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Setting up a Ukraine support community group

**Are you a group of people who simply want to get together to support Ukrainian guests and their hosts?**

Many community groups are run entirely by volunteers, to benefit their own members, improve their local neighbourhood, or support members of their community.

If you are a group with the wish to get together as volunteers to organise something where,

* Those attending can support each other (peer support), and/or
* Guests and their families are signposted to advice and other support, and/or
* Professionals can come and talk about their services or support

(e.g. how sign up for Universal Credit, find a job, how to apply to get a school place for children)

then an unincorporated community group or association is probably the structure your need. Please note, these types of groups can not employ staff or lease premises, if you do plan to do either of these things you will need a more formal structure. We can support with this, please contact [Jayne.vaughan@communityactionsuffolk.org.uk](mailto:Jayne.vaughan@communityactionsuffolk.org.uk)

To set up an **unincorporated community group** you will need:

* A constitution or set of rules. This simply sets out the remit of the group, who is involved, who the committee members are and their roles
* A set of Policies that show that you have thought through how you are going to run the group and the responsibilities. These should be in place to protect the organisation, the committee members, volunteers, and service users
* Insurance that covers your activities – primarily public liability insurance
* A bank account in the name of the group – not essential but good practice

Policies and procedures that you should have in place:

* Health and Safety
* Equal opportunities and diversity
* Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults
* GDPR/Data protection

In addition, for best practice and/or if applicable, you should have:

* Complaints procedure
* DBS procedure and checking
* Volunteer policy
* Lone working policy
* Money handling policy

You can find out more about different structures by contacting our VCSE Organisation Support team, full details can be found here <https://www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk/organisation-support/>

We also offer 121 surgeries with one of our dedicated team, you can find and book a surgery here: <https://www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk/organisation-support/traininganddevelopment/1-to-1-surgeries/>

Or visit the governance page of our website here <https://www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk/organisation-support/governance-and-organisation-development/>

**Frequently Asked Questions**

There is a danger of overwhelming both volunteers and yourself with forms, policies and procedures, so the trick is to keep them practical and relevant. Also remember to ensure that all documents are clear and accessible. Here are some frequently asked questions:

Q Why Have a constitution or set or rules?

A. This sets out clearly what the group is about and helps everyone involved understand the common purpose of the group

Q. Are policies necessary as we are only a small group?

A. With a set of policies you are protecting the organisation, the volunteers that support it, and the service users who come to you

Q. Do we need insurance?

A. Yes

1. Does the group really need a bank account in the name of the group?
2. If you are planning to handle money, make payments or receive funds then it is good practice. If you are seeking funding, grant makers will want to pay into a separate account.

Q. Why do I need these policies?

A.

* Health and safety - Different to risk assessments, this sets out that you understand how to keep everyone safe, that health and safety is everyone’s responsibility and the measures you have put in place to ensure safety
* Equal opportunities and diversity – You need to demonstrate that you understand the laws and practices of treating everyone fairly
* Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults - whilst you may not deal directly with either of these groups it is everyone responsibility to be aware of safeguarding good practice
* GDPR/Data protection – This shows that you have an understanding of the need to protect personal information, if you need to collate that information, and how you will ensure information is dealt with safely and securely

In addition, you may need or should have:

* Complaints procedure – to have something in place that demonstrates how you will deal with a complaint should it occur
* DBS procedure and checks – DBS @ CAS Ltd offers a full service of DBS checking should you need it further information
* Volunteer policy –sets out how you will recruit, train and look after your volunteers
* Lone working policy – you will only needs this if an individual (employee or volunteer) is likely to volunteer on their own
* Money handling policy – a useful policy to have if you are dealing with cash at all, it sets out the procedures and protocols so the systems you use are transparent

For further information please visit <https://www.communityactionsuffolk.org.uk/organisation-support/>