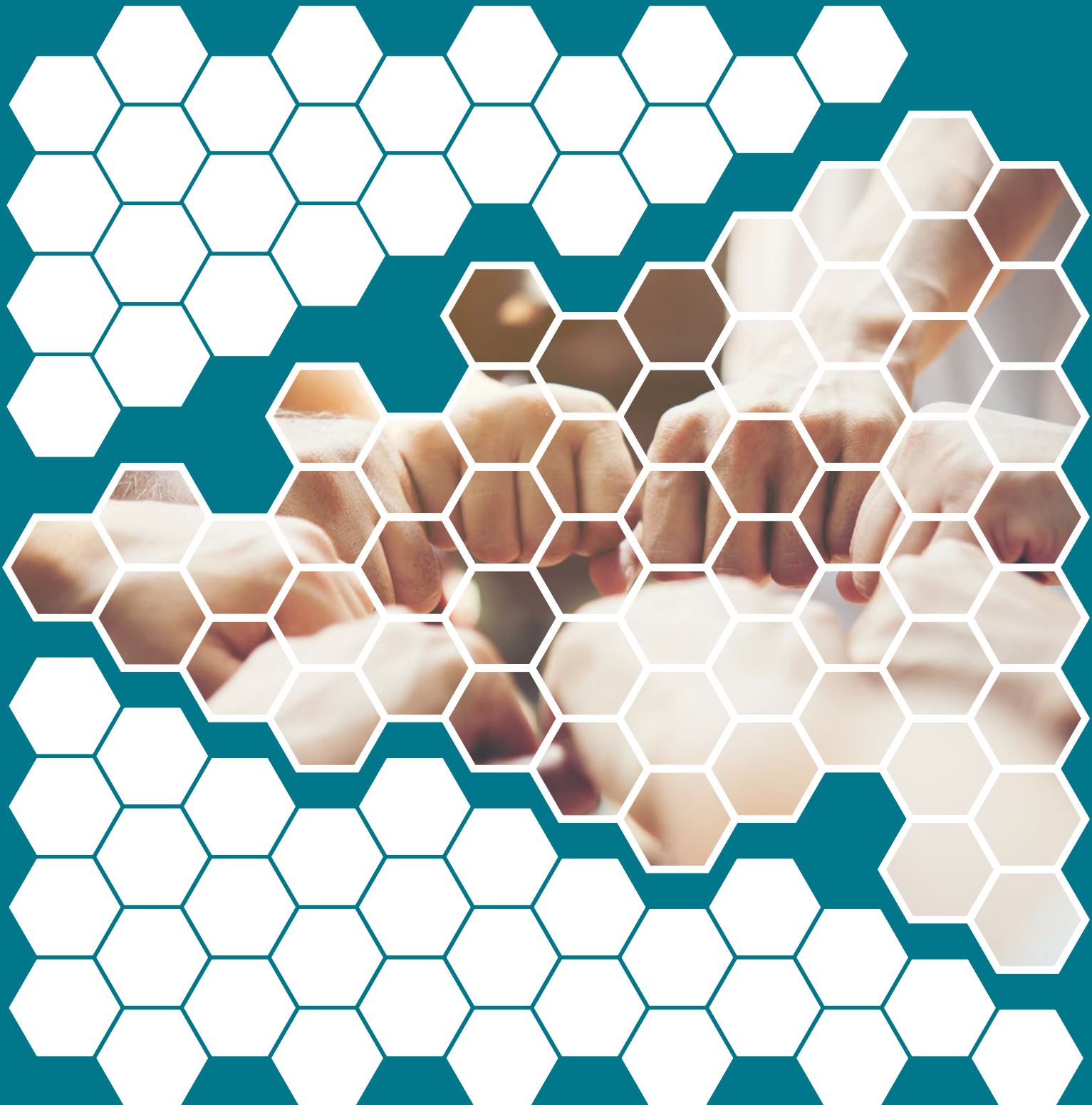


TOOLKIT FOR **Community Development** In North Belfast



Communities In Transition
Ardoyne & New Lodge



The
Executive Office



TOOLKIT FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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Introduction

Welcome to the Community Development Capacity Building Toolkit for the New Lodge & Ardoyne area.

Our Communities in Transition Capacity Building Programme (North Belfast) staff and participants worked closely with Community Places to develop and produce this toolkit which puts a special emphasis on building the capacity of youth, community and voluntary groups working across our CIT area.

The toolkit content reflects on the programme learning with specific reference on how to build local capacity and what is required to promote the development of shared, resilient and lawful communities. It has also sourced best practice from other institutional contexts to demonstrate how concepts such as lawfulness could be promoted and instilled across the CIT area of New Lodge and Ardoyne.

In producing the Community Development Capacity Building Toolkit, our goal is simple - we want New Lodge and Ardoyne to become better places to live, work, rest and play. We want to encourage active citizenship while contributing to the building of fulfilling lives for everyone living in the CIT area through the development and provision of first-class front-line services which meet real community need.



About this Toolkit

Who is it for?

The Toolkit is for all community groups in north Belfast and will, we hope, be useful to groups everywhere. We think smaller and newer groups will find it most useful, but it contains information and guidance for all. It has been developed by Community Places.

What it is

Toolkits provide initial advice, information and guidance and links to further sources of help and greater detail. This one focuses on key aspects of community development and the challenges of setting up and running a community group. It focuses on the needs of less resourced groups – those with volunteers, a committee and (perhaps) one or two staff. Larger groups will find the links to more detailed guidance helpful.

How to use it

The Toolkit has been designed primarily for onscreen use. In the contents page and throughout the document there are links to both other parts of the Toolkit and to websites providing more details and in-depth guidance. Clicking on these links will bring you to all of these.

