

Just as there are lots of reasons why people participate or volunteer within sports clubs, there are also a number of barriers that might prevent this. Often these can be the difference between people joining your club or not. By understanding barriers, your club can put actions in place to overcome them and make joining easier. Areas to consider include:



Finance

Financial restraints can often be a barrier for people regularly taking part in sport and joining clubs. They may find it hard to commit to annual membership or afford the equipment and kit needed. Whichever it is, the cost of playing sport could prove difficult.

Possible solution

A specific discounted membership for this age group and kit available to use at the club so they don't have to purchase their own. Or being able to pay annual fees by monthly direct debit.



Time

One of the most common reasons for people not participating in sport is because of the other demands on their time. They are often very busy people trying to balance social, work and family commitments before even taking into account playing or volunteering their time for sport. Therefore it is important that they can participate in sessions at a time suitable for them.

Possible solution

Run longer activity sessions than normal that members can dip into when they can. Run alternative days offering different people the opportunity to try you out.



Transport

Getting to your club, sports facilities or even matches could prove difficult for those that do not have their own transport. This may make getting to your club a chore and could put them off all together.

Possible solution

Could your club organise sessions around the area at the start of the season to engage potential new members before asking them to travel a greater distance to the club facilities. Or could you introduce a car share scheme for members like businesses do? Does your club have good public transport that you could access?



Family commitments

A common life-changing experience for people is starting a new family and, as much as they might want to carry on playing sport or volunteering, they find it difficult to find time in between looking after children and organising childcare.

Possible solution

Some clubs have identified and arranged a crèche or childcare facilities on site allowing new parents to participate in confidence and with peace of mind. Having organised activities for slightly older children is a great way of capturing the next generation, especially if it is held at the same time as the adult activity.

DISCLAIMER:

Information is for guidance only and does not constitute formal professional advice. As such, no reliance should be placed on the information contained in this toolkit. Where specific issues arise in your organisation advice should be sought from the relevant expert(s) as necessary.