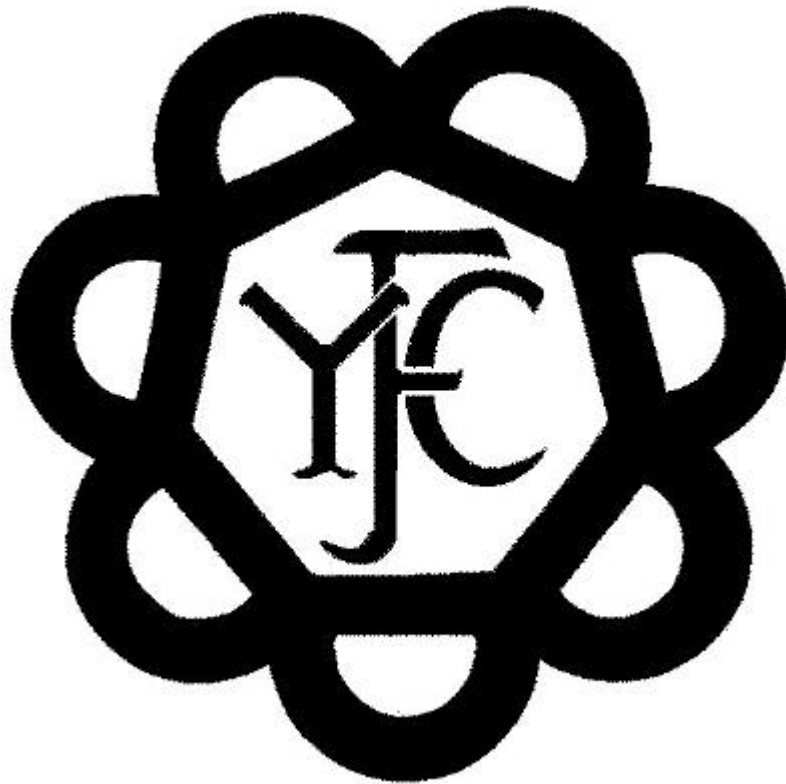


National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs



Club Officer Profiles

Club Leader

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1. INTRODUCTION

The role of the Club Leader is to provide advice, support and guidance to Club Officers and members in all aspects of running a Young Farmers' Club.

The purpose of this booklet is to provide support to Open or Senior Club Leaders in undertaking this role.

This booklet can be used as:

- An overview of the role for those considering becoming a Club Leader.
- An aide memoir to those who have been elected.
- The basis for a training course for new Club Leaders.
- A discussion document for outgoing Club Leaders and incoming Club Leaders.
- As a gift to every new Club Leader on election.

2. OVERVIEW OF MAIN ACTIVITIES

The Club Leaders' main activities include:

- To act as a "mentor" to Club Officers, especially those who are new and inexperienced.
- To ensure that the club complies with all relevant legislation.
- To step in as and when required to support the club during times of difficulty.
- To stay in touch with the club through regular attendance at Club Meetings and events or other means as appropriate.
- To keep up to date with relevant activities at other levels within YFC e.g. County, Area and National.
- To ensure that the club is providing a balanced programme of activities for all members.
- To be there for members when they need you!

3. WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE IN A MENTORING ROLE

A mentor is someone who voluntarily gives up their time to support, encourage and guide someone else to achieve certain objectives. A Club Leader acts as a "mentor" to the Club Officer team.

The mentoring role of a Club Leader will vary depending on the skills, knowledge and experience of the Officer Team within the club.

Here are six steps to good mentoring:

- Ensure that you are familiar with the guidelines on Child Protection, especially if the club has members under the age of 18 years. This is for your own protection as much as the members.

- Ensure that you understand the roles of the members you are supporting and that they know what your role is! (Club Officer Profiles for each role are available from NFYFC, the county office or from the NFYFC website www.nfyfc.org.uk).
- Work with the previous year's Officer Team to provide induction to the new officers.
- Get to know the club and its members. This will enable you to judge when it is appropriate to offer help and when it is advisable to stand back and observe.
- Be approachable and prepared to listen, no matter how much of a hurry you are in.
- Remember you do not have to be an expert in everything, but do be prepared to find out if you don't know.

