

Rewarding Your Volunteers with runningsports

With the sports awards season in full swing, you will no doubt be thinking about how you can ensure your volunteers feel valued and are rewarded for their time. Whilst awards are a great way to reward volunteers, there are many other ways that you can thank your volunteers.

Sports volunteers are the lifeblood of sports clubs - without them the majority of clubs just couldn't function. Volunteers are extremely valuable, and deserve considerable praise and thanks. So it's essential that volunteers feel that their role and their actions are important; they want to feel welcome, needed, useful, part of the team and thanked.

So how can you reward your volunteers? Sometimes it's the simple things that make a difference, just saying thank you or offering praise while they are doing their role. Other ways you could thank your volunteers include:

- ❖ Acknowledge them in club newsletters and on the notice board
- ❖ Send them birthday and Christmas cards
- ❖ Listen to their ideas and implement their suggestions where possible
- ❖ Organise a social event for volunteers
- ❖ Pay for them to attend relevant skills and training events
- ❖ Give them a thank you certificate
- ❖ Deals on club membership
- ❖ Give them complimentary tickets to special events and functions

It is also worthwhile to ensure club members understand the impact that volunteers have on your club. This can be done through raising awareness of what the volunteers do within the club. Suggestions for doing this include;

- ❖ Producing articles for the club newsletter that focus on a particular role - for example 'a day in the life of a groundsperson' or 'what does a club secretary do?'
- ❖ Creating a notice board that explains the different roles at the club

More information can be found in the runningsports Top Tip '*Recognising and Rewarding Volunteers*' and in the '*Volunteers*' Quick Guide, both of which can be accessed free by Network Members on the runningsports' website - www.runningsports.org. There is also a runningsports workshop, '*Valuing Your Sports Volunteers*', which is an excellent way to meet people from other clubs and the tutor will positively encourage you all to swap ideas at the event. '*Valuing Your Sports Volunteers*' will help you to recruit more volunteers, motivate, retain, reward and manage them even more effectively. To find your nearest workshop, visit the runningsports website and view the [workshop calendar](#).

Most volunteers get pleasure from volunteering, but we all like to be treated well and thanked when we give our time for free. Rewarding volunteers is an essential part of retaining your club's workforce - it can't be left to chance!

For more information on rewarding your volunteers, or to access runningsports' range of resources, all designed to support administrative sports volunteers working in sports clubs across the country, visit our website, www.runningsports.org.