

ASA
VOLUNTEER
ENGAGEMENT

The Good Club Guide for a
Club Secretary




the **asa**
swim for life



Welcome

You have either been appointed, or are considering, a role as a Club Secretary.

We wish you a fulfilling and enjoyable experience in your role. We greatly appreciate the time and commitment that you are giving to support the development of aquatics.

How this resource will help you

This resource is intended to assist you in your role by providing:

- A guide to your roles and responsibilities as a Club Secretary.
- Templates and resources to save you time.
- Top tips and good practice advice from experienced volunteers.
- Useful links and information about additional learning opportunities.



Role of the Club Secretary

The Club Secretary provides a central point of contact for administration, information and communication. It is the Club Secretary who initially deals with all correspondence and communications, and is key to the smooth running of a club.

The Club Secretary also provides a link between members, potential members and external organisations, e.g. pool operators, local authorities and the ASA Regions. The Club Secretary should report to the Club Chairperson.

Duties of the Club Secretary

- To act as a main point of contact for the club, maintain records and information in relation to queries, all administration and communications.
- To deal with the day-to-day running of the club including all internal and external correspondence.
- To process and deliver appropriate correspondence and information to and from county, regional and national ASA levels.
- To organise committee meetings and AGMs, prepare agendas, take minutes, and distribute and communicate these as appropriate.
- To liaise with other club committee members to ensure all appropriate administration is in place.
- To have a knowledge and understanding of the roles and responsibilities of other club committee members.
- To maintain up-to-date contact details of all members, committee members, other key club personnel and ASA secretaries at national, regional and county levels.

Skills and qualities required

- Enthusiastic with a good knowledge of the club and people within it.
- Be an excellent communicator with good verbal, written and IT skills.
- Have good administration skills, including word-processing and minute-taking.
- Have excellent organisational skills.
- Have the ability to maintain confidentiality.
- Have the ability to work in partnership with others, both inside and outside the club.
- Have the confidence to represent the club at external meetings.

Level of commitment required

This will vary from club to club, but will include ongoing weekly responsibilities, particularly in dealing with correspondence.

Term of office

This will vary according to club constitutions and club election processes. Some clubs have rules stipulating that a new Club Secretary should be appointed each year, or impose a limit to the number of times a person can be re-elected to prevent one person remaining in post for too long.



Getting started

Checklist

The ASA has compiled a helpful checklist for those who are new to the role. There are certain documents which club secretaries should have in their possession, and there are documents which other club officers may hold, but club secretaries should be aware that they exist, and should know where to locate them.

Documentation	Notes	From Whom
ASA Handbook	Sent annually to the Club Secretary.	ASA Operations Department. Also available to download from www.swimming.org/asa
Regional Handbook	Sent annually to the Club Secretary.	Regional office
ASA Insurance Certificate and Information	Sent annually to the Club Secretary following payment of membership fees. May be held by the Treasurer.	ASA Membership Services Tel: 01509 640 727 Email: renewals@swimming.org
Accident and Incident Book	Replaced on request when full. To be held by named officer of the club.	ASA Customer Services Tel: 0871 220928 Email: customerservices@swimming.org
Other Insurance Policies	Separately arranged with the insurance brokers – may be held by the Treasurer.	Insurance company
Wavepower – Child Protection Guidelines and Procedures	May be held by the Welfare Officer.	ASA Customer Services Tel: 0871 220928 Email: customerservices@swimming.org
Photography and Video Log Book	Replace on request when full. May be held by the Welfare Officer or Competition Secretary.	ASA Customer Services Tel: 0871 220928 Email: customerservices@swimming.org
Copy of Club Membership Return	May be held by the Membership/Registration Officer.	ASA Membership Services Tel: 01509 640 727 Email: renewals@swimming.org

Club Constitution	May be referred to as Club Rules. Any changes must be agreed by ASA Region.	Own club
Record of club minutes (may be a minute book or electronic)	Current minute book may be held by Minute Secretary. Historical minutes should be with the Club Secretary or in known archives.	Own club
Club Account Books	May be held by the Treasurer.	Own club
Swimming Times	Copy sent to the Club Secretary each month.	ASA Swimming Times Tel: 01509 640 230 Email: swimmingtimes@swimming.org
ASA Annual Report and Financial Statement	Sent annually to the Club Secretary.	ASA Marketing & Communications Department Tel: 01509 640 229 Email: communications@swimming.org
Handling Internal Club Disputes	Copy sent to the Club Secretary on affiliation.	ASA Customer Services Tel: 0871 220928 Email: customerservices@swimming.org
Online Membership System (OMS) User Guide	Copy sent to the Club Secretary on affiliation. Updates sent for any new development to OMS.	ASA Membership Services Tel: 01509 640727 Email: renewals@swimming.org
Your Sport Newsletter	Club Secretary is encouraged to subscribe.	ASA Marketing & Communications Department Tel: 01509 640 229 Email: communications@swimming.org



Club committee meetings

The committee is a group of elected people who meet regularly to discuss and make decisions on the operation and activities of a club. The business undertaken at a committee meeting is normally in two key areas:

- **Items for information.** This relates to events that have already happened or decisions already made. Verbal and/or written reports are given to inform members, who then have an opportunity to ask questions or seek clarification.
- **Items for debate.** This relates to future events. This enables the whole group to discuss the issues and develop options and solutions.

