



**HOCKEY
IRELAND**

CLUB GUIDE



SUPPORT

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Section 1: Hockey Ireland

1.1 Introduction

Hockey Ireland is the driving force behind the sport of hockey on the island of Ireland. As the National Governing Body, we proudly connect clubs and schools in all 32 counties—creating exciting playing opportunities for boys and girls, men and women of all ages and skill levels.

Whether it's indoor or outdoor, our dynamic hockey programmes are designed to suit every player, from every background. We work hand-in-hand with like-minded organisations to make hockey accessible, inclusive, and fun for everyone.

Our vibrant community is supported by four regional branches, Connacht, Leinster, Munster, and Ulster, each powered by dedicated volunteers and backed by our expert team at Head Office in Dublin. With 168 clubs and 280 schools affiliated, the hockey spirit is alive and thriving across the country!

From grassroots activities to elite competition, we offer a clear pathway for every player. Most start at their local club, some rise through our Player Pathway Programme, and a select few go on to proudly represent Ireland on the international stage.

This aim of this Club Guide is to become your go-to resource for running a successful, well-organised club. Packed with practical tips and essential guidance, it outlines key roles, financial know-how, organisational structure, and compliance essentials. It's all about helping your club run smoothly, lead confidently, and create an amazing experience for every member or potential member.

1.2 Our Vision

“Unleash the power of hockey”

1.3 Our Purpose

“To lead, empower and support an environment for all to enjoy hockey and realise their potential whether playing, coaching, officiating, governing or watching our sport”.

1.4 Our Values

1. Attentive
2. Accountable
3. Ambitious

ATTENTIVE

At the heart of our organisation's values lies ATTENTIVENESS. We prioritise active listening, understanding, and seeking diverse perspectives to inform our decisions and strategies. As an organisation that relies heavily on its volunteer workforce, we recognise the importance of fostering an environment where every voice is heard and valued.

ACCOUNTABILITY serves as a cornerstone value within our organisation, reflecting our unwavering commitment to ownership, delivery, and meeting commitments. Clubs must play a crucial role in upholding this value by ensuring they operate with fairness, maintain clear communication with their members, being transparent in their operations, and ensuring that they meet the expectations of members, Hockey Ireland and the broader community with integrity and professionalism.

Our organisation's core value is rooted in AMBITION, driving us to constantly pursue excellence and success in all that we do. We actively seek out opportunities for growth and development, recognizing that progress is essential for sustained success. We approach decisions and actions with courage, unafraid to take bold steps and confront challenges head-on.

1.5 Our Governance and Management

Hockey Ireland proudly stands as the official National Governing Body (NGB) for hockey across the island of Ireland, recognised by Sport Ireland, Sport NI, and the International Hockey Federation (FIH).

At the heart of our organisation is a dynamic Board of Directors, steering the strategic vision and ensuring we meet our goals with integrity, purpose, and a commitment to excellence. They set the direction, uphold our values, and keep us aligned with our legal and regulatory responsibilities.

Bringing this vision to life is our energetic Chief Executive Officer (CEO), who leads the charge on all executive matters. Supporting the CEO is a dedicated Executive Team, backed by skilled staff and a passionate network of Regional Development Officers, all working together to grow the game at every level, from grassroots to elite.

This team is the engine that powers Hockey Ireland, driving progress, innovation, and opportunity for every player, coach, and club across the country.

1.6 Regional Level

Hockey Ireland is a proud all-island organisation, built on the strength and spirit of its four regional branches: Connacht, Leinster, Munster, and Ulster. Each branch runs independently with its own Board of Directors and some operate as a separate limited company, bringing a local focus to a national vision.

These Boards oversee a range of dedicated committees, each driving progress in key areas of governance and development. While closely aligned with Hockey Ireland's overall mission, it's important to recognise that each branch is an independent body, not a sub-committee of the national organisation.

Together, they form a powerful network, autonomous in structure, but united by a shared passion for growing the game across every corner of the island.

Local Club Level

Before a local club can take to the pitch officially, it must first apply for and receive official affiliation from Hockey Ireland. Once approved, the club becomes part of the national hockey family and can begin building its legacy in the community.

Clubs are powered by the passion of local volunteers, or a combination of volunteers and paid staff, all working together to create a thriving, welcoming environment. This dedicated group is responsible for the smooth and successful running of the club, on and off the pitch.

Each club offers safe, inclusive, and exciting hockey experiences, from training sessions to competitive matches. The goal for most? To foster a love for the game in an environment that's fun, supportive, and community-driven.

Every club is linked to one of Hockey Ireland's four provincial branches, based on its geographic location. Within the club, members are typically grouped into four key categories:

1. Players – the heart of the game
2. Volunteers – the lifeblood of the club (e.g. committee members, administrators)
3. Coaches & Umpires – who may be volunteers or paid professionals
4. Non-Playing Members/Supporters – loyal fans and club advocates

Together, they form the backbone of every hockey club, bringing energy, commitment, and community spirit to the sport we love.

Players

We have 2 types of playing membership. 1 Senior Membership for players aged 18yrs and over 2. Junior Membership for players aged under 18yrs. For initiatives aimed at trialling the sport / increasing participation in your club for example PickUpaStick / Hockey Taster sessions, contact Hockey Ireland and we may be able to include you under 'programme insurance'.

Volunteers

Any individual over the age of 16yrs can register as a volunteer. The individual must complete Hockey Ireland's Volunteer Registration process and verify their registration prior to engaging in club activities. Depending on their role, volunteers will be subject to vetting as part of the registration process. This vetting will be undertaken by the appropriate authority in the Republic of Ireland (Garda Vetting Bureau) or Northern Ireland (Access NI). All Vetting goes through the Club Children's Officer who sends the completed e-vetting invitations to Hockey Ireland who submit them to the Garda Vetting Bureau for processing. In Northern Ireland, this is handled by Ulster Hockey through Access NI.