Some mentoring do's and don'ts:

- Do share experiences with other Club Leaders, both within the club and from other clubs. This can provide useful links should a problem arise for which additional support is required, or just someone to talk to.
- Do respect the values and opinions of the young people concerned and the qualities they bring to the post(s). They might not do it "your" way, but it could still work.
- Do be available to support club members if they ask for it.
- Don't say "that's not my job"!
- Don't judge club members or say "I told you so".
- Do be diplomatic.

4. PROBLEM SOLVING

At some time during a Club Officer's term it is likely that problems will occur. As Club Leader it could fall to you to support them through these. Outlined below are some guidelines on how to approach problem solving.

Here are six steps to problem solving:

1. Gather all the relevant information/check the facts
2. Identify the problem
3. Find a variety of solutions
4. Look at the consequences of these solutions
5. Act on the most suitable solution

6. Review the effectiveness of the actions

Remember to use skills such as tact, diplomacy, listening skills and patience, especially if the problem involves member's personal issues.

5. COMMUNICATION

As Club Leader you may find yourself communicating with a number of different groups of people.

These could include: -

- Club Officer Team
- Club members
- Parents
- Advisory Group members
- County Staff/Officers
- Area staff/members
- NFYFC staff/Council members
- External bodies e.g. local council, Police, funders, Parish Council, press, local community.

Communication is a two way process, which may involve written words, verbal and non-verbal methods of communicating, or a combination of all three. Communication not only includes talking, but also listening.



"Nature gave people two ears but only one tongue, which is a gentle hint that they should listen more than they talk!!"



Communication is a vital part of ensuring the smooth running of a club, event or meeting. In order to ensure you use the best method(s) it is important to understand what you are trying to communicate, why and to whom. It is also important to decide where and when the communication will take place.

5.1 BODY LANGUAGE

Don't forget that communication can also be non-verbal. Our bodies can show how we are feeling without us realising. It can give away whether we are telling the truth or are feeling uncomfortable.

If someone is standing up, leaning to one side and has their arms folded, then they are showing that they are not interested in what is happening.

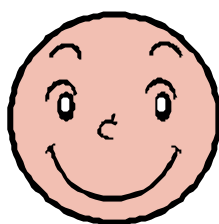
Standing too close to someone can make them feel uncomfortable, but so can standing too far away. They might see you as distant or stand-offish. Watch the group around you to see what the acceptable levels of personal space are.

If someone is sitting slightly turned away from the speaker with arms and legs folded then they are probably not interested in what is being said, but if they start to unfold their arms or uncross their legs, you are getting somewhere!

If someone is nervous they may fiddle with their hair, nails or clothes.

Maintaining eye contact shows that you are interested and confident. Someone who is shy or nervous will not maintain eye contact for long. However, staring could be seen as aggressive.

Don't forget that a smile goes a long way to making someone feel at ease.



6. LEGISLATION

YFC members undertake a diverse range of activities. It is therefore inevitable that a number of elements of legislation will apply at some point. Outlined below are the key areas which affect the weekly running of YFCs, along with some guidelines to support Club Leaders in their role of **ensuring** the appropriate legislation is implemented. Additional resources and further reading are listed at the end of the profile.

6.1 HEALTH AND SAFETY

It is vital, if we are going to provide opportunities for "fun, learning and achievement", that the activities we do are safe and that any risks to members and supporters are minimised.

Due to the nature of its size NFYFC is legally bound to produce a written Health and Safety Policy. However, all organisations have a duty to ensure that their employees, volunteers, helpers, supporters and the general public are protected from risk as much as is reasonably practicable.

Therefore it is essential that at all levels of YFC a culture of ensuring safety be developed. In order to provide a safe environment at a club level, Club Leaders should consider the following:

- Obtaining a copy of the NFYFC Health and Safety Policy.
- Making contact with the County Health and Safety Officer.
- Supporting the club in adopting a Health and Safety Policy.
- Seeking support from the county office, other clubs or NFYFC on putting health and safety/risk assessment procedures in place.

- Undertaking risk assessments for the club meeting place and any activities the club arranges. (A risk assessment template can be found at Appendix A).

The NFYFC Health and Safety Policy gives guidelines on health and safety issues along with risk assessments for a variety of events. It can be downloaded from the NFYFC website www.nfyfc.org.uk, or your county office will have a copy.