Lawfulness

The final section of the Toolkit provides information and links to further resources on the concept of **lawfulness**.



Community Development

Introduction

Community Development is practiced in many countries across the world. This part of the Toolkit provides information on how Community Development is understood internationally, the foundational principles and beliefs and how it contributes to making life better in disadvantaged communities and to sustainable development globally. It is good to know we are not alone!

An International View

"Community development is a way of strengthening civil society by prioritising the actions of communities, and their perspectives in the development of social, economic and environmental policy. It seeks the empowerment of communities - geographical communities, communities of interest or identity and communities organising around specific themes or policy initiatives. It strengthens the capacity of people as active citizens through their community groups, groups and networks; and the capacity of institutions and agencies (public, private and non-governmental) to work in dialogue with citizens to shape and determine change in their communities. It plays a crucial role in supporting active democratic life by promoting the autonomous voice of disadvantaged and vulnerable communities.

It has a set of core values/social principles covering human rights, social inclusion, equality and respect for diversity; and a specific skills and knowledge base".

The International Association for Community Development IACD 2004 [here](#)

The values and principles referred to above reflect those incorporated in the recognised Occupational Standards for Community Development set out below:

Community Development Values, Principles and Roles

Values and principles:

- Social justice
- Self determination
- Working and learning together
- Sustainable communities
- Participation
- Reflective practice

Key Roles:

- Develop working relationships with communities and organisations

- Encourage people to work with and learn from each other
- Work with people in communities to plan for change and take collective action
- Work with people in communities to develop and use frameworks for evaluation
- Develop community organisations
- Reflect on and develop own practice and role

Extract from National Occupational Standards, see Appendix 1

A Guide to the Occupational Standards is available [here](#) also 'The Community Development Challenge' [here](#) and the Rural Community Development Strategic Framework for Community Development [here](#).

Community Development

Community Development is embedded in public policy and local government across Scotland where many hold the view that it is simply a better way of meeting the needs of people and developing all communities:

A Way of Doing Things Better
<p>Community development is a way of doing things better. It is an active process, which occurs when people take action to achieve things that might not otherwise happen. It can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - bring people together; - help people to identify the problems and needs which they share and respond to these; - help people to discover the resources that they already have; - promote knowledge, skills, confidence and the capacity to act together; - strengthen group and leadership within communities; - strengthen contacts between and within diverse communities.
And Making a Difference
<p>Once people are working together it can help them to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - deal directly with issues they think are important; - change the relationships between communities and public or private groups; - help public groups to work in more open and inclusive ways; - promote increased local democracy, participation and involvement in public affairs; - create stronger, more resilient communities in which people can live better lives; - take action to address inequalities in power and participation.
Community Development Alliance Scotland (CDAS) 2014 - here

Community Development is intrinsically linked to the achievement of Sustainable Development – locally, regionally and globally. The UN Sustainable Development Goals (17 in all) include actions on sustainable communities, disadvantage, inequalities, education, human rights, peace and justice ([here](#)) and information on what the Government is doing is available [here](#).



Engaging your Community

Introduction

A group's community may be all residents, residents of a particular age, people with a particular interest or need. It depends on the group's purpose (which will be stated in the constitution – see section on Governance below). However a group's community is defined it should know what their community needs and wants from them. Finding this out and keeping up to date is generally referred to as engagement. Most groups will also want the help and support of volunteers and to encourage people to get involved in all types of ways.

This part of the Toolkit thus focuses on knowing your community's needs through engagement and encouraging people to become involved in whatever way suits them best.

Knowing Your Community's Needs and Views

As a community group you will want to know the views and needs of the people you are providing projects, facilities or services for. So, for example, if you are focused on improving the local environment you will want to be sure you have taken on board the views of residents. Similarly, if you are providing a facility or project for young or older people you will want to be sure that you fully understand their needs and views. When considering your application for funding funders will also need evidence that you really know what people want. This is where engagement comes in. There are various methods for engaging people. Your choice of method will be influenced by what you want to know, the time and resources you have available and so on. And each method has its own strengths and weaknesses.

Click on this link [here](#) for details of a wide range of methods and guidance on which one to use. These include Participatory Budgeting (PB) which provides opportunities to engage in non-traditional ways that reach out to people who don't often have a voice and it can become a celebration of positive action in the community. PB can improve trust and relationships between citizens, public sector bodies, elected representatives and the private sector. There are a number of PB models the most common of which are small grants allocation and mainstream investment. See the dedicated website on PB [here](#). It is hosted by Community Places and contains details of a range of PB projects from across the region.

With the support of Community Places two of the Local Council based Community Planning Partnerships have developed Community Engagement Strategies based on the IAPP approach. Derry City and Strabane is one of these Council areas (see [here](#)) and the other is Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon.

Getting People Involved

People will, when asked and if it suits them at a particular time, willingly get involved with your group. For many people this will be with activities or events where they can help for a short period of time and not take on too much responsibility.

But this, for some, can be the start of a journey to becoming more actively involved in the community – and perhaps your group and committee at some point. This is much more likely to happen if your group has thought carefully about what to ask people to do and put in place ways of making volunteering straight forward and of supporting, thanking and acknowledging their help. For advice and guidance on recruiting, managing, valuing and retaining volunteers see publications by Volunteer Now [here](#) and [here](#).



Governance – Getting It Right

Introduction

Governance is about how a group is run by its Committee – it is about taking decisions within the purpose of the group and for the benefit of those it was set up to assist and it is about being open and accountable to members, funders (if any) and supporters.

This section of the Toolkit provides information on the most common forms of community group, initial questions to consider when setting up a new group, information on the fundamental principles of good governance and links to further sources of advice and support.

Types of Charitable Organisations

The two most common types of charitable community organisations are:

- unincorporated association;
- charitable company.