Section 2: Club Governance and Management

2.1 How to Structure your club

Something all clubs should give due consideration to is their legal structure. A club can amend their legal structure at any time. There are many deciding factors in choosing the right fit for your hockey club. Currently, some hockey clubs are registered as a Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG) while others remain unincorporated. Outlined below is some key information on this topic. Any club engaging in discussions regarding registering as a CLG are well advised to chat with other hockey clubs who have completed this process as well as gaining professional legal advice.

Option 1: Unincorporated organisation

An unincorporated association is the most common structure for sports clubs as it is the simplest and most informal way to establish a club. Simply put, it is where a group of individuals come together to carry out a mutual activity ie a club. The group usually draws up a set of rules to regulate the relationship between the members and will usually provide for a committee to run the club's affairs. Put simply, any hockey club which is not a company is an unincorporated association, whether its members are aware of it or not!

Advantages

- **Informality:** Comes into being simply as a result of a mutual decision on the part of its members to form a club.
- **Simplicity:** No need to file or publish accounts or returns. Legal formalities and administrative costs are kept to a minimum although it is a good idea to have at least some rules and regulations set out in writing.
- **Privacy:** The rules and accounts of unincorporated associations are not a matter of public record, allowing for privacy in the club's affairs.

Disadvantages

The club has no separate legal personality from members which gives rise to the following:

- **No limited liability.** The members will be personally liable for any liability of the club not met by its assets. Therefore caution should be exercised in taking on any onerous debts.
- **The unincorporated association will have to appoint trustees** if it wishes to hold property such as a clubhouse. Similarly, if the club is to make a contract or be a party to litigation, a nominated member of the club must act on its behalf. However, as these activities are usually limited they should not present a major issue.

Option 2: Guarantee Companies

A Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG) structure is ideal for sports clubs because it allows the organisation to operate without shares, meaning members are not financially invested in the same way as shareholders in a for-profit company. Instead, members' liability is limited to a nominal amount (usually €1), which is only relevant if the club ever winds down. Operating as a CLG also enables your club to attract sponsorships, grants, and funding more effectively, all while adhering to clear governance and compliance standards.

The guarantee company's constitutional documents are its Memorandum and Articles of Association. It consists of members who normally elect a board of directors to conduct the affairs of the company and to whom the executives will report.

A key characteristic is that a guarantee company may and generally will wish to generate a profit but it may not distribute that profit to its members. Profits are thus reinvested in the club.

Advantages

- **Limited Liability:** The liability of the members is limited to the guarantee amount not being less than €1.00.

- **Separate Legal Personality:** This characteristic provides a club with the ability to hold property and bank accounts in its own right and the ability to sue and be sued in its own name rather than in the name of certain individuals.
- **Flexibility:** A company's Memorandum and Articles of Association may be tailored to the purposes of the particular hockey club.

Disadvantages

- **Regulated Environment:** The Companies Acts prescribe various regulatory requirements which companies must comply with such as Companies Registration Office filings, meaning increased administrative burden and not insignificant cost compared to unincorporated associations. These costs may be an issue for small clubs. Also failure to comply with these requirements may lead to prosecution and fines.
- **Directors' duties:** Where clubs or organisations are operated as companies they must appoint directors who are subject to onerous statutory duties and may be personally liable if the company fails to comply with the Companies Acts.

2.2 Suggested Club Structures

Regardless of the legal structure your club chooses in order to effectively manage its operations, it is crucial to have a coordinated, communicative, organised, and structured approach to activities.

How a club sets up its committee structure is their decision. Below are examples of existing structures that work well.

Option1 – Unincorporated Organisation

The Executive Committee is responsible for overseeing the overall management of the club. The tasks of the Executive Committee are typically divided among the following roles:

- Vice President/Vice Chairperson
- Treasurer
- Club Secretary (can be divided between Fixtures Secretary; Membership Secretary; Seniors Secretary & Juniors Secretary)
- Youth Participation
- Communications Officer
- Club Designated Liaison Person
- Club Children's Officer
- Fundraising Officer
- Club PRO
- Head Coach
- Volunteer Officer

Option 2 – Examples of Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG)

Executive Committee chaired by the Club President/Chairperson is responsible for the overall running of the Club and is answerable to an elected Board of Directors.

- President/Chairperson
- Vice President/Vice Chairperson
- Treasurer
- Club Secretary (can be divided between Fixtures Secretary; Membership Secretary; Seniors Secretary & Juniors Secretary)
- Head of Youth Development/Vice President Juniors
- Club Captain (could be divided between Men's/ Women's; Boys/Girls)
- Strategic Projects Officer/Development Officer
- Communications Officer
- Club PRO
- Head Coach

Other roles who may not sit on the Executive Committee

- Club Designated Liaison Person
- Club Children's Officer
- Fundraising Officer
- Volunteer Officer

2.3 Club Roles

To guarantee that all club members enjoy their club engagement it is vital to ensure that individuals are assigned to positions that align with their strengths and personality. All individuals should fully understand what is expected of them regarding time, effort and commitment from the outset. The easiest way to do this is by developing appropriate role descriptions. These clearly define responsibility and reduce confusion. The responsibilities listed below for each role are guidelines and should be modified as required in order to meet each individual club's needs.

Note: For the purposes of consistency we will assume the below roles sit on the Executive Committee.

2.3.01 Club President

The President acts as the overall leader and is the primary representative of the Club in dealings with outside bodies. He/She is responsible for the ultimate achievement of the strategic ambitions of the club as well as the overall management of its operational activities.

Duties include:

- Monitor and evaluate the progress of agreed actions – both short term and strategic.
- Ensure that succession and forward planning are integral and ongoing in the club.
- Constitute and resource any special working groups and ensure that their activities are reported to the Executive Committee.
- Manage other Club Officers to ensure the delivery of their responsibilities.
- Ensure that the Club structure and responsibilities are transparent and available to the membership.

- Work in close liaison with all members of the Executive Committee
- Act as a mediator in the event that disagreements arise between particular sub committees or sections.
- Work with the Executive Committee to ensure that club activities are conducted safely and that collective responsibility for safety is emphasised at all levels. Also, ensure that the Club Safety Statement is reviewed regularly.
- Act as the Club spokesperson where appropriate.
- Lead club activities and, along with the Executive Committee, ensure that the club complies with all the obligations set out in HI Policies and Constitution
- Responsible for chairing meetings of the Executive Committee and the club's Annual General Meeting (AGM) and any Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM). In the absence of the President at a meeting of the Executive Committee, the Officers present will elect one of their members to preside. In the absence of the President at an AGM or EGM, the members present will elect one of their members to preside. The President will present a report of the activities of the Club to the AGM.

