership is received

13. The treasurer shall keep correct and up to date accounts showing all transactions and financial affairs of the club. A statement of accounts for the financial year shall be presented at the AGM

14. Cheques that are made out on behalf of the club must be signed by 2 authorised signatories.

15. The secretary shall be responsible for all Club matters of a general administrative nature including notification of meetings and will be responsible for the keeping of continuous records that are to be passed on in the event of a change in the post.

16. Alterations to the committee can be made at the AGM and any EGM's provided the proposals are notified in advance

17. Alterations to the constitution require two thirds of club members to be present and voting to be in favour

18. The annual subscription shall be discussed and fixed at each AGM

19. The committee shall have the power to make rules governing the conduct of the club. Such rules shall be binding on membership and all members must be made aware of any changes. Any matter in relation to

discipline or the breaking of the club rules will be dealt with by the club committee and any action as a result must be decided by a majority of X0.

20. All complaints will be investigated and dealt with by the committee of the club

21. Anyone representing the club in competition must be a member of the club

22. The club and all its members will follow the rules of the Volleyball Association of Ireland

23. The club is agreed to all the principals set out in the code of conduct.

## **Funding**

The issue of finance is a major issue for any club. Clubs have to find ways to make the best use of their limited funds, while also trying to find ways of increasing the funds available to them. In this section, we will look at some of the costs, involved in running a Volleyball Club and ways in which to raise funds.

As per normal, club members should pay an annual subscription /membership fee. The cost of this fee should be based on the cost of general activities of the club and the total number of members.

Because of the rental costs associated with playing Volleyball and hiring courts we would recommend that members pay a small fee per night, to cover these rental costs, so as general running costs can be covered. However other costs, outside that of the day to day running of the club should be met by alternative sources. These alternative sources are wide and varied and we will look at a number of the options available now.

General Fund Raising:

Many clubs do not try to involve the local community in fundraising, viewing it as desperation. However, this should be a major part of a clubs fundraising strategy. Clubs may be surprised by the good will of people to voluntary organisations in the area, people who may not be involved themselves are proud to see clubs in there own community doing well and may be willing to support financially in any small way that they can. On another note, raising money in the community also helps raise awareness and profile of the club.

There are many mechanisms for fundraising in the local community. We have put a few ideas together; some of which you will probably have come across before.

Lottery or Raffle

Sponsored Activities

Disco/Dinner Dances

Quizzes

Fun Competitions

Treasure Hunts

Marathons

Volleython

Fun Runs / Sponsored walks

Many of these events are perfect for non-members to see the club in action, and hopefully from the clubs point of view to becoming a member. Members should therefore be encouraged to bring along as many friends and family as possible.

Donations:

This is where money or goods are donated with no expectation in return. Money is often donated to help run certain events and goods such as sports equipment and prizes for social occasions are often given by local

companies. The key to receiving donations is to build a good relationship with potential donors and not to ask too often!

#### Sponsorship:

Corporate sponsorship is an arrangement between a company and a voluntary or community organisation. The company funds either an event or project in return for the good publicity that it will receive. Sponsorship is not the same as a donation. Companies will expect a return for their money. A guarantee of publicity for the company name, coverage in the media, awareness created of the goods or services that they are supplying in the local community - this is the type of return that your sponsor requires.

Most companies allocate sponsorship once a year so contact them before you send in a proposal to see if they have used their annual budget or not. If it is gone, ask what is the best time of the year to apply for future reference. Also ask if they have any set procedures or sponsorship policy so that you are aware of how the company likes to deal with potential sponsorship partners.

If any club members work for or have links with any companies, these should be approached first as the connection gives a good introduction to any proposal.

The key to effective sponsorship is ensuring that the aims of a company match those of the club applying. It helps to take into account the nature of the company's business involved - those involved in the promotion of sport are obvious candidates (whether it be sports equipment etc) But don't stop at obvious choices. Think laterally "it is simply about looking for an angle that will appeal to a sponsor and using that in your proposal".