Most community groups (residents, community, youth, older people, environmental and so on) are unincorporated associations. They have a constitution which is their founding document, and they are registered with the Charity Commission. Where a group takes on responsibilities for larger grants, premises, employing staff and so on, it is often sensible for them to become a charitable company (sometimes referred to as a social enterprise). One of the main reasons for doing so is that (provided the people involved act lawfully and reasonably) they will not be personally liable if something goes seriously wrong (money goes astray, bills are left unpaid etc).

Charitable companies have what are called Directors and a Board but for most practical, day-to-day purposes this is the same as having Committee members and a Committee. The Charitable Company can have a membership with the members electing and appointing the Directors. In this way the Board of Directors is accountable to the membership (for example residents who are the members) in the same way a Committee is accountable to the members of an unincorporated association. Charitable companies often have responsibilities for things like staff, premises, vehicles, income and contracts. Charitable companies must register with both the Charity Commission and 'Companies House' and adhere to the legal requirements all companies must follow (as well as those of the Charity Commission).

Setting Up a New Group

While advice should be taken from NICVA and from groups already well established there are some fundamental questions to consider at the outset:

- **Purpose** – What is the basic purpose of the suggested new group? Does it fall into one of the Charity Commission's twelve broad purposes ([here](#))? What in the medium to longer term will the new group be aiming to achieve? For example:
 - improve the health of residents or older/younger people or women or men.
 - provide arts and culture opportunities, classes etc.
 - provide sports activities and facilities.
 - improve the environment.
 - tackle poverty, low income etc.
- **Membership** – Who will be the first members? How will people become members in the future and what criteria will they have to meet? While all members (new and old) must support the group's aims and objectives are there other reasonable requirements (live in a particular area; be over or below a certain age; be a carer or have a disability etc)? The criteria for membership should be linked directly with the purpose and aims of the group.
- **Who will Benefit?** – the Charity Commission requires groups to be clear about who will benefit from the activities. The people who will benefit must be linked to the purpose and aims. In many cases it will be all local residents who will benefit (from sports, improvements to amenities, the environment, culture activities and so on). But, in some cases, it may only be a section of the population – for example under 18s if the purpose is youth provision or over 50s if the group wants to run activities for older people only.
- **Committee Size** – There is no magic number. In general, it shouldn't be so big that it becomes harder and harder to

fill the Committee or hold meetings. Sometimes new groups have lots of enthusiastic people to join the Committee but in subsequent years this may change. A good way of providing for this is to set a minimum number which seems reasonable while at the same allowing for a larger Committee by either setting no maximum number or a fairly high one.

- **Quorum** – A quorum is the minimum number which must be present at a meeting. A group's constitution should set this number for Committee meetings and for meetings for the full membership (including the Annual General Meeting). For Committee meetings the quorum should not be so large that it becomes difficult to have regular Committee meetings nor so small that a very few Committee members can hold meetings and take decisions. A similar rule of thumb applies for AGMs – while taking into account that it is difficult to get members to attend an AGM which is a formal and largely administrative affair. So, for AGMs keep the quorum number low and reasonably achievable.
- Remember – talk to established groups, check the website links above and get advice when starting up a new group (it is available and usually free so ask for it).
- The Charity Commission has published guidance on “Starting a New Charity” [here](#) and also models of constitutions which groups can adapt and adopt [here](#).
- NICVA's Guide to Committee Procedures is [here](#) and details of its Governance advice and support is [here](#) and includes help in preparing a constitution.
- Supporting Communities has a model template for a community association constitution [here](#).



Good Governance

When setting up your group and throughout its lifetime there are some fundamental principles which your group should live by. These are for your own integrity and reputation and for the group's and provide reassurance to your group's community that you are genuinely doing everything above board.

Seven Principles of Good Governance

- **Selflessness:** Decisions should be taken in the interests of the group, not the benefit of one person or their family, friends, etc.
- **Openness:** Information should be shared and reasons for decisions made clear.
- **Integrity:** Committees should never put themselves under any obligation to outside individuals or groups which might influence their role and decisions.
- **Objectivity:** Committees should make all decisions completely on merit (being particularly careful when money, staff appointments and similar decisions are involved).
- **Accountability:** Committees must of course comply with the law and are accountable for decisions and actions to their members, the wider public and service users any funders and the Charity Commission.
- **Honesty:** Committee members have a duty to disclose to the Committee any private or personal interests which may be (or appear to others to be) a conflict of interest (this is often where they or their family members would benefit from a particular decision by the Committee) and take steps to avoid the conflict (for example leaving a meeting during discussion of an issue).
- **Leadership:** All Committee members are responsible for applying these principles with the Committee officers showing a lead and being a model of good practice for all.

See also Ards and North Down Council and Community Networks [here](#).

Details of NICVA's Governance advice and support are [here](#) and the recognised Code of Good Governance for Community and Voluntary Groups and a Governance Health Checklist is available from Volunteer Now [here](#).

Community groups running activities or providing facilities and services and so on need to have governance policies which set out how these activities, services and facilities will be properly and safely managed. The policies a group needs are determined by what it does. **Appendix 1** lists many of the policies a group may need and provides details on obtaining further information and guidance.



Committee Meetings

Introduction

Committee meetings are important because they are where issues are discussed and decisions are taken, needs are identified and plans made, and where progress is reviewed and problems solved. While they are formal with an agenda and minutes, they should be participative with everyone being given the chance to contribute and having their views listened to with respect. This section of the Toolkit provides some guidance on how to achieve positive and productive meetings, sets out a typical agenda and explains the roles of key Committee officers.

