

A Guide to a Club Development Plan

What is a Club Development Plan?

A development plan is essentially a business plan for your club. It identifies your club's vision for the future, its aims and the ways in which the club hopes to achieve them. It is a short, working document that should be easy to read and therefore should be kept clear and simple.

Why should we do it?

A club development plan is designed to help clubs to plan for the future. It will help a club to have a clear purpose and will encourage a coordinated approach in order to achieve this. There are a number of reasons why good planning is important: a secure future, to attract new members, to develop volunteering, to support club staff and volunteers and to ensure efficient use of resources.

Producing a development plan can benefit your club in various ways:

- Provide a clear direction for your club's development
- Identify goals and help to focus your activity
- Attracting new members
- Improved chances of securing external funding
- Keep local, regional and national partners informed of your aims
- Demonstrate how your club is meeting the funding criteria once you get them

It may seem like a long and daunting task initially however it should be viewed as a 'to do' list which will save the club time and effort in the long run.

Who should write it?

Ideally a small working group of members who can represent all the members of the club to ensure it is relevant to everyone should lead the development of the plan. The members should have knowledge, experience and enthusiasm to ensure the best plan for the club is produced.

How to plan...

A club development plan should answer five main questions:

1. Where have we come from?
2. Where are we now?
3. Where do we want to be?
4. How will we get there?
5. How will we know we have achieved our targets?



The aim of the plan is to set realistic targets for your club in achievable time frames.

Section 1 – History

Where have we come from?

Begin with a general overview of the club including a brief history of the club.

Section 2 – Audit

Where are we now?

You need to outline your club's current position, include a brief audit of the existing activities of the club.

The easiest way to do this is to complete a SWOT Analysis which allows you to identify the club's strengths and weaknesses as well as opportunities and threats in the near future.

- **Strengths** → what your club does well e.g. security of tenure, good access, lots of volunteers, SBD Centre
- **Weaknesses** → what your club could improve e.g. low membership, lack of equipment, poor participation by young people
- **Opportunities** → external chances to improve e.g. Sport England Small Grants, partners and sponsors, Cutting Edge programme
- **Threats** → external element that could cause trouble for the club e.g. increase in rent, low water levels, funding issues

While completing the analysis, consider the following areas:

PARTICIPATION AND MEMBERSHIP <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recruitment, membership turnover, fees• Membership gaps• School programmes/Cutting Edge• Women only sessions• Numbers of people actively participating• Competitions• Open access sessions	FACILITIES NEEDS <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Club boats• Clubhouse and changing provisions• Disabled access• Accessible slipways, pontoon etc.• Car parking• Straight line cable• Equipment – ski's, boards, wetsuits etc.
TRAINING <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ski Boat Driver Level 2 and Level 3• Availability of qualified instructors/coaches• Training for potential coaches• Availability and range of volunteers• Talent identification• External courses	ADMINISTRATION <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your committee structure and responsibilities• Volunteers and their responsibilities• Coordination of management resources• Club policies• Safeguarding• Risk assessments
MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication with members and BWSW• Contact with local authorities (e.g. CSP)• Local and regional media• Community involvement e.g. local events• Schools and colleges• Local sponsors• Promotional material (e.g. flyers, Facebook)	FINANCE <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Budgets• Income and expenditure• Fundraising• Facility hire• Assets

Section 3 – Aims

Where do we want to be?

Once you have analysed where you are, you need to look at where you want to be in the future and think about your objectives for the club over the next 3-5 years. The aims must be realistic in terms of time scale, cost and resources.

You should be able to build on your strengths, address the weaknesses, utilise the opportunities and be aware of potential threats.

You may want to consider aims for each of the areas looked at in the analysis (participation and membership, finance, administration, marketing and communication, facility needs, and training)

Section 4 – Plan

How will we get there?

This section involves prioritising the aims identified in the previous section. These should then be broken down into specific targets for each year and how each will be achieved; this forms the basis of your club's action plan.

The plan can be formulated in a number of ways however a simple template of a table is shown below;

AREA	WHAT (What you want to achieve)	HOW (How it will be achieved)	WHEN (When it will be achieved by)	WHO (Who will do it)	COST (What it will cost in terms of money, time, people etc.)

Distribute the plan – it is the club's plan so make sure all members, sponsors and partners should have access to it. It may be useful for your local CSP, BWSW and other local agencies to have access to it so send a copy to them.

Section 5 – Review

How will we know we have achieved our targets?

The most important part of the development plan is regularly monitoring your progress against the targets you set. This will ensure you continue to move in the right direction and help you to realise when you have achieved something. The plan is a working document so it can be modified to allow for unforeseen delays, changes in personnel, funding issues etc.

Useful Tips

- Make sure it is relevant to your club and your members
- Set achievable, measureable goals with specific time frames
- Be realistic when setting budgets and costs
- Keep it short and simple; include a more detailed appendix if necessary
- Ensure it looks professional and attractive
- Keep it up-to-date – review it!!