

FUNDRAISING IDEAS FOR CLUBS

This document covers ideas to help raise funds for your not-for-profit organisation. Areas covered include:

CROWDFUNDING

FOOD AND DRINK

SPONSORSHIP

MEMBERSHIP AND GOOD PRACTICE

GENERATING PAYING CROWDS

CREATE A MULTIPURPOSE CLUB

FUNDRAISING IDEAS AND EVENTS

BOOST YOUR MEMBERS

Source: some of the ideas in this document have been obtained from Sport England's Club Matters A-Z Fundraising Ideas at: www.sportenglandclubmatters.com.

DISCLAIMER: This is not an exhaustive list and The RFL or RLWC2021 take no responsibility of the accuracy of its content. This has been put together simply as a guide for not-for-profit organisations who are looking at ways to fundraise for their clubs.

1. CROWDFUNDING

What is Crowdfunding?

Crowdfunding is a way of raising money by asking a large number of people via the Internet for a small amount of money individually for a project, idea or venture. Traditionally, financing a business, project or venture involved asking a few people to invest large sums of money. Crowdfunding switches this idea around, using the Internet to potentially encourage thousands or millions of potential funders.

Those seeking funds will set up a profile of their project on a Crowdfunding website and then use social media, alongside traditional networks of friends, family and colleagues, to raise money.

People are increasingly using this method of funding opposed to traditional banks, loans, grants, by turning to people around the world to fund their idea.

There are different types of Crowdfunding opportunities, which include:

- **Donation Crowdfunding:** a charity donation-based method where a cause or idea is asked to be donated for.
- **Reward Crowdfunding:** similar to donation-based, offers a reward for funding, such as name of funder on a wall for donating to a rugby club.
- **Debt Crowdfunding:** more a lending mechanism, where investors receive money back with interest.
- **Equity Crowdfunding:** investment is in exchange of shares, a stake in business, project or venture.

For the purposes of the types of not-for-profit organisations that would seek funding to help with their projects, the Donations Crowdfunding route is the best approach, although the Reward approach can also be successful.

Is it right for you and your idea?

According to Crowdfunder (a crowdfunding platform) most ideas or causes can be crowdfunded. For instance, raising funds to support a new initiative to raise funds for a new local rugby league team, could be crowdsourced and if people around the world like it, they could donate small amounts of money and the more people that donate the bigger the fund grows.

There are many resources on the Internet on how to create, plan and run a crowdfunding project and it's recommended to research them before commencing.

What Crowdfunding platforms / websites are out there?

There are many out there and listed below are a few of the popular ones.

JustGiving: www.justgiving.com

Crowdfunder: www.crowdfunder.co.uk

fundit.buzz: www.fundit.buzz

Facebook: www.facebook.com

What are the fees?

Different online platforms and providers have their own fees and it's strongly recommended to research this carefully before launching into starting a crowdfunding campaign.

Want to find out more?

Visit Sport England's dedicated page about Crowdfunding at:

<https://www.sportengland.org/funding/other-sources-of-funding/sources-of-funding-you-can-generate-yourself/crowdfunding/>.

2. FOOD AND DRINK

Not all clubs have clubhouse facilities to sell hot food etc. However, many of the following ideas can be adapted to suit. Obtain advice from your local council to ensure all regulations and laws are being followed in the preparation and selling of food & drink.

As well as providing the standard products to sell, sweets & burgers etc. all clubs could take a pro-active approach and do a quick ask around to those who turn up each week asking what they would buy if it was available. Without realising it 20 of your spectators/player partners/parents may be vegetarian and by providing a salad sandwich each week may help to boost sales. Ask the question & meet the needs of the customer.

Community clubs cannot have a supermarket range of products on sale for everyone to buy therefore it is essential the club recognises their biggest sellers and pushes these (not obscurities). If crisps, sandwiches, cans of pop, burgers and apples are your biggest sellers then just sell these – keep it simple!

Sell food/drink in the crowd at half time, walk around with a box of sandwiches, drinks and sweets. Take the sandwiches & drinks around the clubhouse afterwards – push the sale. Show food and drink is available. Show the crisps, sandwiches and chocolate is available behind the bar. Clearly advertise what is available to buy from the kitchen.

Check with club members to see if any are connected to the food business – may lead to a cheaper supplier of the food or drink.

