



How to be a great Foróige Secretary

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Congratulations on being elected as a Foróige Club Secretary

Being a club secretary can be a huge learning experience, developing your life and employability skills. Nearly every organisation has a secretary. They are a key part of a committee of people who together ensure that the club operates effectively.

We hope you really enjoy becoming a great club Secretary.

This book will support you to get going with help from a leader and ideally should be supplemented by training provided normally through the District Council and the Regional Youth Officer.

The Secretary and the Committee

As Secretary, you are part of the Club Committee which consists of the Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Communications Officer, Club Leader and up to two other members. Each officer has specific duties to perform: Yours are in this guide.

The Committee is responsible for planning and running the club meeting and getting tasks needed for the day to day management of the club carried out on behalf of the members.



The Committee Meeting

The committee meets separately from the club either before the main meeting or on a different night, to plan the meeting including drawing up the agenda. The Club Leader or her/ his nominee must attend.

The Committee can use the meeting to discuss problems or difficulties in the club, to consider the needs of particular members and to plan for all the members to be involved in discussions and decisions during the club meeting.

The Secretary brings minutes from the last committee meeting (a record of the main points and decisions) and writes the minutes of this one, as well as contributing to the discussion.

Every Club Officer...

- ➡ Asks for help when needed, from a leader or someone who has done the role before
- ➡ Attends the club each week
- ➡ Has with her/him everything s/he needs for the role
- ➡ Takes an active part in committee meetings
- ➡ Supports the other committee members
- ➡ Acts as a good example to other club members

The Role of a Foróige Secretary

It's an important job! The Secretary supports the Chairperson by ensuring the smooth administration of the club. The following list shows what the secretary generally does.

- ➡ **Helps draw up agenda with the committee**
- ➡ **Notifies the club of meetings or changes to times**
- ➡ **Takes minutes of each meeting**
- ➡ **Reads the minutes of the previous meeting to the club**
- ➡ **Keeps an attendance record of members, leaders and visitors each week**
- ➡ **Corresponds with others on behalf of the club. This may be by letter email, text, other message service or club phone.**
- ➡ **Cooperates with the Club Leader in affiliating the Club**



A Secretary needs to have:

- A minutes book or online minutes record
- Note book and pen
- This guide to being a Secretary
- Access to email and stamps
- Contact details needed by the club
- A file in which to keep club information
- A club secretary email address

The Meeting Agenda – a secretary's take

The Secretary's unique role in the club meeting

Chairperson opens the meeting

Reading the minutes

The Chairperson asks the Secretary to read the minutes of the previous meeting (Minutes are a written record of the main points of a meeting).

The Secretary reads them out in a clear loud voice and slow enough for everyone to hear.

The Chairperson then asks the club if the minutes are correct. This is in case something someone said, or a decision made, was left out or wrongly recorded.

Adopting the minutes

After any changes are made the Chairperson asks the club if “someone will propose that the minutes are in order”. This is a member declaring they believe the minutes to be an accurate account of the meeting.

The Chairperson then asks someone to “Second the minutes” This is another member declaring they believe the minutes are correct. The secretary writes down both names. For example: “The Minutes were proposed by Magda Kowalski and seconded by Gerry McDonald”. They must have been present at the previous meeting.

Once the Secretary has recorded both names and the Chairperson signs the minutes, no one can question their accuracy because the club has formally agreed that they are correct.

Matters arising

Now the Chairperson asks if there are “any matters arising from the minutes”. This is a formal way of asking do we need to continue or follow up on anything from the last meeting unless it is on the agenda anyway. E.g. if someone was to book a bus for the club, the Chairperson might ask if it was done.

Correspondence

Information received by the club. It may be a letter, email, text message or messages through social media. The content may be invitations, notices about club affiliation, or Foróige national or local events, training for leaders or members and other topics. Even if it went to an adult leader, it is for the club and the Secretary should read it out.

