

Quick Guide:

Setting up a voluntary or community group

The characteristics of a voluntary or community group can include:

- run on a 'not for profit' basis,
- it's work has a social or environmental benefit.
- it is run, usually entirely, by volunteers at management committee level, although there may also be paid staff.
- there is more than one person involved in running the group.

How a group is run: There must be some direction and be managed by someone. This is usually a management committee or board of trustees who meet on a regular basis and consider issues such as:

- how the group is organised
- how the group can achieve what it was set up to do
- how to raise funds
- whether to recruit staff and/or volunteers
- how current activities are progressing
- whether the group should be carrying out different activities
- how to address problems

Choosing a structure for the group: It is important to choose an appropriate structure for your group. Whether you choose a formal or informal structure, the group must be run in the best way to achieve its aims. For more information read our information sheet 'Get Legal'.

Considering a governing document: A governing document will set out in writing rules which enable the organisation to function well. It could be called, for example; a Constitution, Trust Deed or Memorandum and Articles. These are the minimum points you need to consider:

- What is the purpose of the organisation and who will run the organisation?
- What powers and responsibilities will the management committee have?
- Where will you be based?
- Will the organisation have members and what are the rights of the members?
- How do you elect the management committee?
- How will meetings of the management committee be organised and how often will they take place?
- How will the accounts be managed and examined?
- Who is responsible for your assets?
- When will you have your Annual General Meeting (AGM) and how do you call a Special General Meeting?
- How can the organisation be dissolved?

DeVA can help and support you and your organisation. Contact us on 0845 6099901 or by emailing support@devonva.org.