If you are looking for a large amount of sponsorship it can help to break these down into smaller sections and apply to various organisations. Think carefully about what you are looking for sponsorship for and also about the interests of companies in trying to find the best match. Research the companies that you are applying to.

You are more likely to find a sponsor on your own doorstep so always include the local perspective. This works especially well with companies that are new in an area given that they are trying to build a local profile.

Always ring before sending in a proposal to establish the appropriate person to send the application to and make sure that you get the correct spelling of their name and job title.

Always state that you will contact the company on a certain date to see if the application has been successful or not - give a reasonable amount of time 3 maybe 4 weeks. This means that a decision will usually be taken one way or the other so that you are not left sitting waiting for the company to contact you. Make sure that you always follow up on the date that you state.

Where you are applying for an event / project involving young people, there are some ethical principals to be aware of:

Particular care should be taken that the association with a sponsor should not put them under pressure to purchase the sponsor's products. Where programmes or events are directed at primary schools they should promote products or services aimed at a children's market. So obviously sponsorship by the likes of alcoholic drinks or tobacco companies should be avoided

If you are unsuccessful in your application, don't be afraid to contact the company to ask why - this can give you valuable information for your next application.

#### Writing proposals:

Research the potential funder before you begin - what kind of organisation and projects do they fund? What are they interested in? What are their requirements in terms of supporting documentation, accountability and evaluation?

Some funders have their own applications which list the details required - if this is the case you should still include covering letter and supporting documentation.

For those who are told to structure their own submissions, make sure to include the following details:

Profile the club

The general needs that it meets

The specific needs that the funds will meet

Exactly what the organisation plans

How the proposal will be carried out

How much money is required?

How its other funding needs will be met

The expected outcomes of the project

Why the funder should be interested

Start your application with a covering letter outlining who you are and why you are writing. You have to make an impact in the very first paragraph of your covering letter. Remember that some organisations receive dozens of applications every week so it must stand out.

Always be positive. Write down all the good qualities of your project without being modest. Tie this in with what you know about the funding agency/sponsor and show that you have done your research.

Draw in all of the benefits to the sponsor (if applicable), the club and the potential participants in events / projects. Always show that the funding being applied for is part of an overall sustainable scheme.

Keep the proposal concise and easy to read- list points and type if possible.

Get someone unconnected with the application to read it over before sending it in to ensure the clarity of the proposal. Use tables and graphs where possible and don't crowd the text onto the page.

Make sure that the proposal is well presented - don't just throw a few sheets of paper together. Use colours for different sections and use a folder to keep all of the information together.

Personalise it - don't send off the same letter and information to all funding agencies and potential sponsors. Use the information that you have on each company to direct each proposal personally towards the recipient.

Include any information, press cuttings, accounts, and newsletters etc that you have on any previous projects/events to show a successful history if possible. This gives the funder a broader view of the work of your club. Any endorsements from the local community, letters of thanks/appreciation etc. are also useful as they show that the club can motivate people and does good work, which is appreciated by the community.

Be clear about the amount that you are asking for-you should also indicate a willingness to fundraise at least part of the total cost. Asking for partial funding is far preferable to simply asking for the whole amount.

In budgeting for the proposal, the club must show that it has its finances under control. It is important that accounts are kept up to date and that they are easy to understand.

It sometimes seems that the effort put into applications isn't worth the result at the end of the day but persistence will pay off. Remember that there are many selling points for Volleyball.

Life long sport - participation is possible at all levels of play all the way through a person's life from juvenile to veteran

It is a sport that can be played by both males and females at the same time - this is especially true for children

As an indoor sport, it encourages people to remain active during the winter months when they are typically inactive

It is also a relatively inexpensive sport compared with many others and so finance is rarely an inhibitive factor for those wishing to play

Clubs are located on a countrywide basis and so even if someone moves, they can easily stay involved.

