

Fact Sheet for Community Groups

What type of group or activity?

An unincorporated group or association is perfectly appropriate if you want to run informal or small-scale community events or activities, such as:

- Coffee mornings
- Social get togethers
- Fun days
- Lunch clubs
- Befriending activities
- Parent & Toddler groups
- Tenants and Residents Associations (TRA)
- Neighbourhood Forum

How are you going to finance your activity or group?

Are you planning to bid for funding?

Have you looked into what groups are already active in your area?

Have you considered how you can be welcoming and accessible to everyone?

How are you going to advertise your activity group in your community??

How will you finance your group? Are you bidding for funding?

Do you have at least two other people who support your idea and want to be involved?

You may want to bid for funding to cover the costs of room hire, refreshments, materials, activities etc.

First Steps for Formal Groups

Once you've come together as a group of at least three people and agreed a common goal it's time to form your Committee. If you wish to bid for funding you will need a Committee, a Constitution or governing document for your group and a bank account set up in your group's name.

Committee Roles: Every Committee should have a Chair, Secretary and Treasurer as a minimum.

- **Chair** – a person with good time keeping skills, who can keep the meeting on track and ensure everyone has the opportunity to contribute respectfully and within the group's code of conduct.
- **Secretary** – helps the Chair with admin and publicity for the group, takes notes of meetings.
- **Treasurer** – keeps records of the groups income and spend.

See our video quick guides here for more information on Committees and Roles.

Your Constitution

Your group will need a document that sets out the group's aims and the 'rules' of the group. For example, who can be a member, how often the group meets, arrangements for meetings, election of the Committee and voting rights.

We recommend you also have:

- A folding agreement to set out what will happen if the group decides to stop
- An Equality and Diversity statement
- A Safeguarding Policy

Did you know you have to have a minimum of 3 people to be a formal group?

See our range of free templates here to help you!

Fact Sheet for **Community Groups**

Jargon **Buster**

IGM - Inaugural General Meeting

In simple terms this means the first formal meeting of your group when the Committee is elected and the Constitution agreed.

AGM – Annual General Meeting

A yearly meeting held 12 months after your IGM. The Committee stand for election, accounts are presented and any updates to the Constitution can be agreed.

The AGM should be held annually. No longer than 15 months should pass between AGM's being held.

SGM – Special General Meeting

An interim meeting held on request by Committee Members, to discuss the formal arrangements of the group.

Committee Meeting

General meetings of the Committee held throughout the year to discuss the group's business and plan future activities. Committee Meetings should be held at least four times a year as a minimum to keep your group on track.

Constitution

A document that sets out the governance arrangements for the group. A funder would want to see a copy of your governing document before deciding to award funding.

Support **Available**

Stockport Homes' Customer Engagement Team can usually help you with the following:

- Support to set up a group
- Free templates for key documents
- Signposting to training and funding support
- Advise on project and activity planning



A support network for voluntary, community and faith-based groups, social enterprises and charitable organisations in Stockport. Sector3 joins together community minded groups, organisations and change-makers across Stockport to support neighbourhoods to thrive. The network offers peer-to-peer support, advice and learning, funding and resources. www.sector3sk.org

Next **Steps**

It can be difficult to get funding without having a formal group structure as all funders will want to see a copy of your group's constitution, accounts, receipts and any notes from meetings as evidence.

Stockport Homes' Funding Officer

Our Funding Officer can help local community groups access a range of funding from many different organisations. How we can help:

- Setting up your group
- Searching for funding
- Writing your first funding bid
- "Critical Friend" – We can help you by reading over and commenting on your funding bids before you submit them
- Signposting you to other groups, potential partners and sources of advice and other resources
- For more information, please get in touch at funding.info@stockporthomes.org

Stockport Homes' Community Fund

Bid for up to £2000 from the Community Fund. Check the criteria and apply online at www.sk-y-light.org/community-fund