



## MICHELLE RITCHIE

Club Affiliations Secretary  
Junior Committee Member  
UKCC Level 2 Coach  
Umpire  
Vice Chair – County Junior Development Group  
Satellite Academy – Assistant Coach

### Tell us about your work as a volunteer...

I am affiliations secretary for our club for 50 adults (in role 2 years ) and 60 juniors (in role 3 years). I sit on our Juniors committee and coach our juniors, now I am a level 2 I lead U14/U16. I attend most matches and organise availability of players  
I captain our seniors 3rd team and have been a team captain for 5 seasons. I umpire for seniors and juniors and I fill in for seniors coaching sessions often at last minute.  
I am Vice Chair for the County Junior Development Group which runs the junior league.  
I am volunteer assistant coach at our satellite academy.

### How long have you been volunteering?

20 years

### Why did you start volunteering and why do you continue to?

I was asked to be a team captain when I first joined my club in 2011, which meant I attended committee meetings. When we started up juniors in 2013, **I wanted to be involved** as my own love of netball began when I first started playing aged 9. I was keen to pass on my passion and be involved in getting more girls loving the game. I started off doing admin support and helping at coaching which led to my level 1. I also encouraged my sister to play (she was never a netballer at school) and we did our Level 1 together and now play in the same team. **Love that!** I attended county meetings representing my club and put my hand up for vice chair at an AGM, to get to learn more about how netball works in the County.

Having passed my level 2 I saw an ad for satellite coaching opportunities and applied. I wanted to continue my coaching learning journey and working with performance athletes would give me the opportunity to stretch myself, experience different coaching styles and approaches and hopefully bring new fresh ideas back to my own club.

I am definitely a netball addict and love giving something back to a sport that I have played my whole life. Outside of netball I am a reading mentor at my sons school where I read 1-1 with kids once a week.

### How has volunteering benefitted you?

It has given me a greater understanding of the effort and workload involved in running a club, a league and now a performance academy and makes me **very grateful to all those volunteers that make it happen**. I get a lot of satisfaction through volunteering and giving comes naturally so it suits me. After setting up the county league it was wonderful after the many meetings and time round a kitchen table planning league fixtures to then be there on that first match day, seeing 4 courts full of girls playing netball. **So satisfying.**

When I first started volunteering I was in a very stressful job and it helped me to claw back some **work life balance** and something else to focus on once a week outside of just playing netball myself. I have met some **wonderful people** in the netball world and made some very **great**

## Why would you recommend volunteering to someone thinking about getting involved?

I would say to **just do it!** Give as much time as you can, even if it's an hour or 2 a week.

**Get involved**, ask what needs doing and you will always get given a job to do and any help you offer will be gratefully received.

## Tell us about your best volunteering experience....

Being involved with our juniors has been the most rewarding. The girls that first started with us 3 years ago are now u16's. They have gone from losing every game to winning the end of season tournament. Such a proud moment and it was wonderful to see the **pride and delight in their faces** when they went up to collect their silverware! 3 of them got academy places and are now volunteering within our club helping with the younger age groups. **I hope they enjoy netball for the rest of their lives.**

## How has volunteering affected your social life?

It has **increased my social life**. Not only do I spend time at various meetings but especially in my own club it gives me a chance to get to know people better and **make friends**. Love my netball girlfriends.

## How has volunteering helped you in your Professional Career?

I do my job because it pays well and I have to pay the mortgage somehow. It is stressful and not particularly rewarding but I am able to work from home and now only work 9-3. Volunteering has helped me gain a better work life balance and allowed me to do more worthwhile things with my time outside of work. If I could make a living from netball I would love it, but I can't so I volunteer instead and benefit from the joy I get from being involved in the netball community.