Summary of Guidelines when applying for funding of any kind:

- Research your proposal before you begin
- Address proposal to an identified contact
- Always follow up on written proposals with a phone call
- Include any information that you feel may be relevant in supporting your application- press cuttings, statistics of club etc
- Adapt your application to the specifics of the company/funding agency that you are applying to
- Be business-like "be positive, not defensive"
- Show that you are planning for the long term and funding agencies especially want to see that the funding will be used on something sustainable or for an event that is part of a bigger plan - Drawing up a club development plan could help you in this
- If successful, keep the funder informed of progress with regular updates-this creates a contact that could lead to further funding at a later stage
- Keep a file of all press cuttings, other publicity etc
- This will show that they are getting coverage of their investment
- Invite them to the event being staged or other events such as a Prize-giving
- Don't forget to say thank you!
- Even if the contact doesn't respond positively this time, ask for feedback on your application for future reference. Also keep them informed of other opportunities "they may not have had the budget at the time and may be interested at a later stage"
- Keep records of all funding applications, successful or not as these can help in future applications.
- Don't come to rely solely on one sponsor as they may decide at some stage to withdraw the funding - keep trying to make other contacts at all times.

Reasons why applications are rejected:

### **Funds may be oversubscribed**

The application may not have made a distinctive case for themselves

The aims of the club and project/event are not clear

There seems to be no financial control in the club

The club seems to be well off and could get the money elsewhere without undue difficulty

The club seems to provide an expensive service

The application does not contain all of the required information

## Lotteries:

A permit is needed for lotteries not held privately or in conjunction with an event. Application is made through the Gardai. A permit is also needed from the Gardai to collect money in a public place. These applications must be made to the Gardai in the area where the collection or lottery is to take place and they will be confined to the area applied for.

Collecting without a permit is an offence and entitles the Gardai to seize what money you have collected.

Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation  
Sports Unit  
Fredrick Building  
South Fredrick St  
Dublin 2

Tel: 01-6313914

The Department provides funding at local level from the National lottery under the annual Sports Capital Programme, which provides funding to voluntary sporting and community organisations towards the provision of sport and recreational facilities in terms of construction, refurbishment, improvements and equipping to high standards.

Funding will only be given for capital spending which is defined as:

Expenditure on the improvement or construction of an asset

Purchase of permanently based sports equipment ^securely housed and will remain in use for 5 years or more.

The funding requires the following local contribution:

Applicant Status	Max Grant Available	Min Local Contribution
Local facilities	70%	30%
Regional facilities	50%	50%
Disadvantaged Areas	80%	20%

Applications should also be sent in with letters of support from the local community - such as from local council, any other sports or community groups that use/will use the facility concerned or the Volleyball Association, your provincial branch, etc. A feasibility study must also accompany the application in relation to projects costing over 450,000 Euro, as well as written confirmation of local and other funding available for the project. Evidence of title to the proposed site of project, details of other grants applied for, drawings/plans specifications are also required. The programme is advertised once a year. For further details see [www.irishsportsCouncil.ie](http://www.irishsportsCouncil.ie) <<http://www.irishsportsCouncil.ie/>>

The following is a checklist of all costs associated with a volleyball club in Ireland, when applying for grants remember to include all reasonable and appropriate costs

Affiliation Cost

Court hire

Competition Entry Fees

Admin and publicity

Referees Fees

Coaching (if outside coach is brought in)

Course fees



Hall Hire

Travel

Insurance

Attendance at VAI meetings

Equipment

Team Kit

### **Recruiting New Members**

Even the best run clubs will lose players for various good reasons. It is essential then that every club find new members who will help the club develop and expand.

Volleyball is a sport that many people in your local community will have played in school, or will have seen on TV. Many of these may like to have a go at volleyball. You have to let these people know about your club, basically help them find you. We recommend that you take some of the following steps to publicise your club.