2.3.02 Club Secretary

The Secretary manages, processes and maintains a record of all incoming and outgoing correspondence and club documents. In addition, he/she records the deliberations and decisions of the club committee.

Duties include:

- Responsible for the day-to-day administration of the club.
- Maintain records of all members (players and volunteers) of the club.
- Responsible for minuting Executive Committee meetings, AGMs and EGMs and for the accurate record keeping of the minutes from such meetings.
- Responsible for giving appropriate notice of meetings to the Members or Officers concerned and ensuring that each such person is furnished with a copy of all relevant reports for discussion at a meeting.
- Manage and ensure action on club correspondence including legal and insurance matters.
- Ensure the Club Safety Statement is circulated to the appropriate personnel and that it is widely available in the club through notice boards etc.
- Any correspondence/issues relating to Health and Safety is brought to the attention of the Executive Committee
- Hockey Ireland will issue communications to the Secretary of the club unless it is more specific in nature and appropriate to a particular officer or role held in the club.

2.3.03 Treasurer

Chief financial manager of the club, the Treasurer maintains the integrity and accurate recording of the club's financial position.

Duties include:

- Responsible for keeping records of accounts and for their presentation at meetings of the Executive Committee.

- Financial planning including producing an annual budget and monitoring it throughout the year.
- Present the accounts to the AGM and keep the accounts available for inspection for Members outside of the AGM.
- Responsible for budgeting, in conjunction with the President, and will ensure that Club finances and transactions are kept transparent.
- Recommend action on financial matters to the Executive Committee.
- Collect membership fees and all money due to the club.
- Pay bills on behalf of club and record the information.
- Ensure all cash and cheques are promptly lodged to club's account(s).
- Ensure funds are spent properly.
- Ensure club pays all affiliation and competition fees

2.3.04 Director of Coaching (Head Coach)

Note: Clubs may choose either role title

- Coordinates coaches and assistant coaches to ensure regular, quality, training activity, and participation in competitions, leagues, and development days.
- Acts as a point of contact in the club for receipt of communications on coaching, competition, and sports development from Hockey Ireland and other relevant stakeholders
- Ensures all sports-related communications are shared with coaches in a timely manner.
- Takes responsibility for the recruitment and retention of players and coaches (with support from Volunteer Officer) and developing and maintaining links with local schools and colleges.
- Ensures the persons assigned in coaching roles hold the relevant qualifications and skills as applicable and receive the appropriate training required by attending designated coaching courses.
- Promotes good sportsmanship on and off the field of play.
- Promotes Hockey Ireland programmes and activities to ensure the continual development of all players.
- Works in conjunction with the Club Safeguarding Officer to provide a safe training and competition environment for all players and coaches in line with Hockey Ireland's guidelines.
- Provides updates on sports activities at Club meetings.
- Represents the views of coaches to the Executive Committee.
- Develops and implements a coordinated coaching programme throughout all sections of the Club.
- Sets behavioural standard policies for all teams and members at the start of the season.
- Liaise with the Club coaches, players management teams and team captains on matters such as playing facilities, equipment, playing gear, etc
- Be aware of all administrative procedures regarding player registration and eligibility.

2.3.05 Volunteer Officer

Responsible for the retention, training, organisation, recruitment and welfare of a sufficient number of volunteers for the club to operate effectively on a weekly and ongoing basis.

Duties include:

- Facilitate the recruitment, retention, recognition, and reward of volunteers within the club.
- Determine each year the various tasks that are needed for the club to operate efficiently and effectively and match volunteer skills and interests to those positions.
- Ensure that new volunteers are welcomed appropriately and are clear on their role/responsibilities including whom to approach if any difficulties are encountered. Each year arrange orientation and appropriate briefings for each volunteer.
- Issue documentation that clearly sets out each volunteer's role and commitments; make any adjustments as necessary.
- Ensure individual volunteers are given appropriate support and guidance to maintain their enthusiasm.
- Identify means of recognising and rewarding volunteers.
- Attend club events, matches, and social evenings to promote and encourage new volunteers.
- Establish a welcoming, enjoyable atmosphere that embraces inclusivity, ensuring all volunteers feel appreciated and integral to the club.
- Ensure the club operates an open and welcoming environment for volunteers of all abilities and backgrounds

Children's Officer

The appointment of Children's Officers in hockey clubs is an essential element in the creation of a quality atmosphere. They act as a resource with regard to children's issues.

In summary Children's Officers should work with others on the club committee to ensure current policies in relation to young people, check that all activities are safe and fun, and inform adults of how to deal with any concerns that may arise in relation to the protection of children and young people.

Club Children's Officers should be child centred in focus and have as the primary aim the establishment of a child centred ethos within the hockey club. S/he is the link between the children and the adults in the club. They also take responsibility for monitoring and reporting to the Club Management Committee on how club policy impacts on young people and Hockey Leaders.

The Children's Officer should be a member of or have access to, the Club Management Committee and should be introduced to the young people in an appropriate forum.

The role of the Club Children's Officer should be:

To promote awareness of safeguarding guidelines within the hockey club, among young members and their parents/guardians. This could be achieved by:- the distribution of information leaflets, the establishment of a junior specific notice board, regular information meetings for the young people and their parents/guardians

- To influence policy and practice within the hockey club in order to prioritise children's needs

- Establish contact with the National and Regional Children’s Officers across Hockey Ireland and the Provinces.
- To ensure that children know how to make concerns known to appropriate adults or agencies.
- To encourage the appropriate involvement of parents/ guardians in the club activities
- To act as an advisory resource to Hockey Leaders on best practice in youth hockey
- To monitor changes in membership and follow up any unusual dropout, absenteeism or club transfers by children or hockey leaders
- To ensure that the children have a voice in the running of their hockey club and ensure that there are steps young people can take to express concerns about their hockey activities/ experiences.
- Establish communication with other branches of the club, e.g. facilitate parent’s information sessions at the start of the season
- Keep records on each member on file, including youth members, their contact numbers and any special needs of the child that should be known to leaders
- Ensure each member signs an annual membership form that must include the signing up to the code of conduct for hockey leaders and children and young people.
- The CCO must undertake the necessary training i.e. Safeguarding 1 & 2 (ROI) or Safeguarding Children and Young People and Designated Safeguarding Officer (NI).
- Coordinated the completion of any safeguarding audit require and review the club safeguarding risk assessment.
- Ensure that the club rules and regulations include:
 - complaints, disciplinary and appeals procedures.
 - an anti-bullying policy.
 - safety statement.
 - rules in relation to traveling with children.

