



THE GOOD CLUB GUIDE: HOW TO RUN AN AQUATIC EVENT

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How this resource will help you

This resource is intended to assist event and competition organisers in understanding the requirements and best practice involved in planning, organizing, running and evaluating an event. It will do this by providing:

- Top tips and good practice from experienced volunteers
- Templates/resources to assist you and save you time
- Further information and learning/training opportunities

Links to swim 21



swim21 is the asa's club development programme. The Good Club Guide is intended to complement swim21, by providing tools, templates and resources that will assist the running of a club, and ultimately assist in achieving or maintaining swim21 accreditation

How to use this resource

You can use this resource in the following ways:

- To prompt discussions at your club about the standards and qualities of volunteers needed and their roles
- As a reference to assist you / others in their role
- To assist a club in recruiting volunteers by giving information about a role
- To assist in personal development and the achievement of personal goals
- As part of an induction for a new volunteer at the club
- To input into the development / action plan for the club





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Organising the Event

Once you have decided who your participation target group is e.g. a beginner taster session, a club gala or an open competition in any discipline, you need to start thinking about how you will plan and organise the event. This guide has been written to help anyone planning an aquatic event.

- Equipment availability
- Adequate insurance (check your asa membership)

You may also want to make some enquiries about your chosen date to ensure that participants and volunteers will be able to attend. A good idea could be to check the date with [the asa](#) and other local competition calendars to ensure that it doesn't conflict with another event.

Booking the venue

The first things an event organiser will need to do is choose a date and time and reserve the venue. Factors you may want to consider when choosing the venue are:

- Availability and suitability
- Travel distance for participants and volunteers
- Seating capacity for participants and spectators
- Disability access
- Parking access and access to public transport
- Costs including VAT (what is included in venue hire fee and what is extra)
- Health and Safety

Some events will need licensing by [the asa](#), which should be done before committing financially. This applies to swimming and disability swimming events.

Licensing can cover all levels of competition and allows competitors to get times entered into [the asa](#) rankings. It is also a method of establishing minimum standards for an event and is a good way of providing competitors, parents and coaches with the confidence that the event is a quality competition.

For further information on licensing please visit www.britishswimming.org and click on disciplines - swimming.

For contact details about your Regional Licensing Officer please visit [the asa](#) handbook on www.britishswimming.org and search for [the asa](#) handbook.

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Writing the competition conditions

The next task you may want to consider is writing the competition conditions. This will ensure that everyone understands key information and the event procedures. Information that you may want to include is:

- Date, time and venue
- Events to be included
- Schedule (sequence of events)
- Entry restrictions / eligibility (e.g. age, ability, geographical area)
- Entry procedure (e.g. open invite or invitation entry, if invitation what is qualification criteria. See example entry form in Appendix A)
- the [asa](#) affiliated event
- the [asa](#) licensed event

Example competition conditions can be found in Appendix B.

If you do not want to write conditions from scratch, you can ask your local County Association for a guiding framework.

Write an action plan

To help prepare for an aquatic event it may be useful to write an action plan. The template opposite is a list of the different areas you may want to use in your action plan – you can choose what you do and don't want to include.





| Action | Responsible person | Budget | When by |
|---|--------------------|--------|---------|
| <p>Pre Event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agree the type of event• Agree budget and finances• Agree dates and times and reserve venue• Write competition conditions• Get formal permissions and licence from the asa• Agree marketing and promotion required• Identify key roles and responsibilities and ensure CRB checks are completed where required• Complete initial risk assessment• Promote event and invite participants• Invite volunteers• Invite guests and VIPs• Seek sponsorship• Ensure appropriate people are assigned to identified roles and provide training if required• Complete venue and equipment checklist• Produce promotional material to hand out on the day of the event e.g. volunteer recruitment flyer• Agree programme of events and timings.• Print programmes, tickets, signage, forms for running the competition• Complete participant entry process and produce event programme• Organise awards and medals | | | |

