

Club Development Plan

Framework

**Introduction**

In the NCAS criteria document, one of the themes is ‘Future Planning’. This theme relates directly to the outcomes that would be achieved through a club formulating a Club Development Plan. This Framework document, along with the Club Development Plan Template is designed to assist your club in formulating that Club Development Plan.

A Club Development Plan (similar to a Strategic or Business Plan in a corporate setting) is a key development tool in planning for your club’s future. Any football club that is serious about sustainability and future development must have a blueprint that shows the direction that it wishes to take.

The process of putting together a Club Development Plan is ongoing. It involves regular evaluation and discussion by the decision makers at the club. This is not a document that can be completed by just one person in a short amount of time. The ideal way for a club to create one is for the entire committee to be involved. The finished product will show a breakdown of each Key Priority Area (KPA) and:

1. Provide a snapshot of where your club currently relates to that KPA;
2. Outline a series of achievable goals;
3. Detail a list of actions that will help the club to reach those goals.

There are a large number of topics that could be included in a Club Development Plan. FFA has provided twelve that are essential. These are depicted as KPAs and are below. These KPAs all relate directly or indirectly to the Themes detailed in the NCAS Community Criteria Document.

**Club Development KPAs**

1. Club Vision and Mission

2. Player Retention and Growth

3. Volunteer Development

4. Partnership Development

5. Creating a Welcoming Environment for all

6. Promoting Positive Behaviour

7. Communication and Marketing

8. Coach Development

9. Safety and Risk Management

10. Facility Development

11. Creating Recreational Opportunities

12. Developing Match Officials

**Length of Time for your Plan**

You need to choose an appropriate length of time for your Club Development Plan to be in place for. It may be a 3-year plan, alternatively some clubs may feel that it’s more relevant to be a five-year plan. Whatever length of time your club decides to go with, evaluation of your initial goals and ongoing actions will determine how beneficial the document will be. The period of time that you decide should be identified on the cover of your Club Development Plan.

**Next Steps**

This document should be used in conjunction with the Club Development Plan Template. Once you have completed the Framework for your Club Development Plan, it’s time to use the information to populate the Template. Keep in mind the Template is only a guide so be sure to put your own clubs spin on the contents.

Your newly formed Club Development Plan should be referred to at each committee meeting to evaluate the goals and actions. This will help keep your club on track and working towards the bigger picture.

**KPA 1 – Club Vision and Mission:**

**What is this KPA about?**

Vision Statements and Mission Statements are designed to give your club an overriding objective, a rationale for its existence. They identify and summarise your club’s purpose and outline its future ambition.

**Why is this important?**

It’s important for your club to have a direction. The club Vision and Mission are a great way to encapsulate your club’s purpose and future aspirations.

**Vision statements contain key phrases that express the following:**

* the ideal, ultimate, realistic and achievable outcome or goal
* the preferred and plausible future – what does it look like?
* strategic direction

**Mission statements contain key phrases that express the following:**

* reason for being, purpose
* why the club exists and what it is trying to achieve
* how it wants to be seen and what it does

**Sample Vision Statement:**

The Bayside Soccer Club is known as a successful family orientated club, which contributes to the wider community both on and off the field.

**Sample Mission Statement:**

The primary objective of the Bayside Soccer Club is the development of junior football and footballers. We will provide the Bayside area with a football programme that prepares young players both mentally and physically for senior football. This will include the provision of a safe and supportive community based environment which encourages skill development, fitness, fair play and teamwork.

**Next Steps:**

* Think about what values your club has and its principal goals for the future. Put this into two short paragraphs, representing both its vision and mission.

**KPA 2 - Player Retention and Growth:**

**What is this KPA about?**

Identify opportunities to increase the number of new players at your club as well as strategies to keep existing players.

**Why is this important?**

* Currently football has a significant drop out of players at differing age groups. It is important that clubs are thinking about how they can retain players, so that they become lifelong participants.
* The National Facilities Audit identified that there are still opportunities to grow the game.
* Clubs should be considering where they would like to be in the long term, including the number of teams and players.

**Potential Strategies:**

* Find out why players are attracted to and continue to be involved in your club.
* Utilise strategies such as direct email communication with players, fostering links with schools, newspaper and banner advertising..
* Consider whether you should be looking to offer a range of opportunities including Women’s and Girls’ teams/programs, Masters, Recreational or social opportunities.

