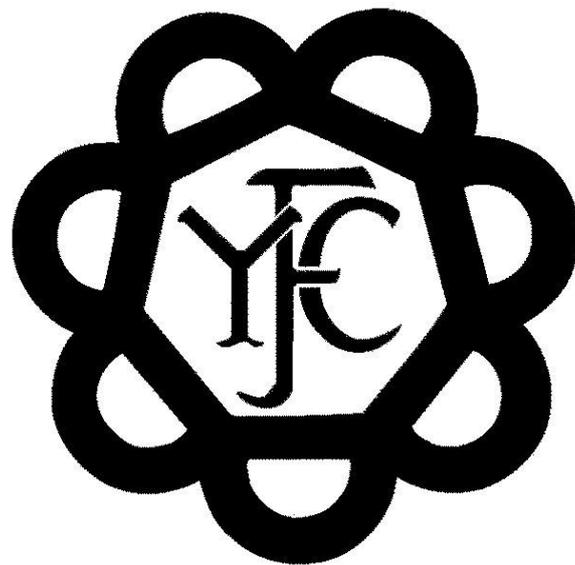


National Federation of Young
Farmers' Clubs



Club Officer Profiles

Club Secretary

(Reviewed Nov 2007)

Introduction

The purpose of this booklet is to outline the role of Club Secretary for those who are either considering taking on the role or who have recently been elected.

How to use this booklet

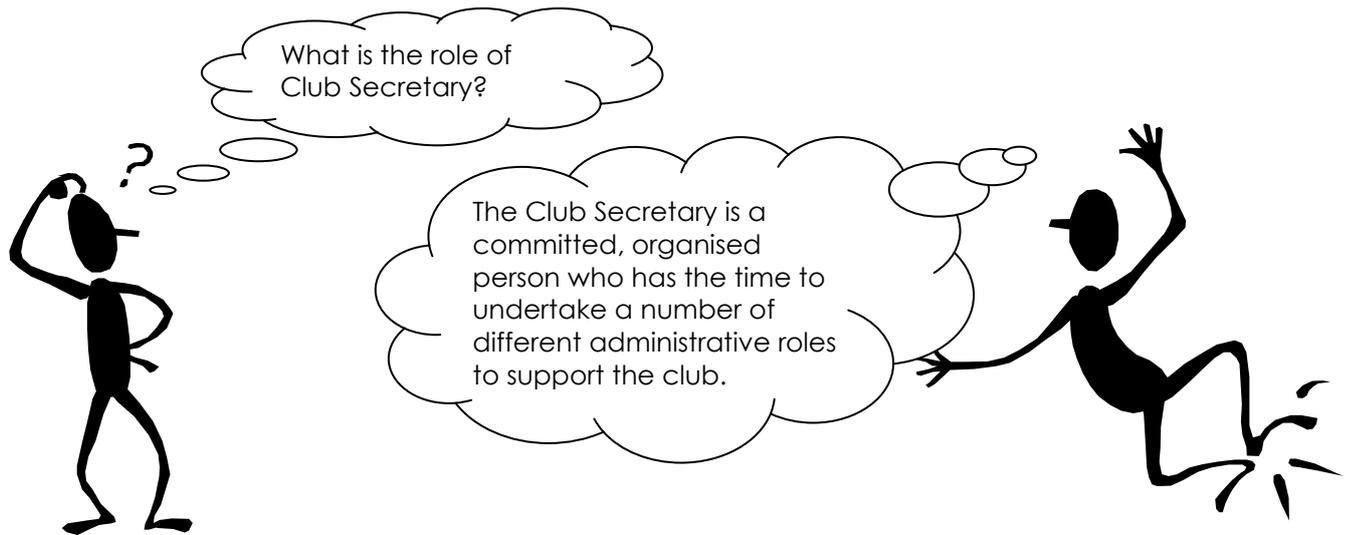
This booklet can be used as:

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

The booklet contains the following:

- The Role of Club Secretary
- Overview of the main activities
- Meetings
- Planning an Agenda
- Taking Minutes
- Dealing with Correspondence
- Communication
- Record Keeping
- Further Information

The Role of Club Secretary



Overview of Main Activities

The Club Secretary's main activities during the year of office include:

- ⊙ Supporting the Club Chairman in the planning and running of Club Meetings.
- ⊙ Recording club meetings including any decisions and actions agreed (minute taking).
- ⊙ Dealing with club correspondence.
- ⊙ Ensuring members are kept informed of events locally, regionally and nationally.
- ⊙ Keeping and maintaining all club records, including membership details.



