



The Freshwater Foundation – Small Group Start-up Guide

Mark Robbins
info@freshwaterfoundation.org.uk

Contents

1. Introduction	2
2. Step 1 – The Initial Idea	5
3. Step 2 – Forming the Group	7
4. Step 3 – Making Things Happen	11
5. Step 4 – Involving the Group.....	19
6. Step 5 – Finding Funds	23
7. Step 6 – Getting Yourself Known.....	29
8. Step 7 – Building Staying Power & Moving On.....	32
9. Appendices.....	35

1. Introduction

Taking the Plunge

This guide aims to give a simple step-by-step approach to setting up a small community group. If you feel that there is anything that you want to do which would benefit others in your local area, then this will get you going.

This can be intimidating. You have an idea; how is just one person going to turn that into something that makes an actual difference in the big wide world - and bring along others with you? You are doing something important here, reaching out beyond your own life and having a positive impact on the world around you, and it is a route that can appear bewildering, complicated and fraught with the possibility of failure.

It is however taking the initial plunge that can be the most difficult step; as you'll see from this guide, once you've started, the process can be quite straightforward. We break the job down into a set of simple steps which anybody with persistence, patience and a methodical approach can follow successfully. Also included is a comprehensive set of templates from which to produce any necessary documentation and a Resource Pack, with sample policies, spreadsheets, lists of contacts and other useful resources. We at The Freshwater Foundation are also here to support you through this process, and having completed the first steps successfully, you may well qualify for one of our small grants, worth up to £500.

Don't be put off by the length of the document. You only need to go through it one step at a time, in your own time. Don't move on until you're happy that you've completed the current step successfully - and some steps will not be relevant to you.

Most importantly, always remember the significance of what you are doing; you are becoming a *social entrepreneur*, somebody who is making a real impact on their community. The achievements may take time and there will be frustrations, but as anybody who has been down this road will tell you, the sense of satisfaction you'll gain from bringing about real benefit through community action is enormous.

Simple Steps

Here are the steps in brief - we look in more detail at them in the rest of the guide:

✓ Step 1 – The Initial Idea

Here you decide what the group exists to do. We look at the various types of local groups that people set up, how to develop your aims and how to generate interest in them in your local community.

✓ Step 2 – Forming the Group

The big step here is producing a constitution, a document specifying the *Whys* and *Hows* of the group. This sounds rather grand and complicated, but is in fact straightforward. The *Hows* are generally much the same for all groups, so you can use our off the peg constitution and just fill in the *Whys*, the aims you decided at Step 1. Once you've taken a few more straightforward administrative steps, you call your initial meeting, agree on the constitution and a few other basic matters and there you are – a fully constituted group, legally recognized as such. You're ready for work.

✓ Step 3 – Making Things Happen

Your activity may be something that you're already doing – so you can just keep going. It's more likely however that what you have in mind will need some kind of planning, and this may be something that you're not familiar with.

This guide will help you with an approach to planning that is simple yet of proved effectiveness. It may be that you that you just need to plan one or a series of activities – you'll need to follow our project planning approach if this is the case. If, however what you have in mind is a series of activities all linked together to reach an overall goal, then our simple strategic planning advice is what you'll need to follow. This however might be something that you'll only consider later after having found your feet during the simpler project planning phase.

You'll also need to think about Risks and also possibly about Feedback. Once again, we provide simple approaches to all these topics, supported by templates and examples to help you produce any necessary documents.

✓ Step 4 – Involving the Group

For all members of the group to be involved, you'll have to hold meetings. These will report on activities and allow members to be involved in key decisions and if done well, drive your activities and projects forward with greatly added impetus. For the day-to-day activities, this will involve Management Committee meetings, while more fundamental decisions will be taken at General Meetings.

We outline the basics of holding successful meetings and look at the specific purposes of the two types of meeting.

✓ Step 5 – Finding Funds

This can also seem like an intimidating step; how do you go about asking for free money?

If however you've followed the previous steps successfully and have a well-constituted group with credible aims, and well-planned activities that you've got backing for from within the local community – then that is more than half the battle. Show all this clearly (and we show you how) and funders will be at least be ready to give you a sympathetic hearing.

We also show you how to start simply, generating funds from amongst friends, families and immediate contacts (and how to use simple crowd-funding tools to help you). The sums involved may be small, but they are evidence that your aims have broad support – and can take you to the next stage. If local businesses, councils and independent funders can see community backing, however modest, then they are far more likely to reach into their own pockets. We give you some simple tips as to how to approach these people and a comprehensive list of suitable independent funders.

✓ Step 6 – Getting Yourself Known

You may well want to publicise yourself. You may be holding events, you may need to recruit more people or you may want to get recognition for your achievements. Publicity is especially important as a way of staying connected to your community.

We give basic tips on how to get yourself known in the wider world, through the local media, social networking and key local organisations such as the council.

✓ Step 7 – Building Staying Power & Moving On

So now you've set up a successful group. It is effectively doing what it was set up for, it is well-funded and well-known – what could the future hold?

On the basis of such success, it would be only natural to think about how to develop your group, or at least how to make it sustainable into the future. Here we look briefly at some of the next steps you would need to think about going forward. The change will be difficult – but the rewards are very great.

Acknowledgements

While this guide is partly based on our own increasingly broad knowledge of small groups, its strength primarily derives from the great experience and expertise of our partners and former applicants. Our broad range of activities mean that we sit in the middle of a large network of local charities and community groups, councils, umbrella groups and other funders and support groups. As you'll see from what follows, we draw freely on their often excellent sources and would strongly recommend that you explore the references given to them.

We would especially like to thank Hounslow Council, Ealing Council, the Church of England's social outreach arm Near Neighbours, the crowd funder Spacehive, Hounslow's Let's Go and Learn Outside (<https://lgoal.org/>), Ealing's Youth Engagement Programme (<https://www.yepealing.org/>) and the Children's Book Project (<https://childrensbookproject.co.uk/>). We have either drawn on many of their materials or have developed our own approaches in conjunction with them.

Other important sources of information and inspiration include Ealing & Hounslow CVS, the NCVO, the Small Charities Coalition, New Philanthropy Capital and Social Investment Business.

Our grateful thanks to all of them and to all the other groups that continue to inform and inspire our efforts.

2. Step 1 – The Initial Idea

Deciding What the Group is For

Your first job is to decide what it is you want to do.

Typically, local groups are formed for a variety of different reasons:

- You may want to promote a particular leisure activity, like walking or reading.
- You may want to improve some aspect of your local community – turning some waste ground into a garden or recreation area for example.
- You may want to organise local social events or otherwise build a stronger local sense of community.
- You may want to have a stronger voice with official bodies like the council.
- You may want to start a campaign either for something like better local facilities, or against something like fly-tipping or antisocial behavior.
- You may want to bring together people who want action on broader issues like the environment or inclusion.

Get clear in your own mind what it is you want the group to do. It may be just one of these types – it may be a combination. Whatever you decide, make sure you can express it simply; these will be the Aims that you specify in your constitution and more importantly, you will only be able to bring other people on board if you can explain to them in a clear and straightforward manner what it is you want to achieve.

However simple your aim is, it is still worth thinking about other aims that it could involve. You may just want to develop a plot of ground for gardening and recreation, but it could involve broader benefits:

- Bringing together the community
- Increasing health and well-being
- Decreasing problems in a particular target group (isolation amongst older people, anti-social behavior in the young)

You might also want to think at this stage how you might develop as a group:

- Working in partnership with similar groups
- Spreading the idea throughout the area
- Broaden the scope of your activities (e.g. exercise classes, community events)
- Open up the possibility of a relationship with the local council; applying for resources, having input into policy, lobbying for the sector etc.

You may of course want to remain modest in your aims, and of course it is always sensible to start small, but it is worth thinking about the *broader impact* of your activities and the *scope for development*, even at this early stage. Local councils, funders and other possible important local partners will always look more sympathetically at efforts that have a broader social impact. And some sense of ambition and planning are similarly welcome to them. Last but not least, these broader aims will increase the number of people in the community sympathetic to what you're doing.

Once you've decided what your key and any other associated aims are, document them in clear, straightforward English. These are at the very heart of everything you are aiming to do.

Getting Other People on Board

You've now got clear in your own mind what it is you want to do. Now's the time to go out and about and get the support from within your local community.

