

Volunteers: your questions answered – 5

*This series of information sheets has been developed to help you recruit, train and retain volunteers, both disabled and able-bodied, to support sailing programmes which include disabled people. To safeguard yourself and your volunteers, please ensure that you also read the series entitled **Volunteers - essential information**, available from www.rya.org.uk/AboutRYA/RYSailability/Bestpracticemanual.htm*

Finding disabled volunteers

You may well have caught the interest of some disabled volunteers through your general search (see sheet 4), but there are lots of extra ideas for contacting them too.

Start by finding out what publicity opportunities might exist – look at:

- local exhibitions and conferences
- specialist disability press
- community nurses and social workers at day centres
- special schools, colleges and youth clubs
- disability organisations
- disability-specific sports organisations
- sports sections of disability organisations
- Local Area Health Authorities (useful for finding physiotherapists and occupational therapists)

Once you know your local targets, put together your publicity to appeal to them. For example:

- Take out advertisements in the specialist disability press, offering volunteering opportunities to disabled people.
- Give talks to disability organisations about your club and what you can offer volunteers (see sheet 3).
- Take advantage of 'word-of-mouth' – make sure that your existing volunteers and members talk about your opportunities for disabled volunteers wherever they go.

And remember, as with anybody you already know, if you have a disabled contact, just ask him/her to volunteer. Whether you call, write, e-mail or phone, it's difficult to refuse a direct request!