

Club Chair

Introduction

The Club Chair is a key role within DCC. The role requires a range of skills; from making sure that club policies are reflected in good operational practice, to running effective committee meetings, through to employing diplomacy skills to encourage a happy and effective club.

The Chair should have a good knowledge of the club and has a responsibility for ensuring that the collective views of members can be heard and represented. These views help the Club Chair develop club activities that reflect the needs and wants of the club members.

DCC has a long-term strategy which sets 'ambitions' or strategic priorities. The Chair sponsors this strategy and drives and implements the annual Club Development Plan, outlining actions the club is taking to improve the opportunities available to members.

As a figurehead for the club, the Chair is likely to play a leading role in representing the club in the local community, liaising with other organisations and community groups for the benefit of the club.

Role Description

The Chair is responsible to: The CIO Trustees and Club Management Committee.

Role purpose:

To provide leadership and ensure an efficient and well managed club.

Commitment:

Commitment in terms of hours per week and additional commitments

Main Tasks:

- Act as an ambassador for the club, representing the club at local and regional events.
- Chair regular CIO Trustee and Management Committee meetings and the Club Annual General Meeting (AGM) in accordance with the club constitution.
- Divide responsibilities for club development and operational management with the deputy chair and other club officers
- Work with the Club Secretary to produce agendas for meetings.
- Take responsibility for personal conflicts of interest and declaring, recording and managing these appropriately.
- To ensure that club policies are delivered.
- Being actively involved in creating and following a Club Development Plan.
- Assist the club to fulfil its responsibilities to safeguard children at club level.
- Ensure an understanding of the legal responsibilities of the club to which the club applies.
- Ensure the organisation is represented at British Canoeing regional/national and discipline specific committee meetings.

Skills required

- Knowledge of the club is essential
- Knowledge of the club, centre or committee is essential.
- Background in management is helpful (but not essential).

- Strong leader who can be objective.
- Confident and effective in communication.
- Enthusiastic and able to motivate others.

Chairperson Attributes

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There are many attributes which combine to make an outstanding Chair. Like all good leaders, it is easy to recognise an effective Chair when you see them but pinning down what they have in common can be a bit more difficult. The list below highlights some of the attributes we think all great leaders share:

- 1. Integrity** - The person leading the club must be seen to have the highest personal standards regarding honesty, reliability and commitment to the role. They should lead by example.
- 2. Ability to influence others, without dominating** - the Chair is responsible for harnessing all the best that the club membership can offer the club, especially fellow committee members. Every committee member is there because they want the best for the club and they all bring unique experiences, skills, knowledge and understanding. It is the role of the Chair to get the best out of the committee, ensure that they all contribute to discussions, the decision-making process and carry out their respective roles for the benefit of the members.
- 3. Personal strength** - Being Chair of a club can sometimes be a tough job. A good Chair will share responsibilities and give strength and support to others. Clubs can experience tough times and the resilience of the Chair can be important in maintaining a great club spirit.
- 4. Clear vision and passion for the club** - the best clubs have a clear vision and plan for how they will provide the best paddling experiences for its members. The Chair plays a key part in working with members in establishing and sharing that vision. They also drive the delivery of the plan and a passion for the club can help maintain the commitment of others.
- 5. Emotional Intelligence** - a difficult attribute to pin down but a great Chair will have the ability to read people and build effective relationships with them. The Chair should be a great facilitator, who makes everyone feel safe, confident, and able to share their views, challenge the views of others and then facilitate a joint decision.
- 6. Knowledge and experience** - prior knowledge and experience in both management and paddling can be very helpful (but not always necessary!). Any good Chair recognises the need to have the right people doing the right things for the club, a club development plan keeps members focused and developing high quality communications with all members.
- 7. Decisiveness** - a good Chair will know what should be prioritised, when to take

action, and what judgments to make in difficult circumstances. They gather all information and views before coming to decisions that are in the interests of the club and its members.

8. Ability to chair meetings - It might seem obvious, but a Chair must be able to chair meetings! Managing meetings effectively involves taking time to plan an agenda, balancing contributions from all members, ensuring clarity about decisions and actions agreed. Actions from the meeting must be followed up.

9. Coaching skills - As a senior member of the club and someone with a great set of management skills, the Chair should be helping other committee members and general club members grow and thrive. At the very least, time spent supporting and developing leaders throughout the club will do wonders for the club's succession planning.

10. Courage - The Chair might, on very rare occasions, be required to make some tough decisions which are in the best interests of the club. These might not be popular, but as long as good consultation has taken place, backed up by transparent processes and good communications, decisions are more likely to be seen as fair and in the interests of the club as a whole.