Put posters up in Sports centres, schools and other public areas, advertising practical details of the club, its training times and contact details, cost of taking part, home venue and meeting place. Advertise similarly in your local newspaper and on local radio. Also submit regular press releases about the clubs activities to these sources.

- Organise a club open day or evening locally
- Go to local sports centres and encourage them to include Volleyball as one of their facilities
- Contact your local authority about the possibility of running an evening class at the local school, college or sports centre.
- Stage a volleyball demonstration and "come and try it session" in a local park or on a local beach. Put a contact number into phone book and yellow pages
- As the younger generation is the future of the club, the following steps are hugely important.
- Contact your local school through the PE teacher
- Run a session in the school for the kids to try the game
- Invite the children to an open club training session and your next home match

### **Keeping New Members**

Imagine that you are a shy, unconfident youngster trying to pluck up the courage to turn and join in. You wonder if it matters what you wear, how much it's going to cost, and whether your friend can come too. At the volleyball club sessions, the players probably look very good, very noisy and too busy to be interrupted.

How can your club make it easier for that potential player?

Is your club:

- Well advertised locally and in the sports centre.
- Near public transport and "well lit" streets.
- Cheap or free for the first few sessions.
- Welcoming, friendly, helpful.
- Understanding of the needs of new members.

If not you won't attract many new players! Who knows, you could be discouraging a future first team player. No one starts off as a natural volleyball player!

Overleaf is a list of things to do to help new members and beginners.

### **Helping New Players/Beginners**

Make sure that someone in the club is responsible for welcoming and involving all new members, whether they turn up expectedly or unexpectedly.

- Adequate equipment (balls and correct net height) must be available.
- Don't spike balls at them or push them into a competitive game too early.
- Remember how embarrassing it is to be a beginner and make mistakes.
- Remember that beginners often feel better with a group of friends.
- Remember that new player needs individual attention and tuition, plus patience, understanding and encouragement.
- The Volleyball Association of Ireland runs coaching courses designed for these situations. Make sure that some of your club members have attended a course.
- Include new members in the club social life.

### **Women and Junior Players**

Volley is one of the few sports that is played equally by women and men (it's the biggest women's sport in the World), but you should remember some of the extra problems that women and juniors can face:

- Do they have transport problems? Can a lift be arranged?
- Do they have to walk in badly lit streets after dark? Can you escort them?
- Are the costs of transport and playing too much for them? Do you have reduced rates?
- Can the players arrange to share babysitting? Is there a creche available?
- Do they want to play socially or competitively? Don't push too soon.
- Is the training session safe and adequate for their particular needs?
- Do they get equal opportunities for coaching and practice at the correct net height?
- Are they well represented on the committee?

Your club must consider these factors if you really want everyone to participate.

### **Unemployed**

Unemployed people often lack self-confidence as well as cash. Are you helping to offer them opportunities and keeping subscriptions low?

### **Foreigners and Ethnic Minorities**

Many other cultures excelled at volleyball long before the game was even introduced to Ireland. People from different background often have a lot to offer your club, and in particular Irelands Colleges and Universities have a lot of exchange students, many of whom excel at one sport or another. Some of the finest volleyball players and teams in the World come from Asia, South America and Africa.

## Disabled players

Disability need not be a bar to participation and excellence. Volleyball can be enjoyed as a sitting or standing game, and players with artificial limbs have played in National Leagues in many countries. Don't forget that your club need organisers, referees, coaches, etc. as well as players.

Create opportunities and incentives for prospective members to try out playing volleyball by using special events and open days.

Make contacts within local media, and submit regular press releases and club updates to increase awareness

Build membership lists of past and present members and keep note of the effectiveness of previous promotions

Invite teachers, leaders and parents to the club for an open evening to discuss your plans

Running a Junior section:

Young people are the future of your sport: they are the future of your club. They are essential for every clubs survival & development. By not having a junior section clubs are overly reliant on recruiting adult players. Running a junior section does have its hassles and does use up resources, but these negatives can be addressed, as we will do in the following pages.

