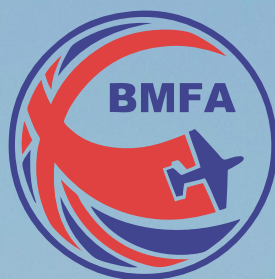


Affiliated Club PR Support Guide



British Model Flying Association
Est. 1922



Affiliated Club PR Support

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Affiliated Club PR Support Guide

Welcome

Welcome to the BMFA's Affiliated Club PR Support Guide. The idea behind putting this information into one handy guide is to share ideas that the BMFA has seen gaining success at clubs up and down the UK.

Hopefully there will be many ideas mentioned in the following pages that your club will have already tried and had positive result from. Equally there will be many more that are easy to implement, yet will help to raise the profile of your club and the sport to the wider public in a positive way, with the end result of more people discovering the world of model aircraft and drone flying, plus your club gaining new members.

The BMFA is here to help and support you and your club in every way possible. If you see an idea in this guide that you would like to try but wonder where would be the best place to start, please don't hesitate to make contact. We also want to hear about your success stories, please send us news and pictures of your efforts for publication here and in the BMFA news. Andy Symons, the BMFA's Club Support Officer is just a phone call or email away, ready to help you make these ideas become a reality.

Andy Symons - BMFA Club Support Officer

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Online Visibility - Website

The very best way that your club can have its information available to both members and potential members, 24 hours a day, is through a club website. Think of these as a business card for your club. Anything that you want to tell people about your club should be on your club's website.

Part of being an affiliated club means that the BMFA can help you to set up and host a club website free of charge. We can also provide training so you can keep it up to date with all of your club's latest information and events.

The best websites engage their viewers through a mixture of great pictures, snappy short shots of information, and an easy to follow format that isn't too fussy.

Make sure that the important information for potential new members is very easy to find. Things like; what is the best way to contact the club? What to expect when they arrive? Can the club offer a trial flight? How will they learn to fly? Describe these in a clear fashion that isn't too technical. Make sure that your website gets the message across that being a part of your club and the world of model flying is fun and enjoyable.

Setting up a website is a very quick and effective way for you to promote your club. The BMFA is here to guide and assist you every step of the way.



Online Visibility - Social Media

Facebook is a great way to keep in touch with your club members and attract potential new members. The BMFA's own Facebook page reaches 175,000 people and engages with 22,000 people per month!

Setting up a club Facebook page is very simple and the BMFA is on hand to help you every step of the way should you have any difficulties.

Every club has a member who is always online and this might be a job to delegate to them. Below we've popped some handy tips to follow and get you underway, if you get stuck just ask us to help.

- Create a page for your club not a closed group. This way the public can see what your club is doing.
- Make sure that your club contact details are easy to find.
- Update your page once or twice a week. Always use a picture or video to attract more attention and add interest.
- Vary the types of post that you do. Flying, building, 'how-to' guides, flying site updates etc... anything that will engage your club's following.
- Make sure you tag your club members and the BMFA into your posts and pictures. This will increase your reach massively and the BMFA will also be able to share your posts to our followers.

Don't be afraid of social media, it is one of the most valuable tools for getting your club noticed.





Local Community Visibility

78% of all model flyers are introduced to the sport through a friend, family member, or friend who is a member of a flying club. Nowhere is recruitment for club members as successful than the club going out into the local community and promoting itself.

The ways you can do this are extensive, we've listed a few examples below to get you started. Often a simple discussion with fellow club friends will bring many more ideas to light.

- Invite your local newspaper or radio station along for a flying lesson.
- Village or school fêtes and galas.
- Local agricultural, memorabilia or car shows. Perfect events where you will have a great mixture of all ages and families at one place.
- Shopping and Leisure Centre events, Christmas fairs, food and drink events, school holiday sports events etc.
- Supermarket stands. We know of several clubs that have found these very successful. When done midweek they tend to attract a more mature audience, at weekends a younger and family audience.
- Scout, Girl Guide, ATC or any other local youth group. Model flying is part of many of these groups activity programmes and will welcome your club's approach.
- Sports clubs; Football, rugby, hockey, bowls club etc.

All of the above ideas will give a broad cross-section of the public and will allow your club to interact with them at all times of the year.



Events - Club Based

Putting on fun, positive and accessible club-site based events can be one of the very best ways of getting new faces along to your flying site and interacting with potential new members.