**Next Steps:**

* Provide a history of where you club has been in recent years and where it currently stands with regards to team and player numbers (including men, women, junior, senior etc). Try to include tables and statistics if possible.
* What are your goals for ‘Player Retention and Growth’ over your selected period of time for the Club Development Plan?
* Provide a list of ACTIONS that your club will take over this period. You should include who will be responsible for each action and when it will be complete. This could be in table form or as bullet points.

**KPA 3 – Volunteer Development:**

**What is this KPA about?**

Identifying how you can retain, support and increase the number of volunteers in your club.

**Why is this important?**

Volunteers are very integral to our game and without them clubs would not be able to survive. However, we often don’t take time out to consider how we can better support volunteers within the club and how we can more effectively manage our volunteers.

**Potential Strategies:**

* Review the management of volunteers. Do they have a job description which clearly outlines roles, responsibilities and timeframes?
* Shifting volunteers into different roles can help to maintain enthusiasm.
* Do you reward your volunteers? Do you recognise them at end of season functions?
* Do you accept short term volunteers, university students, young people who may be travelling? If so, how do you recruit these volunteers?
* Do you think about target groups for volunteers? Parents, young players, university students, Rotary Groups?

**Next Steps:**

* Outline the types of volunteers you currently have at your club. This will include your Committee positions, team managers, ground keepers, canteen workers, registrars etc. Give a description of how you recruit these volunteers and on what basis they are recruited.
* What are your goals for ‘Volunteer Development’ over your selected period of time for the Club Development Plan?
* Provide a list of ACTIONS that your club will take over this period. You should include who will be responsible for each action and when it will be complete. This could be in table form or as bullet points.

**KPA 4 – Partnership Development:**

**What is this KPA about?**

The key relationships you develop in your local community. Consider who the key stakeholders are that your club would benefit from developing a stronger connection with.

**Why is this important?**

Creating effective partnerships will not necessarily lead to instant benefits. However, as an example, by investing in a relationship with your local council you are likely to benefit in the area of facility development and grants in the long run.

**Potential Partnerships could include:**

* Local Council.
* Local Primary and Secondary Schools and Universities.
* Community organisations.
* Local Police.
* Member Federation.
* Local businesses.

**Next Steps:**

* Consider and detail the current partnerships that your club benefits from. What advantages are gained from these relationships? Who looks after these partnerships? Are key stakeholders invited to your club for important functions and events? Do you meet regularly with these stakeholders or just when your club needs something from them?
* What are your goals for ‘Partnership Development’ over your selected period of time for the Club Development Plan?
* Provide a list of ACTIONS that your club will take over this period. You should include who will be responsible for each action and when it will be complete. This could be in table form or as bullet points.

**KPA 5 – Creating a Welcoming Environment for all:**

**What is this KPA about?**

Is your club inclusive and welcoming to all groups in the community? This could include female participants, people with a disability, new arrivals and Indigenous Australians?

**Why is this important?**

Everybody has the right to participate in sport at their local club. People want to feel part of a community and access inclusive opportunities rather than segregated communities.

**Potential Strategies:**

* Review your welcome strategies, ie. if a person with a disability came to your registration day, how would they be treated by a club official?
* Educating club volunteers and coaches.
* Develop a relationship with a local special needs school or community organisation.
* Offer opportunities for people with a disability to volunteer.

**Next Steps:**

* What type of welcoming initiatives does your club currently have in place? Do you have existing relationships with community organisations who offer non-exclusive opportunities? Does the club have a welcoming environment policy? Does everyone at your club know the club’s welcoming environment policy?
* What type of ‘Welcoming Environment’ initiatives would you like to put in place over your selected period of time for the Club Development Plan?
* Provide a list of ACTIONS that your club will take over this period. You should include who will be responsible for each action and when it will be complete. This could be in table form or as bullet points.

**KPA 6 – Promoting Positive Behaviour:**

**What is this KPA about?**

Adopting strategies to influence the behaviour of parents and players who are representing your club on game day as well as at club events.

**Why is this important?**

Negative behaviour on the sidelines can reflect badly on your club and the sport of football as a whole. It is also becoming increasingly difficult to recruit and retain referees, which is in part due to the abuse inflicted by spectators and the like during matches.