Firstly and most importantly, running a junior section brings a large number of benefits

- A regular supply of new players that will ensure a healthy future for the club
- Increased membership, including the opportunity for parents and families to become non-playing members
- Many of these non-playing members may have sporting or organisational skills that will help your club
- An increased public profile and interest in your club
- Opportunities to generate additional income
- Enhanced likelihood of grant aid
- Better access to local facilities, school and local authority
- Local development of your sport
- An opportunity to contribute to the broader life of your local community.

In today's society, technology offers children a wide choice of recreational pursuits. Encouraging young people away from computer games and Internet and on to the playing field, court or gym is more difficult than ever.

Knowing the reasons then for children's participation in sport is hugely important so as you can appeal and promote your sport and club effectively to young people

Young people will generally join clubs for a number of reasons.

- To be with friends
- To improve their skills
- To experience the excitement of competition
- To play sport

- To receive encouragement from parents and friends
- To become part of a team

The aim of many or most of these children is not necessarily to win. Therefore the emphasis at juvenile level should not be based on the competitive aspect as this may lead to juveniles leaving the game.

Volleyball clubs should be promoting the game as an enjoyable, fun and sociable activity and all activities should be run on this basis. By emphasising the importance of playing rather than the outcome the overall experience is a much happier one for any young person.

Young people always develop at different rates and age is not always a good indicator of a young person's stage of development.

One of the challenges is modifying the rules and equipment to help all young people participate and improve irrespective of their stage of development.

Simple practices, can be adopted to help young people develop their volleyball skills

Organise small-sided teams

Modify the rules

Adapt the equipment

Reduce playing area

Reduce playing time

Rotate playing positions

As with the club itself a structure needs to be in place for a junior section in a club to be successful and develop. This junior section needs the following

1. An individual to oversee and co ordinate the junior sections activities. This co-ordinator should be a part of the clubs committee so as to act as a link.
2. People to organise and supervise in the club these roles can often be filled by parents who may not have the necessary expertise to coach, but who have good organisational skills
3. Properly qualified coaches
4. Parents involvement so they understand and support their child's and the clubs development
5. Support from club members to ensure its continuous development
6. Effective links with schools, youth groups to ensure new members are always coming through.
  - Arrange for demos and try our sessions by club coaches and members in schools
  - Go into all schools in the local area at the start of each school year and advertise the club giving times and contact info.
  - Keep the PE teachers of these schools informed as to the clubs activities.
7. Create opportunities for older juveniles to work closely with the club committee so that juveniles can have their say
  - This also allows for the breaking in of future committee members/club administrators

Some other possible ways of adding to juveniles enjoyment

- Have incentives for the children who attend

- A prize for best attitude attendance etc
- Fair play all around

### **Financing for Junior Clubs**

Your club may be eligible for funding to help establish its junior section. Your Local Council and NGB will be able to offer you advice on funding.

The costs you incur in running your junior section should be covered through membership fees and fundraising events. Local business and parents business may be inclined to offer financial support for equipment and special events so contact them.

Coaching Part (link in with getting parents involved)

### **COACHING**

At present the Coaching Award courses are as follows:

#### **Level 0, Coaching Award:**

This is the basic level and it is run in a single day with from 6 to 8 hours instruction.

#### **Level 1, Coaching Award:**

This is the more advanced level and takes four days over two weekends. There are about 30 hours of instruction involved.

#### **Level 2, Coaching Award:**

This will be made available when the need arises.

