



## Setting up a New Group

### Did you know...we can offer support and advice about setting up a new group?

Here at Durham Community Action (DCA), we regularly get enquiries around setting up a new community group. Our enquiries often focus on an interest in providing a new service which has been identified as a gap in a community and looks to support from DCA

Often, a group that has been running informally for a while is beginning to look for funding or take on more responsibilities and realise that they need to become more structured to meet the rules of funders who offer grants or limit liabilities of those involved in the management of the groups.

### Are you setting up a community group or a charitable group?

#### Community Group

A voluntary and community group is defined as a group or organisation which works for the public benefit. Activities carried out by the group will generally benefit a particular group of people within a community.

The key steps you need to take to set up a community group are below.

#### Registered Charity

If your organisation benefits the community, it does not mean that you can automatically set up a charity. This is because not everything that benefits the community is charitable.

You must have specific aims (known as 'charitable purposes') to set up a charity.

<https://www.gov.uk/set-up-a-charity>

Simple guidance on setting up as a charity can be found here:

<https://charitysetup.org.uk/>

To help you decide which structure is best for your group, you will need to consider the following:

### What is the purpose of your group?

- 1) What is your group trying to achieve?
- 2) Who are you going to benefit?

### Who is responsible for running your group? -

You will need to have at least three people who will be known as trustees and are responsible for making decisions. For more advice and support about legal structures speak to our friendly team here at DCA.

Once you have decided which structure is most suitable you may also need to:

**Understand your rules** - Once the trustees are in place and have formed a committee, the group will need a constitution. The constitution is a set of rules which helps make sure that everything is running correctly.

**Set up a bank account** - Most community groups need to have a bank account in the name of the group. You will need this if you intend to apply for grants.

**Apply for funding** - Once you know what activities and services you want to provide, you may want to apply for grants to help cover the costs.

At DCA we know how difficult it can be running small groups. We offer support at all stages, whether that is talking you through setting up as small group, offering advice on funding opportunities, delivering training to committee members so that they understand their roles and responsibilities or providing workshops to help promote your organisation or complete a funding application.

If you would like to find out more, please don't hesitate to get in touch. If you have been working directly with one of our Community Support Team, you can contact them in the usual ways or email [info@durhamcommunityaction.org.uk](mailto:info@durhamcommunityaction.org.uk) and your enquiry will be directed to a member of the team.