

Volunteering Policy

Durham Amateur Rowing Club

Ethos of Club

Durham Amateur Rowing Club relies on its members to volunteer in a wide number of capacities in order for the Club to function. This includes the overall management of the Club, managing the professional staff and contractors, providing coaching, catering for events and generally helping out with events either at home or in the region.

Whether a member volunteers as Chair of the Club or makes cakes for regattas, every contribution helps to make the Club a cost effective, inclusive and effective organisation.

Our Volunteers

Members and the parents of Junior members volunteer because they have a vested interest in the Club. They may want to make certain areas work better, they may want to give something back to the Club or rowing in general, get to know others in the Club, be part of a team, lend their own experience and skills or learn and develop their knowledge of our sport.

Most people will anticipate that their contribution will be acknowledged and appreciated, even if it is not their primary motivation for volunteering. As members we should aim to acknowledge our volunteers' contributions and respect their efforts and time. If volunteers feel that their contribution is valued, they are more likely to want to continue to commit their efforts.

Some volunteer roles are difficult to carry out, especially where decisions have to be made that may affect a rower's participation in an event, in that they can't please all of the people all of the time. It is important that all members treat those who volunteer with respect at all times. If there is reason to believe that the volunteer has acted inappropriately in any way, or that a wrong decision has been made, then this should be raised with the Club Secretary or another Club official who is present (or in the case of the Club Secretary acting inappropriately, the Chair).

By using volunteers for income-generating functions and events, the Club is able to keep down the cost of membership and generate money for the running and maintenance of the Club and also for boat and boat related purchases

Volunteer Roles:

Members will be asked on their application form to complete details of any skills or experience that they may have which they are able to make available to the Club.

Descriptions of different volunteer roles and, where applicable, any specific training or qualifications required for that role can be found in the Appendix.

Set Training

Some volunteer roles can only be undertaken following training. These include: Umpires, Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Minibus and Trailer Drivers and Safety Boat Crew.

General

General volunteers are nearly always required for a wide range of roles at regatta events. Anyone taking part in a home rowing event will be expected to provide at least two hours of volunteering during the event. Volunteer roles at events include Start Assistants, Landing Stage and Catering and many more.

Apart from rowing events, there are a number of ongoing requirements such as helping with functions, boat repairs, or taking on a specific role such as that of Social Secretary or Coaches Coordinator.

All volunteers (including non-members) will be expected to represent the Club positively and adhere to the Club's policies on Safeguarding, Health and Safety, Data Protection and the Club's ethos on respecting others.

Recognising Volunteer Contributions

The Club values volunteers and wishes to recognise their contribution. For example, volunteer lunches or dinners may be held. And the Club will also recognise those who make a special contribution in the Club Updates or other internal communications and 'the volunteer of the year' will receive an award at the Club Annual Dinner. The Club may, from time to time, recognise outstanding contributions by awarding Life Memberships.

Specific items of clothing will be provided as required (eg shirts and hoodies for coaches). Food and refreshments may be provided to volunteers serving at events and appropriate subsistence payments made to volunteer coaches and trailer drivers travelling to major events.

Regardless of how the Club recognises volunteers, the appreciation of our volunteers should be manifest in the way all members interact with them; we want our volunteers to feel valued. For example, it would be appropriate for volunteers who are not on the Executive or other sub committees to be invited, where relevant, to meetings which are to discuss areas on which they have a specific volunteer-related interest and where their views could make a contribution.

Reimbursement of Volunteer Out-of-pocket Expenses

Volunteer Coaches attending external rowing events:

- Where the Club requests that the coach attend an external event, and this involves the coach incurring personal expenditure, the Club will refund the following: the cost of accommodation for any necessary overnight stay and £15 per day for subsistence expenses.
- Other out-of-pocket expenses could include the provision of subsistence to Juniors
Trailer drivers who use their own vehicle to tow a trailer to an event will be able to claim petrol expenses where at the specific request of the Club
- Any coach who is asked by the Club to attend an external event using their own vehicle will be reimbursed for petrol costs on the basis of petrol purchased and the submission of a receipt. This arrangement will be made prior to the event and will be authorised by Rowing and Coaching Committee.
- With the purchase of an additional club vehicle it is anticipated that there will be no/a reduced requirement for anyone to attend external events using their own vehicle. Therefore no reimbursement of expenses will be necessary as transport in a club vehicle should be available. Anyone attending an external event will be transported from the club and therefore will need to make their way to the club. Any exceptions to this will need prior approval.

Promoting Volunteering

On joining new members, including Junior members, will be informed in their Welcome Letter about the Club's ethos of volunteering and referred to the website for details of volunteer roles. Members will be encouraged to take on volunteering duties throughout the year.

Durham Open Events

A duty list for each home regatta will be posted in the Club foyer well in advance of the event, which will include volunteering jobs on the regatta days and will also provide for volunteering opportunities before and after the event for those who are unable to attend the event itself.

Other Benefits of Being a Volunteer

Development through Volunteering - Volunteers can buddy a more experienced volunteer at an event, or in a particular role, to gain experience. For specific roles, such as Captain, the outgoing Captain will also provide a handover wherever possible.

Building Club culture and 'Team Durham' through Volunteering - Volunteering can bring you into contact with members from other squads or sections of the Club. This contributes to and supports the Club's mission to be one team.

Support for Volunteers

The Club aims to support its volunteers at all times. Where a volunteer has any concerns with their role, or with the way in which they have been treated by another Club member, or parent of a Junior, they should, in the first instance approach the Club Secretary, or other Club official present if the matter is urgent. The Club Secretary will advise on a course of action or refer them to the Welfare Officer or another member of the Executive who is best equipped to deal with their issue.

Safeguarding and Dealing with Complaints

Volunteers, specifically those working with Junior members, will be required to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check and will need to adhere to British Rowing's Safeguarding Standards. Training will be provided periodically for this purpose.

Any volunteer who is subject to a complaint or is understood not to have followed the Club's Code of Conduct will be asked to meet with the Welfare Officer and a member of the Executive to discuss the matter further. It is possible that where there are a series of concerns or a concern of significance, the volunteer may be asked to step down from their volunteering role.

Employer supported Volunteering

At least 5% of employees in the UK are involved in employer-supported volunteering. Durham University has a Staff Volunteering scheme which enables employees to donate five days per annum to a charity or their choice. The Club welcomes members who are able to donate time to the Club and will work with the member to find a mutually beneficial volunteer arrangement.

Recommendations:

1. New members to be encouraged to take on volunteering opportunities as described on the website.
2. Reward scheme for volunteers as above.
3. Repayment of expenses so that volunteers are not out of pocket.
4. Development of members into volunteer role through buddying.