Positive and Useful Meetings

Meetings are more likely to be useful when they have a clear purpose and are well organised. Having a clear agenda and taking good minutes are crucial. The agenda should be drafted by the Secretary (or staff member) and then agreed before the meeting by the Secretary and Chairperson. A Template for meeting agendas is included in this Toolkit on page 17. The minutes must record who was present, apologies and all decisions made. They should also include a brief summary of the main points made under each agenda item.

Officers and Committee members should understand their roles and responsibilities (see below). For further guidance on Committee procedures see the DIY Committee Guide [here](#) and the NICVA Guide to Committee procedures [here](#).

Committee Officers' Roles

The Chairperson's role includes:

- chairing committee meetings;
- assisting the committee to work together;
- maintaining an overview of the work and progress;
- being the main contact person.

Before Committee meetings the Chairperson and Secretary would normally set the agenda. The Chairperson should ensure the agenda is followed and that the time available is well used to get through all the items. The Chair should also give everyone the opportunity to speak during discussions and make sure decisions are clear and understood.

In addition to chairing meetings the Chairperson should try to ensure that everything is running well and people are working well as a team. The Chairperson will often be the first point of contact for the Group – though the Group may decide that for particular issues, projects or activities another Committee member will be the lead contact.

If the Group employs staff the Chairperson should ensure they know what the Committee wants from them and what the decisions of the Committee are.



Committee Meetings



The Secretary's main roles are:

- taking minutes at the committee and general meetings.
- setting the agenda (along with the Chair) and sending out details of forthcoming meetings.
- receiving and responding to correspondence and emails and keeping a record of these.

The minutes should record who attended and apologies, what has been discussed, the decisions made and who is to implement them. The Secretary should keep all the key documents of the Committee (agendas, minutes, constitution, correspondence etc).

If the Group employs staff, they may undertake many of the secretary's tasks, but the secretary must ensure that they are doing so in accordance with the Committee's procedures and wishes.

Treasurer

Unless the group has one or more staff and one of them is responsible for financial administration the Treasurer undertakes this role on a day-to-day basis. If there is a staff member then the Treasurer should overview the financial position of the group and discuss finances with the staff member regularly. The Committee decides how funds are raised (and for what purpose) and (overall) what it should be spent on. The Treasurer (with help from any staff member) should keep financial records for the group (the bookkeeping) and regularly report on the financial situation to the Committee. The Treasurer has lead responsibility for ensuring the Group's financial procedures are followed – to the letter (see below).

Maintaining financial records for the group includes keeping: a written record of all monies coming in or going out (including all cash and receipts for everything bought – no matter how small the cost); the bank statements and checking they tally with other records; receipts for all items purchased; all paperwork (letters of offer, copies of reports to funders etc) for all grants.

At the AGM (Annual General Meeting) the Treasurer presents a detailed financial report covering the whole year.

All Committee Members

- attend all meetings and send apologies if you can't;
- read the agenda and keep to it;
- read any papers for the meeting;
- put items on the agenda;
- keep to the point;

Committee Meetings

- listen carefully and ask questions;
- contribute to decision making and try to reach agreement with others (a consensus where possible);
- volunteer to help and join in activities;
- understand the role of the officers;
- know the aims of the constitution and any legal duties.

Assessing the Committee's Progress

Every Committee should take some time out to discuss how it is doing. Here are a few basic criteria Committee members could consider individually – and perhaps give the Committee marks out of 10 for – and then discuss all together as a whole group.

Key Criteria	Score (out of 10)
We are working well together.	
We are sticking to our agenda.	
People are being respectful of one another.	
We take and implement decisions.	
Members take on responsibilities and carry them out as best they can	
We are being frank and open about issues.	
We are gradually achieving what we set out to do.	
Total Score	

Financial Procedures

Introduction

There are many guides and training courses on financial procedures. It is crucial that your group not only looks after and use any money it has properly but also that it can show to funders and your community how you have done so and that everything is above board. It is also important for your group's and your own reputation that there are no doubts about how money is being used.

There is also a lot of terminology and jargon words around financial procedures. Click on this link [here](#) for a guide to all of the financial jargon (and many other jargon terms as well).

Your Group needs to have a Financial Procedures Policy. This should set out the steps the Committee members, volunteers and any staff should follow in looking after money coming in and ensuring any money spent is for proper purposes. A Template for you to change and adapt for your group is on page 18.

Fundraising

Fundraising can take many forms from sponsorship to social events. These are great ways of not only raising some money but also involving volunteers and building support from within your community. So, no matter how well funded your group becomes eventually, it should always consider local fundraising as well.

Seeking funding from government, public bodies, the Lottery and so on takes time, experience and skills. It can be learned and there are training courses to help groups. It involves application forms, reports and, if successful, detailed financial monitoring and accounting to the funder.

NICVA provides training and has published advice including its five "Top Tips" [here](#). It also provides details on funding sources called "Grant Tracker" [here](#).

Supporting Communities produces a regular Funding Bulletin (see [here](#)) and provides Financial Administration and Fundraising training (see [here](#)) and Day-to-Day Financial Management Guidance ([here](#)).

Project Planning

Introduction

This section of the Toolkit provides signposts to further more detailed guidance. The term project includes activities over a period of time and events, festivals and so on. The more extensive the project is (in terms of duration, people involved, expenditure) the more time a group should take to plan and the more detailed the plan should be.

