

Five steps to recruit new members



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Introduction

So you'd like to recruit more members? Great! This five-step guide is designed to help you do just that. Recruiting new members isn't quite an exact science, but from years of working with and listening to our clubs, we have a good idea of what works.

So, if you share out the tasks and follow the guide, we're confident you will get results. We have tried to make it as simple to follow as possible, but please remember we are always at the end of the phone or email and will be happy to help in any way we can to ensure you get the new members you are hoping for.

This plan simply focuses on what you can do to recruit new members. If your club has other challenges such as training, kit or pool problems for example, please get in touch and we will see what we can do to help.

You do not have to do the steps in this plan in sequence. Although, having said that, we have tried to put them in as logical a priority sequence as possible so, unless you feel strongly otherwise, it may be easiest to take it from the top.

We hope the clear 'take home' from this guide will be the importance of your club's online presence and how getting it right will make a big difference. The website and social media guidance will serve you well - you will be amazed. Please do contact us if you would like to chat anything through or would like some bespoke feedback, such as an appraisal of your existing website. We're here to help.

Good luck!

Kind regards

The BSAC Marketing Team

"We followed the advice that HQ gave us for our website and can't believe the results since then – we've been recruiting a new member every two weeks!"

Rob Sewell, Thistle Divers



Useful contacts:

General marketing queries – marketing@bsac.com

Social media marketing – socialmedia@bsac.com

Step 1

Getting off the blocks

The hardest part can simply be getting started. Here are our suggestions to get you flying off the blocks.

1. Take inspiration from other clubs

Read how five clubs turned their clubs around at bsac.com/needinspiration

Hear Martin Holloway from Chester SAC talk through their successes...



2. Make the most of your people

Successful clubs generally involve as many members as possible in their plans and activities. This helps people feel involved, it shares out the work and is likely to be a lot more fun than working on your own. You are also likely to get far better results working in a team. Think about finding the following people to see if they can get involved...

Do you have a web designer or digital marketing pro?

We don't want to state the obvious, but in today's digital age we're sure this person could help!

Do you have a marketing, media or PR pro?

If they were willing, this person (or people) could be perfect to coordinate this recruitment plan.

Who is keen to get more involved?

Generally new members are excited about their new-found sport and want to get involved. Also, you may have other members who would happily get more involved if asked. Get them on board. 'Many hands' as they say.



3. Reflect and write a simple plan

First, reflect on where you're at. Questions to ask yourselves...

- How many new members did we recruit in the last year? How did they find out about our club?
- What recruitment initiatives did we employ? What worked well and what did not?
- How many members did we lose? Do we know why? What makes members stay with our club? (Although not the focus of this guide, retention of members is important too).

Second, what do you want to achieve?

Set yourselves a target. Maybe you could target yourselves with 10% growth in new members over the next year? You can then follow the rest of this guide and, with a bit of luck, will be celebrating your success in a year's time. For a marketing plan template to get you started visit **bsac.com/marketingplan**

Third, write a plan

Once you have read through this guide, make a simple plan for your club. Include your targets and the activities you will be carrying out. Include timings and clearly define who is responsible for what. Think about the different options you have for reaching your target audience. There are lots of marketing channels to choose between, such as websites, social media, posters, newsletters, press and media. This guide will help you to prioritise.

Finally, feel free to contact BSAC HQ for a chat

If you would simply like to talk through where you are at and receive some tailored advice and support to get you started, please get in touch. Call **+44(0)151 350 6224** or email **marketing@bsac.com**.

Do it! We'll be delighted to help.