**There is a great need for more people to qualify as coaches, because the demand is always greater than the supply. Courses are run regularly for levels 0 and1.**

Depending on the availability of coaches at any given time the Association try to run two very important initiatives:

### **COACH LOAN SCHEME**

When it is possible this scheme is available to all clubs starting out or being promoted to a higher division within their league. An experienced coach is loaned, for a period of time subject to certain conditions. The cost is subsidised by the Volleyball Association of Ireland (VAI).

### **PLAYER IMPROVER COURSES**

This again depends on the availability of coaches. Clubs or schools can request an experienced coach for day or weekend course to improve the standard of their players. Application should be made to the Coaching Administrator or to the VAI office.

### **COACHING LIBRARY SERVICE**

A selection of books and videos on volleyball and related topics is available on loan to all coaches registered with the Volleyball Association of Ireland.

Level 0

Level 1

Level 2

Tutor courses

Coach loan scheme

Player improver scheme

Coaching library service

Referees

Info on how to become one, money involved etc

The different grades

## **REFEREEING**

Referees play an important part in the game of volleyball. The officials in charge of a game are:

**1st Referee, 2nd Referee, 4 Line Judges, 1-2 Scorekeeper(s)**

The 1st Referee is directly responsible for the running of the game.

For those interested in refereeing, courses are run regularly by the VAI throughout the year and generally take place over a weekend. Referees begin at Grade 3 and progress to Grade 2,1, National level and then International level.

Please contact the Referees Commission, or the office, for details of these courses. There are currently four National volleyball teams: Senior Women, Senior Men, Junior Women and Junior Men. One weekend in every month is set aside for all National Team training. This is generally comprised of two days training. The venues for training vary in relation to the areas from which the players are selected.

Annual trials are held for National Squads. If you know of a player who is a potential National Team player, you should contact the office of the Association and the information will be passed on to the relevant responsible person.

What the VAI recommends - how many coaches, refs. per club.

Getting Parents/Volunteers involved

Coaching courses/referees

Solutions to reasons parents want to get involved

## **Drawing up a club Development Plan**

Why draw up a club development plan?

There are some very important reasons why clubs should have a development plan in place:

When applying for funding, including a club development plan will greatly enhance any application, as it will demonstrate that a club is organised and that any funding received is part of a long term and sustainable scheme

It will help clubs to decide what they want to apply for funding for ^ what are the areas within the club that need strengthened

It will help a club to become stronger as it will help to identify weak areas in the club and give rise to thought on how to improve them

It will help the club to work towards the same goals rather than everyone working in different directions

Drawing up this plan needn't be a long or complicated process - but it does involve getting as many people as possible involved in the club, to give their views.

The following is a suggested template for a club development plan-if there is anything else that you would like to add in, feel free and like wise if you feel that there are sections or questions that aren't relevant to out, leave them out.

There are three main steps:

1. Where is the club now
2. Where does it want to go
3. How is it going to get there

Section 1: Where is the Club now?

#### COACH EDUCATION

How many coaches are there in the club and what levels are they qualified at?

Intro Level

Level 1

Level 2

Level 3

How many of these coaches actually work within the club?

Intro level

Level 1

Level 2

Level 3

Are they paid for their Work?

Yes

No

Who do they coach?

Juveniles

Adults

New members

Does the club provide financial help to those wishing to train as coaches or to upgrade their qualifications?

Yes

No

#### EQUIPMENT

What equipment does the club own?

What equipment does the club uses?

What state of repair is the equipment in?

What is the usage of the equipment?

FACILITIES:

What Facilities does the club use?

How long have they used them?

Is there a cost for hiring the facilities and if so how much?

Yes

No

What is the state of repair of the facilities?

Is the facility shared?

Yes

No

How many courts are available?

What other Facilities are there?

OFFICIALS:

Number of the following?

Umpires

Referees



Club officials-posts that are currently filled?

Chairperson

Treasurer

Secretary

PRO

Club Children's Officer

Fundraising Co co-ordinator

Others:

How long are people typically left in these posts?

RECRUITMENT:

How many club members are there in the club?