Club Meetings

Meetings are a crucial part of ensuring the smooth running of your club for a number of reasons:

- They are a way of sharing important information with members about forthcoming events.
- They ensure that members are involved in the decisions that need to be made.
- They enable members to have the opportunity to raise any questions or make suggestions.

Therefore it is vital to ensure that they are planned well. As Club Secretary it is your role to support the Chairman in the smooth running of these meetings.

Here are a few helpful hints to achieve an effective meeting.

Before the Meeting

1. Always prepare the agenda with the Chairman.
2. Make sure everyone is aware of the date, time and venue.
3. Confirm that the venue and any other arrangements have been made.
4. Ensure that you have all the tools for the job
 - a. Attendance book and pen
 - b. Minute book
 - c. Copies of the agenda
 - d. Copies of any papers
 - e. Any correspondence you have received since the last meeting.
5. Ensure you have read the correspondence and can summarise it if necessary to save people getting bored while you read out a long letter!
6. Read the minutes of the last meeting to ensure nothing is outstanding. If it is, bring it to the attention of the chairman.
7. Ensure that a copy of the Club Constitution is available for the meeting. (It could be kept in the front of the minute book)

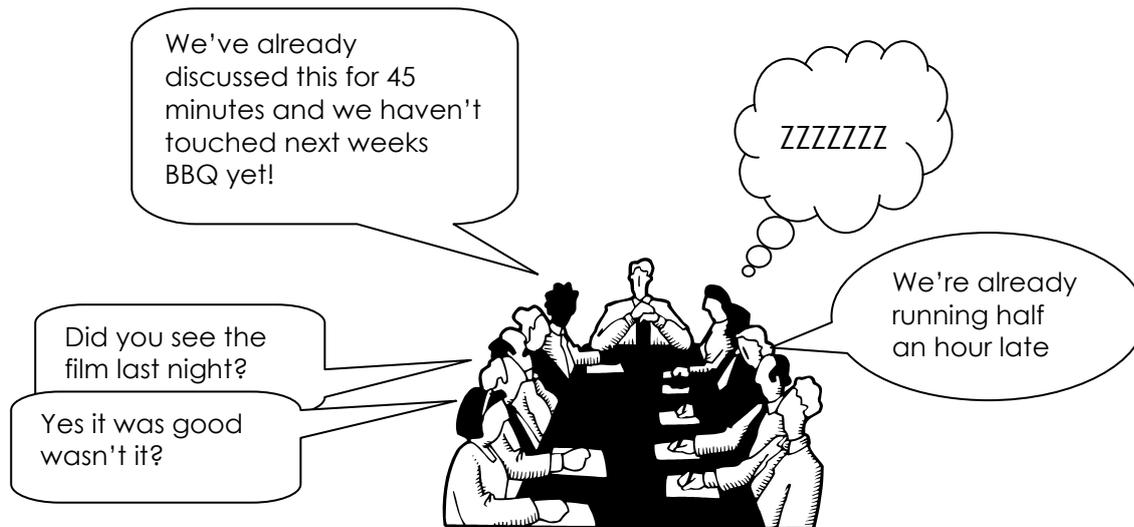
After the Meeting

1. Write up the minutes as soon as possible.
2. Write any letters of thanks required.
3. Take any action required from the minutes.
4. Ensure the arrangements are in place for the next meeting.

During the Meeting

1. Always be punctual.
2. Double check you have got all the necessary paperwork.
3. Read the minutes carefully.
4. Read relevant parts of correspondence.
5. Take minutes.
6. Support the Chairman should they need it.
7. Ensure that you have all the details of what decisions were made and who agreed to do what.