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| Action | Responsible person | Budget | When by |
|---|--------------------|--------|---------|
| <p>Day of the Event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check that all necessary personnel are present, ready and equipped to do their allotted job. • Verify risk assessment e.g. lifeguards, medical, first aid and emergency provision • Set up signage, reception and equipment • Ensure all paperwork and IT is in place and available if required • Arrange briefings as appropriate including timings of the event • Register participants • Welcome guests and spectators <p>Event Begins!</p> <p>After the event - on the day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank all involved in the delivery of the event • Evaluate the event with the volunteers and officials • Evaluate the event with the participants • Clear away all equipment <p>After the day of the event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete an event evaluation and debrief report • Thank volunteers and helpers with thank you notes, website notice etc • Feedback to venue management • Communicate event results, evaluation report and promote success stories | | | |



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Recruiting and supporting volunteers

An important factor about organising an event is the experience and enjoyment of the volunteers who will be involved. Aim to provide volunteers with a valuable experience so they will want to come back again and encourage others to participate.

Identifying and recruiting volunteers

There are many roles involved in organising and running an event and each role will be suited to a different person depending on the skills and experience required. Where possible it may help to specify the requirements for the different jobs to get the best volunteers for the roles, a good way of doing this could be by providing role descriptions.

A role description could include:

- The minimum hours for which your volunteers will be needed
- The locations in which they will be required to work
- The dates and times that you will need them
- Clear roles and responsibilities

The key person to be identified at the beginning of organising any event is the Event Promoter; this is the person responsible for the event. The role description for the Event Promoter is available in the Extracts of the [asa Laws](#) or the [asa Handbook](#) (search for prompt cards on our website: www.britishswimming.org).

You may need to consider who will fulfil the following areas:

Entry Administrator

This person would be responsible for the circulation, collection and collation of competitor entry forms. This information may be required for the event programme or entry cards.

Official's Organiser

This person would take responsibility for recruiting suitably qualified Technical Officials, including the required number of Referees, Starters, Chief Timekeepers, Timekeepers and Judges. The Chief Referee for the event would have responsibility for managing the officials during the event. If it is a licensed competition please refer to the licensing requirements on: www.britishswimming.org

Programme Administrator

This person would be responsible for collating information to be included in the programme. This should include warm up and

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start time, order of events and approximate time of any breaks/presentations. It may also include tributes to sponsors/officials/helpers/VIPs, current record holders and a list of participants competing in each event. They person may also be responsible for printing and distributing the programme.

Awards/medals coordinator

This person would be responsible for the organisation and allocation of medals/certificates/awards.

Sponsorship Coordinator

This person would take responsibility for seeking sponsorship, negotiating an agreement and coordinating the sponsorship programme.

If you choose to have Team Leaders for different areas such as Front of House, Officials, Fundraising and PR, it may also help to appoint these at an early stage.

Other roles that you may need to consider include:

Health and Safety

Lifeguards
First aiders
Security guard/s

Officials

Technical Officials
Clerks of the Course
Results service
Announcers/Commentators
Marshals
Warm up marshal

Further information about the different officiating roles is available in [the asa handbook](#). Also see our website www.britishswimming.org

Helpers and front of house

Refreshments for participants and volunteers
Refreshments for spectators
Photography register ([the asa](#) affiliated clubs can request a photography log book free of charge from [the asa](#))
Front of house to issue tickets/programmes and answer enquiries.

Discipline specific

Timing Operator (Automatic Officiating Equipment AOE) - Swimming
Scorer and music control – Synchro
Referee, Judge and recorder – Diving
Callers – Synchro and diving

If you are not clear what roles you will need for your event, you can ask your local County Association for guidance.



