

GENERATING INCOME

Having a realistic and clear understanding of the likely sustainable income your club can generate is a vital ingredient of good financial management.

A great way of ensuring your income is sustainable is to get it from a variety of sources, including:

- Membership fees
- Sponsorship
- Fundraising
- Commercial activities
- Grant funding

Exploring membership options

Many sports clubs rely heavily on income generated from membership fees, so it's important to get these set at the right price. Ideally your membership fees should cover the day-to-day financial running costs of the club. Additional income generated can then be used to improve and develop your club and to build up a sinking fund to cover unexpected events. Below are some questions to ask yourself when thinking about your sports club's membership fees:

- Have you researched to see if your subscriptions are **competitive** with other local clubs or activities?
- Do your fees reflect the **value** of what your sports club offers? For example, the playing opportunities, coaching, facilities, social activities, etc.?
- Is there scope to **increase** the fees, or should they be **reduced** to attract more people?

Remember, raising membership fees can be an emotive issue so make sure your members know exactly what they are getting for their money and let them know how your club is funded overall. Often a rise in membership fees is more acceptable if members are more informed about the financial position of the club.

Sponsorship

Sponsorship can be a great way to generate income and form a partnership with a local business or organisation. Sponsorship isn't free money, however. It requires time and resources to be successful and it should be seen as a two way mutually beneficial relationship between your club and the sponsor. Think about the different types of sponsorship a company could offer your club including:

- **Sponsorship fee** e.g. for sponsoring the club kit, match, equipment etc.
- **Provision of resources** e.g. volunteers to help out at the club for the day or at an event
- **Provision of products or services** e.g. an electrical company providing energy efficient lighting or a local builder providing some facility maintenance work.

Many businesses (large and small) are keen to engage in sponsorship opportunities in their local communities. Building relationships with local businesses can benefit everyone. Sponsorship is an excellent way for your club to raise revenue while raising the profile of the organisation that is sponsoring you. You must remember when seeking sponsorship that any

agreement you come to will be a two-way thing. Your club will be expected to honour obligations in order to maintain the sponsorship.

What can you offer sponsors?

With a little creativity, as a sports club you can open up a whole new range of sponsorship targets. There are some examples below for what you could offer a sponsor:

- Their logos printed on your kit, equipment, minibus, sideline banners
- Their logo included on your website, email footers, letter heads
- Their company name mentioned in any events, team publicity and end of season reports
- Hold an event under the name of the sponsor, for example “The Car Sales Co. Cup”
- Hold an event at your sponsor or partner’s venue, or allow them to hold an event at your venue. For example, a ‘Family Fun Day’ held at your club house during your off season

What can sponsors offer you?

- Financial support
- Club kit, which may have their logo or company colours on it
- Discounts e.g. money off equipment or supplies ordered from their shop, a reduced admission price to events, or a discount when hiring specific services or facilities
- Facilities or a venue to host events

Potential Partners

Your club may want to consider partnering with another organisation to promote one another’s complimentary (but usually non-competing) products or services. Some options for you to consider include:

Schools/Colleges

- Link in with local school sports days. Getting involved in any school sports competitions is a good opportunity to create strong links

Community Groups

- Contact Community Groups to look for joint marketing opportunities. For example, if a community group is holding an event, you could look into attending as a representative of your club. You can promote your services to their members, and likewise the community group can do the same at your events

Local council

- Many Local Authorities have an active programme to encourage and develop sporting activities, both recreational and competitive. There is often a particular focus on developing sporting activities as part of a wider social inclusion policy, so why not build a relationship with your Local Council

Local Businesses

- A lot of sponsorship, funding and in-kind donations can potentially come from local businesses. Research your local businesses, the work they do, what their values are and see what potential links you could make

Health Organisations

- There are opportunities for sports clubs to engage with Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) throughout England to form partnerships (e.g. linking in with the exercise and well-being agenda). Doctors and nurses could recommend your sports clubs to patients and you may be able to use their notice boards to promote your club too

Fundraising

Raising money from fundraising and social events can be a great source of income as well being an excellent way to bring your members together. By involving members other than the committee to organise events you can give them the opportunity to feel they are doing their bit to support the club. The list of events you could run is endless and often the more imaginative the better.

Commercial activities

Commercial activities, for example selling products (e.g. kit or refreshments) or services (e.g. facility hire) can be a great way to generate income from both inside and outside your club to support it financially.

Look within your club

Think about what your players, parents and social members want. If you're not sure, ask them. How can you get them to willingly spend more money at your club? For example, could you encourage more people to visit by making the club more family friendly, or can you encourage parents to stay throughout kids' sessions by offering free wifi and selling refreshments?

Look to your local community

Outside your club think about what else is in your community. What else is on offer that you can provide as good or better? What doesn't your community have that it needs? Can you meet this? Also, think about whether you can work in partnership with a local organisation to send potential customers to you (and vice versa).

Raffles

Holding raffles can be a great way to raise funds for your club. It's an easy way to raise funds and is very cost effective. Raffles often have high engagements and are low cost, they can be easily managed, help to build relationships with the club and are just plain fun. Often people will be willing to donate gifts to the club which can make the prize pool very tempting.

Here are some different types of raffles to try;

- **Traditional Raffle** - These raffles are exactly what they sound like: ordinary, run-of-the-mill raffles where contestants buy tickets to compete for different prizes
- **Single Prize Raffle**. While it's a lot of fun, a single-prize raffle only makes sense if the prize is something super valuable, these are great for offering cheap sponsorship for business over a season or two.
- **Split Raffle** – A raffle where the club takes a percentage cut and the winner takes the rest, great for generating extra income and the split can be decided in which favour you wish.
- **Reverse Raffle**. This one's a bit counter-intuitive, and that's all part of the fun. Instead of the first ticket drawn being the winner, winners are the ones left standing when all the tickets have been drawn! As you eliminate contestants one by one, the suspense really grows.
- **Jar Raffle**. Get a bunch of decorative mason jars and hide notes inside which indicate the grand prize, a regular prize, or just a friendly "thanks for playing!" Kind of a like a wine pull, participants get to go home with a little souvenir!
- **Online Raffle**. Guess what? Most of these raffles can be hosted virtually! All the fun of competing for prizes and counting down winners can be recreated for donors from wherever they are in the world, including their living rooms. Best of all, you won't need to worry about booking venues, providing refreshments, or fussing with paper tickets.

All of the above raffles can be edited to suit the club, the single prize raffles is a great opportunity to target multiple sponsors with cheap advertisement for the year and not only does it cost them very little, it allows you to network with a number of different companies. By offering a 1- or 2-year sponsorship deal as part of a raffle you can save a large investment by a singular business and multiple small investments from multiple business in which you may look towards in the future.