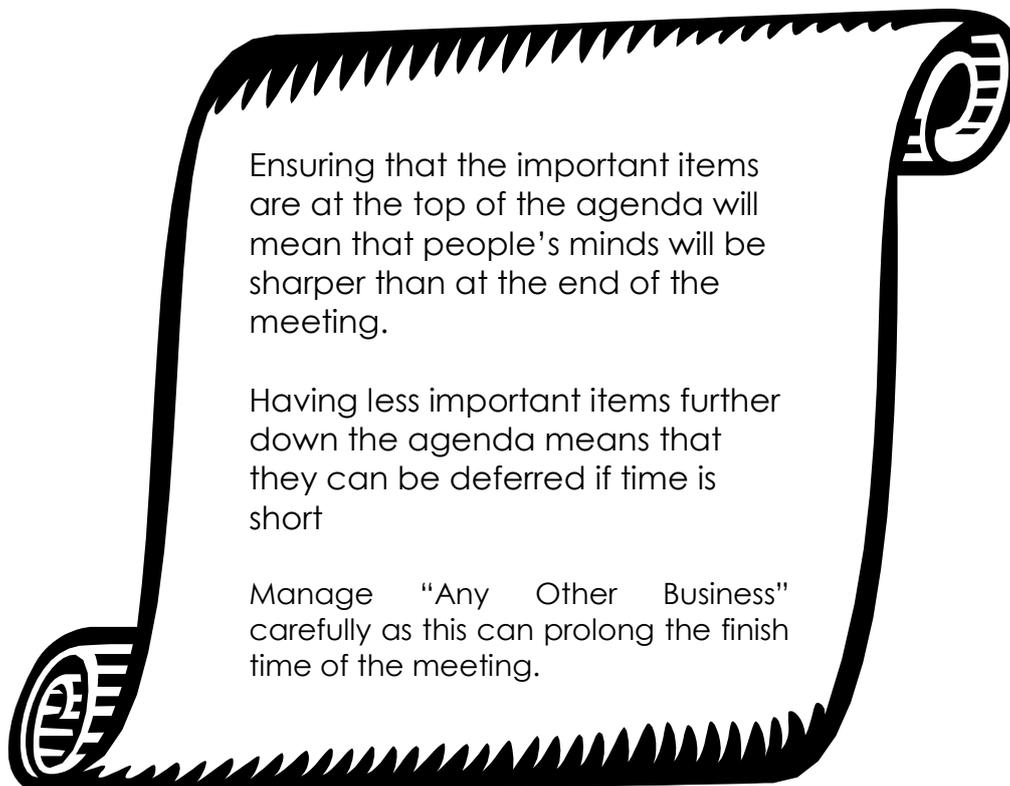
Planning an Agenda



How many times have you sat through a meeting and either found it difficult to concentrate after an hour-and-a-half or have spent lots of time discussing trivial items and run out of time for the important issues for the club.

Having a well put-together agenda can help with the smooth and effective running of club meetings.

Here are a few things to think about when putting an agenda together:



SAMPLE AGENDA

Club Name YFC

Club Meeting to be held on 23 May 2010 at YFC Room, Parish Rooms, Any town at 8.00pm

AGENDA

1. Chairman's Welcome

- Hints:** Ensure the Chairman includes
- a) Special Guests (E.g. President, County Rep)
 - b) Speaker (Give the topic for the evening as well)
 - c) Any new members (It will make them feel welcome)

2. Apologies

3. Minutes of the Last meeting

- Hints:** To be read out by the Secretary or other nominated member.

The Chairman then asks the club members' approval to sign the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting. If there are any alterations that need to be made, the Chairman should initial next to the amendment prior to signing the minutes.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

- Hints:** Ensure chairman asks for an update or notes any action from the last meeting which do not appear anywhere else on the agenda
This should only include matters discussed at the last meeting, NOT any new business

5. Correspondence

- Hints:** This should include letters and newsletters received by the club.
The secretary should read correspondence beforehand to ensure they can give the important details to members.

6. To receive any reports

- Hints:** These may be from a County Committee, competition, sport or social event or from the club committee.

7. Any Other Business

- Hints:** This can be used to remind people of forthcoming events.
BE CAREFUL however as this section can prolong the meeting beyond the planned finish time.

8. Diary Dates

- Hints:** This is a good opportunity to let members know about forthcoming activities at county, area and national.

9. Date and details of the next meeting

10. Main Business of the Meeting

- Hints:** The Chairman should at this point hand over to the programme organiser or introduce the speaker themselves.
At the end of this section ensure that a **Vote of Thanks** is given. It is useful to establish who will do this prior to the meeting.

11. The meeting is then declared closed

Minute Taking

Ensuring accurate minutes of any meetings are produced is a very important part of club life. If accurate minutes are not taken, then it is unlikely that people will remember what decisions were made and who agreed to do what.

Outlined below are a few hints and tips on taking accurate minutes.

