

# THE VOLUNTEER ECOSYSTEM

**It's important to look at volunteering as a journey that the volunteer progresses through over time, and to remember that support should be given throughout every stage of that journey not just at the beginning when the volunteer is recruited.** The different stages of the volunteer experience are shown in the Volunteer Ecosystem.

The following pages have been designed to help you think through the whole volunteer experience at your Club. They will help you understand your current situation, and identify what works really well, where you might have particular challenges, and things that you might want to improve upon.

The insights you gather from this exercise will help you understand the things you might need to do in order to continue to attract new volunteers, retain existing ones, and ensure their experience is as fun and rewarding as possible.



# THE VOLUNTEER ECOSYSTEM

Definitions of each stage and key questions to get you thinking

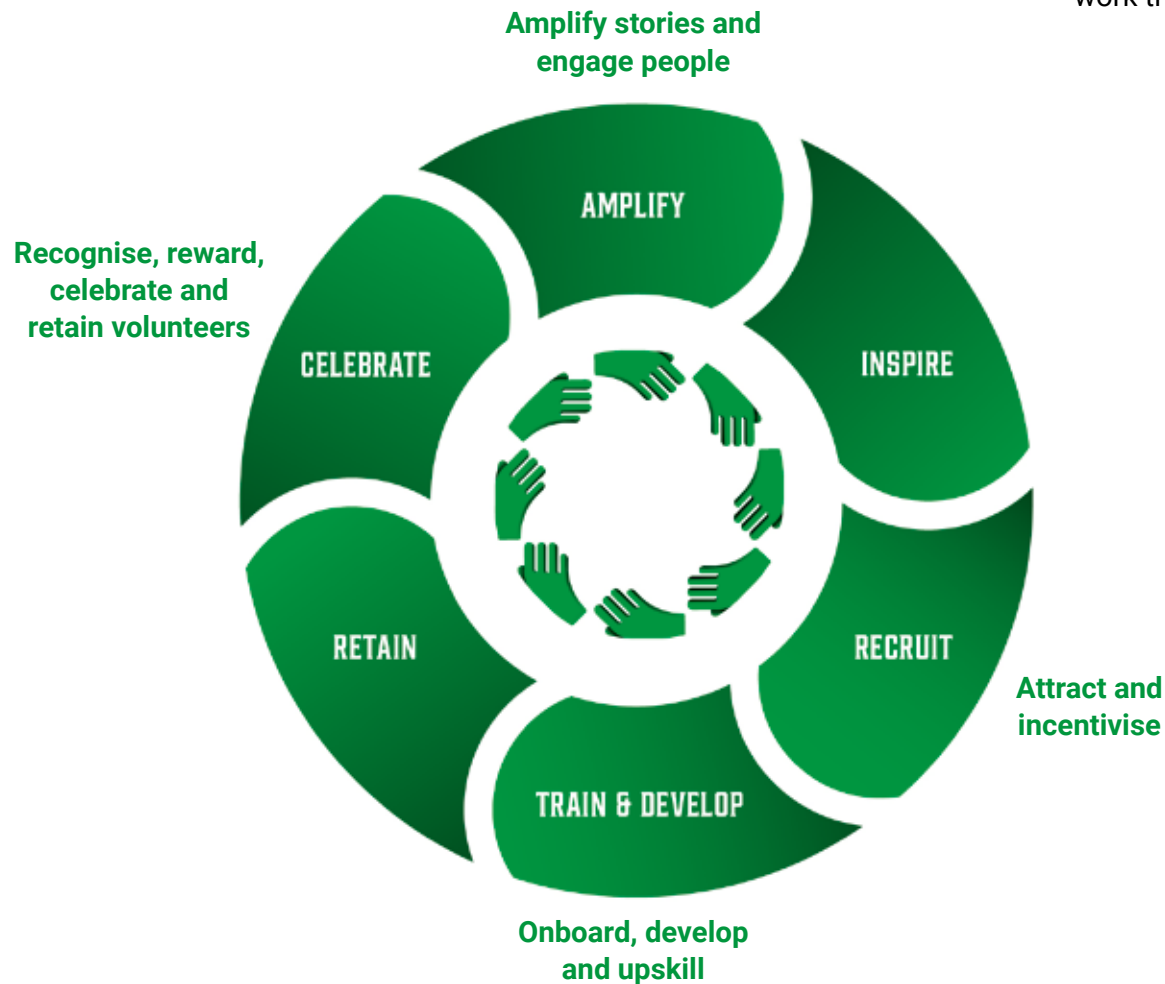
<b>Inspire</b>	<b>The message and stories we tell to attract audiences into volunteering</b>	»»»	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do we represent volunteering in our marketing and communications?</li> <li>• Who are the faces of volunteering in our Club?</li> <li>• What are the right case studies and stories to tell?</li> </ul>
<b>Recruit</b>	<b>Where and how we communicate with potential volunteers</b>	»»»	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do we recruit new volunteers and how do we welcome them into our Club?</li> <li>• How do we understand and answer different people's motivations for getting involved?</li> <li>• Where and how do we advertise volunteering roles?</li> </ul>
<b>Train &amp; Develop</b>	<b>How we support volunteers in order to meet both their and football's goals</b>	»»»	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do our volunteers receive an induction?</li> <li>• Do our volunteers have access to training?</li> <li>• Is there additional support we could provide (such as mentoring)?</li> <li>• What kind of things do our volunteers need support on?</li> </ul>
<b>Retain</b>	<b>How we work to keep hold of our volunteers and make a difference to their lives</b>	»»»	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What truly makes a difference to volunteers' lives?</li> <li>• How do we retain our existing core of volunteers?</li> <li>• What motivates our volunteers to carry-on?</li> <li>• How do we ensure we are not asking too much of our volunteers?</li> </ul>
<b>Celebrate</b>	<b>How we ensure that football volunteers feel valued and rewarded</b>	»»»	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do we ensure volunteers feel recognised and appreciated?</li> <li>• How do we reward and celebrate our volunteers at all levels – from simple thanks, surprise and delight moments to the Grassroots Awards and beyond?</li> </ul>
<b>Amplify</b>	<b>Who we get the message out to and how we reach them</b>	»»»	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who are we trying to attract?</li> <li>• How do we ensure we reach our target audience?</li> <li>• How could external partnerships help us reach more people?</li> <li>• What tools do we use to get our message out (eg social media, word of mouth, local community groups)?</li> </ul>
<b>Support</b>	<b>The tools and processes which help volunteers in their roles</b>	»»»	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do we have a support structure in place for our volunteers?</li> <li>• How do we use digital to support volunteering?</li> <li>• How do we evaluate what works and what doesn't?</li> <li>• Do we have adequate safeguarding processes in place?</li> </ul>



## EXERCISE: CHALLENGES & SUCCESSSES

Using the template on the next page, think through each stage of the volunteer experience at your Club and consider what works really well and what challenges you face. You can use the questions on the previous page to prompt your thinking.

It is useful to ask a number of volunteers to contribute to this exercise, as each person is likely to have had a different experience and so bring a slightly different perspective to the table. You could circulate this guide and ask people to feed back individually, or you could get everyone together and discuss and work through the template as a group.



### Challenges

What are the biggest challenges you face in each area of the ecosystem?

What are the key problems for your club/league that need to be solved?

### Successes

What is working really well currently?

What things have you put in place that you should continue/could learn from?



# CHALLENGES & SUCCESSES

Inspire

Recruit

Train & Develop

Retain

Celebrate

Amplify

Support

What are your biggest challenges?

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What works really well?

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