Long term suppliers should be approached for sponsorship and all clubs in the local area could use the same supplier and therefore bulk buy and get the produce for cheaper.

Don't be frightened of charging to make a small profit i.e. 50p for a cup of tea instead of 20p. People know they are helping the club and are willing to pay the 'mark-up' price.

To avoid the hassle of getting more volunteers to make the sandwiches clubs get outside caterers to run the kitchen or set up a stall outside on matchday. All will charge a set fee and all profits will go to them unless specified your partnership agreement

3. SPONSORSHIP

Many sports clubs use their existing members i.e. parents, players, fans, ex-players, committee members and their links to businesses to ensure sponsorship of teams and the club. It would perhaps be beneficial to the club if on their own registration form the open age player or young person's parent had the chance to fill in a space to highlight any known business that may be interested in sponsoring opportunities or the company the person works for. This could then be followed up by a committee member.

When sitting down at the beginning of the season planning what your club could sell to the sponsor please ensure a reasonable price is put on everything and don't out-price yourself. Sponsorship is a business deal between two parties in which both parties are to benefit out of the agreement, so all clubs must provide something in return.

Benefits to companies who sponsor sports clubs:

- **Publicity** - Profile to company brand or their new products
- **Corporate Image** - Link values of club and sport to that of business
- **Public Relations** - Business seen as caring for communities
- **Direct Marketing** - To all club members
- **Product Endorsement** - Profile of club/player helps profile of product
- **Hospitality** - For their clients, business partners or staff
- **Patronage** - Giving makes the sponsor feels good
- **Social Media** - Providing that company with access to your followers
- The first, and most obvious piece of sponsorship, is playing kit. Areas of your playing kit that could be offered for sponsors logos include: Main shirt chest Sponsor, Sleeve Sponsor, Collar sponsor, Shorts/socks Sponsor
- When selling any sponsorship package, it is essential the club clearly highlights what the sponsor gets in return.

Examples of what the sponsor could receive include:

- Team to play all home matches in sponsored strip
- Team photo with new playing kit in frame
- Kit launch story in local press
- Advertisement every time players picture is in the press i.e. local paper every week and Rugby league national press.

- Free programme advertisement

Matchday Sponsors

- Advertisement in matchday programme
- Official thank you in after match presentations
- To hand over the man of the match awards
- Free sponsorship of MoM awards and therefore mentioned in all press releases.
- Clubs with own facilities can provide pre/post-match food and drink.
- Free parking

Season Sponsors

- Advertisement hoarding surrounding the pitch
- Free Matchday Programme Advertisement
- Free ticket to the end of season presentation night
- Advertisement on club car stickers and posters (depends on fee paid)
- Website and social media banners
- Many businesses are only willing to pay small payments, and this will pay for a small advertisement space in the club programme and website. It is important clubs still embrace these small sponsors i.e. invite to club social events and fundraising dinners etc. and not forget about them – think long term, they may become a major sponsor!

Training and Matchday Wear

- Clubs now have a variety of other clothing items that the sponsors name could go on:
- Matchday warm up tops
- Sub Suits (all in one garment to keep players warm on the bench)
- Player Training Kit
- Club Shirt and Tie

- Club Tracksuit
- Coaching Jackets

Man of the Match

- Sponsors can get:
- Advertisement in matchday programme
- Official thank you in after match presentations
- To hand over the man of the match awards
- Mentioned in all press releases. “MoM sponsored by...went to....”

4. MEMBERSHIP AND GOOD PRACTICE

Annual membership and income generated on matchday through player subs, raffles, spectators and programmes and more ensure all community clubs have a steady income for the season.

A number of good practices exists in our game in place to stimulate clubs ensuring they maximise their income and take a proactive approach to self-development.

Membership Policy

Community Clubs should ensure that they capture the data of all members and players.

This data is essential to keep people up to date with club activity and to help promote club events by using emails and phonecalls to ensure your events are a success.