Step 2

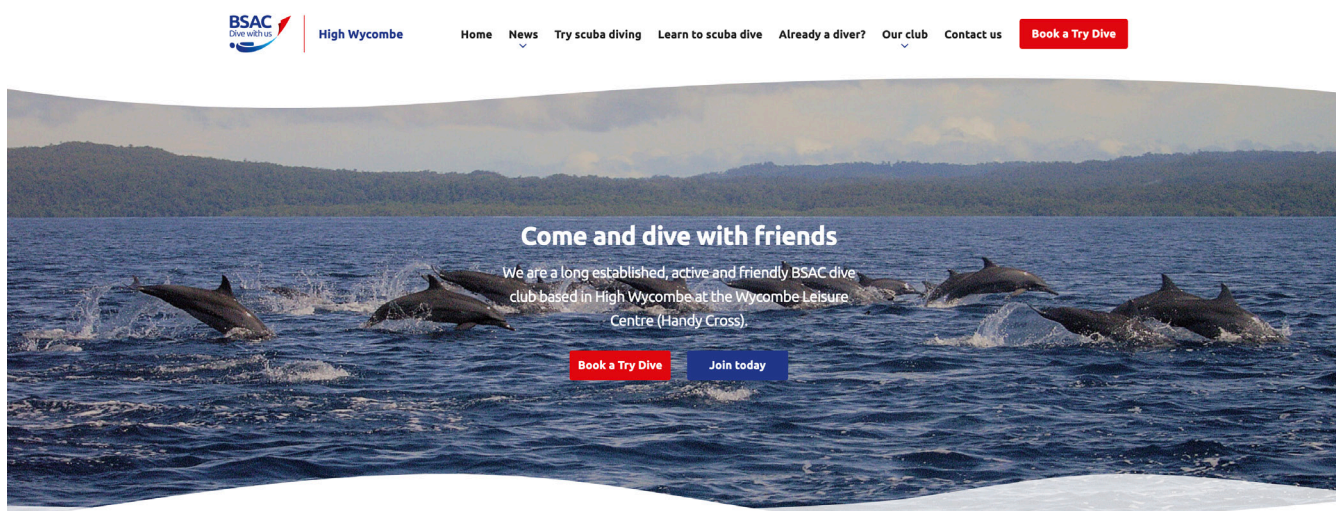
Sort your website

After 'word of mouth' (referrals from club members), club websites are the best source of new member leads. If you don't have one and want new members you really need to get one sorted.

Don't have a website? Here's what you need to know about the websites for clubs initiative...

- **Get an easy-to-use, attractive website made specially for you.**
The websites are created with recruitment and retention in mind so they're easy-to-navigate for potential members, as well as easy-to-manage for you!
- **BSAC-branded to feel part of the community.**
One of our specific aims when working with Partner was to link our clubs visually with the BSAC brand. Check out one live in action at wycombesubaqua.com.
- **On-hand support team to answer any queries and assist.**
While the websites are made to be specific to the BSAC brand, you can also tailor yours to suit your club. There is an online support team with Platform to help you through the set up process and then whenever you need assistance.
- **Great value for money.**
A website of this calibre can be costly, but BSAC has partnered with Partner to make sure this website is cost-effective, with a one-off set up cost and small ongoing monthly charge.

Find out more about the project and see examples of other clubs at bsac.com/websiteadvice
Ready to sign up? Visit builtbyplatform.co.uk/bsac



Alternatively, here's some tips to set up your own...

1. Delegate if you can.

Firstly, do you have a web designer or someone technically minded that may want to take it on? If so, why not use their help to get you started?

2. Don't think it's going to be too difficult or expensive.

Even if you don't have a web designer at your disposal, sorting out a website can be inexpensive and easy to do for the non-technically minded.

3. Easy to set up options.

If you want something cheap (or free!) and easy, there are thousands of options out there. If you Google 'free websites' you will see what we mean. Check out wordpress.com for a low cost option.

4. Get someone to 'manage' your club's website.

They'll need the passion and interest to keep your website updated regularly with dive trips and training dates, for example.

5. Still not sure what to do? Don't worry!

Please contact the team at HQ who will be happy to help.

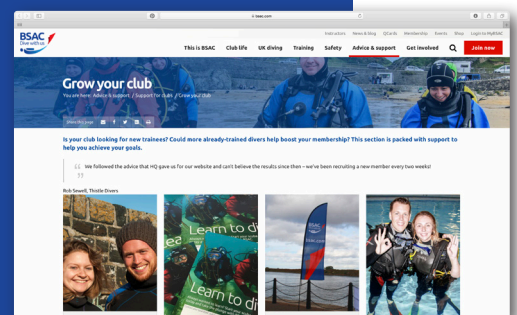
marketing@bsac.com

Did you know...

Google offer free website templates, especially for clubs. Check out sites.google.com, then click 'Get Started' – Google will help you from there with their website template system.

Did you know...

BSAC is happy for you to use text from the main bsac.com website. We're not precious - if you want to cut and paste any text, please help yourselves! Please note though, if you need any images please get in touch with us as we won't necessarily have the appropriate copyright permissions on all of the images. There are some images you can download and use freely, at bsac.com/wantnewmembers



Tips to make your website do more for you...

