



# First Steps

## Getting a group started

This section is about the very first steps you need to take when you are setting up a group. Many of the points are covered in more detail in other information sheets.

## Get people together

You need to gather together as many as possible of the people you hope will be members of your group. Once it gets going it will be their group too, so it's important that everyone is involved in setting it up from the beginning.

The best way of involving a number of people in a session together is to have a meeting. Here are a few ideas for making your first meeting attractive and interesting:

- ◆ **Publicise it widely**
- ◆ **Invite people personally**

If your group is going to be quite small, it is worth investing the time to call on people to invite them to the meeting. Even if they don't come, this will give you useful information about whether they think the group is a good idea and what they want it to do.

- ◆ **Prepare the meeting room**
- ◆ **Offer an incentive**

Not many people enjoy meetings, and for some it is a big effort to arrange childcare or transport, so it's a good idea to offer an extra attraction. This could simply be free refreshments, or perhaps a video about something to do with the group's aims or activity.

- ◆ **Involve everyone in the discussion**

## Agree your aims

Once you have some people gathered together, you can talk about why you want to start a group and agree together what its aims will be.

It's a good idea to talk about the aims of the group at this first meeting, so that everyone is clear from the start about what the group is for. You may want to include these aims in a written constitution.

## Plan the first action of the group

It's a good idea to make sure your first activity is something public, fun and easily achievable.

Continued overleaf

# First Steps

---

## .... and share out the work of making it happen

Once you have decided what to do first, someone (or preferably a group of people) needs to take responsibility for making sure the next stage happens. You may want to elect a committee with named officers (Chair, Secretary, etc), or just share out the work that needs doing immediately. Either way, everyone needs to know who is doing what, and when they will report back to the whole group.

## Make some decisions about money

Running any group costs money, and it's a good idea to start thinking at the beginning about where to get it from and how to look after it. As soon as your group has some money, you will want to give one person responsibility for keeping track of it (the Treasurer).

## Write down what has been decided

Whether or not you are starting the kind of group that has regular meetings with minutes, it's important to write down what happens at this first meeting so that the group's aims are clearly recorded.

## Fix a date, time and venue for the next meeting

By the end of the launch meeting you should have found some more people to work with you and come up with lots of ideas for your group's next steps. All that's left is to arrange when you will meet again, and your group is up and running.

***If you require support with setting up a new group, please contact  
Evesham Volunteer Centre,  
where staff can support and help you with this process.***

## **Disclaimer**

The information provided in this sheet is for guidance only. It is not a substitute for professional advice and we cannot accept any responsibility for loss occasioned as a result of any person acting or refraining from acting upon it.

**Acknowledgement: Resource Centre, Brighton**