This can be a part of the process that puts a lot of people off, not because it is particularly complicated, but it can take a pretty thick skin to take the rejection that you will frequently experience. Just remember that everybody in this position goes through this and that as long as you give yourself the time (and it can take quite a lot of time) and your idea is sound, you will succeed. Also remember what we said at the beginning, that you are trying to do something big here. When disappointments and frustrations start to crowd in, always remember the rewards in store when you finally succeed.

What you are initially looking for is a small group of people (generally a minimum of six) who are willing to come to an initial meeting to agree to the setting up of the group. They will need to agree with the aims, and to get involved in the basic activities of the group, but not necessarily to have any specific further responsibilities (stress this point – people are often reluctant to join anything where they end up having to do extra work). From among the people you will however need to find three (you can include yourself) who are willing to act as officers of the group (which we look at in more detail in the next step).

Getting in touch with people needn't be as intimidating as it seems – there are plenty of intermediaries who can help you out (suggestions on how to contact some of them can be found in Appendix I):

- Local Councillors
- Churches\other faith-based organisations
- Police Community Support teams
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Residents Associations (Councillors will often know about these)
- Council Depts and the local CVS
- Community Centres
- Youth Groups, Play Groups, Sports Groups

Approach these people, and where relevant ask them either to let their members/contacts know about your idea and ask them to contact you, or to find out if they know anybody who might be interested in your idea that they can put you in touch with. Even if they don't know such people, they might know of others who would – the chain of people you sometimes need to go through can get quite long! If you're feeling brave and the organisation brings together people at specific times, you might also ask if you can go and talk to them about your idea.

Of course, there is always the old-fashioned shoe-leather approach; knocking on doors and approaching people in shopping centres and the like. This can be frightening for the inexperienced, but you can make it easier for yourself by asking them about their opinion of the issue or activity you're interested in rather than immediately pitching in with your views and proposals. If people feel that they are having other people's ideas imposed on them, then hostility and rejection is likely. Ask them what *they* think and they'll be readier to talk – you can then pursue your ideas with those whose views are close to your own or who also think the issue or activity is important.

3. Step 2 – Forming the Group

Why Constitute?

You now know what it is you want to do and you've got people behind it. Next comes the formal process of constituting yourself as a group.

This will not be necessary in all cases – if it's just a few of you pursuing a simple activity with little contact with anybody else, then you can just remain as an informal association.

If however you are going to want to:

- Open a bank account
- Raise funds
- Have dealings with official bodies
- Enter into any kind of formal arrangement of agreement with other groups or individuals

then you will need to constitute yourself. As we'll see, even if none of these apply, there are still advantages to constituting yourself; formal arrangements and agreements can help maintain harmony and purpose within a group – it can focus people's efforts and make disputes (an inevitable feature of even the friendliest of associations) easier to resolve.

And it is not a particularly complicated step. People often confuse *constituting* a group with *incorporating* one. Incorporation is complex and can leave you with burdensome obligations for the future; it involves registering yourself with a regulator (e.g. Companies House, The Charity Commission), so you have to meet their often demanding initial requirements and then you continue to be bound by their rules and reporting procedures.

Constituting, as we will see, is just the simple process of making formal the agreement about aims that was conducted in an informal way in Step 1. There will be other optional steps to take which we cover, but they are all relatively simple – and worth doing for the benefits they bring. You also have on-going duties, as an incorporated group would, but these are generally much lighter and more within your power. We talk about these in Step 4.

The overall process is this:

- Decide a name for the group
- You write a constitution (document the aims created at Step 1 – we provide a template).
- Select a Management Committee and its officers.
- Create a Code of Conduct (optional but strongly recommended – we provide a template).
- Make financial arrangements; create a bank account and optionally take out public liability insurance.
- (Optionally) create any necessary policies from our templates.
- Hold an initial meeting to agree all of the above.

Once completed, you are now formally constituted.

The Steps Towards Formation

- Your Name

Not a complex step, but obviously worth spending some time over to make sure it reflects what you are all about.

- Your Constitution

You'll find a basic template for your constitution in Appendix II and most of it can be left as is; the provisions just cover the basic ways in which you will operate, and these are generally the same for all groups. There is just one section you need to fill in, the 'Aims' – the rest can be left as is, or possibly modified slightly at need.

- ✓ Aims

Here is where you write in a succinct way what you decided were your Aims in Step 1. Don't worry if you think you may need to amend or delete them later – that can be done at a general meeting, as we explain later in Step 4.

- ✓ Powers

These are just the general activities that you need to allow yourself to be able to pursue your aims. You may want to add some more powers, but in general they should be specified as broadly as possible.

- ✓ Other Sections

You'll just need to fill in the details shown in red. What some of the provisions involve is dealt with in more detail in Step 4, Involving the Group.

- The Management Committee

These are the small group of people who will be running the group. Their formal powers are given in the constitution, but their core task is to make sure that the group is fulfilling its aims and taking action if it is not doing so. This will mean approving any plans for the future and reviewing the activities of the group (see Step 4).

They will also review the aims and any other part of the constitution, decide on any changes that need making and approve those changes. Any disciplinary action, such as removing members and people on the Management Committee will also fall to them.

Taken together, these activities are known as *Governance*, which in larger groups can be a role of considerable importance and complexity. At the start however, you can just stick to these basic activities – they will be enough to ensure the groups operates effectively.

The committee can start small, but should include at least 3 people, who will be the officers of the group. Specific duties are detailed in the constitution, but in sum they are:

- ✓ *The Chair*: chair meetings and act as a public figurehead

- ✓ *The Secretary*: take care of the formal business of meetings and basic administration

- ✓ *The Treasurer*: look after the financial business of the group

- The Code of Conduct

It is strongly recommended that you adopt one of these, and ensure that there is someone (often the Secretary) who ensures that it is strictly adhered to. However much unanimity exists within a group, there will always be disagreements and the Code of Conduct ensures that these are managed properly and that differences don't prevent the proper functioning of the group.

In essence, it ensures that the members only concern is the pursuit of the groups aims, treat each other with respect and tolerance at all times and always act professionally.

When a member joins, they should always be asked to sign a copy of the code to signal their agreement to be bound by it, which should then be filed by the Secretary.

A suggested template is given in Appendix III.

- Financial Arrangements

These arrangements will probably be made by the Treasurer once you have had your initial meeting.

- ✓ A Bank Account

Strongly recommended; a bank account for the group engenders trust in your financial probity, makes your money easier to manage and is essential if you want any sort of formal funding.

Most banks do not offer accounts specifically for small unincorporated groups, but two that do are:

- Lloyds Treasurer Account for Clubs, Societies & Associations: Can all be done online and is the easiest and quickest to set up.

https://www.lloydsbank.com/business/business-accounts/specialist-accounts/treasurers-account.html?WT.ac=lloyds-bb_and_sme-business_accounts-community-tile-treasurer-FOM

- Metro Bank Community Current Account: a longer application process and may involve a visit to a branch.

<https://www.metrobankonline.co.uk/business/current-accounts/products/community-current-account/>

- ✓ Public Liability Insurance

If your activities involve any interaction with the public, then you will need to take out public liability insurance. Look for 'Insurance for Community Groups' via Google for insurers – quotes should be around £100 or less.

- Policies

Policies can seem overly bureaucratic and unnecessary, and indeed all they often amount to is a commitment to act with common sense and common decency. Indeed, if your members behave in this way, they'll certainly stay within the bounds of most policies almost all of the time. They can however have their uses and most importantly, councils, funders and other potential partners will often insist on you having them.

Of the following policies, the first three are probably going to be needed in all cases – the remaining two will only be adopted in special cases, as explained below. There are templates for all of them in the Resource Pack, except the last one discussed.

- ✓ If your activities involve a risk of physical harm (e.g. the use of certain gardening tools), then you'll need a Health & Safety policy.
- ✓ You'll also have volunteers, so you'll also need a volunteer management policy. An excellent guide to volunteer management can also be found at this GLA site: <http://www.getoutgetactive.co.uk/volunteer-management-toolkit>
- ✓ It is also advisable to have an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy.
- ✓ If you store information about the general public, then you'll need a Data Protection policy (you'll need to modify both the Privacy and Data Protection Policy documents). This something for later as the templates provided require more modification work, and you needn't adopt a policy on this until you actually start to store data. In general, as a small group, you would want to avoid keeping details of the general public unless absolutely necessary to your activities.
- ✓ If your activities involve children or vulnerable young people and adults, then you will need a Safeguarding policy. It is likely that you will need to tailor this to your particular circumstances, so we don't include a template. Indeed, you will need to think very carefully about setting up such a group as the law is (rightly) very sensitive in this area. At the very least, specialist advice should be sought, and we would recommend that full training by all concerned should be sought before setting up a group where safeguarding is needed.