Treasurer's report

Communications Officer's report

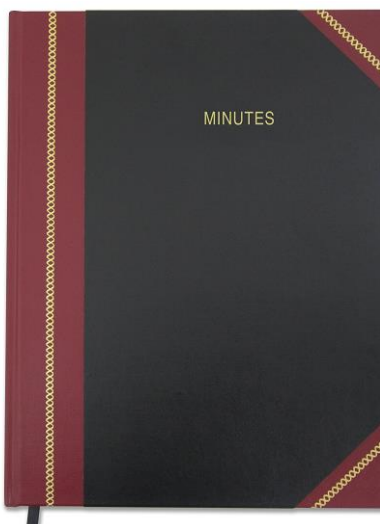
Main business

AOB (Any Other Business)

Throughout the meeting the secretary records the minutes. Next we will look at how this is done.

Tips on writing Minutes

The Club should have a proper hard back minute's book or an online minutes file, stored in the cloud so that the access can be passed from secretary to secretary each year. The Club Leader should also have the password.



- Minutes start with the date of the meeting and where it is taking place.
- They include a list of those present and those who sent apologies.
- They record who proposed and seconded the adoption of the minutes of the previous meeting.
- They include a brief summary of the Treasurer and Communications Officer reports.
- They include the main points and any decisions made, who is meant to do what, when and how.
- If there was a vote on any decision the minutes record how many votes were for and against it.
- The minutes finish by recording the agreed date and time of the next meeting.

In summary, the Secretary writes short notes on the officers' reports, correspondence, the main business items and any other business raised. Minutes do not record everything said.

The secretary must listen throughout the meeting so as to get the important points.

The secretary writes up the minutes from those notes as soon as possible after the meeting while still fresh in his/her mind.

Reading the minutes aloud

Reading the minutes requires the secretary to have the attention of the whole club. Here is how to get, and hold that attention.



- Have your voice loud enough for everyone to hear.
- Read at a moderate pace so your audience can take it all in.
- Pronounce the words slowly and clearly.
- Pause briefly at each comma and for 2 seconds at each full stop.
- Try to keep your head up so that your voice projects around the room. Don't be buried in your notes.
- Read over the minutes before you have to read them out so that you are confident and not stumbling over words.

Sample Minutes

In these minutes, can you find which paragraph is Correspondence, which is the Main Business, which is the Treasurer's report and which is AOB?

Remember to keep the minutes short so they don't take too long to read out.

A meeting of Ballychurch Foróige club was held on Friday 7th of September. The Chairperson opened the meeting at 8.10pm

25 members and 4 leaders were present.

The Secretary read the minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes were adopted on the proposal of Mags Bourke and Mohammed Almasi and signed by the Chairperson.

The Chairperson asked if David O'Brien had found out the price of the bus to take the members to Citizenship at the end of the month. He had not done. The Chairperson expressed concern that we were leaving it very late to book the bus. David said he would have the information for next week.

The Secretary had received an invitation from the Tidy Towns Committee to get involved in a clean-up day. As this is two months away, the Chairperson said we would discuss it properly next week.

The Treasurer reported that she had a balance of €235.78 in the account. €38 euro had been received in weekly subs and €80 rent was paid on the hall for last month, leaving €193.78 in the account. The Treasurer reminded all members to bring along their €2 each week or we would not be able to afford the bus to the sports day.

The Communications Officer said that Foróige's Facebook page now had almost 100,000 likes and asked members to encourage others to "Like" it too.

A discussion on the sports day confirmed that 16 members were planning to go. The Chairperson read out the list of games and different members volunteered for the activities. The Club Leader told the meeting that the time of the sports day had changed from 6pm to 12 noon due the large numbers expected.

Goodwill Eze, from the games subcommittee said we would be trying three new games tonight and would divide us into groups after the meeting.

Under AOB, Jimmy Collins asked if we could introduce TAB (Tea and Biscuit) time as another club he knows has it. The Chairperson agreed to put this on the agenda for the next meeting.

Proposed by _____ Seconded by _____

Date of next meeting _____

Chairperson's signature _____

Sending a Formal Email

As secretary you may be emailing organisations or individuals on behalf of the club. How the email looks and reads is very important in getting the result you want. You can use this advice for letters too.