Annual Membership Incentives

All community clubs should have an annual membership for all playing and non-playing members. Examples could include:

- Junior Players £25* includes a polo
- Senior £50*
- Non-playing membership – Senior £15* / Jun & OAP £10*

*Guide figure. Set prices as you see appropriate for your club

Membership Benefits you could offer

Clubs must clearly show the benefits to the individual i.e. list of benefits could include:

- 1) Weekly training from a qualified coach
- 2) Opportunity to play on match days (no membership – no play)
- 3) Access to a qualified physio
- 4) Access to facilities (Gym, bar etc)
- 5) Discount on club merchandise
- 6) Discounted tickets to club social events
- 7) Free ticket to end of season presentation
- 8) Discounted coach travel on away matchdays (non-playing members)
- 9) Discounts on products from commercial partners of the club

New Members arriving in Season

All clubs have new players and members arriving throughout a season.

The club should have a membership policy and rulings for these to avoid confusion i.e. full price for all individuals arriving any time up to one month into the season and half price for those who arriving afterwards or 10% off for every month into the season.

Player Subs

All community club players should be expected to pay 'subs' for every match they participate in.

This helps to offset costs of the matchday which includes post-match food and washing of the kit.

As a guide, juniors, on average, pay £3 for each game they play, while Senior players pay £5 on average.

Keep a 'Subs Book' to keep on top of payments and ensure none are missed or added in error

Next to each player's name should be a list of detailing fixture dates and opposition, plus a paid column.

All collectors of subs should submit their collected team funds to one central point at the club, who keeps a record, to ensure none are lost or misplaced.

Good Practice Linked to Membership

Some clubs link payment of subs to this to their membership and those who pay all of this upfront receive a slight discount.

Example: Club has an annual membership of £25 for senior players and charges £3 subs for every match (25 games a season $£3 \times 25 = £75$). Those players wishing not to pay weekly subs may purchase a £80 membership (£20 off) and therefore be exempt from subs.

Players who wish to take this up therefore don't have the hassle of paying subs and receive a slight discount however rarely do players play all their matches in a season. The discount is therefore not really there and therefore no loss to club, who has a greater amount of funds at the start of the season.

Good Practice – Direct Debits and Standing Orders

A) Instead of weekly subs some players/clubs prefer to pay a monthly fee.

B) Clubs can set up forms to arrange direct debits from the players bank account into the club accounts. A small weekly or monthly fee is therefore paid into the accounts without the hassle of chasing players etc. To provide incentive to paying by direct debit clubs could link this to a club lottery etc or players could receive a discount on price.

5. GENERATING PAYING CROWDS

Realising not all community clubs have the facilities to ensure a paying gate however all want to further their income and therefore the topic is applicable to all clubs.

Lots of spectators means lots of customers who will in turn buy programmes, raffle tickets, food, drink and merchandise etc. Many clubs who put a charge on the gate also provide a free programme, others send a bucket around in the first half of the match where spectators make a contribution for their attendance.

To ensure large crowds are generated for every home fixture, clubs must take into account the two main factors, recruitment and retention. It is little use to a club in ensuring lots of new people come to matches every week if person doesn't like it and doesn't wish to come again. This coupled with customer service is a huge topic, one of which many books have been written and therefore the following is therefore very brief and simplistic but hopefully a huge help.

6. CREATE A MULTIPURPOSE CLUB

An increasing amount of sports clubs are now joining together in one locality and forming new overarching 'sports clubs' in order to share facilities, resources and access funding.

Numerous sports clubs sharing the same site will ensure extra revenue being generated.

More Clubs means more revenue generated in the clubhouse.

Multi sports clubs are eligible for more funding grants than their single club counterparts i.e. facility development, while pooling resources will ensure a reduction in cost i.e. training.

Multi-Use

Many clubs who own their own clubhouse and fields hire out to private and commercial groups to cater for their events.

The event can either be held in the clubhouse or as many clubs now do, hold the event in marquees out on the field and the caterers/event organisers use the clubhouse as their kitchen/organising room etc. Examples of events include

- Wedding Receptions
- Post Funeral events
- Engagement Parties
- Birthday and Anniversary Parties
- Other Sports Club Dinners
- Fundraising Dinners
- Celebratory Events
- Business Functions/Parties etc.
- Film companies

Clubs can utilise their rooms with in their clubhouse to hire out to local community groups for meetings and seminars. Many clubs hire out large rooms for aerobics instruction or dance classes.

You can also hire out your pitches for sports days and festivals such as Football Festivals, training or playing venues for other clubs, Summer Fairs, car boot sales and summer camps.

Many clubhouses are just used during matchdays and training nights. Open your doors to other organizations such as Youth Clubs and babysitting services.