 - supervision and recruitment of leaders.

Designated Liaison Person

The Designated Liaison Person is a resource for leaders/volunteers/staff who have a child protection concern. DLP’s are responsible for ensuring that the reporting procedures are followed correctly and promptly. The designated liaison person is responsible for reporting allegations or suspicions of child abuse or neglect to the Duty Social Worker in Child and Family Agency/Tusla or An Garda Síochána/ Gateway services or PSNI.

The DLP should also inform the National Children’s Officer that a report has been submitted without identifying details

- The DLP should be knowledgeable about child protection and undertake any training considered necessary i.e. Safeguarding 3/DSO workshop
- The DLP should familiarise themselves with the statutory and support services within their locality
- Have knowledge of the Safeguarding policy and relevant child protection legislation (Children First Act 2015 (ROI)/National Vetting Bureau Act 2012-2016 (ROI) and Cooperating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2017.

Relevant Person

- For Clubs/organisations that operate in Republic of Ireland they must appoint a Relevant Person. Defined in the Children First Act 2015 (ROI) as a person who is appointed by a provider of a relevant service to be the first point of contact in respect of the provider's Child Safeguarding Statement.

2.3.06 Club Public Relations Officer (PRO)

Communications is one of the most important activities in the club. The main function of the Club PRO is to communicate with the general public on behalf of the Club, presenting a positive image of the Club and Hockey Ireland in the local community and beyond.

Main Duties:

- Identify PR opportunities and plan year-round promotion of the club.
- Develop good relationships with local media.
- Help with planning and promoting club fundraising events.
- Promote the Club to the local community and beyond using all available methods of communication.
- Keep records for historical purposes.
- Make sure the Club is well presented.
- Communicate with Executive Committee and coaches to agree content to be shared on club website and social media pages.
- Ensure upcoming events are circulating through website/social media.
- Make and maintain contact with local newspapers and radio stations to increase club profile.
- Promote club achievements and events by writing interesting articles and sending to local newspapers in good time, always include photos.
- Keep club website and social media up to date i.e. upcoming events, good news.
- Ensure club operates within acceptable use and safeguarding young people policies.
- Answer any queries on club social media or direct to club secretary as necessary.

Remember:

No longer is it good enough for a Club to do good work: people must be told about it!

The biggest mistake that a PRO can make is to assume that people know!

2.4 Why have an Executive Committee structure?

A well-organised Executive Committee is key to running an effective and sustainable club. It ensures that responsibilities are shared, leadership is supported, and operations are streamlined. The main benefits include:

- **Shared Workload**
Responsibilities are distributed across multiple people, preventing burnout and making the work more manageable.
- **Defined Roles and Responsibilities**
Each committee member has a clear understanding of their duties, which improves accountability and overall effectiveness.
- **Clarity for Everyone Involved**
A structured committee provides direction and transparency for members, volunteers, and the wider club community.
- **A Solid Support Structure**
Committee members can rely on one another, bringing different perspectives and skills to tackle challenges and make informed decisions.
- **Reduction in Duplication of Effort**
Clearly outlined roles prevent overlap, allowing the committee to work more efficiently and avoid repeating tasks.
- **A Platform for Future Growth**
A strong committee structure creates stability, making it easier to plan ahead, launch new initiatives, and expand club activities.
- **Best Practice in Safeguarding**
A formal structure ensures that safeguarding responsibilities are clearly assigned and consistently followed.
- **Supports Long-Term Sustainability**
With good governance and planning in place, leadership transitions are smoother, and the club is better equipped to thrive into the future.

This structure is not only practical but also vital to the long-term health and development of any sports club.

2.5 How should an Executive Committee Operate?

One of the most effective ways to keep your club running smoothly is to hold regular Executive Committee meetings. These meetings are more than just a formality—they're essential for staying connected, sharing updates, solving problems, and driving the club forward.

Why it matters:

Regular meetings help strengthen communication, build team awareness, and provide a space to plan, troubleshoot, and make informed decisions.

To get the most from each meeting, consider these best practices:

- Set a consistent meeting schedule
Choose a regular date and stick to it—e.g., the first Monday of every month.
- Develop and share an agenda in advance
Involve committee members in shaping the agenda. Circulate it ahead of time along with the meeting details (time, venue or virtual link).
- Start and finish on time
Respect everyone's time by keeping to schedule.
- Take accurate minutes and share them
Minutes should clearly capture key points, decisions, and action items. Circulate promptly after the meeting.
- Track progress on agreed actions
Review outstanding tasks at the start of each meeting to ensure momentum.
- Maintain proper records
Meeting minutes may remain confidential to the committee, but they must be securely stored for future reference and as part of the club's historical records.

Data Protection Matters

Executive Committee members must handle all personal data, whether about players, families, or volunteers, with care and in line with the club's Data Protection and Safeguarding Policies.

In line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), individuals have the right to request access to any written information the club holds about them. This means all written records must be accurate, respectful, and securely stored.

Always remember: sensitive information should only be shared with those who need to know. Every officer on the committee has a responsibility to uphold the club's commitment to privacy, safety, and trust.

2.6 Annual General Meeting

Once a year the Executive Committee/Executive should hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) for all Club Members. The purpose of the AGM is to elect Club Members to vacancies on the Executive Committee/Executive, inform the members of previous and future activities, allow members to receive the club accounts and to have an opportunity to provide input and feedback on the club's activities.