**Potential Strategies:**

* Briefing parents, coaches and team managers about behaviour.
* Assessing this as part of the recruitment of a coach.
* Promoting and advertising the club’s and/or FFA’s codes of conduct – where are they displayed within the club?
* Embedding key messages into your club welcome pack and registration forms.
* Supporting the FFA Code of Conduct and any similar campaigns developed in this area.
* Regular reminders about all of these policies, not simply a one-off explanation at the beginning of the season.

**Next Steps:**

* How does your club currently promote positive behaviour to its players, members, coaches and spectators? Is this a major focus for the current committee? Do you have a parent session where this is highlighted? Are there posters displayed to reinforce the message? Provide a history of any initiatives that the club has promoted for this theme.
* What are your goals for ‘Promoting Positive Behaviour’ over your selected period of time for the Club Development Plan?
* Provide a list of ACTIONS that your club will take over this period. You should include who will be responsible for each action and when it will be complete. This could be in table form or as bullet points.

**KPA 7 – Communication and Marketing:**

**What is this KPA about?**

Communication and marketing focuses on three key areas;

1. Promoting your club to the wider community.

2. Internal communication with your players, staff and volunteers.

3. Communication with potential customers.

**Why is this important?**

This area has a direct impact on the recruitment of new players and retention of current players. It also plays an important role in retaining volunteers. A positive club profile will assist with partnership development and the perception of the club by key stakeholders.

**Potential Strategies:**

* Developing or reviewing your website is important. You need to consider who the website is primarily aimed at and whether the content reflects this.
* Does your club hold Registration Days and are they a good introduction to your club?
* Banners, leaflets, newsletters and e-newsletters.
* Good news stories through local media including newspapers, radio and local council.

**Next Steps:**

* What kind of strategies does your club currently employ to communicate and market itself to the wider community? Provide a list of these and whether they form part of an existing Communication and Marketing plan, or are just done on an ad-hoc basis. What do you want to achieve by promoting your club to external stakeholders?
* What are your goals for ‘Communication and Marketing’ over your selected period of time for the Club Development Plan?
* Provide a list of ACTIONS that your club will take over this period. You should include who will be responsible for each action and when it will be complete. This could be in table form or as bullet points.

**KPA 8 – Coach Development:**

**What is this KPA about?**

Providing your club coaches with the appropriate skills and knowledge through the provision of training courses for both football specific coaching and also broader player management.

**Why is this important?**

Coaches are key point of contact for skill and game development knowledge for players, particularly a club’s junior players. It’s vital that they are provided with the appropriate support and are given every opportunity to develop their own skills and knowledge of the sport. This will make a coach more confident in their role and enable them to have the desired impact on players.

**Potential Strategies:**

* Organising (and ideally subsidising) the appropriate level of coaching courses for each club coach through your Member Federation.
* Having a high profile guest coach take your club coaches through a training session.
* Appoint a Coaching Coordinator to oversee all club coaches.
* Monthly coaches meetings to discuss relevant issues and network ideas.
* Senior coach to attend junior games and provide feedback to junior coaches.

**Next Steps:**

* What current coach education and development initiatives does your club have in place? Do you have an existing Coaching Coordinator or someone who informally oversees your coaches? Is there interaction between senior and junior coaches? Are your coaches qualified to the appropriate level of accreditation?
* What are your goals for ‘Coach Development’ over your selected period of time for the Club Development Plan?
* Provide a list of ACTIONS that your club will take over this period. You should include who will be responsible for each action and when it will be complete. This could be in table form or as bullet points.

**KPA 9 – Safety and Risk Management:**

**What is this KPA about?**

Providing a safe environment for all who visit your club while identifying any possible risk and reducing its affect through safe practices and policies.

**Why is this important?**

In an age where litigation is prevalent, it’s extremely important that clubs take every precaution to provide a safe environment for anyone who utilises its services and facilities. This includes not only safe fields and amenities but identifying potential risks outside of a physical nature.

**Potential Strategies:**

* Club representatives completing the online induction questionnaire located at [www.gowgatessport.com.au/football](http://www.gowgatessport.com.au/football)
* Displaying the FIFA 11+ poster (provided by FFA) in a prominent location at your facility and encouraging all coaches to implement this injury prevention program with their teams
* Displaying the Safe Football poster (provided by Gow-Gates) in a prominent location at their facility
* Club representatives attending an annual risk management seminar (organised by Gow-Gates in conjunction with the respective Member Federation)
* Clubs providing evidence of regular use of the Match Day Checklists throughout the season

**Next Steps:**

* What safety and risk management practices does your club currently have in place? Is there one specific person who oversees this area and does the committee discuss this on a monthly basis? Is the club aware of councils and FFA’s requirements regarding safety and risk management?
* What are you goals for ‘Safety and Risk Management’ over your selected period of time for the Club Development Plan?
* Provide a list of ACTIONS that your club will take over this period. You should include who will be responsible for each action and when it will be complete. This could be in table form or as bullet points.