- ✓ Check your club's constitution to see if there are any requirements for minute taking or the sending out of minutes.
- ✓ The minutes should include the following:
 - The name of the club
 - The type of meeting (Club meeting, business meeting, advisory etc.)
 - The date and time the meeting was held
 - Apologies for absence
 - The names of those present (or the phrase "as written in the attendance book")
 - In what capacity they attended.
- ✓ If you are unable to attend, ensure that someone else takes responsibility for your duties, don't leave it to chance.
- ✓ The content of the minutes does not need to be a word for word account of everything that was said, but the following should be recorded:
 - The precise wording of any resolution along with the name of the proposer and seconder and the result of any vote.
 - A summary of the discussion on each item.
 - Information on which a decision was based.
 - Any actions required and by whom.
 - The date, time and venue of the next meeting.
 - If a speaker has been invited record their name, topic and who gave the vote of thanks.
 - Time the meeting closed.
- ✓ Minutes can be written or typed and stored in a minute book.
- ✓ Minutes of meetings provide an excellent history of the club so it is useful to take care of them and ensure they are handed down year on year. Your local County archivist may be happy to store them for you at the County Records Office.

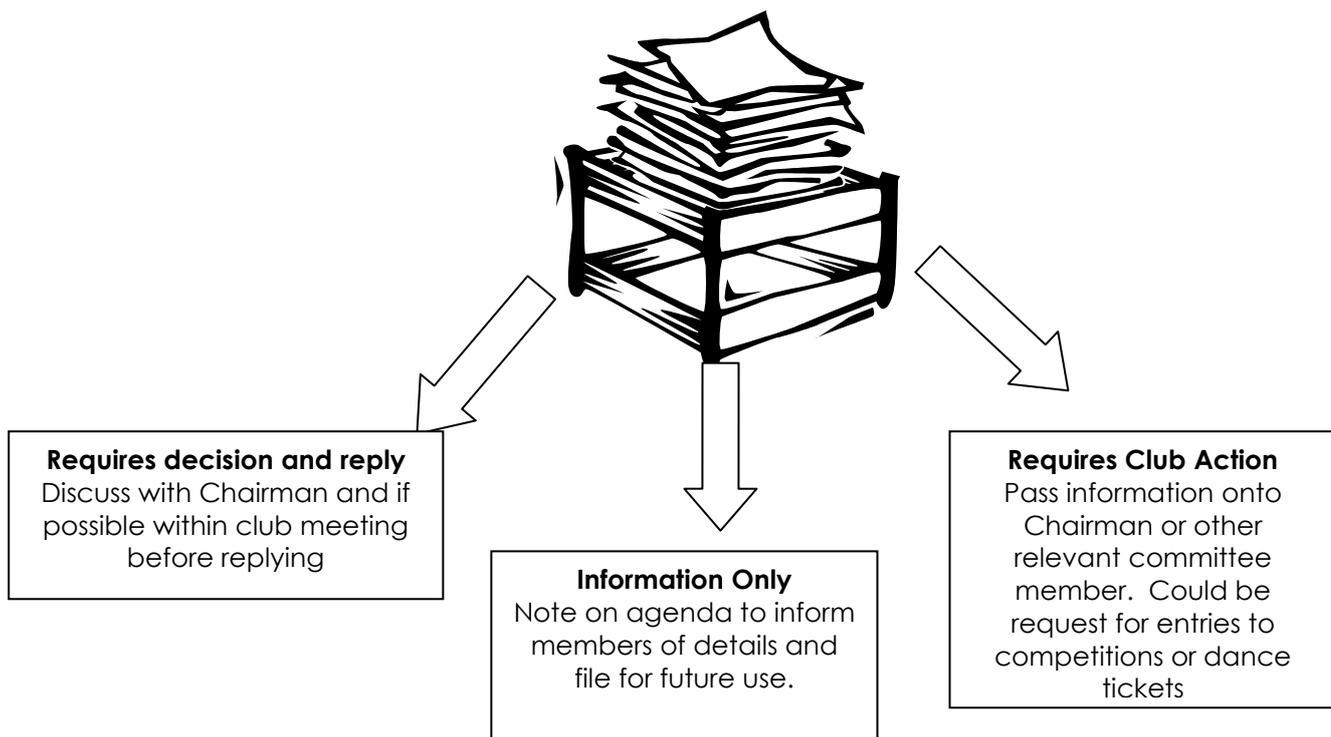


Dealing with Correspondence

As Club Secretary you will probably find yourself being the post box for the club for all sorts of information including the County Office, Area committee, NFYFC, external organisations, other charities, Parish Council and a host more.