If these events can allow your visitors an opportunity to have a go on the club trainer, you have a much stronger chance of grabbing their interest and showing them that the sport is for them. They will experience first hand the addictive fun and camaraderie of model flying.

Whilst a straight forward ‘Try Model Flying’ day is a perfect introduction, holding other types of events can reap equal rewards. Another great way of showcasing your club to people that might not normally show an interest in model flying, is to hold a club BBQ, with all members encouraged to invite their friends and family along.

The list of potential events that your club could host is vast, why not work in conjunction with another local interest group? Anything that will get fresh faces to your site and allow them to interact with your club is the aim. It is important that the events are fun, initially not too technical, easily accessible for all age groups and with a clear path forwards for anyone who might be interested in taking the next steps.

The BMFA can supply lots of support material... use of the simulator trailer, give-away goodies, artwork and printing support are just a few examples. Don't forget that you already have event insurance in place as part of the Affiliation Partnership.





Club Support Material - BMFA Supplied

We mentioned on page 8 about some of the goodies that the BMFA can offer your club to support your activities and events.

Let's be honest, everyone loves a give-away and a potential new member visiting your club would love to take away a small gift. Not only is it a nice thing for a club to hand out, they will also remind visitors about your club and model flying, hopefully encouraging them to take the next steps.

The BMFA can help your club with other support over and above pens, stickers, badges etc. If you're holding an event, high quality, professionally produced artwork, posters and flyers are a great help and will really make your club stand out. The BMFA can offer this kind of professional support including help with artwork and printing. All you have to do is ask and we'll do what we can.

There is no better way to get somebody interesting in exploring more about model flying than getting them hands-on with a transmitter and flying. The BMFA Flight Simulator Trailer is a free to use resource and presents a great opportunity as a promotional and recruitment tool at events where you will find potential new members.

The simulator does book up rapidly each year so this is very much a resource that your club should book well in advance, maybe working an event around it once you know your club has a booking of the simulator secured.



Club Support Material - Club Investment

The aim of your club's PR activities is to give a positive and lasting impression, both of your club and model flying. One way that you can make a long lasting impression is for the club to invest in good quality and durable promotional material.

A few examples of the types of promotional products that are eye-catching, long lasting and inexpensive are listed below.

- Large format outdoor banners.
- Pull-up banners.
- Laminated reusable posters.
- Sail flags.
- Customised and branded gazebo.
- Branded club clothing and accessories.

Does your club use a local model shop that would like additional promotion? If asked, they may be willing to have their logo added to your club's promotional material in return for paying part of the cost of production.

We often find many clubs worry about ordering PR material because of the need for logos or artwork. Many suppliers will often include free artwork if asked, equally this is something that the BMFA may be able to offer additional support with.

The most important thing to focus on is making your club visible within the community in a polished, professional, attractive, yet approachable way.





Club Training Programme

Having a structured training programme in place for new flyers, with defined training sessions is a proven way of attracting new blood to your club and also retaining existing members.

The RC Achievement Scheme is the perfect way of delivering this. The scheme is run by the BMFA as a national scheme and it is open to all RC model flyers. This also has the added benefit of making your club a safer place to be at and enjoy being a member of.

The scheme is not primarily about permitting or licensing, fundamentally it is all about personal goals and challenges. It is intended to provide every RC flyer with something to aspire to and aim for, should they so wish.

You will find the team behind the Achievement Scheme very relaxed and approachable, they love to see nothing more than a progressive club that offers this facility to those members that would like to explore their personal flying goals.

You can find out more about starting a Club Training Programme through Club Support Officer, Andy Symons. You will also find lots of interesting information and insight at the Achievement Scheme website.

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A Social Club In The Community

We hope this guide has given you and your club members many ideas of how to attract more people into showing an interest in your club and the world of model flying.

From the outset it was designed for clubs as a way of gaining inspiration, allowing them to select projects to try, safe in the knowledge that the BMFA is on hand to help and guide whenever the need arises.

There is no doubt, if we could get a sizeable proportion of affiliated clubs to work through this guide, ticking off each page as your club progresses from project to project, it would bring a very real and positive impact for your club, the sport of model flying and the model trade too.

No matter what PR activities your club decides to try, focus on making sure that your club comes over as a welcoming, fun and enjoyable place to spend time. You know the personal pleasure that model flying gives you, the friendships you have made, the personal challenges you have enjoyed and succeeded at. If you can pass on that enthusiasm to your local community, your club will soon be welcoming new members.

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