

These ideas come from clubs. Your club may already be using some.

1. Self support

- Encourage your umpires to always ask any other club umpires present, when they come off the pitch, 'what do you think?', to discuss incidents and good practice.
 - This is the one thing clubs can easily do. It helps create a 'development culture' of gentle, constant improvement.
 - This helps umpires feel supported, as well as improving standards.
- Create an online discussion group for your umpires, without captains or other club officials.

2. Manage the weekly appointments jigsaw centrally

- Instead of captains chasing umpires individually, provide a central service to appoint available umpires to the right games. This is onerous, but saves your captains a lot of work.
- The volunteer will need to know relevant league requirements, the qualifications of their umpires, and their capabilities - to put the right people on the right games.
- Give umpires a choice of games. Set up an online spreadsheet or poll, listing next weekend's games, with times, and ask your umpires to give their availability/preference. This also helps tease out who can umpire a game after they play.
- This central approach helps assign newbies for match practice, teaming them up with experienced umpires, and for arranging assessments.

3. Continuous development

- Appoint someone to manage umpire development, possibly separate from whoever manages the weekly jigsaw. That person needs to be aware of the support and resources available, and can discuss these and other development issues with London Hockey.
- Encourage umpires to take/re-take the modules in the Hockey Hub, especially at the start of the season, and/or point them to resources they might not be aware of.
- Circulate useful/interesting umpiring news. Short video clips of international game incidents are relatively easy to find.
- Arrange umpire development evenings, with an L2+ in the lead. Ask any local small clubs if they'd like to send people.
- Consider asking the Area to hold a Club Umpire Development Day (CUDD) at your club. Contact . These bring experienced umpires/coaches to your club, and normally involve one or more Level 1 assessment games.

4. Radios for all

- Radios are an incredibly useful tool in umpiring, helping accuracy on the pitch and creating a stronger umpiring team.
- If umpires don't have their own, consider investing in a club set that can be loaned out, or consider setting up a reimbursement scheme.
- Radios and mic/headsets can be bought from various places. [Here's a UK company](#) that specialises in them.

5. Use the summer

- If your adult teams have been promoted/relegated, their league umpiring requirements may have changed for next winter season. This might affect how many qualified umpires your club needs.
- Summer leagues, plus tournaments and festivals, are the obvious way to give people match practice and arrange assessments. Contact and line up assessors as soon as you can.
- Consider a 'female umpires only on female games' policy for the summer, to encourage more female umpires into the game (see below).
- Pre-season - and the mid-season break - are good times to pair club umpires up with more experienced Level 2s, if possible, as it's one of the few times in the year that club umpires can experience higher level umpiring.

6. Promote and support female umpiring

- Female umpires are woefully few in number (only 29% of Level 1 umpires are female, nationally, in 2023)
- Over half of members of the Women in Hockey Officiating network have cited that (primarily) male player and coach aggression is an area they want the most support in and can often be a factor in someone giving up umpiring entirely.
- Encourage female members to be role models for others, by deterring willing male umpires from umpiring female games - particularly summer matches and friendlies.

7. Help progression to Level 2 for those that want it

- Level 2 qualification is the next step for those wanting to progress. Contact London Hockey for further information.
- Clubs need to understand individuals' ambition, even if it means they would be lost to the club week to week.

8. Have internal Level 1 assessors

- Encourage existing Level 1 umpires to become assessors. Contact London Hockey if you have someone interested.
- Obviously, this helps bring newbies to Level 1, and helps with internal expertise and culture generally.

9. Juniors

- Junior sections are an obvious way to introduce people to umpiring.
- Consider requiring all juniors above a given age to take the online test on The Rules. As well as helping players understand the game, this would help identify anyone wanting to progress their umpiring.
- Consider requiring all juniors above a certain age to umpire at least one lower age game a season e.g. U18s to umpire U14s, perhaps paired with a regular club umpire and using radios.
- If a junior wants to progress with their umpiring, contact youngumpires@london.hockey, as dedicated support is available.

10. Big clubs - link up with local small clubs

- Umpires at small clubs can be totally isolated from support and development. Bigger clubs may be able to help on some issues - summer games, juniors, assessments etc..
- Bigger clubs should consider forming relationships with smaller clubs