

## Volunteers: your questions answered – 3

*This series of information sheets has been developed to help you recruit, train and retain volunteers, both disabled and able-bodied, to support sailing programmes which include disabled people. To safeguard yourself and your volunteers, please ensure that you also read the series entitled **Volunteers - essential information**, available from [www.rya.org.uk/AboutRYA/RYASailability/Bestpracticemanual.htm](http://www.rya.org.uk/AboutRYA/RYASailability/Bestpracticemanual.htm)*

### What benefits can you offer volunteers?

Volunteers will all have different reasons for getting involved. To ensure that you make the job attractive, and offer them real benefits, you will need to find out what each volunteer wants from you:

- **New friends and activities**
  - Pair new volunteers with experienced ones so that they don't feel at a loose end.
  - Provide opportunities to meet people and to get out, to have new experiences and meet new friends.
  - Social functions – BBQ's, sailing regattas, wintertime theory courses.
- **The opportunity to gain skills and qualifications**
  - These might include sailing buddy, Assistant Sailing Instructor, Dinghy, Keelboat and Powerboat Instructor, rescue boat crew, minibus driver, hoist operator.
  - Introduce a progressive volunteer logbook and reward scheme. Provide certificates with the number of hours worked and activities undertaken (including training). This can be useful if volunteers are looking for further work or study opportunities.
  - Give volunteers a chance to achieve something on their own initiative.
- **Trips (potentially worldwide)**
  - Some competitive sailors need buddies to travel with them to national and international events in order to help with care and boat rigging.
- **'Feelgood factor'**
  - A 'uniform' (such as a club t-shirt or sweatshirt) and name badge makes volunteers feel valued and part of the team.
  - Show them on your organisational structure charts for the same reason.
  - Provide tea and coffee – as well as a friendly smile, regular thanks and travelling expenses if possible - and remember birthdays and other celebrations.
  - Offer childcare support if you can.