TEAM GRASSROOTS

CLUB DEVELOPMENT / PEOPLE & VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer roles guide

The people behind every kick-off. A clear guide to the roles that help a grassroots football club thrive.

INFORM. SUPPORT. EQUIP.

Made for grassroots.

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WELCOME / HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

A place for everyone to contribute

A grassroots club is built by people with different skills, experiences and amounts of time to give. Coaching is only one part of that picture. Organising fixtures, keeping accounts, welcoming families and supporting welfare are equally valuable contributions.

This guide explains the common volunteer roles at a club: what each role is for, the work it usually involves and the support that helps someone do it well. It is an information resource, rather than an appointment agreement or a contract.

> Use it to start a conversation. Roles vary with club size, football provision and constitution. Adapt the tasks to your club and confirm current eligibility, training and affiliation requirements with your County FA.

Find your role

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ROLE PROFILE / CLUB LEADERSHIP

Chair

Helps the club agree its direction and creates the conditions for people to work well together.

What the role usually involves

• Lead committee meetings fairly, keeping discussion focused and making space for different views.

• Help the committee set realistic priorities, agree responsibilities and follow up decisions.

• Keep player welfare, inclusion, finances and volunteer wellbeing visible in club planning.

• Represent the club where appropriate and help maintain constructive relationships with partners.

• Support succession: encourage new volunteers and avoid knowledge or decisions sitting with one person.

Qualities that help

Listening, fairness, calm judgement and the ability to bring people together. Football experience is useful, but the role is chiefly about leadership and teamwork.

Who they work with

The whole committee, particularly the secretary, treasurer and welfare officers. Decisions follow the club constitution and agreed authority; the chair is not automatically entitled to decide everything alone.

Support the club should provide

A clear constitution, timely meeting papers, reliable reports and someone to share leadership duties. Declare conflicts and step aside from decisions in which impartiality may be affected.

In practice
The club wants to add a new team. The chair brings together the playing opportunity, volunteer capacity, welfare provision and budget so the committee can make an informed decision.

ROLE PROFILE / CLUB LEADERSHIP

Club secretary

Keeps club administration organised and helps the right information reach the right people.

What the role usually involves

- Coordinate affiliation and football administration with the County FA, league and club officials.
- Maintain an annual calendar for registrations, renewals, meetings and competition deadlines.
- Arrange meetings, circulate agendas and record decisions and actions accurately.
- Help maintain club and team official information in the relevant football systems.
- Share rule changes and correspondence with the people who need to act on them.
- Keep club records secure and arrange a clear handover when the role changes.

Qualities that help

Organisation, accurate record keeping, clear communication and confidence asking for clarification. Tasks can be shared with a fixtures secretary or team administrators.

Who they work with

The chair, treasurer, welfare officers, team managers, league administrators and County FA. The secretary coordinates information but does not have to carry out every club task personally.

Support the club should provide

Access to agreed systems, training on their use, a shared deadline calendar and deputy cover. Welfare records and sensitive information require restricted access, rather than general circulation.

In practice
A league sends a registration deadline. The secretary shares the action with team administrators, records who will complete it and checks that confirmation is received.

ROLE PROFILE / CLUB LEADERSHIP

Treasurer

Helps the club understand its finances and use its resources responsibly.

What the role usually involves

- Keep accurate records of income, spending, receipts and outstanding payments.
- Prepare a realistic annual budget with the committee and monitor performance against it.
- Reconcile bank records regularly and explain the financial position in clear language.
- Coordinate subscriptions and payments through agreed club procedures.
- Track grants and sponsorship conditions so restricted money is used appropriately.
- Prepare year-end information and support the review required by the constitution or club structure.

Qualities that help

Accuracy, reliability, discretion and confidence with basic financial records. A treasurer need not be a professional accountant, but should know when specialist help is needed.

Who they work with

The committee, team administrators and fundraising leads. The committee retains shared oversight; the treasurer should not be the only person who knows how the club finances work.

Support the club should provide

A club bank account, appropriate software, clear payment limits, access controls and an agreed second-person approval process. Someone claiming expenses should not approve their own payment. These are recommended controls to agree locally.

In practice
Before ordering new kit, the treasurer checks available funds and upcoming costs, explains the position to the committee and records the agreed purchase.

ROLE PROFILE / CLUB LEADERSHIP

Committee member

Contributes to the decisions that shape the club and helps turn agreed plans into action.

What the role usually involves

• Attend meetings prepared, read relevant reports and contribute constructively.

• Bring the interests of the whole club into discussion, including people whose voices may be less visible.