**KPA 10 – Facility Development:**

**What is this KPA about?**

Providing our club’s members, players, volunteers and supporters access to the best available and most appropriate facilities.

**Why is this important?**

It’s important that all affiliates of your club feel like they are accessing the best possible facilities when they visit the club. The club should be seen to be proactive in this area, whether it be through the lobbying of the ground owner (in most cases this will be the council/shire), or fundraising to support future facility development projects. It’s also important that a club is realistic with its facility expectations.

**Potential Strategies:**

* Facility audit to show what the club currently possesses.
* Look at lease/tenant agreements with the owner of the facility.
* Think about proposed growth of members and players and what the club may need to service these people in the future.
* What is achievable in the short/long term in terms of development?
* Does the club have a sinking fund, through player registrations? Does a portion of fundraising/sponsorship go towards facility maintenance and facility development?

**Next Steps:**

* What are the current facilities that your club has access to? Provide a detailed explanation of these. What kind of access does your club have to its facilities? Is there a lease/tenant arrangement with the local council/shire? Do you have access to the facilities all year round or on a seasonal basis? Does the club have a sinking fund and/or raise money for future facility development.
* What are you goals for ‘Facility Development’ over your selected period of time for the Club Development Plan?
* Provide a list of ACTIONS that your club will take over this period. You should include who will be responsible for each action and when it will be complete. This could be in table form or as bullet points.

**KPA 11 – Creating Recreational Opportunities:**

**What is this KPA about?**

Providing alternative football opportunities to existing members and potential new members of your club, through the development and promotion of structured modified games.

**Why is this important?**

The standard 11-a-side football on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon incorporating two nights a week of training may not cater to everyone’s needs. In order to continue the growth and development of your club, it’s important that you provide alternative times and game formats that allow everyone’s involvement. This can provide the club with another source of revenue which will assist in ensuring it is sustainable into the future.

**Potential Strategies:**

* Creation of a club Futsal team to play in an existing competition.
* Creation of a Futsal competition, run at the club or a local indoor centre.
* Introduction of a Social Competition for people who are only able to attend on a semi regular basis.

**Next Steps:**

* What kind of recreational opportunities does your club currently provide to its members, or has it provided in the past? Do players also have involvement in a structured indoor or futsal competition that could come under the club’s name? Is the club fully aware of the opportunities available through FFV’s modified competitions? Have people from the wider community enquired about social playing opportunities within the club?
* What are you goals for ‘Creating Recreational Opportunities’ over your selected period of time for the Club Development Plan?
* Provide a list of ACTIONS that your club will take over this period. You should include who will be responsible for each action and when it will be complete. This could be in table form or as bullet points.

**KPA 12 – Developing Match Officials:**

**What is this KPA about?**

As the number of football clubs and teams continue to grow, there is an associated need for a higher number of match officials to adjudicate matches.

**Why is this important?**

Without match officials we would not have a competition based sport. It’s important to promote opportunities for people who may not have the capacity or desire to participate as players. A great way to encourage potential match officials is through the existing club system, utilising association material.

**Potential Strategies:**

* Encourage and promote opportunities provided by your Member Federation.
* Highlight and promote the advantages of becoming a match official including fitness, social and even financial benefits.
* Introduce a club recruiting program for match officials.
* Constructive feedback provided to assist in referee development.

**Next Steps:**

* What current practices does the club have in place for the development of match referees? Is this an area that has been focussed on in the past or does the club simply rely on your Member Federation/Association for the provision of referee recruitment? Does the club take care of match officials that are provided for match days and support them throughout their time at the club? Is productive feedback provided through the appropriate channels regarding referee performances?
* What are you goals for ‘Developing Match Officials’ over your selected period of time for the Club Development Plan?
* Provide a list of ACTIONS that your club will take over this period. You should include who will be responsible for each action and when it will be complete. This could be in table form or as bullet points.