6.2 CHILD PROTECTION

As Club Leaders you may find that you have members under the age of 18 within your club. As with health and safety, we have a duty to **ensure** that YFC members (especially those under the age of 18 years) are kept safe from harm at all times during YFC activities.

It is at club level that the majority of interaction takes place between young people and adults. Parents have placed their children in your care and they expect you as Club Leader to always act in their best interests. Therefore, it is essential that Club Leaders are aware of child protection issues.

The NFYFC Policy for the Protection of Children and Young People provides guidance for Club Leaders in undertaking this role. It can be downloaded from the NFYFC website www.nfyfc.org.uk, or your county office will have a copy.

6.3 CHARITY COMMISSION

The Charity Commission lays down minimum guidelines for whether an organisation should register as a charity. If your club has one or more of the criteria below then it should be registered as a charity and this will require the club to prepare and maintain accounting records. These records (cash books, invoices, receipts etc.) must be retained for at least six years.

- A gross annual income of more than £1,000
- A rateable occupation of land or buildings
- A permanent endowment (i.e. land, buildings or cash which cannot be spent by the charity)

A registered charity is required by law to file an annual report and financial statement with the Charity Commission. The legal requirement is most simply met by publishing your accounts in the style recommended with the associated annual report (Paper 193/92/A). There is not a legal requirement for smaller charities (that is, charities in England and Wales with incomes of under £10,000 a year) to have a professional audit. However, the standard YFC constitution (A5000) says that an independent audit should always be carried out before the Annual General Meeting (AGM) adopts the club accounts.

You must fill in the Central Register of Charities Annual Return Form (some county offices do this on behalf of their clubs so be sure to send in your accounts as soon as they are adopted).

State your registered charity number on all correspondence and cheques (banks will print this on your cheque books for you).

The Charity Commission has a website which contains detailed guidance on all aspects of running a charity (www.charity-commission.gov.uk).

6.4 RESPONSIBILITIES OF TRUSTEES

All clubs should appoint a Management Committee at the AGM which consists of at least three people from among the Club Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Leader. All such committee members must be over the age of 18 years and they will be the trustees with legal responsibility for the management of the charity.

The trustees are the people who are legally responsible for the overall management and decision making in a charity. They are responsible for the direction and performance of the charity. The trustees must ensure that the charity keeps within the law, not just charity law, but also other laws such as employment, health and safety, data protection etc. However, that does not mean that the trustees have to be experts in all aspects of the law. There are a number of specialist organisations which can help.

The Charity Commission produces a summary of the Responsibilities of Charity Trustees (CC3(a)) which can be downloaded from the Charity Commission Website (www.charity-commission.gov.uk)

6.5 INSURANCE

NFYFC arranges insurance for all Clubs, Counties and Areas through the NFU Mutual in the form of a global policy. This policy covers the following areas:

- Public/products liability
- Employers liability
- Fidelity guarantee
- Money
- Office contents
- Borrowed/hired livestock
- Borrowed/hired vehicles, machinery and equipment
- Travel (optional)
- Personal accident
- Trophies
- Hired buildings
- Motor liability (off road)
- Liability (road use)
- Damage to farm premises
- Personal accident insurance for yfc staff
- Personal effects of staff, judges and stewards

Copies of the global policy are available from your County office, NFYFC or the NFYFC website www.nfyfc.org.uk. It is important that you obtain a copy of the insurance policy to check what is and isn't insured.

6.6 DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

NFYFC provides guidance for counties on drugs and alcohol, in the form of the NFYFC Drug and Alcohol Guidelines, which can help Club Leaders in their role. Our legal and professional obligations relating to drugs and alcohol are as follows:

Immediate action should be taken to stop the following activities at an YFC event:

1. Smoking cannabis
2. Illegal supply or consumption of drugs, including alcohol to under 18s

The NFYFC Drugs and Alcohol Guidance for Counties gives Club Leaders guidelines on what to do to minimise the risks and suggests ways of dealing with situations, along with the legal position.

The NFYFC Drugs and Alcohol Guidance for Counties provides guidance for Club Leaders in undertaking this role. It can be downloaded from the NFYFC website www.nfyfc.org.uk, or your county office will have a copy.