• Take responsibility for agreed tasks and report progress or difficulties early.

• Ask useful questions about welfare, affordability, participation and sustainability.

• Respect confidentiality and declare personal or financial interests in decisions.

• Help review how the club is working and support its officers rather than leaving everything to them.

Qualities that help

Curiosity, teamwork, fairness and willingness to help. A committee benefits from different backgrounds and perspectives; a formal officer title is not required to make a valuable contribution.

Who they work with

Other committee members, officers and the people affected by club decisions. Election, voting rights and terms of office follow the club constitution. A committee member is not automatically a trustee or company director; responsibilities depend on the club structure.

Support the club should provide

An induction, understandable reports, meeting dates and a clear explanation of decision-making. Relevant safeguarding learning should be arranged according to current club-role requirements.

In practice
Parents raise a concern about subscription costs. A committee member gathers feedback appropriately and helps explore affordable options, without discussing individual family circumstances publicly.

ROLE PROFILE / CLUB LEADERSHIP

Club welfare officer

Helps the club create a safe, welcoming environment and ensures people know how to raise welfare concerns.

What the role usually involves

- Promote safeguarding awareness and support the club in applying its safeguarding policies.
- Make welfare contacts and reporting routes easy for players, parents/carers and volunteers to find.
- Support safer recruitment and monitor relevant checks and training with authorised club officials.
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking their experiences seriously.
- Receive concerns and refer them promptly through the appropriate safeguarding network.
- Work with the committee to improve practice and keep sensitive records appropriately secure.

Qualities that help

Approachability, careful listening, discretion and confidence seeking advice. The role needs time, independence and active support from club leadership.

Who they work with

The County FA Designated Safeguarding Officer, chair, secretary, coaches and families. Safeguarding is a whole-club responsibility, not a task delegated entirely to one volunteer.

Support the club should provide

For youth welfare roles, confirm current FA requirements: safeguarding children and welfare officer learning, committee safeguarding learning and an in-date FA-accepted eligible enhanced DBS check. Use current course names and renewal requirements supplied by the County FA.

In practice
Someone shares a concern. The welfare officer listens, records factual information and seeks advice or refers promptly. They do not investigate alleged abuse, promise secrecy or wait for a committee meeting.

ADULT / OPEN-AGE / DISABILITY FOOTBALL

Welfare across the whole club

Welfare arrangements must reflect the people who play at your club. An adult team is not automatically a team with no safeguarding responsibilities: open-age football can include 16- and 17-year-olds, who are children for safeguarding purposes.

Welfare officer for adult teams

Provides an accessible welfare contact for adult players and helps the club promote positive behaviour, recognise concerns and use the appropriate support or reporting route. This can include poor practice, discrimination, wellbeing concerns and the safety of younger players in open-age teams.

Welfare officer for adult disability teams

Supports appropriate adult safeguarding arrangements and accessible ways to raise concerns. Listen to the individual, consider communication and support needs, and use the County FA safeguarding network. Disability does not automatically mean someone lacks capacity or is an adult at risk.

Current season check / 2026-27
FA affiliation guidance requires a named welfare officer for adult teams with Player Welfare Course completion, and an adult disability welfare officer with Safeguarding Adults Course completion. Open-age teams containing 16/17-year-olds also have FA DBS requirements for named managers, coaches and assistants. Confirm applicability and any exemptions with the County FA. [4]

Know which route to use

Operational concerns such as routine selection or registration questions normally begin with club procedures. Suspected abuse, neglect or risk of harm requires safeguarding referral. If the concern involves a welfare officer, use the County FA or another appropriate route directly.

If someone is in immediate danger, call 999. Football-related safeguarding concerns can be referred to the County FA safeguarding lead or The FA at safeguarding@thefa.com. Volunteers should seek advice promptly rather than trying to decide or investigate complex cases alone.

ON THE PITCH / AROUND THE TEAM

Roles supporting football delivery

Coach / team manager

Plans and delivers appropriate football activity, supports player enjoyment and development, manages the team and communicates expectations. Works with assistants, parents/carers and welfare officers. Youth coaches require the relevant FA checks and safeguarding learning; confirm coaching, first-aid and competition requirements for the team.

Assistant coach

Supports sessions and individual players within agreed competence. Helps organise safe activities and shares responsibility for attendance and supervision. The role needs its own appropriate recruitment, checks and learning; assisting does not remove those requirements.

Team administrator / team secretary

Coordinates availability, parent/carer updates, registrations and practical team arrangements in partnership with the club secretary. Uses approved systems and keeps personal information secure. This role helps the coach spend more time on football.

