



T3SC Factsheet

Setting up a new group

If you are interested in setting up a new voluntary or community organisation there can be a mind-boggling number of things to consider. There are decisions to be made, information to be gathered, and jobs to do. If you tackle this process with a good plan of action and plenty of help and support then it isn't as daunting as it might seem - and the potential rewards are great. Some of the most important considerations are covered below. These are only guidelines for good practice. T3SC would be delighted to help you get going and keep going. As well as general organisation we can help you get funding, make useful contacts and find useful resources.

Things that you need to ask, find out, or decide

What do you want to do?

You need to have a specific idea about exactly what your group is going to do. Will it offer a service to a community or will it be of benefit solely to its members? What are the aims of this group? What do you want to achieve?

Where do you want to do it?

What area are you going to cover? For example, only Ashton or the whole of Tameside? Be realistic - if you only have the resources to cover a small area don't overstretch yourself.

Who do you want to do it with?

If you are providing a service then you may want to identify a specific group of people with whom you are going to work, for example people affected by a specific issue or living in a defined area. If you are going to work with several groups, then you need to consider any possible conflicts of interest.

Are you overlapping with other groups?

Is there already a group doing the same kind of things you want to do in the same area? Duplicating what other groups are doing won't help you when it comes to trying to get support, funding or volunteers. It's a good idea to ensure that what you want to do is new and/or unique. If there's a national organisation concerned with your particular situation or condition they will be able to tell you if there is a local branch or contact in the area.

Could you work in partnership with any other groups or organisations?

If there are groups already doing something similar perhaps you could make your idea an addition to their organisation, or you could work together to develop something new. Maybe you could share premises and work together for the benefit of both groups. T3SC try and link you to similar organisations and Tameside Library has a list of local community groups.

Things that you need to do

Getting Support

Who might be interested in the group? Start advertising to start up a group by using posters or leaflets etc. in areas where this target group might go, for example a local community centre, doctors surgery or school. You could write small piece for the T3SC newsletter or E-Bulletin as well as contacting local newspapers. If there is a national organisation concerned with your particular situation or condition there may be support available.

Developing an action plan

Spend time as a group identifying goals, think about how you can achieve them and share out tasks. This way everybody gets involved, everyone knows what they're working towards and no one person has all the work piled on them. It will also make it easier to get funding and support if you have a clear and agreed vision of what you are trying to do and where you want to get to.

Adopting a constitution

If you are going to set yourselves up as a group then you really need to have a set of rules that will govern exactly what your group does, how it does it and how you all work together. This is what a constitution does. One of your first tasks therefore is to write a constitution and officially adopt it. T3SC has copies of a model on which you can base your constitution. The important part of a constitution is that it reflects what you want to do and how you want to do it and also allows you room for expansion and diversification in the future.

Getting a Committee

There is usually a group of people from within the membership of your group who will be responsible for the day to day running of the group. The constitution might call them the Management Committee or the Executive Committee. The Committee are elected by the membership. Some members of the Committee also take on specific roles within the Committee including Chair, Secretary, Treasurer etc. It is the Committee's job to ensure that the group is ran fairly and responsibly.

Holding your first General Meeting

The General Meetings are usually the overall decision making body for the group as it is made up of the whole membership. It is the first meeting that you will need to vote to officially adopt your constitution and to elect the Committee.

Opening a bank account

Once you have set up you will need not only a means of managing the group – a constitution – but also a means of managing your finances. For this reason it is important that you open up a bank account. The account should be opened in the name of the group and should have two signatories for all cheques. It is often a good idea for groups to have three or four signatories on an account of whom any two can sign cheques to cover when Committee members are on holiday or unable to sign cheques for the group. Please ensure that signatories are not related/married as many funders will not give funding in this circumstance.

Getting the correct insurance and Policies

The group will need to have a discussion about insurance and at what level it is needed. There is a wide range of different types of insurance available for different needs, such as building insurance, public liability insurance, etc. If you need more information regarding this there is an insurance factsheet. Your group will also need to consider if you need any policies, such as safeguarding children policy, vulnerable adult policy, equal opportunity policy, etc. Please speak to a member of the Support and Development team regarding policies.

Contacting other groups

Very often many of the problems or difficulties that you may face will have been faced and overcome by other groups in the past. Working in partnership, sharing information and networking with other groups who are doing similar things or who are working in the same area can be an invaluable source of support and information.

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