Key Questions when Planning a Project or Activity

1. Is the project/activity idea within **our purpose and role**? Are we thinking about it because people really want us to do it or because a funder has announced money for it? Is it for us or something another group or body should take on?
2. If it is within our remit (and aims in our constitution) what **evidence** do we have (or can we gather) to show a need for the project? This evidence could be in the form of data (facts and figures – for example, a waiting list for existing projects or a local survey) and what people have told you when you engaged with them (see Engagement section on page 7).
3. When you have gathered evidence about the issue or problem you will have a better understanding of it and, crucially, what activities your group could do (on its own or with others). The **activities** you think you can undertake may well require new resources (money, equipment, more volunteers, staff, premises) but they should not be so unrealistic that they are unlikely to be achieved and thus lead to disappointment. The activities you are thinking of will give you a good insight into what you hope to achieve (and vice versa). What you want to achieve is often called outcomes. At this stage you should try to list the **outcomes** your group would want to see achieved by tackling the issue or problem. Outcomes describe the difference you hope there will be in the future after your group has delivered activities or projects. For example, outcomes might be:
 - Older people will be less isolated.
 - Anti-social activities will be reduced.
 - Women will be more involved in health improvement activities.

Funders often ask for outcomes when you apply for money. So, thinking about what your group can realistically achieve is important.

The Lottery publishes useful guidance on Outcomes and Project Planning [here](#) and [here](#) and on measuring progress and success [here](#).

4. Having listed two or three outcomes the next question to ask yourself is how will you know if you are succeeding? For each outcome you should have one or more **indicator** of progress. An indicator is what you will measure by gathering **evidence of progress**. The examples of outcomes above could, for example, have indicators and evidence of progress like this:

Outcome	Indicator	Progress Measure
Older people will be less isolated.	More older people say they are more involved in community and with friends and family.	Ask older people at beginning of project and at regular intervals thereafter.
Anti-social activities will be reduced.	Number of incidents reported to PSNI. Attendance at Youth Club activities.	Change in number of reported incidents.
Women will be more involved in health improvement activities.	Women take part in health and well-being activities.	Number of women enrolling in courses. Number continuing healthy activities xx months after course.

5. During the course of running activities and projects there are always ups and downs. It is important to learn from both. So, take time out to talk about what is happening, what is working well and what needs to be improved or changed. Every successful group and business does this – some call it learning or evaluation as you go. A crucial part of this is engaging with people who are involved in your group's activities, projects, facilities (see section on Engagement on page 7). Also talk to people you want to involve but aren't involved – yet.

And, finally, be sure to **celebrate progress** and success as you go along. Celebrations can be anything from tea and cake to a special event. Whatever form of celebration takes is important to mark progress with all involved in achieving it.

Working with Other Groups

Many of the issues and problems community groups work on can sometimes be more effectively tackled through co-operation between groups within a community or between groups in different communities. Co-operation can also help groups to learn from each other.

Some funders encourage partnership working to maximise the impact of their funding. Belfast City Council supports and promotes co-operation between community groups and a few years ago Community Places developed a Toolkit for community groups on 'Planning and Working Together' which is available [here](#).

Some indicators of successful and less successful co-operation are presented below:

Characteristics of successful co-operation:	Characteristics of less successful co-operation:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement that co-operation is necessary. • A shared vision of what might be achieved. • Respect and trust between different interests and partners. • The leadership of respected individuals. • Commitment of key people developed through a clear and open process. • Time to build agreement. • Compatible ways of working and flexibility. • Good communication (perhaps aided by a facilitator). • Collaborative decision-making with a commitment to achieving consensus. • Effective process structures in place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of clear purpose. • Unrealistic goals. • Differences of philosophy and ways of working. • Lack of communication. • Unequal and unacceptable balance of power and control. • Key interests missing from the partners. • Hidden agendas. • Financial and time commitments outweighing the potential benefits. • A history of conflict among key interests. • One partner dominating.



Lawfulness

Introduction

Lawfulness – a definition

The CCEA (Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment) publishes resources on Lawfulness including 'What is Lawfulness' which defines it as:

Laws are an important feature of all democratic societies. They help maintain a peaceful and orderly society in which everyone is safe. In the U.K. and many other countries, the law is based on the principle that everyone is treated equally and fairly. No-one is above the law.

It is the role of government and the Legislature to create laws. These are then upheld and enforced by the Justice System, which is three main components: the Police Service, the Court System, and the Prison and Probation Service.

To ensure a lawful society, active citizens must be willing to uphold and respect the rule of law. Citizens should also be confident that the Justice System will take action to deal with law-breaking. By doing so, individuals and communities can be free from fear and intimidation from those who wish to unlawfully control them. Active citizens can help to improve their communities and society by having a sense of social responsibility and taking positive action. By supporting the Justice System, they can create a better society together.

See CCEA Active Citizenship Resources [here](#) which include an Animation on What is Lawfulness? [here](#)

The United States Institute of Peace is a national, nonpartisan, independent institute, founded by Congress and dedicated to the proposition that a world without violent conflict is possible, practical and essential for U.S. and global security. In conflict zones abroad, the Institute works with local partners to prevent, mitigate, and resolve violent conflict. To reduce future crises and the need for costly interventions, USIP works with governments and civil societies to build local capacities to manage conflict peacefully. The Institute pursues its mission by linking research, policy, training, analysis and direct action to support those who are working to build a more peaceful, inclusive world.

The Institute describes a 'Culture of Lawfulness' as "A culture of lawfulness means that the population in general follows the law and has a desire to access the justice system to address their grievances" and identifies 10 ingredients – see [here](#). They include references to:

- **Participation and Communication** can help build the foundations for a culture of lawfulness, which may not exist in a society emerging from conflict. Participation means that the population feels they are a part of the process and can use the law to improve their lives. Communication means that an open dialogue exists between the rule of law community and the population in general and that the public has the means to obtain information from the government.
- **Promoting Public Participation** - In many societies emerging from conflict, the population may be afraid to speak out and voice their opinions.
- **Work with Law Enforcement Agencies** - Law enforcement officials should send a message that rule of law matters, that corruption will not be rewarded, and that officers are expected to ensure responsive, service-oriented policing.