- **Your Initial Meeting**

Having completed all the above steps, you will now call a General Meeting (see Step 4) to agree on all of the above (Constitution, Group Officers, Code of Conduct, Policies).

All decisions will be minuted and the minutes and the relevant documents will be kept safely and securely by the Secretary (who will make them available for inspection by members of the group on demand).

(N.B. If you're looking to set up a Residents Association, Ealing Council have some useful advice at <https://www.dosomethinggood.org.uk/node/59>)

You're now ready for action!

4. Step 3 – Making Things Happen

The Need for Planning

Even with activities that are simple and that you are familiar with, planning can be an important step. If it involves finance, you'll have to specify where the money is coming from, if it involves others then you'll need to coordinate people – most importantly perhaps, you'll need say how it fits in with the aims of your group. This can all be very briefly expressed, and it will pay great dividends if only because funders and partners are always impressed when they see evidence of effective planning. In fact, without some sort of plan, funders are very unlikely to support you – they need to have some kind of assurance that their money will not be wasted and also need to be assured that what you're doing fulfils the aims of the group.

If you are just aiming at embarking on a series of unconnected activities, then you can confine yourself to the simpler process of *project planning*, producing a separate plan for each activity. If however your activities are connected, aiming over the medium to long term at a particular goal, then you'll need to consider producing a *strategic plan*. This can be a complex process, but we produce here a highly simplified yet tried and tested method suitable for even the smallest group. If you're new to planning, it may be wise to confine yourself to project planning at the start, and only start thinking strategically once you've found your feet with the simpler process.

Planning will always involve a consideration of *risk* (what they are and how you intend to mitigate them) and if it involves people who will directly benefit from it, some sort of *feedback*, so that you and the Management Committee can assess if the benefits have been achieved. This will happen at your regular meetings, which we discuss in the next step, Involving the Group. We have a look at both risk and feedback at the end of this step.

Key Planning Principles

At all times during the planning process, keep these key principles in mind:

- Involve the group as much as possible at all times. Plans that are imposed cause resentment – those where people are involved in their creation can bond a group together and create a sense of shared ownership and responsibility.
- Appoint the right people. Although all the group will be involved as much as possible, the Project Leader will be directing all efforts and will take ultimate responsibility for the outcome of the project. Choose someone who is a good organiser and can take responsibility.
- The process below is fundamentally very simple. It just involves common sense, cooperation and attention to detail, with some guidance from the outside
- Things will go wrong! This always happens, especially to the novice. Do not worry! The steps below are designed to spot problems early and deal with them in an effective and timely way.

Creating a Project Plan

Planning a project will involve all, or at least most of the following steps (see Appendix IV for an outline Project Plan and also the Project Plan example in the Resource Pack):

- Nature & Aim of the Project

You may well have in mind what you want to do, but you need to be clear how it fits in with the overall aims of your group (these should be included in this section). It is also wise at this point to canvass the opinion of others; you've brought together a

group of like-minded people – now's the time to make use of them! If there are to be beneficiaries, then try and canvass their opinion; after all, if they're not interested, what would be the point of the project? Their views are also important at the next step. A community planning event might well be useful here; bring potential beneficiaries and other stakeholders together, brainstorm ideas, write them up and distribute for further feedback (see Step 5 below, *A Simple Fundraising Strategy*, Group Events for advice on running events).

If you are a new group or this is a new departure for you, you might want to consider starting with a pilot project to gain experience.

- **Project Need**

Here you consider why the project is needed.

How will it benefit your local neighbourhood? Think about the broader aims you may have established when setting up your overall aims (see Step 1). Also consider the views of the beneficiaries you have just canvassed – funders are very keen to see that the community is behind what you are doing.

Need might also have emerged from previous projects (this is very common) and so is strong evidence to back up your case.

You can score big at this point if you also produce official statistics as evidence of need. Is there a particularly high proportion of older people in your area? If your project could help reduce the problems of isolation that they often face, then that strengthens your case. Are you in a particularly deprived area? Any project that opens up opportunities or improves skills is therefore going to be particularly needed there. You'll generally be looking for these statistics either from census data (http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/local_characteristics) or the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (<http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>) and digging through these can be a laborious process. However, here at The Freshwater Foundation we have automated the process of producing these statistics, so get in touch and let us know which area you are interested in and we can produce them for you in an accessible format.

Broader research can also be helpful if you have the time. Reports and papers on your area of activity will be widely available on the web (see Near Neighbours Toolkit – Research & Monitoring pp.2-4 for further research ideas: <https://www.near-neighbours.org.uk/resources>)

You will also need to establish at this point why you are the best-placed (or at least a well-placed) group to meet this need. This will be especially important if you are applying for funds.

- **The Operational Plan**

Here you specify the detail of the plan; what activities will it involve, what is it going to produce (*Outputs*), how much is it going to cost, what people are going to be required and what will they do and so on – see the template in Appendix IV for more details.

This is where the donkey work of the planning takes place, so be prepared to commit the time and aim to be detailed and methodical. Of course, for simpler projects, not all parts of the operational plan will need to be completed (you may well not have any transport needs, insurance requirements or partners for example) – by all means, keep the plan as straightforward as possible. Don't forget to consult widely within the group at this stage so as to draw on the full expertise of all your members.

Having supplied the detail, you can then sum it all up in the Project Overview section.

- **Impact**

This is where you specify how you are going to assess if your aims have been met.

What are the overall results of your activities (*Outcomes* – e.g. happier residents, increased interest in your activity, greater council involvement – these should relate to your project aims)? Once again, consult widely within the group and amongst those that will benefit from the project about what it is you want to achieve.

How are you going to measure whether they have come about – have you had the *Impact* you wanted (use feedback forms, interviews etc.)? Are there any specific targets you want to reach (numbers of people involved, area of land covered etc.)? Who is going to find out and when will they do it? (See *Feedback & Benefits Assessment* later in this step)

How you plan to measure Impact will perhaps be the part of the plan that will be most important to funders – are they going to be able to see if their money has been put to effective use? Any future funding bid will also be very significantly enhanced by showing that you have previously achieved your aims and is also the very best publicity that you can get. Locals will want to join you and official bodies will be keen to support you if you show that you can achieve what you set out to do. It is therefore very important to implement this part of the plan conscientiously – it is always easy to see though half-hearted, tokenistic attempts!

If your project is part of an overall strategy, this is where you will also specify how it has helped in its fulfilment.

- **Project Risks**

We look in more detail at this at the end of this step, but once you have established what the risks are and what you intend to do about them, go back to the Operational Plan step and add any activities that have emerged.

- **Monitoring**

Here you'll specify how you are going to report progress and make changes and how frequently you'll be doing it (see Project Report Form, Appendix XI).

Having established all of the above, document them using the template in Appendix IV.

The Project Lifecycle

These are the steps that you will commonly follow as you create and then implement your plan:

- i. **Appoint a Leader**
 - This may well be you or another member of the Management Committee. No previous experience needed – but choose a good systematic thinker willing to take responsibility.
- ii. **Consultation**
 - Discuss the project within the group and also potentially more broadly within the community (as described above in *Nature & Aim of the Project*).
- iii. **Write the First Draft**
 - Write the plan as described in the Creating a Project Plan section above.

- Consult with outside support where necessary.
- iv. **Management Committee Approval**
 - You will now present your plan to the Management Committee for approval and amendments.
 - The Management Committee needs to understand that at this stage it should give whoever is running the project the benefit of the doubt. There may well be risks involved, but as long as these have been considered and the plan is thorough and sensible, it should be given a chance. If a project turns out to be unfeasible, a good monitoring regime should spot this in plenty of time.
 - Make any amendments required and distribute it to all interested parties (the Management Committee, relevant partners and stakeholders, funders etc). If further changes ensue, you may need Management Committee approval.
- v. **Implement the Plan**
 - Here's where you set to work!
 - Keep track of what you're doing using the Project Tracker in Appendix V. Not only will this help you keep abreast of what's happening, it will be invaluable when you come to write up your Project Reports for the Management Committee.
- vi. **Monitoring**
 - At the intervals agreed, you'll be reporting the Management Committee, using the Project Report Form in Appendix XI. Compile this from your Project Tracker forms. Here is where you'll be dealing with major problems (give the leader latitude to deal with smaller ones on their own). The leader to consult the plan, see what needs to change and recommend a course of action to the board, who will discuss and amend/approve it. You'll also be discussing the overall progress of the project, any other problems and their suggested solution.
 - Make any required amendments to the plan and redistribute.
 - Go back to step v. and continue with the implementation. You'll go through this cycle until the project is complete, at which point you'll move on to the next step.
- vii. **Completing the Plan**
 - Write a brief evaluation of the project as outlined in the Project Plan (results of any feedback, lessons learned and overall conclusions). This will be useful when compiling any project report (funders generally want these).
- viii. **Celebrate Your Success!**

Once again, remember that no plan is ever completely implemented as was originally intended. On the one hand, problems will be encountered – yet on the other, new opportunities might well emerge. Be prepared to change the plan at suitable times (often after the monitoring meetings with the Management Committee); inflexibility always spells the death of a plan.

