



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
- Attract new members
- Improve 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?

Although it may be quicker for one person to write the plan, the key to success depends on a handful of people with the right skills and knowledge shaping the plan.

A small group of people should therefore be identified as 'drivers' in developing the plan and they should all be on board from the start of the process.

Your club may decide to therefore form a planning group of just three or four people, for example:



- Project Sponsor – to oversee the project from implementation to completion and give advice when required
- Project Manager – to ensure everyone is carrying out their agreed role and tasks to keep the project delivery on time and within the agreed budget
- Project Coordinator – to act as the main contact person for all involved and to assist with roles as and when required

Although the process will be led by this group, it is important that club members and other partners are consulted and involved in the process as much as possible.

For example, the planning group may wish to consult:

- Club members
- Lapsed members
- Volunteers and coaches
- Your Local Community Sports Hub Officer or Local Sports Development Officer
- Active Schools Coordinator
- Your Scottish Rugby Regional Manager

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, high membership, geography

Weaknesses → what your club could improve e.g. low membership, lack of equipment, poor participation across minis and youth section

Opportunities → external chances to improve e.g. **sportscotland** grants, partners and sponsors, Active Schools partnership, Development Officer recruitment

Threats → external elements that could cause trouble for the club e.g. increase in rent, funding issues, other sports clubs

While completing the analysis, consider the following areas:

<p>PARTICIPATION AND MEMBERSHIP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment, retention, membership turnover • Membership gaps • School programmes • Inclusion • Social members • Competitions 	<p>FACILITIES NEEDS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pitches – matches • Pitches – training (summer and winter) • Clubhouse and changing provisions • Disabled access • Car parking • Equipment – balls, bibs, markers, post protectors
<p>TRAINING & EDUCATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scottish Rugby qualifications – coaches and match officials • Availability of qualified instructors/coaches • Training for potential coaches • Recruitment and retention of volunteers • Talent identification • CPD opportunities 	<p>ADMINISTRATION & GOVERNANCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your committee structure and responsibilities • Club legal status • Volunteers and their responsibilities • Coordination of management resources • Club policies • Safeguarding • Risk assessments
<p>MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication with members • Contact with local authorities • Local and regional media • Community involvement e.g. local events • Schools and colleges • Local sponsors • Promotional material (e.g. flyers, Facebook) 	<p>FINANCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership fees • Budgets • Income and expenditure • Fundraising • Grants • 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.

Ideally, your Club Development Plan should:

- Be based on the overall 'vision' for the club
- Review and establish the current position and health of the club, membership, no. of coaches etc.
- Highlight projected actions, resources, finances and timescales to achieve these goals
- Allow for regular reviews of progress, outcomes and small adaptations throughout the year

Your plan should be easy to use, review and amend and should be signed off by the 'Committee/Project Drivers'

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 have access to it.

Section 5 – Review

How will we know we have achieved our targets?

Regularly review your Club Development Plan, at least quarterly, it is essential to ensure you are still on your way to achieving your aims and overall vision.

Your planning committee and club members have invested time and effort into developing the plan, so use it and ask for help if and when required.

The club should continually update the plan to ensure there are always targets to work toward and the club is continually developing.

Furthermore, your Club Development Plan is an excellent tool to update local sports networks and funding agencies of your club’s intentions, aspirations and willingness to develop.

As the targets set in the plan are all *specific* and *measurable*, the review process should be relatively simple and not too time consuming.

Re-assess the targets and objectives, are they still relevant and achievable?

The club should re-assess the overall objectives and targets at least annually to ensure they are still relevant to the club’s aspirations and they are still achievable within the planned time scales.

The club may need to amend the objectives, targets or timelines within which they were to be completed. Any amendments to the Club Development Plan should be proposed to and agreed by the ‘Committee/Project Drivers’.

Useful Tips

- Make sure it is relevant to your club and your members



- Set achievable, measurable 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!!