Top Tips for supporting your volunteers

- Choose people to help that have the right skills and experience.
- School events are a great opportunity to involve young volunteers, this enables the young volunteers to benefit from the knowledge of experienced volunteers and it is also a great way of keeping people in the sport.
- Leave plenty of time to check that everyone has insurance cover and the necessary people have had a CRB check
- Provide guidance about what is involved and what different roles will be required.
- You may need to offer training or mentoring opportunities to ensure that enough people are involved with the appropriate skills and knowledge.
- Club and County Workforce Coordinators could be useful people to contact to discuss what volunteers you need and how you can recruit, train and reward them.
- Ensure that everyone feels part of a team and that they have a valuable role in making the event happen.
- Team Leaders could be appointed to oversee several tasks.
- Support Team Leaders to recruit their own teams so they create a team that they work well with.
- Ask Team Leaders to be available throughout the event to ensure their team is following agreed procedures and protocols.
- Have a clear communication plan that everyone understands about how event staff, volunteers, security, first aid personnel, and technical officials will communicate throughout the event
- Arrange a rota so that people can rotate and experience new roles.
- There are lots of ways of recognising and rewarding people who have helped before and during the event. Here are some examples about what other clubs are doing:
 - Provide clothing or equipment that will help them to do their roles
 - A face-to-face thank you – probably the simplest method of all!
 - A phone call, the day after an event, to say thank you.
 - Send them a card – make it specific to the role they play.
 - Create a notice board dedicated to volunteers and volunteering
 - Add a thank you note to the club website
 - Provide a certificate (example available on [the asa website](#))

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Promotion and Publicity

Once the event conditions are decided you need to make sure that the participants are invited and given enough information so they can enter. It is a good idea to use a range of publicity techniques to raise the profile of the event, such as your club, County or Regional website, local media, flyers and notice boards or by circulating information at other events.

When promoting the event think about if you need to provide information about:

- Who is eligible to enter
- Team or individual event
- The date, time and venue
- What will be the participant entry procedure
- What will be the ticketing process
- What is the cost
- What trophies/awards are to be presented
- Is the event part of a series

If the event is licensed check the license meet guidelines to ensure that all documentation complies with the requirements.

Example flyers are provided in Appendix C

Event Programme

Once you have the entry forms submitted you need to collate the details to create an event programme.

When writing the programme you may wish to think about including

- Welcome address
- Acknowledge the support/presence of VIPs
- Venue, date and time
- Full event title which may include licence number
- Summary timetable
- A subset of the conditions that cover the eligibility, the events and award process
- List of participants by event
- Thank you to volunteers
- Information about future events
- Recognise sponsors

Example programmes are provided in Appendix D



Health and Safety

To manage an event safely it is necessary to have a clear understanding of who is responsible to ensure health and safety standards are adhered to both in the set-up and throughout the event. The Promoter is ultimately responsible for the safe conduct of the event and it is important that they understand their role and how they will work with the Referee and the facilities management. Some Promoter's may wish to appoint a representative such as the Referee with specific responsibility for managing safety.

For a Risk Assessment checklist visit www.britishswimming.org (search for risk).

Checklist

Once you have booked the venue it may be helpful to run through the following checklist to make sure that everything will be provided at the event. These lists include suggestions for all aquatic disciplines.

You may need to consider the following with the pool manager:

- Seating arrangement poolside / gallery
- Security locations
- First aid posts
- Drinking water sites
- Lost athletes / property
- Evacuation procedure
- Drowning procedure
- Access for emergency services
- Room for officials
- Location of registration, prize giving
- Entrances and exits including emergency exit
- Food / vendors / stalls
- Toilet facilities / disability toilets
- Communication centre / command post
- Fire extinguishers
- Signs / directions
- Photography log area
- Ticket / Programme sales
- Rubbish bins

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Do you need to ask the pool provider for the following equipment, such as:

- Automatic Officiating Equipment
- Starting blocks / end of pool boards
- Starting equipment
- Anti- wave lane lines
- Backstroke flags and poles/zone markers
- Recall rope and poles
- Chairs for officials
- Internet and power source
- Additional seating for participants
- Winners' podium
- PA system
- Parking/entrance passes
- Photocopier
- Music player
- Tables (how many and locations)
- Barriers
- Scoreboard

Do you need to ask the promoter to provide the following?