The key to dealing with all this correspondence is to create yourself a simple filing system. It doesn't have to be a complicated system.

3 categories should be enough as follows:



Some more key points for dealing with correspondence:

- Acknowledge all correspondence.
- Send reminders and advance notices to Presidents and Advisory of forthcoming dates and events.
- Keep your County office updated with club information.
- Send letters of invitation and thanks where appropriate. E.g. after speaker has visited.
- Ensure all members receive a copy of the programme.
- Keep in contact with members who have not attended for a while.
- Use lots of different forms of communication.

Communication

As Club Secretary another important role is to ensure that all club members are kept informed about what is happening. Some suggestions of how you might do this are detailed below.



It's good to talk. But it can get quite time consuming and expensive for one person, so why not set up a telephone "tree" where a number of people (perhaps the officer team) take on responsibility to telephone some members with some members telephoning other members. Don't forget to produce a contact list of all members and give a copy to everyone.



Send a text. How many times have you been to a meeting and someone has forgotten to turn their mobile phone off or is texting during the boring bits! mobile phones are a good way of getting hold of busy people. Why not send a group text message, which many phones will allow you to do. A simple message like "Hope to c u 2nite" could increase attendance.



Send an email. Why not collect together the email addresses of all members who have access and send information by email. Why not also set up a club website. Many have done so already. Watch out for the links in the NFYFC website (www.nfyfc.org.uk). This is also a good way to keep in contact with members who have gone away to university.



Why not produce a club newsletter to inform members of what's coming up, diary dates, jokes, gossip, pictures, successes and anything else you can think of. Fliers and posters could also be used to publicise specific events.



Don't forget the good old fashioned letter. This may be better suited to the more traditional correspondence such as invitations to speakers and thank you notes. Keep receipts for all stationery you purchase and pass on to the treasurer.

Record Keeping

Another key role for the secretary is that of keeping records and ensuring that those which require it are updated regularly.

The following is a list (although not exhaustive) of the kind of records a secretary might need to keep:

- 📁 All Membership details/ parental consent forms (including contact details). ***It is important that these are updated regularly***
- 📁 Club Constitution
- 📁 A copy of any relevant policies E.g. Child protection, Health and Safety
- 📁 At least one blank risk assessment form
- 📁 Previously completed risk assessment forms
- 📁 Minutes of all Club meetings
- 📁 Minutes of Annual General Meetings
- 📁 Minutes of any other formal meetings which take place
- 📁 Attendance book
- 📁 Spare Club Programmes
- 📁 Spare Membership Forms
- 📁 A copy of the Club Supplies list from NFYFC

Other resources, which a secretary might find useful, include:

An address book, which includes the following contact details:

Members

Advisory

Supporters

Contacts for events, venues etc.

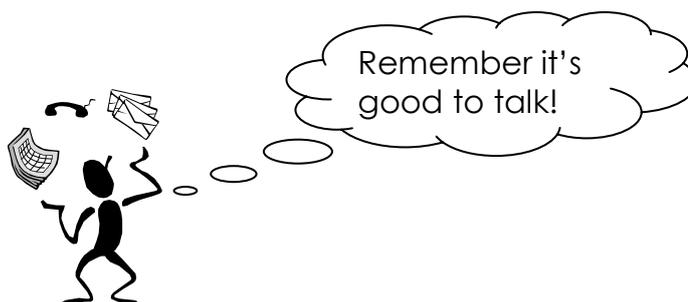
Publicity contacts e.g. Local paper, radio station

County Office

Other club contacts in the county

And of course a diary!

And finally, don't get bogged down in paperwork, if you need help talk to your other officers or the County Office, or have a look at the list of resources overleaf which might help you.