The purpose of the AGM is to:

- Provide a report on the activities of the club from the Chairperson
- Review of the minutes of the previous AGM and any EGMs held since the last AGM.

- Review of the club's affairs
- Allow consideration of the accounts for the year (including an income and expenditure and balance sheet reports) and the report from the Treasurer
- Confirmation that the Club is in good standing with Hockey Ireland and the Provincial Body and that the Public Liability Insurance for the club is in place for €6.5million
- Review of the Club's membership fees and agree next year's membership fees (in accordance with Hockey Ireland and provincial guidelines)
- Allow consideration of all motions and nominations and other matters on the AGM Agenda
- To elect certain roles
- To propose motions and nominations, if any, for submission to general meetings of Hockey Ireland and the province.

2.7 Elections

Typically, all club Officers shall be elected at the club's Annual General Meeting (AGM). The method of selecting members for the Executive Committee, whether by election or appointment, will be determined by the club's constitution.

This may include:

- Annual elections for all positions, or
- Fixed-term appointments, where individuals serve for a defined period before re-election or replacement.

Clubs should refer to their constitution to ensure that the election or appointment process is followed accurately and consistently, maintaining transparency and good governance.

Section 3: Club Administration

3.1 Registration

Registration procedures are in place and mandatory for Players, Volunteers and Clubs. Clubs have responsibilities not only to Hockey Ireland but also to their respective Province. This means clubs must comply with both national regulations and provincial requirements, ensuring alignment with the standards and processes set by both bodies.

1. **Players:** All players must complete a 2 part Registration process.
 1. Club Registration – every club operates their own registration system. This should be a simple easy to follow process.
 2. Hockey Ireland Registration – detailed information on how to complete this online process is found on www.hockey.ie
2. **Volunteers:** All volunteers (ie coach/umpire/committee member) should register with Hockey Ireland via their online membership system. A club will also maintain records of all their own volunteers.
3. **Clubs:** Every year each club must register and pay their Affiliation Fees to Hockey Ireland. This online process is done via their website www.hockey.ie

Note: The Secretary should ensure that the records of club members are accurately maintained and kept up-to-date. Data on club members must always be stored in a safe and secure location, with appropriate measures taken to ensure its protection.

3.2 Health and Safety

First Aid Cover

It is recommended that a volunteer with First Aid qualifications should be in attendance at every club training session. However, it is recognised that this is not always possible. On these occasions it is recommended that, at minimum, the volunteer attending the training session has access to:

- A first aid kit.
- Contact details of the local GP and the nearest hospital Emergency Department.
- Access to players contact information (this could be via the Coach).
- Reporting procedure/guidance for safeguarding issues.
- Access to a telephone.
- Club Safeguarding Officer and Chairperson contact details.

Accident Reporting

In the event of any accident or injury occurring an Accident Report form must be completed and kept with the club records.

Safeguarding

In accordance with the requirements of Children First Act 2015 Hockey Ireland has a Safeguarding Statement which all members should be familiar with.

The National Children's Officer is Hockey Ireland CEO, Anne McCormack. She will advise and guide Club Children's Officers in following the policies and procedures and is available for any queries or issues that may arise.

- National Children's Officer: Anne McCormack, nationalchildrensofficer@hockey.ie
- Designated Liaison Person: Shirley Moore, ndp@hockey.ie

Appropriate training for those working with young people in sport is directed by Sport Ireland and Sport Northern Ireland and should be sport related. While coaches and volunteers may have completed safeguarding training in another sphere it will be necessary to also complete specific modules of Sport Ireland safeguarding training as advised by Hockey Ireland. Courses are run through your Local Sports Partnership (LSP) and Hockey Ireland.

Details of the three stages of training are outlined here as follows

1. Safeguarding 1 – Child Welfare & Protection Basic Awareness Workshop

All Coaches, Club Children's Officers (CCO) and Designated Liaison Persons (DLP) must first complete the 3 hour Child Welfare & Protection Basic Awareness Workshop. This workshop educates participants on the implementation of best practice in safeguarding the welfare of children involved in sport. There is a Safeguarding 1 Online Refresher for those who have previously attended the face- to-face Safeguarding workshop. This must be completed every 3 years.

2. Safeguarding 2 – Club Children's Officer

A person appointed to the role of Club Children's Officer within a club must have firstly completed Sport Ireland's Safeguarding 1 (Child Welfare & Protection Basic Awareness workshop). They should also complete Sport Ireland's Club Children's Officer 3 hour workshop. The aim of this workshop is to help the Club Children's Officer to carry out their role and support the implementation of best practice in the club. Participants will also receive a Club Children's Officer Action Planning document as part of the training.

3. Safeguarding 3 – Designated Liaison Person

A person appointed to the Designated Liaison Person position in a club must firstly complete Sport Ireland's Child Welfare & Protection Basic Awareness Workshop and should complete the Sport Ireland's Designated Liaison Person 3 hour workshop. A club may appoint the same person to both the CCO and DLP positions however best practice advises that they are kept as separate roles.

Club Children's Officers (CCO)

Club Children's Officers should be child centred in focus. Their primary aim is to establish a child centred ethos within the club. The CCO is the link between the children and the adults in the club. They also have responsibility for monitoring and reporting to the Club Management Committee on how club policy impacts on young people and Sports Leaders

Designated Liaison Person (DLP)

Every club/organisation should designate a person to be responsible for dealing with any concerns about the protection of children. The Designated Liaison Person is responsible for reporting allegations or suspicions of child abuse to TULSA Child and Family Agency or Social Services (NI) and/or An Garda Síochána / PSNI. It is recommended that this person is a senior club person. However, if there is difficulty identifying a separate individual to take this role, the Club Children's Officer can be appointed as Designated Liaison Person once the club is clear about the responsibilities of each role. The club's Child Protection Policy and Procedures should include the name and contact details of the Designated Liaison Person and the responsibilities attached to the role.

Safeguarding Incident Reporting

In the event of a safeguarding incident, an Incident Report Form must be completed and kept with the Club Safeguarding Officer records. In dealing with any incident, confidentiality must be maintained at all times.

