Legal Structure



What kind of organisation should we be?

Once you have decided that you want to formalise your group and adopt a legal structure, and you have considered the questions in the Decide how you will run your group section you will need to think about what kind of legal structure your organisation will become. There are a variety of legal structures that can be appropriate for different kinds of voluntary organisations.

> Advice about legal structures is available to voluntary organisations through the network of local voluntary councils (CVCs).

It can be difficult to make decisions about how your group will be run, and make sure you're considering all the implications. Your local county voluntary council will be able to help you work through these options so we would recommend that you contact them.

You could also take a look at our free E-learning course Introduction to Voluntary Sector legal structures and charitable status.

Related resources



Introduction to Voluntary Sector legal structures and charitable status

This course has been created to provide an introduction to voluntary sector legal structures and charitable status.

Other sources of information

NCVO version

Identify the right governing document for your group

A ‘governing document’ is a written set of rules for how your group will be run. It will include the purpose of your group, what activities you can (and can’t) do and will detail rules such as how your Trustees will be appointed, how often you need to have meetings, how you can change the rules in the future and what to do if you need to close down the group.

A governing document might also be called a ‘constitution’ or ‘articles of association’.

Your governing document is closely linked to the type of structure that you choose and template documents are available for you to use.

Other useful information

We have set out some links below which take you to the template governing documents but we would recommend that you seek advice before going ahead with these.

Model Constitution for Setting up a



Small Charity

If you want to start up a small charity, you will need a set of rules which explain what the charity does and how it is to be run. To help you, the Charity Commission has worked with nine umbrella organisations listed at the end of the introduction, to jointly write and promote a constitution for a small charity.

VIEW RESOURCE

Other resources

Small Charity Coalition – guidance page on governing documents for charities

Charity Commission – Setting up a charity: model governing documents

Office of the Regulator of Community Interest Companies – Community interest companies: model constitutions Sport Wales – Governing documents