- ➡ **Font style and size:** Use fonts such as Calabri, Times New Roman and Arial; preferably in size 12 point type. Don't use italics, emojis, or all caps.
- ➡ **Subject line.** Keep it short and accurate. E.g. "Invitation from Foróige" or "Bus booking".
- ➡ **Use a proper salutation.** Dear Mary, or Dear Mr Murphy. If you don't know the name, use "A Chara" or "Dear Sir/Madam,"
- ➡ **Introduce yourself in the first paragraph (if necessary).** For example, when writing to a bowling alley, you might say: "My name is Seamus Doran and I'm contacting you on behalf of Ballychurch Foróige club."
- ➡ **Put the most important content near the top.** E.g. we want to bring 20 people bowling on date, day, and time etc.
- ➡ **Keep an email short** and to the point but use paragraphs in longer emails with a line break between each.
- ➡ **Use complete sentences** and polite phrasing. Avoid slang, unnecessary contractions and jokes.
- ➡ **Closing the email:** "Is mise le meas" or "Yours sincerely," followed by your name and role, if you have not put your role in the body of the email.
- ➡ **Include any necessary attachments.** Make sure to mention them in the body of the email.
- ➡ **Proof read your message.** Reading your email aloud or asking someone to read it for you it is a great way to catch any typos, mistakes, or unclear phrases.

Note: For security reasons, avoid including passwords, account numbers, and similar confidential information in an email.

Sample Email

Subject line: Booking request

A Chara

My name is Michael O'Brien and I am secretary of Ballychurch Foróige club. We would like to book lanes for one hour of bowling for 20 people for Friday 20th of September at 8pm. Please let me know if this is possible along with the price of the lanes. We expect to have 16 club members aged 12 to 17 and four adult leaders.

Do you sell hot food? Please let us know what is available and at what prices.

Is mise le meas

Michael O'Brien

Thank you notes

Make a list of those who need to be thanked. Usually it is just a few people. It is nicer to hand write thank you notes, either on a card or in letter format. Send them as soon as possible after the event. Here is a sample:



*Dear Mr O'Sullivan,
Thank you so much for coming to Ballychurch
Foróige club last week, to show us how to set dance.
We had a great night and learned a lot.
We look forward to trying out our new dancing
another time.
Again, thank you for your time and experience.
Best wishes
Jimmy Murphy*

All Thank you notes follow a similar format. In the example above can you find the 5 steps below?

- **Greeting.** Be sure you are using the correct spelling of the person's name.
- **Express your thanks and then say for what.**
- **Look ahead.**
- **Restate your thanks.** Add details to thank them in a different way.
- **End with your regards.**

Keeping the Attendance Register

This task is normally done by the Secretary, but in a club where each member pays a small weekly fee, the Treasurer sometimes does it, or it can be done jointly.

The club records what Members, Leaders and Visitors attend each week.

Here is a sample. The leaders can download a full page version from the volunteer portal.

Members	Date _____		Date _____		Date _____		Date _____	
	Name	Time in	Name	Time in	Name	Time in	Name	Time in
Leaders/Visitors	Date _____		Date _____		Date _____		Date _____	
	Name	Time in	Name	Time in	Name	Time in	Name	Time in

Minutes Template

Meeting of _____ ***Foróige Club***

held in _____ on the _____ at _____.

Opening: The Chairperson, _____ declared the meeting open at _____ with _____ members present. She welcomed new members _____ and _____.

Present: (list names)

Apologies were received from:

Minutes: The Secretary read the minutes of the last meeting.

Proposed : _____ Seconded: _____ that the minutes read are a true & correct record.

Matters arising from the minutes: _____

Correspondence:

Treasurer Report: a balance of € _____ and presented the following invoices for

payment. 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Proposed by _____ Seconded by _____

Treasurer also reported _____

Communications Officer Report _____

Main Business:

Item 1 _____

Item 2 _____

Item 3 _____

Any Other Business _____

Date, time and place of next meeting: _____

The chairperson declared the meeting closed at _____.

Summary of actions

Action Agreed	Responsibility of	To be done by when



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