If you have a commonly pursued project in mind (local clean-up, street party, play street), then Ealing Council offer some useful toolkits at <https://www.dosomethinggood.org.uk/help-and-advice/toolkits-guides>. If you're holding an event, then Hounslow Council's excellent Community Toolkit has some good advice (https://www.hounslow.gov.uk/downloads/file/820/community_toolkit).

Strategic Planning

If you have any sort of long-term objective that will require a number of coordinated projects, or if such an objective emerges as the group develops, then you will need to produce a strategic plan. This is a document that will specify how over a longer time span (say 3-5 years) you will achieve this objective.

A strategic plan can be important not only because it gives you some control over your destiny, but also as a binding tool within the group. As you'll see from the steps below, creating a strategy is very consultative; you're talking to people a lot, getting their ideas as to what the group should be doing and asking them for input on your ideas. If done correctly, the whole process can really bring a group together, creating a sense of common ownership of your core aims and activities.

It will also impress funders and other key partners – and it will do more than this. It signals to these people that you are in charge and so makes you far less vulnerable to just following their lead – always a danger when a small group starts to partner up with bigger organisations.

Strategic Management can become a very complex topic, and if you grow, you'll need to develop your approach to meet the new challenges of more ambitious objectives, but here we just present a simplified version, suitable to a small group just starting out. We however also hint at the paths towards a more sophisticated approach.

a. Establish Possible Objectives

Consult with members, the Management Committee and the wider community to establish what the longer-term objectives of the group should be (this is where the broader aims you might have established at Step 1 can be important). So far, say, you might have just developed a single plot of land; might you now be looking to develop more plots, or get the broader community more involved in what you do, or use the land for a wider variety of activities?

In a more visionary way, you might want to start thinking about what needs to be done to bring about the broader changes you want to see. Your broad aim might be greater community cohesion; what activities would best bring this about? In the fulness of time if you were to develop, this process would turn into the production of a full *Theory of Change*, a rigorous examination of what activities could lead to the broader changes you're looking to produce (here at The Freshwater Foundation we can guide you on how to produce one of these).

In considering these objectives, it is wise to think about:

- ✓ What are the groups strengths and weaknesses? Some honest soul-searching required here!
- ✓ What resources within the group do you have? Could you realistically increase these?
- ✓ What is needed in the wider world? This is where you would consider extending the research activities you started with your project planning. Don't just look at the raw stats, find out what needs exist within your area of activity and how or if they are being met. This can be a big task, but useful places to start are the big charity umbrella organisations like the NCVO (<https://www.ncvo.org.uk/policy-and-research>), and your local council and CVS might also be able to help. Ask yourself, what needs are not being met that we could fulfil and also are there others already meeting these needs?
- ✓ In the jargon of strategic management, what you will have just done is conducted a simplified version of a *SWOT Analysis* (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities

Threats) and as you develop, you'll engage in this in a more sophisticated way (once again, we at The Freshwater Foundation can guide you on how to do this).

b. Decide on your Objectives

Now either you individually, or perhaps with assistance from a suitably qualified member of the Management Committee or someone from the outside with the right sort of expertise (we at The Freshwater Foundation can supply this), you will sift through the options that emerged above and decide with to pursue:

- ✓ Which one(s) are the most desirable? Think about the broader needs that emerged from your researches above.
- ✓ Which one(s) are the most feasible (think about your Strengths) or the least feasible (think about your Weaknesses)?
- ✓ With the resources available to you, which one(s) could you realistically achieve?
- ✓ Determine the risks involved with each objective (see Risk below).

c. Document your Decisions

You can use the sample template in Appendix VI.

i. What your Group Exists to do

In working towards an overall objective, you are now moving from being a simple community group to becoming more like a charity.

The difference between the two is not merely one of size, it is more importantly one of *scope*. Community groups generally exist to perform some specific activity. Charities on the other hand exist to fulfil some kind of *Vision* (sometimes expressed as a *Mission*), a broader social objective, of the sort you considered at Step 1 when looking at the wider effects of your activities. These are their Charitable Objects, the heart of every charity.

In acting strategically, you are now also likely to be working towards some sort of broader goal, and not only will outsiders want to see what it is, it too is the heart of your strategy, so you must document it here, under 'Mission'. What is the overall aim of your strategy?

Charitable objects must also have (by law) a 'Public Benefit', so it is wise for you to specify what that is too. What group within your community will your strategy benefit and how?

ii. Strategic Context

- ✓ Document your Strengths and Weaknesses
- ✓ Document the need that the strategy exists to meet, both locally and if possible in the wider world

iii. Objectives

Here you document which objectives you have chosen and why and in brief what they will involve:

- ✓ Explain why they are part of what you exist to do (from step i).
- ✓ Show that they play to your strengths and meet actual need (from step ii). Optionally discuss why they are better than other objectives suggested but rejected.
- ✓ What risks are associated with them? How will you mitigate them?
- ✓ Broadly, what activities will be involved, what resources will be needed (people, costs) and what are the timescales? In effect, this will be a summary project plan, to be expanded later when you come to implement the strategy.

- ✓ How will they link to other objectives?
- ✓ Explain what beneficial Impact they will have and how will you measure this?
Are there any specific targets you want to reach?

iv. Conclusion

Summarise the objectives, why you are pursuing them and how they fit together to meet your overall Mission. What are the overall risks and how will you meet those?

d. Seek Approval

The provisional plan now needs the input and approval of the group.

- ✓ Go back to the people inside and outside the group to 'sell' the plan.
- ✓ Modify it in the light of agreed changes.
- ✓ Seek final approval from the Management Committee, generally at a specially convened meeting (see Step 5 below).

e. Implement the Plan

- ✓ In general, you will now implement the plan as a series of projects (see Project Planning above).
- ✓ At your Management Committee meetings, you will now not only discuss project progress, but also strategic progress as well (see Step 4 below).

Risk

There are three stages to dealing with Risk:

- **Risk Identification:** What risks do you face? These will not only be obvious *physical* risks associated with particular activities (e.g. the use of power tools during a gardening project), but also *process* risks associated with the completion of plans and the running the group (e.g. delays, resources or skills not being available). During the project planning stage, you'll be considering both types – during strategic planning, generally only the latter.
- **Risk Estimation:** What degree of danger is posed? Here you'd think of how likely the risk was and also what impact it would have on the group and its activities. If it were likely, but its impact would be light, it would demand some attention, but only moderate measures; if it were not too likely but its impact heavy, then you'd want to take more serious precautions. Once considered, categorise the risks as Low, Medium or High.
- **Risk Evaluation:** What measures ('Controls') are you going to take to deal with the risk? These will in general just be common sense measures (e.g. wear protective clothing, add some contingency times to projects). Calibrate the measures to the Risk Estimation level – the higher the risk, the more extensive the measures.

An important point about Risk is that its management should be thorough and sensible – but not overly cautious. The greatest risk of all to a group is not achieving what it sets out to do. Once measures to deal with risk start getting in the way of that, you may well be letting fear get the better of you. Remember, once a risk has been identified, a perfectly proper response is to just accept it. Starting up a group in the first place is fraught with risk, the risk of failure – yet you've accepted that risk and gone ahead anyway.

Document the risks using the template in Appendix VII.

Feedback & Benefits Assessment

If your activity involves users or beneficiaries of any kind, then you'll want to gather feedback from them. This is of key importance; funders, partners and the community you're serving will want to know whether what you're doing is working. Most importantly of all, you're going to want to know so you can improve what you're doing.