Incidents of a safeguarding nature should not be discussed openly with the Executive Committee, it is purely confidential and, on a need-to-know basis. The Chairperson is the Designated Liaison person and responsible for reporting any safeguarding concerns to the statutory authorities.

3.3 Finance

The Executive Committee, and particularly the Treasurer, has overall responsibility for implementing effective financial procedures.

The following guidelines are based on financial best practice guidelines.

Banking Facilities

It is recommended that a club considers the following when choosing a banking provider to ensure good financial management and financial controls:

- Have two approvals set up for amounts over a certain value to be decided by the Club Committee.
- Set up on-line banking to facilitate electronic payments and to monitor transactions. Apply for a low value cash-card for petty cash purposes and/or a debit card.

Cash Handling

It is recommended that a club eliminates or minimises the need for handling cash. This reduces risk in relation to security, fraud and the personal safety of the individuals handling the cash.

Fees/Subscriptions

Fees are charged on an annual basis and are paid directly to the club's bank account. This is to ensure good governance and minimise the administration. Hockey Ireland has strict guidelines as to the Membership fees each club must upon registration each year – based on this a club decides on what to charge their players.

3.4 Fundraising

Fundraising is an intrinsic part of the operation of any club in the community. It ensures sustainability and should be built into the planning process for the club. Many clubs, depending on their size and requirements, may set up a fundraising sub-committee chaired

by the Treasurer. This sub-committee should come up with ideas for fundraising projects and organise and oversee implementation of the event or initiative.

Should a Club wish to carry out fundraising, it may do so locally in its own name. The club must make it clear that monies collected are for the benefit of the club. This clarity on who will receive the funds must be clearly laid out in all printed materials and documentation.

Grant Applications and Sponsorship

Growing a hockey club takes passion, planning, and often, some additional funding. Fortunately, a wide range of local and national grant opportunities are available to help clubs develop and succeed.

Clubs can access support through Hockey Ireland grants, local sponsorships, government grant schemes, and community funding initiatives, including:

- In the Republic of Ireland, Local Sports Partnerships (LSPs) offer valuable supports such as grants for equipment, volunteer training, inclusion programmes, and club development projects. They also provide guidance on applying for larger funds like the Sports Capital Programme.
- In Northern Ireland, local councils and community departments regularly offer grants aimed at grassroots sport, youth development, and improving club facilities. These small grants programmes are designed to strengthen local clubs and encourage wider community participation.

To help navigate these opportunities, Hockey Ireland's Regional Development Officers are on hand to offer expert guidance and practical advice. They provide support throughout the application process and help clubs identify the most suitable funding streams.

By exploring these funding avenues and tapping into the support available, clubs can unlock new potential, enhance their facilities, and offer even greater opportunities to their members.

3.5 Communication

Strong, consistent communication is at the core of every well-run hockey club. Clear messaging helps build trust, strengthen connections, and keep everyone aligned—from committee members to players, families, and supporters.

Every club has several key internal audiences that need regular, purposeful communication, including:

- Executive Committee and Sub-Committees
- Players
- Volunteers
- Families
- Coaches
- Supporters

To ensure communication flows smoothly, it's essential to establish the following for each group:

- Designate a communication lead – someone responsible for managing and coordinating updates
- Choose the best channels – email, WhatsApp, social media, or face-to-face meetings

- Maintain accurate contact lists – regularly updated and stored securely
- Monitor and evaluate – ensure messages are being received and understood

Set the tone early: Every new member should receive a Club Induction Pack on their first visit. This should include:

- Training schedules
- Executive Committee structure
- Reporting procedures for incidents and accidents
- Club Code of Conduct (to be signed and returned)

While internal communication is key, building a strong external presence is just as important. Engaging with the wider community increases visibility, attracts new members, and builds support.

Clubs that consistently share clear, engaging updates can gain coverage in:

- Social Media – fast, far-reaching, and great for engagement
- Club Website – a hub for information and updates
- Local Press – ideal for match reports, events, and human interest stories
- Email Newsletters – a direct line to your club community

With the right communication strategy, your club can build stronger relationships, inspire loyalty, and grow both on and off the field.

3.6 Insurance

Hockey Ireland's Personal Accident and Medical Expenses insurance programme is designed to help members with medical expenses in the event of accidents causing bodily injury whilst participating in a sanctioned Hockey Ireland event or training. Full document found in Appendices.

3.7 Running a Club Session

Before the Session

Arrival: Volunteers should arrive a minimum of 15 minutes prior to the players in order to open the venue and arrange the setup as required for the session.

Safety: Assess the venue for potential hazards and eliminate or reduce risk. Ensure risk assessment is completed and a plan is in place to manage volunteer's supervision in relation to the following: – Toilets – Emergency Exits – Changing Rooms – Field of Play

Equipment Set-Up: Volunteers should ensure that any required equipment is set up prior to training start time.

Player Check-In: All players to check-in on arrival. A player attendance sheet should be maintained for all training sessions.

Player gear: Volunteers should check that players are appropriately dressed ie shin-guards; mouthguards etc. A guideline of what they need to wear/bring for each training session should be included in the club induction pack.

End of Session

Sign-Out: All players and volunteers should check out of a training session.

Tidy-Up: Volunteers should ensure that all equipment is removed/stored correctly, and that the venue is left in the manner in which it was found.

Player Departures: A minimum of two volunteers should ensure that all players have safely departed before locking up/leaving the venue. In the case of a player not having suitable transport home, club volunteers must follow the club's policy and procedure to ensure the player arrives home safely.

3.8 Club Development

There may be opportunities for your club to develop, grow and learn, offering your players and volunteers greater choice and a better experience.

There are a number of ways that a club can develop their hockey programme:

- Increase the focus on continued coach education
- Investigate opportunities for up-skilling existing coaches through courses offered by Hockey Ireland
- Offer training opportunities to other volunteers within your club who do not currently have a coaching qualification
- Increase the number of qualified coaches
- Identify individuals within your locality that might bring additional expertise to your club
- Carry out a member skills survey
- Run additional training sessions
- An excellent way to enhance both training and competition opportunities for the players is to run Inter-Club blitzes/activities.

