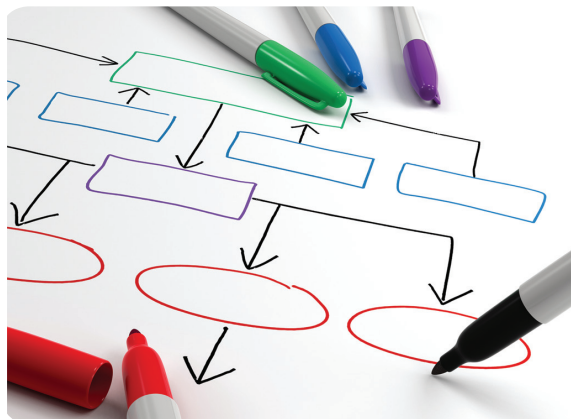


How to set up a group



Get a committee together

The first step to running an efficient and well structured group is forming a management or executive committee. This is made up of chair, vice chair, secretary and treasurer plus other members. The overall aim and objectives of the group or organisation are in the constitution (set of rules that a group works towards). You should now think about your legal status and which is appropriate for you.

Responsibilities and work of the committee include:

- having regular meetings and keeping members informed on progress
- managing the affairs of the group, finances, budgets, fundraising and funding strategy, and being answerable to its members
- ensuring the group stays within the law and appropriate insurance is in place
- holding a shared vision and agreeing why the group was set up
- having clear roles, responsibilities, and a willingness to work together, plan projects and set targets.

Roles of the management committee

The chairperson:

- prepares the agenda and any papers for meetings (often with the secretary)
- chairs committee meetings, board meetings, directors meetings and annual general meetings



- has an overview of the organisation and its work, represents the group or organisation, and speaks on its behalf
- sometimes writes and signs letters (usually with the secretary)
- supports and encourages other members, and helps resolve conflict.

The secretary:

- prepares and circulates the agenda (with the chairperson)
- ensures all committee members are provided with the relevant information before the meeting, takes, writes and circulates minutes, and writes letters on behalf of the organisation (these may have to be checked and signed by the chairperson)
- produces an annual report (it is good practice to produce this)
- keeps copies of minutes and ensures that governing documents are kept safe
- arranges meetings, venues, receives correspondence and reports to the committee.

The treasurer:

- keeps accurate, up to date financial records and produces end of year accounts
- arranges for an external examination of records in line with the group's constitution
- ensures that bank statements are regularly received and balanced with the cash receipt book/cheque book
- keeps cheques and mandates up to date, puts a system in place for petty cash claims, pays bills promptly and banks all income on a regular basis.

Rules about money:

- The group/organisation should have a bank account in its own name.
- Cheques should be signed by two authorised people. It is good practice to have three available. Relatives should not be signatories. Cheques should not be signed by the person to whom the cheque is payable.
- Where possible make payments by cheque and not cash. Never sign blank cheques
- Always obtain receipts for payments made or received.
- Do not pay bills without an invoice.
- Pay all funds into the bank and keep records of the date and amount paid in.

Find out more

Download our full toolkit and find details of organisations that can support you at www.wakefieldvcs.org | Telephone: 01924 367418 | Email: ask@vawd.org.uk

Publication date: December 2010



Providing services and support for voluntary and community groups