You will often gather this sort of information using some kind of questionnaire. There is a lot of advice available about this, but in essence it boils down to keeping things simple:

- ✓ Just include a few questions, only covering what it is most vital for you to know. Try to keep the form to one page.
- ✓ Some of the questions should be tick-box (strongly agree, agree, disagree) and some should be open-ended, allowing the respondent to express their own views.
- ✓ Use simple, non-technical language.
- ✓ Keep the design compact and uncluttered.

In Appendix VIII, we include an excellent example of a feedback form from the charity Let's Go Outside and Learn that puts these principles into practice very well (they were seeking feedback about an outdoor activity).

If you choose to get your feedback via interviews, the same sort of principles should be followed:

- ✓ Keep the interview fairly short.
- ✓ Start with the open-ended questions ('What did you most enjoy about the experience') and end with the specific yes/no questions.
- ✓ Allow interviewees to be critical.

As you grow, you may well want to move from this simple form of getting feedback and move into the more difficult, but significantly more productive world of *Impact Assessment*. Again, we at The Freshwater Foundation can help you with this.

5. Step 4 – Involving the Group

Meetings – Acting as a Group

However much your new body may be the brainchild of one person, or however much its work depends on one or a few people, it has come together as a group, a collection of people dedicated to the same idea, and the more the whole membership is involved, the more effective and dynamic the group will be.

Meetings are the principle way this happens. However much your previous experience may have put you off them as mere talking shops, or a waste of productive time, when conducted correctly, they allow all opinions and expertise from within the group to inform what it does – and at their best, they can become powerhouses of ideas and energy that drive the group forward.

Even if you do not have any projects or strategy to discuss and the ordinary activities of the group are ticking along nicely, you will still need to hold occasional meetings to allow all in the group to be involved in and informed about the key aspects of its business.

Meetings do this by performing a few key tasks:

- Inform the membership of what has been happening.
- Approve and advise on any plans.
- Review progress of plans and advise on problems.
- Deal with any general concerns or emergencies that arise (disciplinary matters, unexpected changes in the outside world etc.).
- Deal with any formal business of the group (changes to the constitution, changes to policy, review risks, hold an AGM, disillusion)

Meetings will be of two sorts:

- Ordinary Management Committee Meetings – in general for reporting and ad hoc advice, approving and reviewing plans, attended by just the committee.
- General Meetings – for more important business involving all members. The only general meeting that most groups hold is the annual one (the AGM), and any group, however little is happening in terms of development should consider holding one of these as a minimum way of keeping the overall membership involved in what it's doing.

Whichever type of meeting you hold, successful meetings always follow some core principles and it is these that we look at first.

Principles of Effective Meetings

- Before the Meeting
 - ✓ The Chair should prepare an agenda, which should be circulated to those attending in good time (generally a week before the meeting) to allow for comments and amendments. This should also indicate how long the meeting will last (see Appendix IX for an agenda template).
 - ✓ Circulate any necessary documentation to be discussed (plans, project reports etc.).
 - ✓ The Secretary should take along the minutes of the previous meeting, to be agreed by the attendees and signed by the Chair.
 - ✓ The Secretary should make all necessary arrangements; say, booking a venue, providing refreshments, publicising the event, making arrangements for guest speakers.

- ✓ The Chair should bring with them a copy of the Code of Conduct.
- During the Meeting
 - ✓ A good Chair is vital to an effective meeting. They will:
 - Ensure that everybody abides by the Code of Conduct. In essence, this means ensuring that attendees are polite and respectful to each other at all times.
 - Make sure that all are given a chance to speak.
 - Be impartial. Where there are disagreements, they will not take sides and will do their best to ensure that all sides of the debate are fairly represented – this might take the form of summing up the various positions to ensure that all are clear about the differing perspectives on offer.
 - Keep the meeting to the agenda, make sure during each item that attendees stay on topic and that the meeting keeps to time.
 - Cast the deciding vote in the case of tied decisions.
 - ✓ Attendees will:
 - Abide by the instructions of the Chair.
 - Respect the Code of Conduct.
 - Listen respectfully to all opinions, and give them all due consideration, especially when they differ from their own opinions.
 - Declare any outside interests they may have regarding any of the topics being discussed and excuse themselves from the discussions and vote on that topic.
 - Keep their own contributions clear, simple and concise.
 - Be truthful about bad news and involve all attendees in seeking solutions.
 - When making decisions, they should decide in the best interests of the group, and if they feel they have not been sufficiently informed to make the decision, they should say so.
 - ✓ The Secretary will:
 - Present the minutes of the previous meeting for the approval of the attendees and have them signed by the Chair.
 - Take brief minutes of the meeting. This should just record summaries of views expressed, decisions made and action points. (see Appendix X for a minute template).
 - Record those attending and apologies for absence.
- After the Meeting
 - ✓ Within a week of the meeting, the Secretary should type up the minutes of the meeting and circulate to the attendees for comments. Amendments should where possible be agreed via email and incorporated immediately; try to avoid leaving discussing amendments to the next meeting.
 - ✓ The Secretary should file the minutes of the previous meeting.
 - ✓ The Chair\Secretary should follow up on all the action points to ensure that they are performed in a timely fashion.

Management Committee Meetings

These will just involve the members of the committee and will take place as frequently as has been agreed in the constitution (see point 5). A quorum must be present for them to take place (see point 10).

- **Reporting on Projects**

If your group has planned any projects, then a large part of your Management Committee meetings will be dedicated to discussing these.

The person in charge of the project should therefore prepare a brief report of how the project is going (see Appendix XI), to be circulated by the Secretary to the committee before the meeting. This will only report the 'headline' details of the project (as indicated by the headings in the project report template), not the detail.

The report should be discussed, especially any problems that are being faced, where the advice of the committee should be sought.

A summary of the discussions should be minuted, the Project Report should be updated with agreed changes and filed with the plan, and the plans should be changed accordingly.

If a strategy is in place, then progress on that should also be discussed.

- **Seeking Approval for New Plans**

If a new project or strategic plan has been prepared, then this should also be circulated to the committee before the meeting.

It should be discussed, any changes should be agreed and approval sought.

- **Reviewing Policy**

At a suitable interval (say once a year), all policies and risks should be reviewed by the committee and changes agreed.

General Meetings

These are meetings that all members have the right to attend and in general where key decisions are made and the group's activities are formally reported on.

A general meeting can be called at any time by any member of the group when they feel that an important matter concerning everybody involved with the group needs to be discussed, but usually the only general meeting that will regularly be held is the AGM, which should take place once a year. This is the primary way in which the general membership of the group is kept involved, and holding one indicates to the outside world (and especially funders and other important partners) that you are a transparent, well-run organisation.

These meetings must cover a core set of topics (as detailed in the constitution):

- ✓ The Chair will deliver a summary of the group's activities over the year and plans for the future.
- ✓ The Treasurer will deliver a report summarizing the group's income and expenditure during the year.
- ✓ New officers and management committee members can be elected. Where there is a vacancy, any member can propose themselves as a member of the committee, but they must be seconded at the meeting by another attendee. If there is more than one person standing for the role, then there will be a vote (generally by a show of hands, but by secret ballot if this is felt to be necessary). If the Chair is standing down, then a Chair for the meeting will need to be elected as the first item of business.
- ✓ Any changes to the constitution should also be discussed, agreed and approved at AGMs (two-thirds majority of those present needed).

AGMs also have certain particular procedural rules:

- ✓ Notice should be 21 days (14 for any other General meeting)
- ✓ People should be made aware that they can self-nominate to stand as committee members or officers.
- ✓ Special rules apply for calling a quorum (see point 10 of the constitution).

Dissolving the Group

There may come a time when the group will need to be dissolved (say interest wanes or you have successfully completed what you set out to do).

In this case a General Meeting needs to be called. At this meeting:

- A two-thirds majority of those present is needed for the group to be dissolved.
- Any remaining funds should be passed on to a similar group or a charity or some other body specified in your constitution.

After the meeting, all relevant people will need to be told that the group has been dissolved.

6. Step 5 – Finding Funds

Fundraising – The Facts of Life

Fundraising need not be the intimidating prospect it might seem to be. If you develop a simple strategy, as we show below, you can start close to home and be raising funds very quickly.

Once you move on to the more time-consuming and uncertain business of approaching independent funders, you'll find that you've done all of the really hard work already. If you've conscientiously gone through the steps above and have a well-supported group with clear aims with well worked-out plans, documenting everything as you go, then funding applications are fairly straightforward. As we show, all you need to do to answer most questions on application forms is to express in a slightly different form aspects of the group that have already been thought-through and committed to paper. We show you the common questions you will be asked on these forms and how best to answer them from what you've already produced.