Introducing a new Hockey Programme

Hockey Ireland offers many different programmes that can be run at club level. It is a great way to engage new players and up skills existing players. There are supporting materials/equipment available through Hockey Ireland and more information on their website. They include:

- Young Hockey Leaders Awards
- Pick up a Stick
- Tricks 4 Sticks
- Club Mark
- Hockey Unplugged?
- Hockey ID?

Developing Membership Growth

For clubs ready to grow, expanding membership—both on and off the pitch—is an exciting step. When done with the right planning and support, it can strengthen your club, increase its visibility, and enhance the experience for everyone involved.

Hockey Ireland's Development team can help. From strategic recruitment advice to connections with community organisations, RDOs can support your club in reaching its growth goals.

Expanding Player Membership

If your club has the capacity, the Executive Committee should actively explore opportunities to welcome new players. However, sustainable growth requires a balance between numbers and resources. Before accepting new members, clubs should ensure:

- There are enough volunteers to support the new players
- The training venue can accommodate additional participants
- The club has sufficient financial resources to maintain quality experiences

Effective recruitment strategies include:

- Engaging local schools, colleges, and community groups
- Building relationships with Local Sports Partnerships/Local Authorities
- Promoting your club through local advertising, including social media, radio, parish newsletters, and community noticeboards

Growing Your Volunteer Base

Volunteers are the backbone of every club. Whether you're expanding your player base or simply aiming to improve your existing operations, recruiting more volunteers is often essential.

Before launching a recruitment campaign, consider:

- The specific needs of the club (Why do you need volunteers?)
- The skills required for various roles
- The number of volunteers needed
- Whether there are clear and meaningful roles in place
- Timing—starting recruitment well before the season begins is key

Potential volunteer recruitment sources include:

- Your Local Sports Partnership/Local Authority
- Nearby schools and educational institutions
- Volunteer Centres in your community
- Families of existing players who aren't yet involved
- Local media, social media, and community newsletters
- Your Regional Development Officer, who can offer tailored advice and practical support

With thoughtful planning and if required the support of Hockey Ireland's Development Team, your club can grow with confidence, building a strong, supportive, and sustainable hockey community. We have created a basic checklist in Appendix xx.

Conclusion:

We hope this guide provides a helpful starting point and offers valuable guidance for running and developing your club effectively. Additional resources and templates are

included in the Appendices and on our website to support you in key areas such as governance, planning, communication, and volunteer management.

If you need further support or have specific questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to your Regional Development Officer or the Hockey Ireland team. We're here to help.

We are always eager to hear from clubs—your feedback and ideas help us shape engaging workshops, webinars, and resources that respond to your real needs. Let us know what topics you'd like to explore further, and we'll work with you to "Unleash the Power of Hockey"

Volunteer Recruitment Checklist

Before starting recruitment, your club should have a clear plan. Identify the "what," "why," and "how."

- Define the need
 - What roles need to be filled? (e.g. coach, team manager, fundraiser, event organiser, admin support)
 - Why are these roles important to the club?
- Create role descriptions
 - List duties, skills required, time commitment, and reporting structure
- Determine number of volunteers needed
 - Match this to your club's goals and player numbers
- Clarify start and end dates
 - Is this a seasonal, ongoing, or one-off role?

2. Recruitment Preparation

Set your club up for a successful recruitment campaign.

- Assign a Volunteer Coordinator
 - Someone to lead communication and oversee the process
- Prepare promotional materials
 - Flyers, social media graphics, info sheets, role descriptions
- Identify recruitment channels
 - Local schools, universities, Volunteer Centres, social media, club newsletter, parish bulletins, Local Sports Partnerships
- Draft a recruitment message
 - Clear, enthusiastic, and includes benefits of volunteering with your club

3. Recruitment Campaign

Begin promoting and engaging potential volunteers.

- Post on social media and club website
 - Include role descriptions and how to apply
- Send targeted outreach emails
 - Especially to player families and community partners
- Connect with your Local Sports Partnership and Volunteer Centre
 - Ask them to share your opportunities
- Host an informal information night or open day
 - Give prospective volunteers a chance to learn more and ask questions

4. Selection & Onboarding

Once volunteers express interest, ensure a smooth onboarding experience.

- Screen applicants (as needed)
 - Especially for roles involving children or finances
- Provide a welcome/induction pack
 - Includes role expectations, code of conduct, reporting procedures, club contacts
- Deliver basic training or mentoring
 - Ensure volunteers feel confident and supported from day one
- Gather required documentation
 - Garda/Access NI vetting, signed policies, registration forms (if applicable)

5. Ongoing Support & Retention

Keeping volunteers motivated is just as important as recruiting them.

- Assign a mentor or point of contact
 - Regular check-ins to offer support and gather feedback
- Recognise and appreciate contributions
 - Public thanks, volunteer spotlights, small rewards or events
- Provide development opportunities
 - Offer training or upskilling when possible
- Evaluate and adjust roles as needed
 - Keep the volunteer experience positive and manageable

Appendix 2: Example of Volunteer Role Template

Role	Key Responsibilities	Skills/Qualifications Required	Time Commitment
Club Chairperson	Lead the Executive Committee, chair meetings, represent the club externally	Leadership, communication, governance knowledge	4–6 hrs/week (varies)
Secretary	Manage club correspondence, organise meetings, keep records and minutes	Organisational skills, attention to detail	2–4 hrs/week
Treasurer	Manage club finances, prepare budgets, oversee payments and accounts	Financial literacy, Excel or accounting tools	2–5 hrs/week
Club Children’s Officer	Ensure safeguarding policies are followed, liaise with parents and coaches	Safeguarding training (e.g., Sport Ireland), people skills	1–3 hrs/week
Volunteer Coordinator	Recruit, induct, and support club volunteers	People skills, communication, basic admin	1–3 hrs/week
Coach (Youth/Senior)	Plan and deliver training sessions, support player development	Coaching certs (Hockey Ireland), Garda/Access NI vetted	2–4 hrs/session
Team Manager	Handle team logistics (e.g., fixtures, transport, communication)	Organised, good communicator	2–3 hrs/week
Umpire/Referee	Officiate matches, ensure fair play	Umpire certification, game knowledge	Per match
Fundraising Coordinator	Plan and oversee club fundraising activities	Creativity, event planning, local contacts	Project-based
Media & Comms Officer	Manage club’s social media, newsletter, and publicity	Writing/design skills, social media savvy	1–3 hrs/week
Events Coordinator	Organise social events, open days, awards nights	Planning, teamwork	Project-based
Membership Officer	Maintain player records, manage registration systems	Admin skills, attention to detail	1–2 hrs/week (seasonal)

Appendix Three: Club Induction Template

Club Induction Pack

1. Welcome Message

Welcome to [Club Name]!