- Stop watches
- Whistles
- Last minute bell
- Lap cards
- Score cards / judging slips
- Judge pads (diving)
- Dive recorder system
- Starting equipment not linked to an AOE
- Event paperwork
- Necessary forms e.g. competitor withdrawal
- Two way radio / mobile phones
- Display stands
- Kit storage box
- Recording equipment e.g. laptop, relevant software, USB, scanner and printer
- Music player with underwater speakers
- Flip over cards to display swimmer numbers
- Accident log (available from ASA)
- Photography log (available from ASA)
- Medals / certificates



Top Tip

For further information about officials and event roles, general competition rules, discipline specific guidance, age of competitors at specific events and facility and equipment guidance please refer to the [asa handbook](#) which is available on www.britishswimming.org and search for the [asa handbook](#).

Event Evaluation

Once you have hosted the event it may be useful to review what went well, what didn't go so well and think about what you would do differently next time.

The more people that can feed into the 'de-brief' the better; this could be achieved at a meeting after the event, by email, telephone or by a questionnaire on the day.

Consider asking people that were involved in the organising, running, participating or watching the event:

- What went well and why?
- How can we improve?
- Did the event achieve its goal, or purpose?
- Did they enjoy the experience?

Areas that you might want to consider are:

- Venue suitability
- Staff and volunteer recruitment, training and support
- Financial outcomes
- Marketing and public relations
- A review of any incidents (e.g. injuries, complaints, etc)
- Recognition of records or special achievements
- Effectiveness of communication prior and during the event

See Appendix E for example evaluation form.

Moving on from your role...

Have you thought about how you will ensure all your knowledge and experience is passed on to a person taking over from you, when you decide its time to move on?

Here are some suggestions to 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 to the club that you are moving on, in order to allow the club to recruit / elect another volunteer

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- Assist in developing an up to date role description and advert for the post based on your experience in the role, 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, and the format you would like to receive it in e.g. one big file, a face to face hand over meeting, hand over in a 2 week period to not overload with information
- Prepare an information pack for the new volunteer to assist them in their role
- Prepare a list of any outstanding work/ issues
- Prepare a top tips or similar list to help a new volunteer
- Provide a list of key contacts or people who can assist a new volunteer
- Hand over hard copies of any files or important correspondence. Put electronic information onto a USB stick or disk
- Offer to mentor the new volunteer in this role for an agreed period of time

Summary

We hope you have found this guide informative in supporting you in your role, and providing you with information and helpful tips to run a successful event. We wish you a great experience in your role and thank you once again for all your time and commitment you are giving to the sport.

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 it's use can be accepted by the asa or the club.

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Email: info@runningsports.org
Web: www.runningsports.org

Sport England

3rd Floor, Victoria House
Bloomsbury Square,
London WC1B 4SE
Tel: 0845 850 8508
Email: info@sportengland.org
Web: www.sportengland.org

Sportscoach UK

114 Cardigan Road
Headingley
Leeds LS6 3BJ
Tel: 0113 274 4802
Email: coaching@sportscoach.org
Web: www.sportscoachuk.org

Child Protection in Sport Unit

NSPCC National Training Centre
3 Gilmour Close
Beaumont Leys
Leicester LE4 1EZ
Tel: 0116 234 7278
Email: cpsu@nspcc.org.uk
Web: www.thecpsu.org.uk

Volunteering England

Regents Wharf
8 All Saints st
London N1 9RL
Tel: 0845 305 6979
Email: information@volunteeringengland.org
Web: www.volunteering.org.uk

In addition

the asa website pages dedicated to volunteers

Did you know the asa website has a dedicated section for volunteers? This includes the appendices to support this guide. To find this section, go to www.britishswimming.org, and click on the "club" tab at the top of the home page. When you are through to the "club" page, click on the "volunteers" link on the left hand side of the page.

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