If however you haven't gone through those steps, or haven't documented their results adequately, not only will applying to funders be more difficult – you will very substantially reduce your chances of being successful. Funding sites often contain very off-putting warnings about how small a percentage of applicants actually get any money. The conscientious group needn't be too intimidated by this; although success is by no means guaranteed, your well-organised approach will shine through and those seemingly long odds will be very considerably reduced (and we show how to reduce them even further below). Not so the disorganised group; it is they who make up a substantial proportion of that large percentage of failures.

One last reassuring consideration. We at The Freshwater Foundation are especially keen to attract applications from small start-ups, and if you can show that you are the sort of group that's made a well-organised start to their efforts, then you will most certainly be eligible for our £500 small grants scheme. Even if you've not got to that stage, but want to, then we can support you through the early stages of getting organised. And we will always help suitable groups with their applications.

We can also help reduce a lot of the slog of applications. Finding funders of non-incorporated groups is very difficult and time-consuming (most only support incorporated groups like registered charities). We have done the donkey work for you here and in our Resource Pack have produced a list of nearly 60 such funders (look for those with 'All' or 'All?' in the Eligibility column). Details of this and other ways in which we support the small start-up are given in the last section of this step.

A Simple Fundraising Strategy

Here you start with the easiest and most certain sources of funds and move up to the more difficult and less certain. What we have here is a 'ladder' of funding (our thanks to Spacehive for this):

- Group Members – *easiest and most certain to donate*
- Friends & Family
- Your Social Network
- Crowdfunding site (Spacehive is recommended)
- Group Events
- Local Council
- Local Businesses
- Independent Funders – *hardest and least certain to donate*

If difficult and uncertain, why move up at all? Because it is at the upper end of the ladder that the large sums are to be found – at the lower end, sums are likely to be only modest.

It is best not to approach the funders at the upper stages until you have been through the lower stages. Not only are these easier, but if you have got pledges from the lower stages made to you on a crowdfunding site, then you have visible evidence of community-backing and that others are willing to support you financially. The people at the top of the ladder are going to be impressed by this. If they can see that others have supported you and that you have local people behind you, then they will be far readier to get involved (in the jargon, they will be looking for evidence of 'matchfunding'). Remember, we've got to improve those odds of getting money out of the independent funders.

We now go through each of the 'rungs' of the ladder in detail:

✓ Members, Friends & Family, Your Social Network

This is where you are the expert, so no advice given. However, if possible, make sure that they donate through the crowdfunding site (next rung). You want their donations to be visible.

✓ Crowdfunding Site

Once you've got pledges coming in (and a group bank account), you can set yourself up on a crowdfunding site. The principle one for local voluntary groups is Spacehive (<https://www.spacehive.com/create>). You'll create a project and will need to specify what's all about in some detail (see 'Dealing with Funders' below), and it will need to be verified by Spacehive as being worthy and likely to be well-run before it can go live, but once this happens, those who have made pledges can start to donate their cash quickly and easily.

Crowdfunding also has other advantages. Spacehive produce a very useful guide to fundraising (<https://about.spacehive.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/The-Ultimate-Crowdfunding-Guide.pdf>) and also provide email support to help you in your efforts. Once your project is uploaded, they will also search for potential backers from their large bank of funding partners and once matched, you can pitch to them for contributions.

Cash is only taken from your donor's accounts once your target has been reached. Once this happens, Spacehive will collect the monies pledged and send them as a lump sum to your designated bank account. Spacehive charge a fee of 5% of the sums donated; they do this by adding this 5% to the original project target sum and retain it when they send the funds to you. If you do not reach your target, no fees are levied.

One key point to remember. If applying to independent funders, ensure that your crowdfunding deadline allows plenty of time for you to make your application and for it to be processed through to completion.

✓ Group Events

Organising an event to drum up funds for your project is always a good way to attract funds (and also publicise what you're all about at the same time).

Near Neighbours has very good advice on events in their Fundraising Toolkit (<https://www.near-neighbours.org.uk/resources>) including an A-Z of ideas for events. For a good overview of how to go about organising and running an event, look especially at the Event Planning Steps.

Hounslow council's Community Toolkit also has some very good advice on organising events (https://www.hounslow.gov.uk/downloads/file/820/community_toolkit), as does Ealing Council on their Do Something Good site (<https://www.dosomethinggood.org.uk/node/57>). The Spacehive guide mentioned above also has some good ideas in the Pledge Parties section.

The key point to remember about events is that it is essential that all the correct planning is completed thoroughly; risk assessment, and investigating potential insurance, safety and licensing issues all need to be completed – the guides and sites just mentioned will give you the relevant contacts and details.

The good news is that once you've organised one event, then future ones will be much easier. Events are very much part of the core way in which community groups keep in touch their localities, so this will be very useful expertise.

✓ Local Councils

Local councils often have funds allocated to support local community efforts and also run matchfunding campaigns for specific types of projects where they pledge to match any funds that you raise yourself (generally on a 50/50 basis).

For Ealing Council go to their Do Something Good fundraising page (<https://www.dosomethinggood.org.uk/fundraising>) and for Hounslow go to the grants page (https://www.hounslow.gov.uk/info/20047/community_and_voluntary_sector_services/1200/council_grants_funding_and_commissioning) – especially Thriving Communities small grants.

It is at this point that you'll need to start thinking about presenting your requests for donations in a more formal way, which we look at below in the 'Dealing with Funders' section.

✓ Local Businesses

Here also you'll need to make a good well-presented case; you're dealing with hard-nosed business people who want to make sure that their money is going to good use. But you'll also need to keep things brief – in business, time is money, and your audience will not want to spend the same amount of time of considering your project as a dedicated funder would.

The best idea is to make your full case, as described below in 'Dealing with Funders' and then produce a concise version of it – one or two sentences each for the project description, why it will benefit the community, why you are well placed to provide it and the core financial details. If they want more, then of course you can point them in the direction of the more detailed outlines you've already produced. Also back up what you're saying with any telling visuals and let them know what's in it for them (publicity at an event, a mention in a local newspaper article etc.). Of course, also point out the pledges you've already got, especially if they're from other businesses.

Some of the businesses you will be approaching will be highly visible (shops etc.), but don't ignore the less visible ones to be found in local business parks or online business directories (e.g. <https://www.makeitealing.co.uk/directory>). Also housing associations and local estate agents can be a good source of funds.

✓ Independent Funders

This is where the heavy-duty applications start and the risks of failure increase – but the rewards are greater. We give a comprehensive list of funders able to support unincorporated groups in our Resource Pack (those with 'All' or 'All?' in the Eligibility

column). If you want to look further, you can find the sources for our directory at the bottom of the Funders list, and also the Near Neighbours 'Writing for Grants' presentation last slide gives other useful contacts (<https://www.near-neighbours.org.uk/resources>).

When using this, always make absolutely sure that you meet the funder's eligibility criteria; writing applications is a time-consuming process – don't make this wasted time by applying for funds for which you are not eligible. Also apply in plenty of time; funders often organise their activities into 'grant-rounds' with specific timescales and the process of assessing applications and deciding who to fund can take up to a few months. Make sure you know what these timescales are.

Also establish what type of costs they will fund. The principle types are:

- Revenue – running costs like utilities, and rent (can include project costs).
- Project – funding for a specific project (can include some Revenue).
- Capital – new equipment or building.
- For a fuller explanation and for other types, see the Near Neighbours 'Writing for Grants' presentation (<https://www.near-neighbours.org.uk/resources>).

We have a look in detail at how to approach independent funders in the section below.

Dealing with Funders

This is where the people you're trying to impress will want to know a lot about you and your project. They will be exacting in their standards and you'll be up against a lot of competition.

The good news is that, as we've said, if you've prepared well up until this point, a lot of the hard work is behind you, and more importantly, you are *already* impressive. It is now just a question of showing this, not of having to generate a glossy new image for the sake of a new audience. You'll also find that once you completed one application, future ones will be a lot easier.

Funder's applications procedures can differ widely, and no two application forms are the same, but you can prepare yourself for the process by producing a few paragraphs (no more) on the following topics, drawing on materials you've already produced. In essence, these summaries will cover most of the information the great majority of funders are after, and as you approach each new application, you'll just have to modify it slightly or perhaps add some new material to suit.

