

A Name

When Choosing your name:

- Keep it simple
- Imagine how it will look in print
- Consider how it will be abbreviated (do the initials spell something unfortunate?)
- Make sure it reflects the image you wish to convey

Aims and Objectives

Aims are a statement of what the group would like to achieve. Aims are general and long standing goals that should not change.

It is important to be clear about your aims right from the start, as they should guide you in all your activities. Your aims should be discussed and agreed by the whole group, to establish how you all see the future of the group. Aims should be simple.

Objectives are what you do to achieve your aims, and they may change as time goes on. Objectives should be reviewed regularly to check you are making progress towards your aims.

Equal Opportunities

It is a good idea for a group to draw up an Equal Opportunities Policy relating to its activities. The policy should prohibit all discrimination on grounds of race, sex, disability, HIV status, age or sexuality. The policy should also ideally identify ways in which services can be monitored and, if necessary, adapted so that they are available to all who may have need of them.

More and more, funders are demanding that groups have an equal opportunities policy in place. CVS have a standard policy for groups to use.

A Management Committee

It is usual for members of the group to elect a management committee to carry out the day to day work of the organisation.

A committee usually includes a chairperson, a secretary and a treasurer.

The Chairman's Duties:

- Representation of the committee at outside negotiations/events and reporting back
- Regular attendance at meetings
- Planning and preparation of meetings
- Introducing and supporting new members
- Conducting the meeting efficiently
 - make sure everyone has their say
 - keeping the meeting to time and to the point

The Secretary's Duties include:

- Receiving and replying to letters
- Making sure a meeting place is booked and that agendas are sent out well in advance
- Taking and filing accurate minutes
- Preparing an agenda with the Chairperson
- Keeping all correspondence sent out or received
- Keeping an up to date register of all members

The role of the Treasurer includes:

- Responsibility for handling the group's finances
- Collecting membership fees
- Paying all bills and issuing receipts
- Keeping a watch on expenditure and reporting regularly to the committee
- Keeping accounting records
- Opening a bank account
- Preparing annual accounts and having them audited for the Annual General Meeting

Charitable Status

If your group works towards: the relief of poverty, the advancement of education, the advancement of religion or for other purposes beneficial to the community, you should really consider registering as a charity.

You can get advice on this by phoning the Charity Commission on 0151 703 1500. They produce a pack on 'Starting a Charity and Applying for Registration'.

A Constitution

A Constitution contains information on the aims and objectives of a group. It also details the organization of the management committee, election of officers, annual meetings, accounts and the duties and responsibilities of the committee.

Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre CVS can provide you with a draft constitution to use as a basis for your own.

Regular Meetings

It is important the committee quickly gets into a routine of meeting regularly. Procedures detailing how and when meetings are held are usually in your constitution.

Once a year you must hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM). At this meeting all members have a chance to express their views and members can be elected to the management committee.

Bank Account and Financial Records

Shop around for an account that suits your needs. It is important that you arrange for cheques to require a minimum of two signatories (ideally three).

Keep all your bank statements safe, and it is a good idea for the treasurer to keep a book of incomings and outgoings and copies of receipts. This will show that you are able to handle money. (This is very important to a possible funder).

Funding

Before looking for funding it is a good idea to work out a budget. This is a plan of what your group wants to do in the year ahead and the money needed to make it happen.

There are different sources of funding that voluntary groups can apply for.

For further advice on this, please contact
**Blackpool, Wyre and Fylde CVS on
01253 624505**

A Place to Meet

Here are some things to bear in mind when looking for a room:

- When and at what time do you wish to meet?
- How far can members travel?
- How many people may come?
- How much can you pay?
- Can you book a room on a regular basis?
- Is there disabled access?
- Are there toilets?
- Are there tea making facilities?

Publicity

Good publicity is vital to every voluntary group - for raising funds, recruiting volunteers and members and informing the public. But not all publicity is good publicity: you need to remain in control whilst getting your message across.

FURTHER HELP AND ADVICE

For more information please contact:



The Blackpool, Wyre & Fylde
Council for Voluntary Service

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The Blackpool, Wyre & Fylde
Council for Voluntary Service

SETTING UP A VOLUNTARY GROUP

Do you have:

- A Name
- Aims and Objectives
- An Equal Opportunities Policy
- A Management Committee
- Charitable Status
- A Constitution
- Regular Meetings
- A Bank Account
- Financial Records
- Funding
- A Place To Meet
- Publicity Plans

If you have answered NO to any of the above READ ON.....



This is a guide for anyone setting up a voluntary group for the first time. This information sheet aims to give you a checklist of things you need to consider having, especially in the light of increased demands by funders.