

Guidance for Clubs Supporting Youth Ambassadors

The Youth Ambassador Programme is a new West Midlands initiative designed to empower young voices and increase youth involvement regional decision-making. Through this programme, clubs actively empower young members, fostering leadership and enabling them to influence decisions at both club and regional levels.

This document outlines the purpose of the programme, the responsibilities of clubs, and essential safeguarding measures to support the success of the Youth Ambassadors.

As this is a pilot project, we will be trialling the way this role is supported through the club, and so any work we will be looking to introduce through this project will be done with youth ambassador and mentor combined. Any applications received will require prior agreement between the young person and the club committee, including the welfare officer.

Purpose of the Youth Ambassador Programme

The Youth Ambassador Programme has been established to achieve several goals:

- **Empower Youth Representation:** This initiative gives young members a platform to share their insights and perspectives, ensuring their voices shape the future of aquatic sports both at the club level and regionally.
- **Enhance Inclusivity:** By amplifying youth voices, clubs can foster a more inclusive culture that reflects the needs and aspirations of younger members.
- **Develop Leadership Skills:** The programme equips participants with practical skills in communication, teamwork, and advocacy, preparing them for future roles both within and outside aquatics.
- **Strengthen Club Culture:** Actively involving Youth Ambassadors promotes a sense of ownership among young members and fosters stronger connections between all club members.

By supporting this programme, clubs contribute to a vibrant, dynamic, and inclusive aquatic community, ensuring that young people remain at the heart of its growth and development.

Responsibilities of the Club

Clubs hosting a Youth Ambassador must take the following steps to provide the necessary support and ensure the programme's success:

1. **Support the Youth Ambassador**

- Assign **two adult mentors** to provide regular guidance and act as primary contacts for the Youth Ambassador. These mentors could include a committee member, parent, or coach but one **must** be the club welfare officer.
- Ensure these mentors have up-to-date safeguarding training and relevant checks, such as DBS certification. Their role includes offering advice, helping resolve challenges, and providing regular encouragement to the Youth Ambassador.

2. Facilitate Their Role

- Create opportunities for the Youth Ambassador to participate in club meetings, especially where decisions affecting younger members are discussed.
- Provide resources such as meeting agendas, access to feedback platforms, or training tools to help them fulfil their responsibilities.

3. Manage Surveys and Feedback Safely

- All feedback collection activities, particularly surveys on sensitive topics, must be overseen by the club's **welfare officer** to protect both the Youth Ambassador and participants.
- The **welfare officer** should review survey results and manage concerns or sensitive issues, ensuring they are handled professionally and appropriately, before handing them onto the Youth Ambassador
- Clubs should ensure feedback activities are inclusive and conducted in a way that encourages honest communication while respecting participants' privacy.

4. Promote Their Initiatives

- Actively support the Youth Ambassador's ideas and projects by helping them implement these within the club.
- Celebrate their contributions through recognition at club events, newsletters, or social media platforms to highlight their achievements and encourage their development.

Safeguarding Considerations

Ensuring the safety and well-being of Youth Ambassadors is essential. Clubs must:

- **Establish Clear Boundaries:** Youth Ambassadors should not be placed in positions where they handle complaints or sensitive issues directly. All concerns must be referred to the welfare officer or a designated adult.

- **Provide Adequate Training:** Clubs should ensure that both Youth Ambassadors and their mentors receive relevant training on safeguarding
- **Encourage Regular Check-ins:** Mentors should frequently meet with the Youth Ambassador to monitor their progress, discuss challenges, and provide consistent support.

These steps ensure that the Youth Ambassador feels secure and supported, contributing positively to their development and success in the role.

Key Contacts for Support

If you need additional guidance or have any questions about supporting your Youth Ambassador, please reach out to a welfare officer. contact information can be [found here](#).