Templates

Committee Meeting Agenda Template

- Name of Group (eg ABCD Community Association Committee)
- Date, Time, Venue
- Apologies for Absence
- Any Conflicts of Interest
- Any Correspondence for the Committee to deal with
- Minutes of Previous Meetings (for approval and signed by the Chairperson)
- Matters Arising from minutes which are not otherwise on the agenda.
- Update on decisions taken at previous meeting (actions agreed)
- Budget Update (presented by Treasurer or a staff member and showing income and expenditure up to that point in the year and any concerns about future income or expenditure).
- Reports from any Sub-Groups
- Reports on Projects, Events, Services
- Any Other Business
- Date, time and venue of the next meeting



Templates

Financial Procedures Policy Template

Introduction

This template outlines financial procedures in place for the ABCD Community Group. The procedures below assume the ABCD Group has a Committee, volunteers and one or two staff. Larger groups will also find it useful. All groups should adapt it to suit their own circumstances. All funders will require your group to have a financial procedures policy, will ask to see it and may want some changes. In any case your group should have one and stick to it. Doing so will ensure everyone knows and can see money is being handled properly and everything is above board. It is not about trusting or not trusting an individual – it is about being up front, accountable, safe and transparent.

1. Annual Budget

ABCD Community Group's budget is agreed at the beginning of the financial year (in April) by the Committee. The budget itemises the estimated outgoings on all main types of expenditure for the year ahead and the expected and hoped for sources of income. The Committee reviews the budget every three months at its meetings.

2. Finance Records

The Treasurer keeps records of **all income** and **expenditure**. Records of all transactions may be kept manually (see Monthly Record example) or electronically (in spreadsheet format – see income and expenditure spreadsheet examples).

Bank statements are checked monthly to ensure all transactions are accounted for and tally with the income and expenditure records. The Chairperson or another Committee member should review bank statements and finance records on a quarterly basis.

4. Banking and Approval of Expenditure

3.1 Banking

ABCD Community Group bank account is set up so that all transactions **require two bank signatories**. The Group currently has agreed four named people (including the Treasurer and Chairperson) who can sign a cheque or authorise an online banking transaction. The Treasurer or Chairperson must always be one of the people signing a cheque or authorising an online payment. None of the signatories to the bank account are related to each other.

3.2 Approval of Expenditure

The **upper limit of expenditure** which can be approved by one staff and one Committee member or two staff members is **£X**. Approval from the Treasurer or Chairperson is required for any other expenditure item over this amount and for any payments made to staff (salaries, travel and other expenses).

When an invoice is received the Treasurer/designated staff member of the ABCD community group:

- checks it is addressed to ABCD Community Group (not a staff member);
- checks it for accuracy against the goods supplied or service provided;
- passes it to the Treasurer or Chairperson for approval for payment.

4. Orders, Purchases and Quotations

4.1 Equipment, Publications, Stationery and Other Budgeted Items - All orders over **£Y** must be placed through (or authorised in advance by) the Treasurer.

4.2 Quotations - If it is thought that expenditure on any item will exceed **£Z**, the Treasurer will ask staff to seek quotations as follows:

- items over **£Z** but under **£X** - two quotations (from brochures, catalogues or online shops);
- items over **£X** - three **written** quotations.

To ensure fairness and transparency, it is important that all suppliers are given the same information when asked to provide a quotation. The Committee will review quotations for and approve expenditure on items over **£X**.

Templates

5. Payments

The following procedures are in place for ABCD Community Group payments:

5.1 **Staff Salaries** by Bank Transfer **(the Treasurer or Chairperson must always be one of the people authorising the online payment):**

- salary payment summary sheet is prepared from payslips;
- payments to staff are set up in online banking;
- Treasurer or Chairperson checks summary sheet tallies with online salary payments set up and authorises them;
- a second bank signatory co-authorises the bank transaction.

5.2 **Staff and Volunteer Travel Expenses** by Bank Transfer or Cheque (the Treasurer or Chairperson must always be one of the people authorising the online payment or signing the cheque)

The Treasurer or Chairperson checks and approves expense claims submitted by staff and volunteers for reimbursement. They may not check or approve their own expense claims.

5.3 **Payment of Invoices**

The procedure is:

- Invoice is approved for payment (see 3.2 above);
- Staff member or Treasurer prepares the cheque.
- Treasurer (or Chairperson if prepared by the Treasurer) checks the cheque against the invoice for accuracy (amount, payee, date) and signs it;
- Another signatory co-signs the cheque.

After the cheque has been signed it should be photocopied and attached to the invoice for filing. All photocopied cheques must have two signatures.

Cheques over **£X** must be signed by the Treasurer or Chairperson. **No signatory should ever sign a blank cheque.**

5.4 **Payment by Petty Cash**

ABCD Community Group operates petty cash on a float system – this means the amount of cash plus the value of petty cash receipts for expenditure **always** equals the fixed float limit of **£Y** (the limit set by the Committee). All cash received and spent is recorded on a Petty Cash Log Sheet (see example).

Petty cash is kept locked away and is used for expenditure on small items (such as batteries, stamps, fuses, biscuits/milk/teabags/coffee for meetings etc) with each item normally not exceeding £10 in value. Expenditure to be reclaimed from petty cash must be accompanied by a receipt. Staff and volunteers cannot approve their own petty cash reimbursements – the Treasurer (or other Committee member) must check the receipt and reimburse the cash.