We are thrilled to have you join our club. Whether you're here as a player, parent, coach, or volunteer, you are now part of a vibrant and inclusive community that is passionate about sport, teamwork, and development. This induction pack will guide you through the essential information you need to get started, understand your role, and enjoy your time with us.

At [Club Name], we are committed to creating a safe, supportive, and enjoyable environment for everyone. Thank you for becoming part of our club family!

2. Club Overview

Club Name: _____

Location: _____

Year Established: _____

Club Mission Statement:

Club Vision:

Core Values (e.g., Respect, Teamwork, Inclusion, Excellence):

3. Executive Committee Structure

Chairperson: _____

Secretary: _____

Treasurer: _____

Children's Officer: _____

Safeguarding Officer: _____

Volunteer Coordinator: _____

Other Committee Members:

4. Training and Match Information

Training Schedule:

Day(s): _____

Time(s): _____

Venue(s): _____

Match Days and Times:

Coach/Team Lead Contact Details:

5. Code of Conduct

All members of [Club Name] are expected to adhere to the Club's Code of Conduct. This includes players, coaches, volunteers, and supporters. The code outlines standards of behavior that promote respect, integrity, and sportsmanship both on and off the field.

Please find the Code of Conduct attached to this pack. It must be signed and returned to your team manager or coach.

6. Health, Safety & Reporting Procedures

Your safety and wellbeing are our top priority. All incidents or accidents must be reported following club protocol.

First Aid Officer:

Incident Report Procedure:

Emergency Contact Numbers:

7. Communication Channels

We use several platforms to keep members informed and connected:

- Club Website: _____
- Social Media Pages: _____
- Email Updates: _____
- WhatsApp/Team Chat: _____

For any queries, your first point of contact is your team manager or the club secretary.

8. Volunteer Opportunities

Our club thrives because of our dedicated volunteers. Whether it's coaching, organising events, fundraising, or administration, there's a role for everyone.

Interested in getting involved? Contact our Volunteer Coordinator:

Name: _____

Email/Phone: _____

Available Roles:

- Coach/Assistant Coach
- Team Manager
- Events Volunteer
- Fundraising Support
- Admin Assistant
- Communications Support

9. Membership and Fees

Hockey Ireland Membership

All club members are required to pay the Hockey Ireland membership fee as part of their annual registration. This membership is essential, as it provides individuals with insurance coverage while participating in sanctioned hockey activities, including training sessions, matches, and events. Being a registered member also grants eligibility to compete in official Hockey Ireland competitions, from local leagues to national tournaments.

In addition, only registered members can access formal training courses, such as coaching and umpiring qualifications, and attend development clinics delivered by Hockey Ireland. Members also benefit from exclusive discounts on Hockey Ireland events, merchandise, and partner offers, adding extra value to their involvement in the sport.

Ensuring your membership is paid and up to date helps support the ongoing growth and governance of hockey across the country, while keeping you connected, protected, and fully involved in the game.

Membership Types and Fees:

- Junior Member: _____
- Adult Member: _____
- Family Membership: _____
- Volunteer (non-playing): _____

Payment Methods:

Contact for Membership Queries:

Name: _____

Email/Phone: _____

10. Acknowledgement Form

I, _____, confirm that I have received, read, and understood the contents of the [Club Name] Induction Pack. I agree to abide by the club's Code of Conduct and policies.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Minute Taking Template:

Date:

Time:

Location:

Chairperson:

Minute Taker: ___

1. Attendance

Present:

Apologies:

2. Approval of Previous Minutes

Minutes from the meeting on [insert date] were:

Approved

Approved with amendments

Not approved

Amendments (if any):

3. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

4. Agenda Items Discussed

Use this table to capture agenda items discussed, actions needed, who is responsible, and deadlines:

Agenda Item	Discussion Summary	Action Required	Person Responsible	Deadline
Example: Treasurer's Report	Reviewed finances YTD	Submit revised budget	Treasurer	Next meeting

(Repeat for each agenda item as needed)

6. Date of Next Meeting

Date:

Time:

Location:

7. Meeting Close

Time Adjourned:

Section 4: Appendices

1. Hockey Ireland Volunteer Policy - <https://hockey.ie/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/b78e259d35310a3c1dfb6f431308d0f12a20ca6f.pdf>
2. Codes of Conduct - <https://hockey.ie/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Appendix-8-OCodes-of-Conduct-FDraft.docx>
3. Hockey Ireland Safeguarding Statement - <https://hockey.ie/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Hockey-Ireland-DRAFT-Safeguarding-Policy94.docx>
4. Hockey Ireland Code of Ethics - <https://hockey.ie/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/4.1-Hockey-Ireland-Code-of-Ethics-21.10.19.docx>
5. Vetting Policy & Vetting Forms (Rep Irl & NIrl) - <https://hockey.ie/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/eVetting-Invitation-and-ID-Validation-Form.pdf>
 - a. <https://ulsterhockey.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Applicant-Instructions-ID-Validation-Oct-2021.pdf>
6. Accidents & Incident Reporting Form - <https://hockey.ie/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Accidents-Incidents-Reporting-Form.docx>
7. Risk Assessment Safeguarding Statement - <https://hockey.ie/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Hockey-Ireland-DRAFT-Safeguarding-Policy94.docx>
8. Risk Assessment Form - <https://hockey.ie/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Clubmark-Resource-Risk-Assessment-Form.pdf>