

V4V Good Practice Case Studies: British Gliding Association

Sport / Activity: Gliding
Country: United Kingdom



Which of the four pillars does the example cover?

- Volunteer strategy and planning
- Volunteer recruitment and deployment
- Volunteer management and retention
- Volunteer development and training

Focus of volunteer intervention: Improving approaches to volunteering

Objective(s):

Surveys and reports undertaken recently have identified that around 70% of British volunteers are unhappy. The primary reason for this is that people have not been asked to do what they would like to do, highlighting the importance of volunteer management and retention. A key concern for the British Gliding Association has been the number of clubs who reported difficulties getting enough people to help out and support their activities.

For safety reasons, gliding is a permission-based culture, so in a gliding club it is particularly important to actively invite people to volunteer. The foundation for healthy volunteering is to; develop a good understanding about what needs doing; and getting agreement on what is involved in each role and how the volunteers will be supported. The focus of this intervention was therefore to provide clubs with resources that would help them to develop and implement a volunteer strategy

Activities undertaken:

The British Gliding Association provided a set of resources to support clubs to meet their volunteering needs. This included guidance on developing a volunteer strategy, doing a skills audit, developing role descriptions, running volunteer inductions, and supporting and valuing volunteers. They also ran a 'Healthy Volunteering' Conference to encourage clubs to establish Volunteer Coordinators to oversee volunteering within each club. Additional resources and guides were also made available on the British Gliding Association website to help with the management of volunteers.

Challenges faced:

In gliding, people who 'help out' might not view themselves as being 'volunteers', using the terms 'volunteer' and 'volunteering' can themselves form barriers to people responding to club requests to 'join in' and 'help out'. As such, it was necessary for some clubs to adjust the language they used in order to attract volunteers.

It is also important that when recruiting new volunteers, the club understands what capacity it has to support volunteers – it is crucial that new volunteers have a nominated individual within the club who can act as a point of contact and support.

Impact:

The resources helped clubs to develop a more strategic approach to recruiting, managing, and retaining volunteers, particularly in relation to project planning and future club management decision making.

Looking after volunteers well helps to create a more successful and enjoyable club which encourages others to join in – both as new club members and active volunteers.

For further information: <https://www.gliding.co.uk/>