1. Make it easy for people to contact you

Put a contact phone number and email address in the footer of your website. We know this sounds obvious but it's amazing how many websites don't do this. Have clear contact details at the bottom of every page of your website. It is also worth creating a specific 'Contact Us' page with your contact details and your club venue too!

2. Keep it fresh

It's important to update your website regularly with trips, training, social events and club news. The most successful club websites are kept up-to-date and have relevant content for your reader.

3. Think about how people search on Google

If your club is in, say, Chester, it's likely that someone interested in scuba diving in the area may put 'scuba

diving Chester' into Google (or other search engines). Whatever words you think people may put into the search engines to find YOUR club, get those words into the content of your website as much as you can.

4. Solve your customers' problems

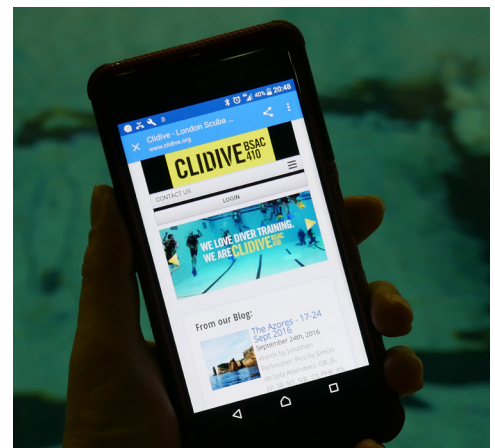
Everyone is pressed for time these days and making your website easy for people to get the information they want is key. We recommend clear sections on the following:

- **About us** – a clear outline of the spirit and ethos of your club, what you get up to and why people join.
- **Learn to dive (or snorkel, or both!)** – people looking to learn want to find out what it's all about; pictures and, better still, videos help illustrate what you do. Tell them what it's like, what's involved, how much it may cost etc.
- **Already a diver?** - Thousands of Brits learn to dive overseas every year. We need to encourage them to give UK diving a go! This section can explain how easy it is to go diving with a BSAC club having trained elsewhere (with another agency). Or if you're based outside of the UK, the same principle applies for people who may have learnt overseas from where you are.
- **Contact us** - as stated above, this is really important and it's a page most people will look for.

Once you're on top of your website, other useful pages to consider are:

- **UK diving** – tell them what kind of diving or snorkelling you do. Pictures and videos are great. Tell them how great UK diving is (or for overseas clubs – how great the diving is where you are!).
- **BSAC training** – how they can train and progress.
- **Membership** – details on your club's prices, BSAC membership and what benefits they get.
- **Club calendar** – the social side is a big reason people join clubs. Let them know what you are up to, when/where you meet, planned trips and training events etc. Make sure you keep your diary bang up-to-date so people's impressions are of an active, fun club.

If you'd like to check out some websites that have really delivered for clubs, try **chestersubaquaclub.co.uk** or **clidive.org**.



Step 3

Get social

Word of mouth (referrals from existing members) has long been the best source of new members for clubs. Now, with social media, the opportunity has skyrocketed. Here we advise on how to get the most from your online platforms...

Social media

With more than 83% of people in the UK actively using social media, it's clear that it's here to stay. Social media allows conversations to happen between your club and the people important to your club, whether that's your members, volunteers, parents or prospective members.

Although you may wish to consider other platforms, Facebook tends to be the best area of opportunity for BSAC clubs so is the best place to start.

Club not on Facebook yet?

For assistance on how to set up a club Facebook Page, visit bsac.com/getstartedonfacebook.

How to make the most of Facebook

Have a good-looking and logical Page

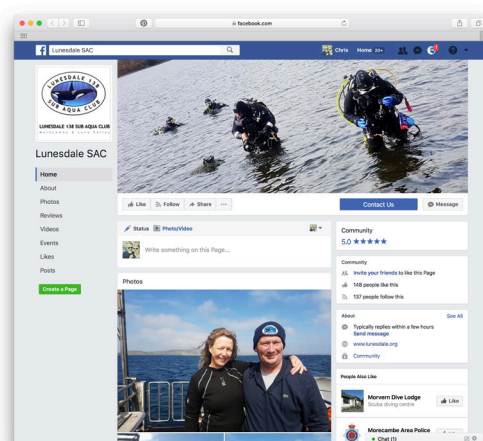
Make sure your club can be found quickly by having a name and profile picture that is easy to recognise. If you have one, use your club's logo. You will also need to make a username which will become your web address (i.e. facebook.com/lunesdalesac). Try and get a great photo for your cover image – one of club members out and about having fun is ideal. Or, a great diving shot. Remember to set your club up a Facebook 'Page' (not a 'Group' or 'Personal profile'). You will reach more people that way.