Some clubs have formal procedures in place for committee meetings. The ASA has produced “*Recommended Club Constitution Guidance Notes*” (January 2015). You can find a link to these notes at the end of this resource.

This ASA guidance provides information on how often to have and how to conduct committee meetings, including guidance on voting and elections.

Top tips for organising meetings

- Prepare a schedule of club meetings a year in advance to ensure everyone is aware of dates and so that you can book venues. It’s good practice to hold these on a set day, or set week each month to be consistent and help others to remember.
- Consult with the Chairperson on the agenda for the meeting.
- Provide confirmation of meeting dates (some constitutions will require you to do this, particularly AGMs).
- When booking meeting venues, ensure good accessibility/transport links and provision for catering (tea/coffee/water).
- Keep up-to-date information regarding availability, costs and booking procedures of suitable venues.

- Provide an agenda for meetings and, where possible, timings for agenda items to guide people in their planning and preparations for meetings.
- Confirm date, time and venue information to all attendees.
- Circulate minutes of the last meeting, along with any papers or reports to be read in advance of the meeting.
- Agree with the attendees of the meeting an acceptable time to circulate information in advance of a meeting. Good practice is 7-10 days, although AGMs will have set timescales for information.
- Work with the Chairperson on the layout and style for the meeting and set up the room to get the best out of the group. Is it a formal round table meeting, or could you set the room up in a different way to be less formal and more inviting? Consider removing tables which act as a barrier or may not be practical.

Minute taking

At all meetings, someone should be appointed to record minutes. This would normally be the role of the Club Secretary, or a designated Minutes Secretary within a club, but could be a nominated person should a Club Secretary not be in attendance. Meeting minutes should be clear and concise and be a true reflection of discussions. Decisions and actions should be clearly recorded and agreed by members of the committee.

Top tips for minute taking

- List the people present and those who sent apologies. Circulating a list for people to sign in will save you time here if there are large numbers.



- At the end of a particular discussion within the meeting, summarise what you have recorded to ensure you have interpreted the conversation correctly. Confirm who is responsible for any actions and a date for these to be completed by.
- Write the minutes in the same order as the agenda, keeping them short and concise.
- Be objective in writing the meetings, ensuring no bias towards any decisions.
- Write up minutes straight after a meeting, while memories are still fresh.
- Circulate minutes to the committee as soon as possible after the meeting, so that any absentees know what happened, and those with actions are prompted to follow up as appropriate.
- Make a diary note to follow up actions with people after two weeks to check progress.
- Follow the ASA constitutional guidance for producing minutes of AGMs.
- Good words to use in minutes include:
 - › Agreed: indicates a strong consensus to support a recommended course of action.
 - › Noted: indicates that a matter was reported, but no decision was necessary.
 - › Received: indicates that a report was presented and accepted.
 - › Approved: indicates that a recommendation has been endorsed.
 - › Recognised: indicates that information was accepted, but no decision was taken.
 - › Resolved: indicates that a motion was formally proposed, voted upon and passed.
- Circulate and publicise non-confidential reports from committee meetings to demonstrate the club's progress and achievements.

Sample Club Committee meeting agenda

There will be a meeting of the (club) Committee, at (place) on (date), from (time) to (time)

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes: to approve the minutes of the last meeting
4. Matters arising: to consider any matters arising not included on the agenda
5. Reports – to receive reports or updates from:
 - a. The Treasurer
 - b. Development Officers
 - c. Disability Officer
 - d. swim21 Officer
 - e. Workforce Coordinator
 - f. Welfare Officer
 - g. Competition Secretary
6. Administration and correspondence
7. Equity update
8. Any other requested agenda items
9. Any other business
10. Date of next meeting



Annual General Meetings

This is an annual open meeting for any club member to attend. The purpose of an AGM is to:

- Present key information about the club, such as its finances and achievements throughout the year.
- Select officers for the club.
- Discuss and vote upon amendments to the constitution or rules.
- Consider the previous year's annual report.
- Hear the views of club members regarding the way the club is being managed.

Prior notice should be given to matters that members wish to discuss.

AGMs are also an ideal opportunity to combine an annual awards event, a club social event, or a thank you to all the volunteers, teachers, coaches and athletes.