6. Security and Receipt of Cheques and Cash

- **Cheque Book** - The cheque book is kept in a locked drawer at all times. The Treasurer, Chairperson and any nominated staff member have access to the key.
- **Petty Cash** – The petty cash is kept in a locked drawer along with all Petty Cash Log Sheets. The Treasurer, Chairperson and any nominated staff member have access to the key.
- **Cheques Received** - All cheques received by post or in person are noted in the incoming mail record book. All cheques received, either by post or in person, should be lodged to the bank account as soon as possible.
- **Cash Collected at Group Club Events** – Group event/activity organisers are responsible for keeping records of all cash collected and spent at the events. Cash must be lodged to the bank account as soon as possible after the event with details recorded (in spreadsheet or table format) of the number of attendees at the event, the amount collected and expenditure (if any) in cash at the event. The bank statement will show only the nett amount of cash lodged.

Templates

- **Cash Received in the Post** - If cash is received in the post, the person opening the mail item must bring this to the immediate attention of the Treasurer/Chairperson to verify the amount received. It should then be lodged to the bank account in the normal way.

7. Salaries

All changes to staff salaries (including annual increments and cost of living increases) will be approved by the Committee, recorded in the minutes of the Committee meeting and staff notified in writing by the Chairperson.

8. Errors

In the event of an error (which may include mistakes with invoices, direct debits, payslips, salaries, cheques, online transactions) coming to light staff or the Treasurer should:

- notify the Treasurer/Chairperson that an error has occurred;
- rectify the error as soon as possible;
- attach documentary evidence of how the error occurred and any financial implications thereof.

Expenditure Template – Excel Sheet

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
	Month	Payee	Payment Method	Amount	Salaries	Travel	Expenses	BankChg	Phone	H+L+W	Premises	Stationery	Bank
1	Apr-20	HMRC Tax and NI Month 12	Bank Transfer	1,250.00	1,250.00								
2		Salary Payments April	Bank Transfer	3,950.00	3,950.00								
3		JB Window Cleaning	Cheque No	14.00							14.00		
4		British Telecom	Direct Debit	250.00					250.00				
5		Bank Charges	Bank Charge	1.20				1.20					
6				5,465.20	5,200.00	-	-	1.20	250.00	-	14.00	-	5,465.20
7													
8	May-20	HMRC Tax and NI Month 1	Bank Transfer	1,250.00	1,250.00								
9		Salary Payments May	Bank Transfer	4,000.00	4,000.00								
10		Staff Travel and Expenses	Cheque No	48.00		22.00	26.00						
11		JB Window Cleaning	Cheque No	14.00							14.00		
12		Phoenix Gas	Direct Debit	180.00						180.00			
13				5,492.00	5,250.00	22.00	26.00	-	-	180.00	14.00	-	5,492.00
14													
15													
16	Jun-20	HMRC Tax and NI Month 2	Bank Transfer	1,250.00	1,250.00								
17		Salary Payments Jun	Bank Transfer	3,950.00	3,950.00								
18		JB Window Cleaning	Cheque No	14.00							14.00		
19		Petty Cash	Cheque No	82.00			82.00						
20		NI Electricity	Direct Debit	180.00						180.00			
21		Stationery Supplier	Cheque No	80.22								80.22	
22				5,556.22	5,200.00	-	82.00	-	-	180.00	14.00	80.22	5,556.22
23													
24				16,513.42	15,650.00	22.00	108.00	1.20	250.00	360.00	42.00	80.22	16,513.42
25													
26													
27													
28		(copy rows above for other months)											

Templates

Income Template – Excel Sheet

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
1	Date	Details	Amount		Lottery Grant	Funder 1	Grant 1	Bank Int	Other	Bank Total											
26	Sep-20	Grant 1	1,500.00				1,500.00														
27		Donation Mr Smith (Cheque)	100.00						100.00												
28		Bank Interest	2.90					2.90													
29		Month Total	1,602.90																		
30																					
31	Oct-20	Grant 1	1,500.00				1,500.00														
32		Cash Lodgement - Youth Group (10-Oct)	36.00						36.00												
33		Bank Interest	2.50					2.50													
34		Month Total	1,538.50																		
35																					
36	Nov-20	Grant 1	1,500.00				1,500.00														
37		Bank Interest	2.50					2.50													
38		Month Total	1,502.50																		
39																					
40	Dec-20	Grant 1	1,500.00				1,500.00														
41		Bank Interest	2.50					2.50													
42		Month Total	1,502.50																		
43																					
44	Jan-21	Bank Interest	2.50					2.50													
45																					
46																					
47	Feb-21	Grant 1	1,500.00				1,500.00														
48		Donation Mr White (Cheque)	50.00						50.00												
49		Bank Interest	2.90					2.90													
50		Month Total	1,552.90																		
51																					
52	Mar-21	Bank Interest	2.50					2.50													
53																					
54			23,015.70		10,000.00	3,750.00	9,000.00	31.70	234.00	23,015.70											
55																					
56		Total Income = Credits to Bank	23,015.70																		
57																					

Templates

Monthly Income and Expenditure Record – Template

Income received this month	Amount £
From	
Total income this month	
Expenditure this month	
Petty Cash	
Salaries etc	
Travel Expenses	
Volunteer Expenses	
Rent	
Heat and Light	
Insurance	
Total expenditure this month	
Income minus expenditure this month	£
Total funds (in bank and pretty cash) at start of month	£
Total funds (in bank and pretty cash) at end of month	£

Prepared by _____

Signed _____ Date _____

Templates

Petty Cash Log Sheet

DATE	DETAIL	CASH IN	CASH OUT	BALANCE

Appendix 1 - Group Governance Policies

This appendix lists governance policies which community groups may need to have. Not all groups will need all of the policies—so, for example, if your group does not work with children and young people then it may not need a safeguarding policy and if it does not employ staff it will not need policies on recruitment.