Keep it current and keep talking

People prefer to listen and watch rather than read lots of text. Put short videos up about your club or of your club members out and about diving. Post on all of your activities – pics or videos from dive trips, training days, social events. Also, celebrate any successes – when people qualify, overcome challenges, grant successes; any positive news from the club. A silent page doesn't give a great impression of your club. You can engage people by commenting on what they are posting and asking for their views. However, it's important on Facebook not to over-post. Well-timed, informative and with media is important for Facebook, but if you want to post more continuously (i.e. live updates), Twitter is a better fit.

Integrate Facebook with your website

If you have a club website you can place the Facebook 'Like' symbol onto your web pages. When someone clicks it, they are taken directly to the club's Facebook page where they can like it. Clubs can also integrate other Facebook tools, known as Plugins, into their website. One example is a live stream to show the latest posts on the club's Facebook page. Visit facebook.com to find out how. You can also do this with Twitter and Instagram.



Did you know...

Video posts reach more people on Facebook than other posts. So get comfortable with shooting video! If you haven't started uploading video to your Facebook page, now's the time to begin. You don't need to be a pro videographer - all you need is a smart phone and some good lighting. For more viewers keep them short (up to one min ideally). If you can, add captions to your videos. 90% of viewers on Facebook watch videos without sound. Google for advice on shooting video and tools for adding captions, there is lots online.

Set up reviews

On your Facebook Page, go to Settings > Templates and tabs > Reviews > Settings > Show. You should then be able to find them at **facebook.com/*yourclubusername*/reviews**.

Make sure you ask all of your members to recommend you - more on this in Step 5.

Be responsive

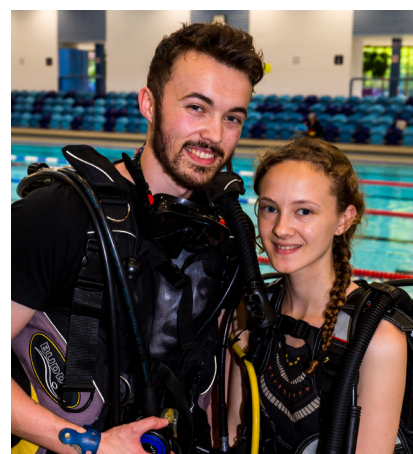
Clubs have a higher success rate when they answer messages from potential members quickly on Facebook. We always recommend a 24-hour response time, but if you're even better than that, Facebook gives you a green badge that tells enquirers that you're 'very responsive'.

Tag people, places and pages in your posts

Tagging people, places and other pages in your posts will result in more people seeing your content and getting more people engaged. Ask members to tag your club page into their personal posts where possible. For example "Just had a great weekend scuba diving in St Abbs with **insert club name**".

Use Facebook Events

This facility is great for your club's trips and other events such as a Try Dive event. This will enable members to add comments, upload their pictures and members can have online banter before and after the event. It will also help potential members see how active your club is. Members can invite their own Facebook friends to come to the event too (which would be particularly useful for a Try Dive event).



Mastered Facebook? Try something new!

While there is a whole host of social media platforms out there, the most useful for your club after Facebook will be Instagram, TikTok and X (formerly Twitter). If you have a steadily active Facebook Page and want to try out another platform, this is where to start. For more detailed information on these platforms, visit bsac.com/twitterandinstagram.

Instagram

Do you like sharing pics and videos from your dive trips and trainings? Do you want to post live media updates from your events, and follow underwater photographers? Instagram might be the right platform for your club!

TikTok

Do you take lots of video and like to engage with the more tongue-in-cheek aspect of social media? Find strong video editing tools, free-to-use music and a community of young people on TikTok!