Juveniles:            18-25:

25-45:

45-65:

65+:

No. of males:

No. of Females:

Disabled:

How does this compare with previous years?

Does the club actively recruit members?

Yes

No

If yes how?

How does your membership compare now with previous years?

How are newcomers welcomed to the club?

How well is the club known in the locality? Is it promoted in any way?

Can the club cater for the disabled?

Yes

No

COMMUNITY LIASON:

What links does the club have with local schools?

Are you in contact with your local sports development officer or local sports partnership (if there are any in the area)?

Yes

No

Do you know what funding is available in the locality and how to access it?

Yes

No

PERFORMANCE & EXCELLENCE:

Do you know of any talent in the club?

Yes

No

Do any members represent Ireland at any level?

Yes

No

How many?

Does the club help talented players gain access to more coaching /court time:

Yes

No

COMPETITION

Does the club run internal competitions?

Yes

No

What are the methods of selection of teams?

Are they fair?

What teams does the club have in the league?

What percentage of club members plays on teams?

Do you organise friendly matches?

Yes

No

FINANCE:

Are the clubs fees set at a realistic level?

Yes

No

How do the fees compare with 10 years ago?

How could the club raise more money?

How has the club raised money in the past?

JUVENILES:

Does the club have a juvenile section?

Yes

No

If not, could a juvenile section be run? Explain:

Yes

No

Has the club any qualified coaches to help juveniles?

Yes

No

What are the links with local schools?

## SECTION 2 WHERE DOES THE CLUB WANT TO GO?

From the last section, it will be clear what areas in the club are weakest and therefore need improvement.

From this, imagine that funding is no object and come up with a wish list for your club.

This wish list will now be the basis for your club development plan. However these wishes need to be prioritised.

Priority 1 - is those elements that can be done immediately and for relatively little cost. For example;

Introduce a welcome system for new members where a club member is assigned to look after them and answer their questions.

Make contact with your local sports development officer and find out what services they offer that you can avail of or how you can work together

Priority 2 - actions will be those that will take longer to achieve or will require funding. For example:

Apply for a grant to purchase new equipment. Secure a section of the club budget to part fund this

Set up fund raising event (quiz night etc) to cover various club activities

## Section three: HOW IS IT GOING TO GET THERE

The most important aspect of ensuring that this plan achieves its targets is to set time limits by which tasks have to be completed- the WHEN, WHO RESPONSIBLE and RESOURCES NEEDED are all important in ensuring the development of a club.

A Club development plan will look like the following:

AREA OF WORK	WHEN	PRIORITY	RESOURCES NEEDED	WHOM	COMMENTS
Three club members to Qualify as Coaches at Level 1	Jan 2005	1	contact association to organise course at local level	Club Secretary	Qualified Coaches required for new Junior Team
Apply for funding from VEC for new equipment	Feb 2005	1	Get relevant form from VEC and apply	Club Treasurer	Equipment needed for new Junior Team

## Monitoring and Review:

With any plan it is important that there is ongoing monitoring and review to ensure that targets are being met and to allow for adaptation to circumstances that may arise after the drafting of the plan.

With this in mind - the plan should be reviewed on a regular basis by the club committee, to measure the progress that is being made.

How often you do this is up to the committee members but the priority one sections should be monitored regularly as a lot can be achieved early on.

Make sure that your areas of work are very specific to allow for easy monitoring  
e.g. Introduce 10 new members to the club by Dec 2004 rather than:  
Invite more people to join the club

Don't worry if some tasks are not being completed within the allotted time scale - other factors will turn up that can sometimes slow progress down or sometimes a task that you think wont take long may require more than time allowed for.

Your development plan should be an ongoing process - the workload will decrease as your club becomes more organised and developed but development must always take place. You must ensure that those new initiatives that you try that work are continued.

Remember - it's the clubs plan and the clubs future - it therefore needs to involve the whole club.