Sample Club AGM agenda

The Annual General Meeting of the (club), will take place at (place) on (date), from (time) to (time)

1. Opening of meeting
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of last year's AGM
4. Presentation of annual report
5. Approval of annual report
6. Presentation of Treasurer's financial statement
7. Approval of Treasurer's financial statement
8. Election of officers
9. Vote of thanks to outgoing executive
10. Annual membership fees
11. Any other business (prior notice required)
12. Closure of meeting

Special (extraordinary) general meetings

These may be called at any time by the club committee, or a specified number of members, to discuss issues that require consultation with, and decisions by, the club membership. For example, changes to the constitution which cannot wait until the AGM.

ASA Administration Calendar

Month	Activity
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New national and regional rules become effective. Clubs return affiliation to Counties – if applicable. Regional handbooks go to printers. Online Membership System (OMS) available to allow clubs to start their renewal process.
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional handbooks to Clubs.
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional handbooks to Clubs.
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insurance documents sent to clubs having paid membership. Clubs and associations suspended for non-payment of membership fees.
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No specific activity.
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Last date for suggested rule changes by clubs. Send Regional post nominations information to clubs with advance notice of the AGM.
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Last date for nominations for Regional posts to Regional Directors. Nominations for ASA Aquatics Awards.
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motions and proposals to Regional offices for Regional ACM. Last date for notice to clubs of Regional ACM.
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Club AGMs usually held in June/July or Sept/Oct/Nov/Dec. Last date for detailed questions to Regional Office. Last date for amendments to proposed Regional rule changes. Regional AGM.
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Club AGMs. ASA Council meeting. The regions notify clubs and associations of any changes to Regional affiliation or National membership fees. Counties involved in “one fee collection” shall also inform its membership.
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Club AGMs. County AGMs (or in June/July).
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> County AGMs Regional Handbook last updates, new secretaries and changes of address Membership renewal packs sent by ASA for those not using the Online Membership System (OMS) OMS closes for clubs to allow the ASA to reset for the renewals process

Moving on from your role

When it's time to move on, it's important to think about how you will ensure that all your knowledge and experience is passed on to the person taking over from you.

Here are some suggestions to help ensure a smooth transition, and to ensure the person taking over from you has the information and resources they need:

- Try to give as much notice as you can that you are moving on, in order to allow the club to recruit or elect another Club Secretary.
- Where possible, try to build up or be part of a small team of Club Secretaries in your local area in order to share workloads, ensure others can take over when you move on and are able to offer training to new volunteers.
- Assist in developing an up-to-date role description and advert for the post based on your experience, and think of any people that may be interested.
- Think about the type of information you would like to receive if you were to volunteer for this position again, and the format you would like to receive it in, e.g. an e-mail, paper file, face-to-face handover meeting, etc.
- Prepare an information pack for the new Club Secretary to assist them in their role, including a list of any outstanding work/issues, a list of key contacts and any ‘top tips’ that may help.
- Hand over hard copies of any files or important correspondence and pass on any electronic information by saving it on a USB stick.
- Offer to mentor the new Club Secretary for an agreed period of time.

Summary

We hope you have found this guide informative. We wish you a great experience in your role and thank you once again for all the time and commitment you are giving to the sport.

swim21

swim21 is the ASA's quality mark for the development of effective, ethical and sustainable clubs. The opportunity to gain swim21 accreditation is available to all ASA affiliated clubs, across any of the aquatic disciplines, regardless of size or activity delivered. swim21 is about creating the best possible aquatic experience for all and raising the quality of aquatic provision across all areas. The swim21 programme enhances club management, strengthens the structures and unites the club with shared goals to ensure the best environment is available for all swimmers.

To find out more about swim21 and the associated benefits, please visit www.swimming.org/asa/clubs-and-members/swim21-accreditation/.

Equality and diversity

Is your club as inclusive as it could be? Does your club truly reflect the local demographics? Aquatic sports can and should be made accessible to everyone, to the greatest extent possible. Opening your club to everyone will aid with sustainability, add new dimensions to the club's social element, and you may even find talent, in many different forms, where you least expect it.

Read more about the ASA's commitment to equality and diversity and find further support for clubs at this link: www.swimming.org/asa/about-us/equality/.

Further information

The ASA accepts no liability for any errors or omissions in this resource. Further, whilst it is hoped that volunteers will find this resource useful, no liability arising out of its use can be accepted by the ASA or the club.

This resource is not a contract of employment and the role you undertake as a volunteer will not create an employment relationship between you and the club or the ASA.



ASA Volunteering Hub

Did you know that the ASA has a dedicated hub for volunteers? To access this hub, go to www.swimming.org/volunteering or email us at volunteering@swimming.org.

Acknowledgements

The ASA Volunteer Engagement Team are grateful for the contributions of both staff and volunteers who supported the creation of this resource. The knowledge and experience of those involved is vital to ensuring these materials are as beneficial as possible.

Useful links

ASA Guidance on Governance and Constitution
www.swimming.org/asa/clubs-and-members/constitution/

ASA Customer Services
customerservices@swimming.org

Sport England Club Matters
www.sportenglandclubmatters.com/

Volunteering England
www.volunteering.org.uk

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations
www.ncvo.org.uk



The ASA

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