7. FUNDRAISING IDEAS AND EVENTS

Money can be generated through organised events and good fundraisers will ensure healthy future seasons in terms of finances.

Good events also bind the social fabric of the club together and ensure members enjoy coming along and therefore retained.

Events should be planned a strategic point through the year to ensure a regular flow of income into the club.

Clubs could explore setting up a “social committee” perhaps made up of former players, who want to stay involved in the club but can no longer commit to a weekly involvement.

Presentation Night

Something all clubs/teams will have and something that can certainly generate a good amount of money for the club.

Whether in the own clubhouse, a hired function room or another sports club consideration must be taken into account of who keeps what money. If you cannot keep the bar takings then other initiatives must be considered to help raise funds.

The cost of the ticket should cover the cost of the evening and therefore monies raised on the night will be profit.

A variety of options are available in terms of format. Clubs may just decide to hire out a room with bar facility and have a disco, buffet and speeches and other clubs may decide to have a formal dinner with disco afterwards.

All the season sponsors and potential sponsors should be invited to the end of season presentation night.

Home Opener

The ‘home opener’ is the clubs first home game of the season and a fresh start for all concerned. It is a useful event to attract new fans, market in the media and ensure a fantastic atmosphere/environment due to the greater amount of given time in order to plan. Getting it right will ensure new members are retained and sales are maximised, getting the season off to great start.

The first home game of the season obviously sets the tone for the rest of the season, so it is an ideal time to introduce initiatives that will improve the game day environment. Launching

RESPECT campaign at the club, technical areas for coaches, spectator areas, new raffles are all easier to introduce in the home opener than half way through the season.

Due to the long lead-in time to the home opener, it is the ideal time to turn the match into an event and work with community partners to boost the atmosphere on the day.

Pre-Season Fundraisers

A must for all pre-seasons is to organise a 'planning evening' and engage with a wide number of people to bring them on the club's ideas and ensure everyone is working with you to get more people coming along to your club.

The more people enthused by what the club is trying to achieve, the better chance of success and the less isolated you and a few others will feel.

A good idea would be to hold a planning evening with as many people as possible (committee members, current players, ex-players, players wives, local professional clubs, council, spectators, local community groups and anyone with a vested interest in the club) to come up with the aims of the club and a plan, alongside some fundraising ideas.

Examples include:

- **Sponsored Walk:** Walkathons are a great way to promote health and the importance of physical activity while coming together to support your team. You will need to carefully choose the location and the date of the walkathon. Keep in mind the season and plan the walkathon for the time of the year when the temperatures are neither too low nor too high, with minimal chances of rain. Having a backup location is a good idea too so you can hold the event even if the weather decides to be unpredictable. You can charge for the admission tickets for the event, but you can also sell other products such as club souvenirs, t-shirts and soft drinks, etc.
- **Ex-Players Reunion Dinner**
- **Bag packing at a local supermarket:** Most supermarkets the likes of Tesco, Asda and Morrisons help the Community and Sports Club by allowing the junior children to bag pack at the checkouts. Contact the store and ask for the Customer Champion or assistant manager to see if you can book a date. You will be surprised what can be raised.
- **Collections before a Super League match (around the stadium)**
- **Collections at the entrances of major stores (usually around Christmas)**
- **Car washing:** Organise a car wash in your community where your team members offer to wash the cars for their neighbours and community members. All you really need are

sponges, soap, buckets, and rags or towels. Pick a day when the forecast is good and use flyers and social media to promote your event. This will not only help you raise funds for your team, but it will also allow you to establish a more meaningful relationship with your fans and members of your community.