Although you'll be drawing on material previously produced in plans, in your applications you can express it more dramatically and personally than you did in the originals. Emphasise the passion and energy of the people involved and include testimonies (not too many!) that highlight how vital the need is.

Sometimes funders will just ask you to submit a letter; make sure you include all of the following in it.

✓ **Project Description**

A brief summary of what the project is. This can be adapted from the project plan's description.

✓ **Benefits**

What benefits to the community will the project bring? This is where you'll draw on the Impact section of your project plan.

✓ Why is the Project Needed?

This is where you'll draw on the Project Need section – all those stats now come into their own. Also include testimonies from locals and any other relevant research.

✓ Why are you Well-Placed to Meet the Need?

Again, draw on the project need section. Do your best to highlight your 'Unique Selling Points' (USPs), the features of your group that make you different and more relevant to the provision of the need than other potential providers.

✓ Measuring the Benefit

This is where you'll talk about the feedback mechanisms you've decided on.

✓ How are you involving the community?

Many funders will want to see evidence of community involvement. Your crowdfunding pledges will help here, but you will need more. Explain how you canvassed local opinion during start-up and the project planning phases and how locals are involved with your activities. Emphasising the voluntary nature of all work done will help.

✓ Costs

This can simply be the project budget – show all the detail and make sure the sums add up! Showing that you have sought multiple quotes will be reassuring to funders.

Also state whether they will be the sole funder of your project or whether you will be requiring funds from elsewhere as well (and your current progress in acquiring them).

✓ Risks

A summary of your risk assessment, including controls.

Here you should aim to show that you understand what the potential problems with your project are and that you are prepared to look them squarely in the face. Funders are always on the lookout of naïve optimism and wishful thinking and they don't like it.

Specify any relevant policies that you have in place to deal with common risks (e.g. Health & Safety, Safeguarding).

✓ The Group

Brief summaries of the group's aims, beneficiaries and activities. Also have to hand the financial details of the group, both summary accounts and bank statements for the last year, a copy of the constitution, minutes of a significant meeting, relevant policies and any publicity material as they may all well be called for.

✓ When writing the summaries (and throughout the whole application procedure), bear in mind the following tips:

- Read any Guidelines *thoroughly* before starting and contact the funder if there's anything you don't understand.
- Keep your summaries simple, as short as possible without sacrificing essential information - and *to the point*. Funders do not like long-windedness and anything off-topic. In too many applications, information relevant to one question ends up as part of the answer to another and the repetition and irrelevance produced create an impression of very confused thinking (and such applications are very frustrating and difficult to read).
- Make best efforts with the presentation and the standard of English. In the minds of funders, sloppy presentation = sloppy group. Once written, get somebody with the right skills to sharpen it all up.

- Answer all the questions. If you don't the funder may think you have something to hide.
 - Be as accurate and detailed as possible with all financial information. Make sure that Income and Expenditure figures given on the application form correspond to totals in accounts and statements (sloppy accounting = sloppy organisation). NEVER delay or deny a funder's request for any financial information about the group – doing this is the way best guaranteed to set alarm bells ringing and ruining your chances.
 - As a new group, funders are often reluctant to give you money because you don't have a track record. They will often be explicit about this, but sometimes they won't. At all events, if this is your first project as a new group, compensate for your lack of a track record with good planning and emphasise any relevant skills held by members of the group. It may also be best to propose running a pilot. As an aside, unlike a lot of funders, being a new group is a positive advantage for us at The Freshwater Foundation.
 - You can often contact the funder with queries. Do not hesitate to take advantage of this if you have any doubts about what's required (applicants are often strangely reluctant to do so).
- ✓ Once You've Applied
- It may be quite a while until you hear the results of your application – check with the funder.
 - If successful, you will probably have to sign a set of (generally straightforward and common sense) conditions.
 - Make sure you keep all invoices and receipts, details of any feedback and you may well have to submit a report and meet other monitoring requirements.
 - If unsuccessful, ask for feedback – it is often available.

The Freshwater Foundation

There is one funder where you can have a greater chance of success – ourselves.

As long as you can show us that you have followed steps 1 and 2 conscientiously, then you can apply for funds under our Small Grants Scheme (<http://freshwaterfoundation.org.uk/small-grants-500/>) and will have a good chance of getting up to £500. These grants can be awarded very quickly.

If you've gone further, and can show us that you have a project that has been well-planned as outlined in step 3, then you can apply for our main grant round (<http://freshwaterfoundation.org.uk/grant-applications/>), with funds up to £2000 available. These awards are based around grant rounds, so apply at least 3 months before you need the money. Check with us for the dates of the current round (info@freshwaterfoundation.org.uk).

Whichever fund you choose, read the eligibility criteria carefully, and get in touch with any queries or for help with the process.

7. Step 6 – Getting Yourself Known

Don't be shy about blowing your own trumpet – if you've got this far, you have plenty to boast about and many stories to tell. Publicity is therefore not just useful for specific occasions and needs, like seeking volunteers or letting people know of an up-coming event, but should also be sought when the group has major achievements to celebrate, like the completion of a particular project or a key anniversary, when you can summarise all that you've done in the past.

Also remember that you are a community group, so publicity is essential to staying bonded to that community. Any new initiative or activity that you're starting will either involve it or be for its benefit, so let people know what's happening. Aim to stay visible, a permanent feature of the local scene. As we'll see from the next section, keeping close to your local community is an important way of keeping the group going, of making it sustainable. And funders, the council and other official bodies will see you as far more legitimate and potent the more community involvement you can demonstrate.

As a means of staying in touch with your community also always consider giving people a chance to respond to your publicity material. Give contact details and invite comments and suggestions.

There are many good sources of information about publicity below in the *Media* Section, but there are a few essential points to bear in mind when producing publicity material:

Publicity Essentials

- Who are you talking to?
 - ✓ The first essential is to determine who your audiences are. You'll be telling them different things, they'll respond best to different types of language and different media will be appropriate to them:
 - ✓ You'll be talking to locals who'll prefer plain, colloquial language. Flyers, newsletters and electronic media will be most useful here.
 - ✓ You'll also be talking to councils, funders, other official bodies – more formal and technical language can be a plus for them. A professional looking website and some presence in local newspapers and radio will impress.
- What is your message?
 - ✓ As a group, you're all about your objects. Whatever you're promoting, the key idea to get across is how what you're doing is fulfilling those objects.
 - ✓ Write up what you want to say in the form of a simple appealing story (see the very useful near Neighbours resource 'Telling Your Story' (<https://www.near-neighbours.org.uk/resources>)).
 - ✓ You can then adapt your story to the chosen media.
 - You can use the materials you've already produced for your plans and funding bids
 - Keep it lively, quote people and give examples.
 - Have a good stock of images to draw on (making sure you have permission to use them from the people in them).
 - Keep it short and snappy.
 - *Above all, use the language and style appropriate to your audience!*

Media

There are many different ways in which you can publicise yourself and plenty of advice on how to do so (for all of them, see the Near Neighbours Toolkit 'How to Promote Your Project' - <https://www.near-neighbours.org.uk/resources>):

- ***Website.***

This is easily the best way of showing that you are a credible, well-established group. Setting one up can be intimidating to the non-professional, but there is plenty of expertise out there willing to produce one at low cost or even for free.

It can however be kept quite simple. It may well just need a few pages:

- ✓ ***Home Page:*** summarising who you are and what you do
- ✓ ***About:*** origins, core ethos, core personnel
- ✓ ***Key Services:*** the detail of what you provide\do
- ✓ ***Current Work|Upcoming Events:*** keep people informed about what you're up to and what you've achieved
- ✓ ***Contact:*** contact details with perhaps an embedded email facility

Remember however that your website needs to be kept up to date. Acquiring just a little in-house expertise in WordPress or whatever package has been used to produce your site can make this much easier; you'll only need to call on the services of the designer for more complex updates.

- ***Other Electronic Media*** (Email, SMS, Social Media).

The Ealing Council Do Something Good site (<https://www.dosomethinggood.org.uk/help-advice/promotion/facebook-twitter>) and section 7 of the Spacehive guide, Communicating your Campaign (<https://about.spacehive.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/The-Ultimate-Crowdfunding-Guide.pdf>) are useful here.

- ***Local Newspapers:***

Perhaps the most intimidating – but actually such outlets are always on the lookout for a good, upbeat local story, so successful local voluntary groups are right up their street.

