

Dear LGFA Development Team,

Our club AGM is coming up and the club want me to take the under 14 girls team this year. I have been with this team at under 12 and under 13 also and they are a brilliant bunch of girls but the problem I have is getting assistance from parents or other mentors. This is making me slightly reluctant to take the role. Do you have any advice on how I can get more volunteers involved to assist me?

(Paddy, Tipperary)

Hi Paddy

This is a problem that we come across regularly and volunteer recruitment can be very difficult in clubs. The most important thing for you to do, as a mentor of that team, is to create a welcoming and safe environment for new volunteers. It is essential that people feel they are required and not 'stepping on someone's toes' by getting involved.

There are always a number of parents on the side lines during training sessions and matches and the key for you is to unlock that barrier that prevents them putting their foot across that line to assist. We would advise that the first thing you do is 'ASK'. There are many parents etc who are waiting to be asked and have no problem assisting if they are given a role and are aware what is expected of them. The challenge for you as the mentor is to ensure that you allow these volunteers to carry out their role and feel part of the set up.

It is also important to remember that it can be very daunting for new volunteers to become involved particularly if they have no previous experience in gaelic games so assign appropriate roles and allow them to shadow you and learn new skills if required. You could also organise our new Ready Steady Coach workshop in your club to help up-skill these new volunteers who want to be involved in coaching the team with you or our Ready Steady Play if they would rather be involved in any of the other volunteer duties. Full information on these workshops are available from Aislinn Harkin on 01 8363156 or email Aislinn@ladiesgaelic.ie . These workshops will help build self-confidence in your new recruits.

Regardless of how you recruit these new volunteers it is essential that they feel appreciated, as you know yourself as a mentor, and that you make them feel part of your team. These people could be essential for the future development of your club so you want them to have a positive experience in your presence.

We hope you decide to stay involved as volunteers like you are essential in our sport and the development of the girls in clubs like yours throughout the country. We, as an Association, appreciate the time and effort of all our volunteers.

LGFA Development Team