- Community Fair - sponge throwing, stalls, tom bola
- Car boot sale: A great opportunity for the whole group to have a good clear out, a club yard sale can help raise funds. If you have grounds, then why not use them to host sales for the local community, with the club keeping the stall fees.
- Chairman's / Sportsman's Dinner: Organise a gala for the club and use local businesses to fund the event. They get to advertise on the evening and come along for free. Tickets are sold for all other attendees and as it's a Gala prices are premium. Use your venue if applicable or arrange a local venue. Sell table of 10 at a reduced rate from individual pricing and include raffles and stand up Bingo, etc. A guest speaker may charge but is an attraction to sell tickets. Incorporate other musical entertainment for the evening as well.
- Golf Days
- Whole Club Training nights – mix ages and work coaching on a carousel basis
- Hosting summer tournaments and charging entry fee
- Running a Summer Play Touch Rugby League Franchise
- Cross Code Match
- Raffles: Various weekly – get the local butcher to donate a meat platter or plan a Christmas Hamper.
- Auction: Ask local businesses to donate some prizes and auction them after a game or at a club evening. Make sure you have a loud and confident auctioneer!
- Bike Ride: Organise a bike ride and charge entrants. Join an existing bike ride and raise money for the organisation.
- Dance-athon: Ever wondered how long you could boogie for? Well here's your chance to find out. Organise a sponsored dance-athon and see how many hours you can last.
- Fun Run: Set up a short running route, create some posters and flyers and invite people to join a sponsored fun run. Add a fancy dress theme to top-off the amusement.
- Give it up: Forfeiting a favourite food, drink or habit for a month can be a rewarding challenge. You simply need to ask people to sponsor you for it to bring in some money for your club.

- Hair braiding / shaving: Hair braiding is a popular stall at a local fair or event...alternatively, find a brave volunteer who's willing to shave off their locks for sponsorship!
- Indoor games: Organise an indoor games evening, with an assortment of boardgames, card games, charades, etc. and ask people to pay if they want to play.
- Karaoke: Rent a karaoke machine and host a sing-along evening at your clubhouse, if you have one, or a local hall. You could turn it into a competition or just ask people to pay to sing.
- Quiz: See how competitive your sports club members and wider community are off the pitch! Organise a quiz, charge participants and see if you can find a donation for the prize.
- Theme park visit
- Go-Karts
- Paintball
- BBQ: No one can resist a good BBQ when it is paired to a matchday.
- Fun Day: Another way to promote staying fit and have some fun at the same time is to organise a fun day in your community. Be mindful of the season and promote the date well in advance. Plan for a variety of games such as potato sack races, water balloon tosses, tug of war, etc. and charge participants a fee for each game. You can also have a stand and sell team's merchandise to increase the chances of raising the needed funds.
- Cake Sales: It may not be an original idea, but it sure is popular. Organise a cake morning and bring along delicious treats to sell to friends and family.
- Club Merchandise: There is no excuse not to have club merchandise for sale to the general public. The start-up costs are small and the returns on t-shirts, hoodies, and caps are at least 300%. It will require someone with time to volunteer to the project, but it will be totally worth it.
- Xmas Party: Bring the club together and charge members to attend an end of year party or meal. A great way to celebrate your year's successes and make the most of the festive season by raising funds.

Monthly Events

During the season players and their families need something to look forward to and participate in. Plan a season of events and send these out along with the fixture list. The events do not

have to be monthly, it is obviously club/team dependent however usually planned around home matches, so members are encouraged to stay on.

A well marketed and organised social event will ensure greater retention of club members due to a greater sense of belonging to the club by the players and their families.

Many of the examples of events have already been listed in the pre-season events however others include:

- Race Night
- Fancy Dress Night
- Golf Days
- Poker Night*
- Casino Night*
- Quiz Nights
- Ladies night
- Karaoke night
- Comedy Night
- Valentines Ball
- Bonfire Party
- Christmas Party / Pantomime
- 70s disco or appropriate era
- Stars in your eyes (Pre-arranged Karaoke with club members dressing up)
- Live Music
- Trip to a big game or event such as the Magic Weekend
- Fundraising Dinner
- *Gambling evenings which are open to the public are not allowed to gamble money; clubs are advised to use tokens and prizes given to the end of evening winners.

8. BOOST YOUR MEMBERS

As well as all the initiatives that attract the new person to the club it is essential the club ensures they are retained. Few spectators watch community rugby for the quality of product however all clubs ensure a good quality of service to the customer most of all a Friendly environment. People attend for the social banter and sense of belonging therefore clubs must ensure the right environment is created at the club.

Friendly environments: Clamp down on poor touchline behavior and be aware of clubhouse raucousness that is not suitable to be seen or heard by other people present and their families. Embrace people, make members of the committee pro-active in going around the bar area and saying hello to players and their families – listen to them and create banter. Remember this little bit of hard work at the beginning of the season will ensure a cracking atmosphere for all to enjoy and revel in for the rest of the season

Welcome people when they get to the club and make sure new faces sat on their own are approached and feel at home.