

Supporters Guideline

Supporters are an integral part of our team, and are highly valued members of Paddlers for Life Windermere.

Our supporters are made up of family, friends, people who may not have had, but have been close to somebody with cancer, as well as volunteers who just like to be part of such a wonderful group.

Supporters have many roles, all are important and often varied.

All supporters can volunteer to do most of the tasks, but some require training ie taking out the support boat and helming.

Initial contact – see ‘Buddy Responsibilities Guideline’ (BRG)

All supporters and their newbies should have a copy of the BRG. It can be accessed in the Documents section of the website, via email and in paper form at Low Wood.

Role of the Supporter

Prior to getting on the water, supporters help with tasks alongside survivors. These include:

Helping to dress the boat – adding dragon head, tail, drum and seat

Ensuring First Aid Kit equipment is in the boat

Helping to launch the boat

Helping to launch the support boat, if needed

Accompanying the driver of the support boat, if needed

Most of the time, at the lake, survivors and supporters do everything together. There is an exception. If there are too many paddlers for the session, the supporter will usually relinquish his/her seat in the boat to a survivor, although this is a very rare occurrence. At regattas, where breast cancer crews only participate, supporters have a pivotal role in supporting our team. There is usually a supporters’ race.

Often there is no drummer on the boat as most people, especially survivors, would rather paddle as it is an important form of exercise for breast cancer survivors. Therefore if, as a supporter, you would like to try drumming, this would **always be appreciated**, and even met with a few cheers!! Drumming is a skill in itself: if possible, talk to somebody who has drummed, to get a few tips.

Getting off the water, again, supporters help with tasks alongside survivors. These include:

Helping to take the boat off the water

Helping to undress the boat

Helping to clean the boat

Helping to cover the boat

Helping to store away any equipment used

Helping to take the support boat off the water, if needed

Out of season, there are various tasks that need doing throughout the year. These include:

Helping with boat maintenance, including the trailers

Helping with trolley maintenance

Helping with preparations prior to the paddling season starting ie assembling the pontoon

Helping with cleaning, storing, tidying at the end of the season, including the garage

Dismantling and storing the pontoon

Volunteering as a Trustee (Treasurer etc) There are a specific number of places for supporter Trustees (see Constitution). The only supporter to have a vote at meetings are Supporter Trustees. Other supporters can contribute to discussions where there is likely to be a vote, but cannot vote. All survivors have the right to vote.

Discuss with your buddy or one of the Trustees if you wish to train for the support boat or to try helming

Thanks to Barbara and Chris for their contributions in completing this guideline.