Further Information

Some resources, which you might find helpful:

NFYFC Website – www.nfyfc.org.uk

NFYFC Recruitment and Retention Guide

Club Constitution

Club Officer Guideline Cards

Clun Programme Guide

County Office

NFYFC Office (Tel: 02476 857200, Email: post@nfyfc.org.uk)

Leadership Development course

Management Adventure course for 16-18 year olds

Area Training Techniques courses

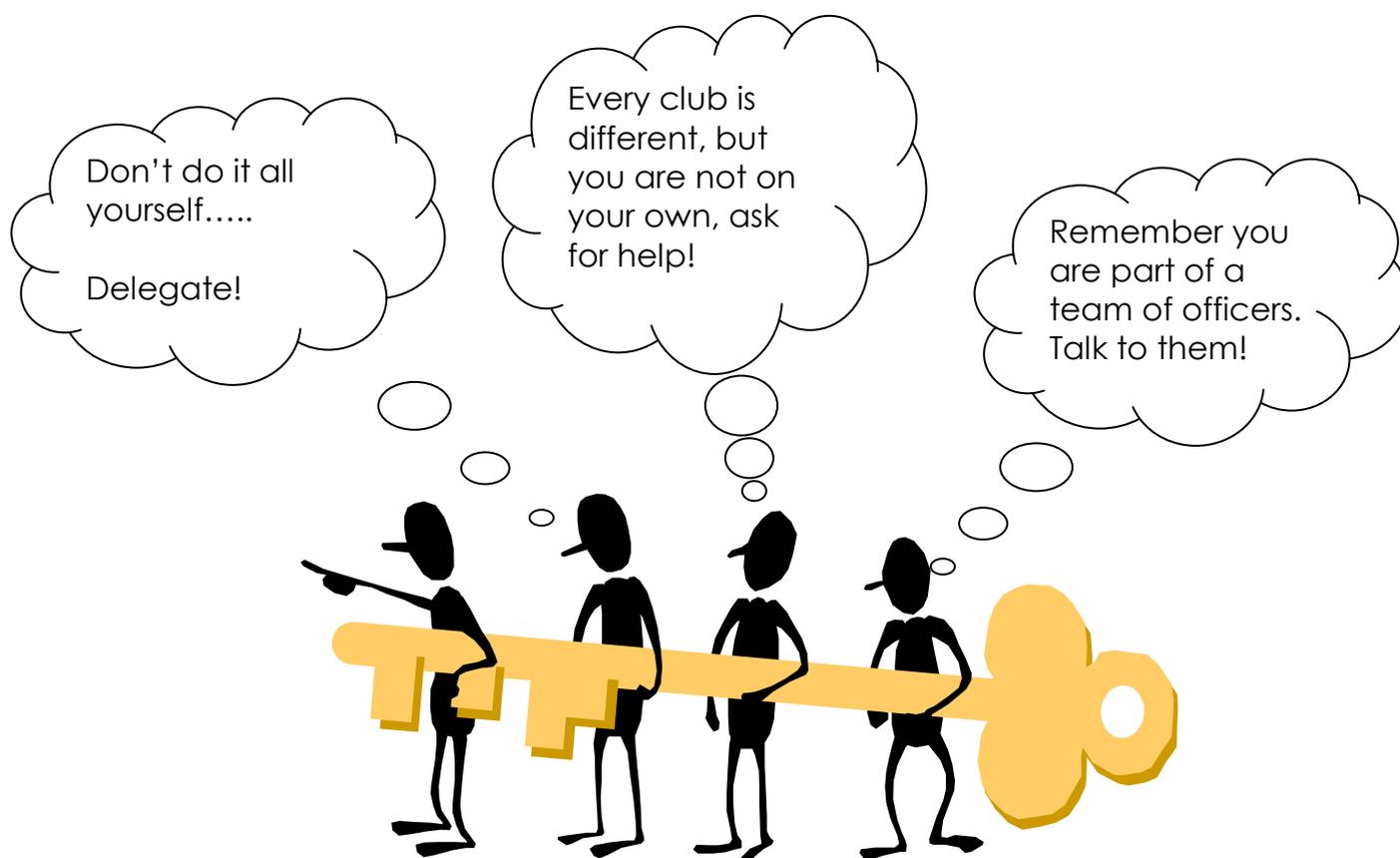
Charity Commission Website – www.charity-commission.gov.uk

Checklist and Sample Agenda for a Club AGM (Available from NFYFC or the NFYFC Website)

Committee procedures (Available from NFYFC)

And Finally.....

A few words from some Club Secretaries!



Good Luck!!

National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs
YFC Centre
10th Street
Stoneleigh Park
Kenilworth
Warwickshire
CV8 2LG

Tel: 02476 857200, Fax: 02476 857229

Email: post@nfyfc.org.uk, Website: www.nfyfc.org.uk