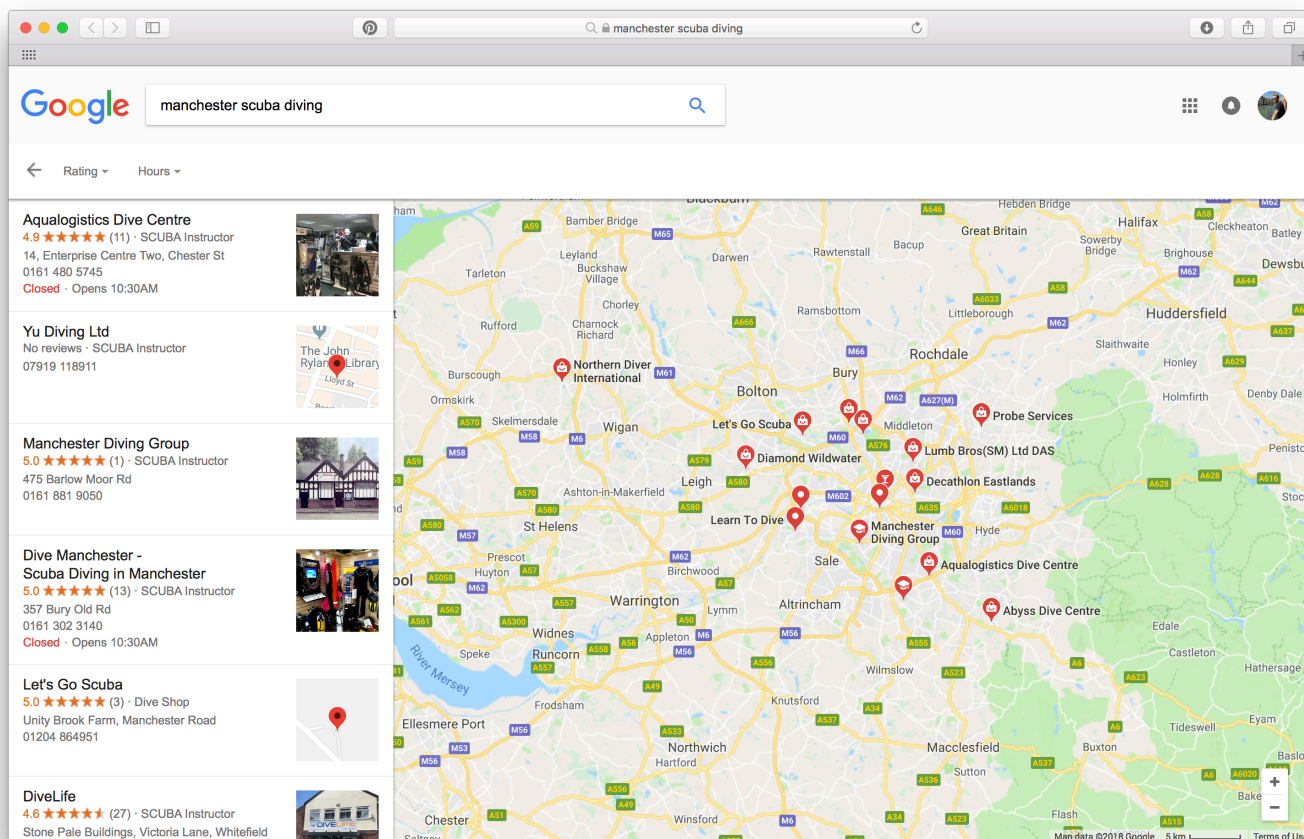
X (formerly Twitter)

Do you like sharing content from new sources, engaging with the latest in scientific and policy-related updates and stay on-top of updates? X might be the platform for you.

And lastly, but definitely not least...

Add your club to Google maps for free.

This free service boosts your ranking with Google. It is straight-forward and only takes about ten minutes to set up. By using Google maps, a club can be found on both Google maps and Google. When your club is on Google maps, the searcher can see where you are, get directions and read reviews. Visit bsac.com/googlemaps to find out to do this, including how to get the best results from it.



Step 4

Ask all members for help

Engaging your members to help in small bite-sized ways can make a real difference. We have a few ideas of how any member of your club can give a helping hand...

Word of mouth is the number one source of new members for clubs. And the great thing is it's free. If your club has happy members, the chances are they will tell people and others join as a result. Through your existing members, you have access to a whole mass of other potential members. Here are some super-easy ways all members can use their own words to advertise your club!