7. USEFUL HINTS AND TIPS FROM OTHER CLUB LEADERS

- Talking to members on a one to one basis can help solve many club problems, however, you need to be aware of the Child Protection issues if this involves members under the age of 18 years.
- A little common sense goes a long way!
- It is important for a Club Leader to be approachable.
- Always find out both sides of any story, things are rarely as straight forward as they seem and the wrong decision or advice could lead to further problems.
- Relax, enjoy it and be there to support members and officers if and when they need it!
- The newer policies such as Health and Safety and Child Protection may seem alien to some Club Leaders, however, they are very user friendly and should not "put off" potential Club Leaders.
- Club Leaders should know lots and say very little!
- Ensure that the club provides a balanced programme of activities to keep all members interested.
- Encourage your clubs to have joint activities with other clubs.

8. FURTHER INFORMATION

Health and Safety Executive (Website – www.hse.gov.uk)
Charity Commission (Website – www.charity-commission.gov.uk)
Area Child Protection Unit (Website – www.acpc.gov.uk)
National Council for Voluntary Youth Service (Website – www.ncvys.org.uk)
NFYFC Club Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer Profiles
NFYFC Club Programme Guide
NFYFC Recruitment and Retention Pack
NFYFC Website – www.nfyfc.org.uk
Club Constitution
County office
NFYFC Office (Tel: 02476 857200, email: post@nfyfc.org.uk)
Skills for Life Programme
NFYFC/County Health and Safety Policy
NFYFC/County Child Protection Policy
NFYFC/County Drug and Alcohol Guidance
Competitions programme
Countryside Challenge
Leadership Development
Training Techniques courses
Checklist and Sample Agenda for a Club AGM (Available from NFYFC)
Committee Procedures (Available from NFYFC)

And Finally.....

Good Luck!

RISK ASSESSMENT

APPENDIX A

A Risk Assessment is a careful examination of what could cause harm to people so that a judgment can be made as to whether enough precautions have been taken or whether more should be done to prevent harm. The key judgment is whether a hazard is significant and whether the precautions taken make the risks small. There are five steps to follow:

- Look for Hazards** – look for significant hazards that could result in serious harm. Ask other people in the setting for their views and for information about hazards they have noticed;
- Decide who might be harmed and how** – consider everyone who may be in the setting, including volunteers, members, the general public and guests;
- Evaluate the risks and decide whether existing precautions are adequate or whether more should be done** – Look at ways of removing the hazard or, if this is not possible the ways of controlling the risks.
- Make a record of your findings** – A blank standard form is overleaf
- Review assessments and revise if necessary** – it is good practice to review the risk assessments in order to check whether procedures are still effective. A new risk assessment will be needed for any major changes which introduce other significant hazards into the setting, for example, if outdoor activities are introduced or major new equipment is purchased.

Precautionary measures can be taken to reduce risk and prevent accidents:

Electrical

- Have all your electrical equipment been checked in the last year by a qualified electrician?
- Do all members know where the fuse box is located?
- Are there unsafe trailing wires?
- Make sure sockets are not overloaded with the amount of equipment.
- Make sure electrical items are switched off at the end of the night. Who is responsible for this?
- Make sure plug sockets are safe and not over heating.
- Make sure all members are informed about how to use electrical items.
- Remember to turn off lights and heaters at the end of the night.

First Aid

- Is the first aid box complete and contents still in date?
- Make sure you have a list of first aiders in your group.
- Make sure you have a procedure in place in case of an accident and that all members know it.
- Make sure you have a list of emergency contact.
- Make sure you have an accident book.

Fire

- Fire extinguishers must be checked on a regular basis.
- Make sure you have written fire instructions.
- Make sure you have regular fire drills.
- Make sure everyone knows what the fire alarm sounds like and knows the drill.
- Do you have a No Smoking Policy?



Risk Assessment Template

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF YOUNG FARMERS' CLUBS
(England & Wales)

Risk Assessment For (specify event/ venue):		Date Assessment Undertaken: By:	Assessment Review Date:
List Significant Hazards	List groups of people who are at risk from the significant hazards identified	List existing controls. List risks which are not adequately controlled and the action needed	Action taken and by whom

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