Committee Procedures	See NICVA's guidance on committee procedures and responsibilities. Dedicated website – https://www.diycommitteeguide.org/ with a wide range of resources on good governance. Volunteer Now's good governance health check.
Managing and Recruiting Volunteers	See Volunteer Now's guidance on involving volunteers and an information sheet recruitment plan for volunteers.
Financial Procedures	A sample template is included in the Toolkit on page 18.
Recruitment and Staff Policies	NICVA has a wide range of HR policies and resources which community groups can adapt for their own use.
Equal Opportunities Policy	See NICVA's Equal Opportunities Policy for guidance.
Conflicts of Interest	See a guide from NICVA on avoiding conflicts of interests which includes a sample policy.
Fraud Policy	NCVO has some general guidance on fraud . The Fraud Advisory Panel has a range of model fraud policy statements including one suitable for voluntary sector organisations.
Safeguarding Policy	The NSPCC has a wide range of resources on writing safeguarding policies and procedures which you can use if your group works with children and young people.
Working with Vulnerable People	Volunteer Now has a wide range of resources which provide guidance on Keeping Adults Safe.
Risk Management	See NICVA's wide range of guidance, publications and webinars on Managing Risk
Reserves Management	See the Charity Commission's guidance on developing a reserves policy. NICVA has a useful webinar on creating and reviewing a reserves policy.
Privacy and Data Protection	NICVA developed a Data Protection Toolkit to help community groups meet the requirements of the GDPR.
Health and Safety Policy	A documented Health and Safety Policy is a legal requirement if your group employs five or more people. The Health and Safety Executive NI has a wide range of guidance on health and safety including a template for a health and safety policy which groups can adapt for their own use.

Appendix 2 – Toolkit References and Web Addresses

The International Association for Community Development	https://www.iacdglobal.org/
A Guide to Using the Community Development National Occupational Standards	https://www.iacdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/A-Guide-to-Using-the-CD-NOS.pdf
The Community Development Challenge	https://www.bl.uk/collection-items/community-development-challenge
RCN's Strategic Framework for Community Development for NI	http://www.ruralcommunitynetwork.org/DataEditorUploads/S_Framework_for_CD.pdf
Community Development Alliance Scotland	https://www.communitydevelopmentalliancescotland.org/
United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/
Information on What the Government is doing (on SDGs)	https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/united-nations-sustainable-development-goals
Engagement Methods	https://www.communityplaces.info/sites/default/files/Community%20Places%20-%20Guide%20to%20Engagement%20Methods%20%282019%29.pdf
Participatory Budgeting	http://www.participatorybudgetingworks.org/
Derry City and Strabane Council's Community Engagement Strategy	http://meetings.derrycityandstrabanedistrict.com/documents/s32586/SGP%20Update%20Appendix%20I.pdf
Volunteer Now Guidance	https://www.volunteernow.co.uk/organisations/involving-volunteers/ https://www.volunteernow.co.uk/app/uploads/2019/10/Recruitment-Plan-for-Volunteers-Information-Sheet.pdf
Charity Commission - Starting a New Charity	https://www.charitycommissionni.org.uk/media/1270/20190531-eg039-starting-a-new-charity-v30.pdf

Appendix 2 – Toolkit References and Web Addresses

Charity Commission – Models of Constitutions	https://www.charitycommissionni.org.uk/start-up-a-charity/model-governing-documents/
NICVA Guide to Committee Procedures	https://www.nicva.org/resource/committee-procedures
NICVA Governance Advice and Support	https://www.nicva.org/services/governance-and-charity-advice
Supporting Communities Model Template for Constitution	https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55c8a600e4b0f16d8cbf82b1/t/5eaaf011dc8b890a76ad6b01/1588260882778/How+to+Template+Constitution+March+2020.pdf
Ards and North Down and Community Networks Community Development Toolkit	https://www.ardsandnorthdown.gov.uk/downloads/Community_Development_Toolkit_online.pdf
Governance Health Checklist	https://www.volunteernow.co.uk/app/uploads/2019/03/Code-of-Good-Governance-Health-Check.pdf
Running Effective Meetings	https://www.diycommitteeguide.org/resource/running-effective-meetings
Committee Procedures	https://www.nicva.org/resource/committee-procedures
Derry City and Strabane Council Guide to Financial (and other) Jargon	https://www.idoxopen4community.co.uk/derrystabane_com/Page?SP=Jargon_Community
Top Tips for Funding Applications	https://www.nicva.org/resource/writing-successful-funding-applications
NICVA – Information on Funding Sources	https://www.nicva.org/services/fundraising
Supporting Communities Funding Bulletin	https://supportingcommunities.org/funding-bulletin

Appendix 2 – Toolkit References and Web Addresses

Supporting Communities Financial Administration and Fundraising Training	https://supportingcommunities.org/financial-management
Supporting Communities Day to Day Financial Management Guidance	https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55c8a600e4b0f16d8cbf82b1/t/5eeccc667b14bd0e80dbd833/1592577130534/Day+to+day+financial+management.pdf
Lottery Guidance on Outcomes	https://bigblogwales.org.uk/2016/02/18/a-beginners-guide-to-project-outcomes/
Lottery Guidance on Project Planning	https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20171011161001tf_/https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/funding/funding-guidance/applying-for-funding/aims-and-outcomes/help-with-aims-and-outcomes
Lottery Guidance on Measuring Progress and Success	https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/people-and-places-medium-grants/guidance-on-tracking-progress
Planning and Working Together	https://www.communityplaces.info/sites/default/files/Planning%20and%20Working%20Together%20Belfast%20City%20Council%20Toolkit.pdf
CCEA Active Citizenship Resources	https://ccea.org.uk/learning-resources/active-citizenship
CCEA What is Lawfulness	https://ccea.org.uk/learning-resources/active-citizenship/what-lawfulness
Culture of Lawfulness	https://www.usip.org/guiding-principles-stabilization-and-reconstruction-the-web-version/rule-law/culture-lawfulness

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