Rate, review, recommend

Most online platforms that advertise businesses have some form of review system built in. Online reviews are key to any organisation - when was the last time you did anything without Google searching the place first? Google uses review ratings to rank search results so getting reviews online is incredibly important.

Google

Once your club is listed on Google Maps (Step 3), invite your members to review it. It takes two minutes and can make the world of difference to your Google ranking. Genuine recommendations and nice words about your club add weight to your reviews and will go far to improving the online presence of your club. Even if it's just a few words.

Facebook

Facebook works in the same way but with a 'Recommend' or 'Do not recommend' system - if someone views your page and sees it has no recommendations, they're less likely to get in touch. Get your members to drop a few words about why they are members, their favourite thing about the club or even just "I really like this club".

Ask members to post on their own social media and tag the club

The club isn't the only one with a social media account. Posting on Facebook, Tweeting or Instagramming is the new 'word of mouth'. If your members love the club as much as we know they do, get them posting about training, club trips and events on their own accounts. Remember to make sure they tag the club's social media account in the post!

Refer a friend

Never stop talking about how much you love your club and diving - enthusiasm is the best ad. All members can refer their family, friends and colleagues to the club and introduce them to club life. Consider offering incentives to members who bring in new members, or maybe Friends & Family Try Dives at a discounted rate.

Step 5

Perfect the 'Try Dive' event

Hosting a Try Dive event is a great way to recruit new members. As BSAC clubs have been doing them for so long, we can give you the formula that virtually guarantees results. The conversion rate is generally 10-20%, which means that if you run, say, 40-50 Try Dives you are likely to recruit 8-10 new members as a result.

Try Dive events can be good fun for clubs and, for the greatest success, it's best to involve as many members as possible (you won't just need instructors; other members can get involved in the non-diving side).

When you organise the event is, of course, completely up to you. However, clubs generally tend to run them before and after the main diving season – so in May/June and/or September/October.

Please see the 'How to run a successful Try Dive event' guide. This guide covers everything you need to know, from promoting the event on social media through to pool safety and tips on increasing your conversion rate. Even if you have run a Try Dive event before, we suggest you have a look at this as it has some useful tips and tools to help you maximise the success of your event.

Find it online at bsac.com/trydiveclubs.

How to run a successful Try Dive event



BSAC
Dive with us



Top tips...

Cracking your online presence is key

Not just having an online presence - nailing your online presence is key. Please follow this guide to help your club do that. If you'd like bespoke advice on setting up a website or an appraisal of an existing one, contact the marketing team at BSAC HQ.

Quick wins you can do NOW...

Audit your club's growth aims annually with the Grow your club toolkit

If you haven't done this yet, we thoroughly recommend you start now as it's a great way to work out where to start with your recruitment and growth. If you've done it before, do it again! Your goals and aims will be constantly changing and the checklist will help you focus on what your club needs to do. Find the toolkit at bsac.com/checklist.



Take photos and videos on all courses and trips and share them on social media!

Take pictures of all of your trips and events and share them on your Facebook page. Encourage members to do the same and share them online, tagging your club's page.

Get your club listed on Google maps

It's free and will help your club perform better on Google when prospective new members are searching on the internet (See step 3). If you're already listed, get your members to review!

Get the first impressions right

Get back to any enquiries within 24 hours. If it means making it someone's sole job, do it. A friendly and swift response will make a huge difference to converting those leads to members.

Ask members to pay by Direct Debit

BSAC clubs retain more members if their members pay by Direct Debit. If you haven't already, sign up to the Branch Levy Direct Debit Collection Scheme. It's a free service for clubs enabling them to offer members the opportunity to pay their club fees (levy) as well as their BSAC subscription via Direct Debit. For more information, visit bsac.com/ddlevy.

And a few to be mindful of ongoing...

Always review your recruitment activities

Make sure you measure and review your activities. If something works, great. Continue with those activities or even look to do more of them. Equally, if initiatives do not work, do not continue; take stock and alter course.

Keep diving and training

Without exception, the most successful BSAC clubs, in terms of both their retention and recruitment, are the ones that have active diving and training programmes.

And finally, please always remember...

Help is at hand

Contact HQ for assistance and advice on anything contained in this guide.

Action points

Use this space to list the next steps you need to take to get things moving for your club...

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