Fixtures secretary

Coordinates fixtures, venue availability and communications with teams, leagues and officials. Makes changes clearly, checks competition procedures and helps avoid clashes. Larger clubs may separate this role from the club secretary.

First aider

Provides a response within their training, checks supplies and knows emergency arrangements and AED access. Records incidents securely and follows current concussion guidance. The club should confirm competence, required training and cover before each activity.

Matchday helper

Supports agreed tasks such as refreshments, setting out spectator areas and clearing equipment. Receives a clear briefing. Goal assembly and movement need competent direction; child-facing or supervisory duties require appropriate suitability checks.

OFF THE PITCH / PRACTICAL SUPPORT

Roles that help the club grow

Volunteer coordinator

Welcomes helpers, matches tasks to skills and availability, arranges induction and checks workloads. Helps people find manageable ways to contribute and plans cover or handovers.

Fundraising and sponsorship lead

Plans fundraising, builds local relationships and coordinates proposals with the committee. Works with the treasurer on money received, costs and funding conditions. Seeks approval before committing the club to agreements.

Communications / social media lead

Shares accurate information, celebrates the club and keeps public channels useful. Uses approved imagery and permissions, protects children's information and follows club safeguarding and communication arrangements.

Kit and equipment coordinator

Organises sizes, orders, stock, issue records and storage. Checks condition and reports unsafe equipment. Works with the treasurer on purchasing and with coaches on what is needed.

Club development / inclusion lead

Helps the club plan sustainable playing opportunities and remove participation barriers. Women and girls, disability or community leads may support specific provision. These roles should listen to participants and work across the committee rather than operate in isolation.

Facilities / grounds coordinator

Coordinates bookings, maintenance contacts and facility checks. Helps clarify responsibilities with the venue owner and reports hazards. Specialist work should be carried out by people with suitable competence.

Small-task volunteers

A welcoming desk, event setup, stock check or one-off fundraiser can be a useful starting point. Give each helper a named contact, a clear task and any relevant briefing. No contribution should be dismissed because it is small.

A GOOD CLUB EXPERIENCE

Make volunteering sustainable

Volunteers are more likely to stay when they understand the role, feel supported and can fit it around their lives. Clear expectations are helpful; unnecessary paperwork and unrealistic workloads are not.

Start with a welcome, not a pile of tasks

• Explain the purpose, typical tasks and busy periods. Be honest about likely workload rather than giving a fixed estimate that may not fit the club.

• Introduce key people, show where information is kept and arrange someone to learn alongside.

• Check suitability and role-specific requirements before relevant duties begin. DBS eligibility depends on actual duties, not simply a title.

• Agree approved communication channels, personal-data access and how to ask for advice.

• Offer adjustments, shared tasks or flexible arrangements so more people can take part.

Keep supporting people

Check in regularly, recognise contributions and respond when workloads become too much. Share administration, plan for absences and leave time for training. Young volunteers need suitable supervision and age-appropriate tasks; they should not replace required adult supervision.

When someone moves on

Thank them, arrange a proportionate handover and return equipment or club records. Transfer or remove access appropriately. A role should be possible to leave without the club losing its knowledge or placing pressure on the individual.

Questions worth asking
Does each volunteer know who supports them? Are the busiest roles shared? Can someone raise a concern safely? Are we hearing from players and families? Who could learn alongside each key officer?

REFERENCE DESK / OCTOBER 2026

Further support and sources

This guide offers a practical overview. Your constitution, club structure, governing-body rules and team provision determine formal responsibilities. Check current requirements with your County FA before appointments or affiliation. Outside England, use your national association's guidance.

1 / Volunteer role profiles
https://www.englandfootball.com/participate/volunteer/growing-volunteers

2 / Learning and development for volunteers
https://www.englandfootball.com/participate/volunteer/learning-and-development-for-volunteers

3 / FA welfare officer network and role guidance
https://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-5-the-designated-safeguarding-officer-network

4 / FA affiliation requirements for 2026-27
https://grassrootsdiscipline.thefa.com/support/solutions/articles/48001235370-affiliation-requirements

5 / Safer recruitment and DBS checks
https://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-3-safer-recruitment-and-dbs-checks

6 / Reporting safeguarding concerns
https://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding/section-2-reporting-concerns

Learning worth exploring

England Football's Run Football: Club Edition supports people new to committee roles. The FA Club Maker supports young adults taking their first steps in volunteering. County FAs can help with role-specific learning and local support networks.

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