And, once again, Near Neighbours have an excellent resource – 'How to use the media' (<https://www.near-neighbours.org.uk/resources>). Key to success are:

- ✓ Getting the attention of the journalist
- ✓ Writing a concise, punchy media release

The Do Something Good site (<https://www.dosomethinggood.org.uk/help-advice/promotion/local-newspapers>) offers useful information about local press and section 8 of the Spacehive guide gives good tips on how to write a press release.)

- ***Flyers, Leaflets, Posters & Newsletters:***

If there is no one in your group with design experience or flair, local printers will often have a good cheap design service available. See Do Something Good (<https://www.dosomethinggood.org.uk/help-advice/promotion/leaflets-posters>).

- *Events*
The Hounslow Council Community Toolkit (https://www.hounslow.gov.uk/downloads/file/820/community_toolkit) has a good section on Events and see Step 5 'Group Events' above.
- *Local Council Community Departments & MPs*; see Appendix I

8. Step 7 – Building Staying Power & Moving On

Building a Sustainable Group

Many small groups start enthusiastically, with a great burst of energy – but then slowly fizzle out. How are you to avoid that fate?

If you've followed the advice in this guide, then you've done a lot of the necessary work already:

- ✓ If you've got a strong, involved Management Committee, committed to the aims of the group, then you have a reservoir of enthusiasm and dedication to draw on and you are less likely to fall into the trap of relying on the energy of the original founder.
- ✓ Well organised projects are more likely to be successful – there's nothing like failure to take the wind out of people's sails.
- ✓ Sustainable funding, where you know that you have a reasonable chance of getting the money you need for your plans going on into the future is also important. Uncertainty and impending financial difficulties are key enthusiasm killers.
- ✓ Keeping in touch with your community. This will keep you relevant and maintaining a groundswell of local support behind you gives a magnificent sense of momentum to the group.
- ✓ Finally, a sustainable group is also a disciplined group. This does not mean that everything has to be done with po-faced formality, but it does mean that people stick to the Code of Conduct, especially as it applies to meetings. Too many groups split up because key figures hive themselves off into separate camps, and ill-tempered and acrimonious conflicts emerge. The key idea behind the Code of Conduct is that people stay focused on the key aims of the group, not their own hobby-horses, that all views are seen as potentially valuable ways forward in the pursuit of those aims, that compromise should always be considered where differences surface, and that the majority view as to the best way that emerges should always be respected.

People can (and will) leave where there is fundamental disagreement about this way, and that is not a great problem – people can get very passionate about their ideals, and departure is an honest and honourable way forward in some cases. It is where a culture of individual ideals taking precedence over those of the group takes hold that the group will get into trouble or where people think that their strongly held views allow them to disregard or disrespect those of other people.

If you've managed to achieve all of the above, firstly – very well-done indeed! Secondly what you now need to do is make sure that you maintain your excellent work by conducting a regular health check of the group:

- ✓ Are fundamental differences emerging?
- ✓ Are they valid, or just the result of individuals personal interests?
- ✓ Is the Code of Conduct being respected?
- ✓ Is the Management Committee becoming stale, and do we need to recruit new blood?
- ✓ Are we staying in touch with our community?
- ✓ Are our projects being well-run and is our fund-raising effective and likely to continue to produce the cash we need?

Here a strong partnership between the Chair and the Secretary can be important. Being the people best placed to have an overview of the group and are the two most involved

in making sure the rules are respected. They should conduct this health check and present the results to the Management Committee, along with suggestions for remedies where things are going wrong.

This may well need to be handled sensitively – it could be that particular individuals rather than the group or the committee as a whole is involved, and in that case, it is best to have a private meeting with that individual to discuss the problem and seek agreed solutions.

Having taken all reasonable steps to take people's feelings into consideration, you may well have to face up to the fact that firm action is going to be required. Take this as fairly as possible (see the Constitution for the procedures involved), but don't shirk from taking it. Left to fester, problems will only get worse, so they'll have to be faced at some time. And remember, the aims of the group are more important than the aims of any one person within it – and that you have the backing of both the Constitution and the Code of Conduct to authorize what you do.

The Next Stage

If you've become a success and have grown (especially financially), then you may well want to consider the advantages of *incorporation*. This, as we said right at the beginning, is where you register with a regulator, whose initial requirements you have to meet and to whom you are then accountable. This can mean quite a lot of extra work, both in terms of re-constituting yourself and in the on-going reporting requirements that you must meet.

There are however numerous advantages:

- ✓ Many more funding opportunities open up (as you'll see from the Funders Directory – there are significantly more of them *and* they give larger sums).
- ✓ You will have far more credibility with potential partners, especially large, important ones. If you're looking to have a greater say on local (or even national) government policy, or want to take your vision a wider audience, incorporation is a must.
- ✓ There are numerous tax breaks.
- ✓ Your financial liability is limited – if you are now in a position where you could accumulate significant debts, then this is important as in the case of unincorporated groups, individual members are liable (all of their property is at risk).

Incorporation can take three main forms, depending on your circumstances. Here is not the time to go into all of them, but we give a brief idea of what they're all about.

- *Charity limited by guarantee* (regulated by the Charity Commission and Companies House, funded mainly by grants)
- *Charitable Incorporated Organisation* (regulated just by the Charity Commission, funded mainly by grants)
- *Community Interest Company* (CIC regulated by the Regulator of CICs, funded through commercial activities and some grants – less likely to apply to you)

Perhaps the main reason why you might want to change is something more fundamental than size. As we've seen, groups focus on activities; charities focus on a Vision, expressed as a series of objects. If you find you've moved on from simple practical tasks to wanting to achieve broader social change, even at only a local level, then becoming a charity is for you. Your ambition is now much greater and becoming a charity gives you the credibility and financial scope to achieve it in a way not available to a simple unincorporated body. So, once you change your nature, the change of form naturally follows.

There is of course the extra work to be considered, and above and beyond the details of the regulator's requirements, your Management Committee will have to reconstitute itself as a Board of Trustees, perhaps the most fundamental change you will have to make. No longer just concerned with practical issues, it has to take a strategic responsibility for protecting and promoting the objects of the charity, a significantly more demanding role. It will also be responsible for a far wider and more detailed range of policies.

However, once again, we at The Freshwater Foundation can help you with this. And to bring things right back to where we started, think of the satisfaction it can bring. Creating a small group can bring very great fulfilment – a charity, with its broader ambition and scope can bring even greater satisfaction.

Worth thinking about!

9. Appendices

I. Local Contacts

Councillors:

- Ealing: <https://www.ealing.gov.uk/info/201044/councillors>
- Hounslow: <https://democraticservices.hounslow.gov.uk/mgFindMember.aspx>

Council Community Partnership Departments:

- Ealing: <https://www.dosomethinggood.org.uk/>
- Hounslow: https://www.hounslow.gov.uk/info/20047/community_and_voluntary_sector_services/1459/community_partnerships_unit

Ealing & Hounslow Council for Voluntary Service: <https://ehcvs.org.uk/>

Citizens Advice:

- Hounslow: <https://hounslowcabs.org.uk/>

MPs:

- <https://www.parliament.uk/business/commons/>

II. Sample Constitution

CONSTITUTION OF:

ADOPTED ON (DATE):

.....

1 Name

The name of the Group shall be:

2 Aims

The aims of the Group shall be to:

3 Powers

In order to achieve its aims the Group may:

- Raise money
- Open bank accounts
- Take out insurance in relation to specific activities
- Organise events and activities
- Work with other groups and exchange information
- Do anything that is lawful which will help it to fulfil its aims

4 Membership

- Membership of the Group shall be open to any person over 16 located in the *name of area here* area who is interested in helping the Group to achieve its aims, willing to abide by the rules of the Group (The Code of Conduct) and willing to pay any subscription agreed by the Management Committee.
- Membership shall be available to anyone without regard to gender, ethnicity, nationality, disability, sexual preference, religion or belief.
- Every individual member shall have one vote at General Meetings.
- The membership of any member may be terminated for good reason by the Management Committee but the member has a right to be heard by the Management Committee before a final decision is made.

5 Management

- The Management Committee is made up of the Officers and other members elected at the Group`s Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- The Officers of the Management Committee shall be: the Chairperson, the Treasurer and the Secretary.
- The Management Committee shall meet at least *x* times a year.
- The Chairperson will Chair all meetings of the Group. If the Chair is unavailable the attendees will vote on a Chair for that meeting.
- Voting at Management Committee meetings will be by show of hands or if felt necessary secret ballot. If there is a tied vote then the Chairperson swill have the final/overriding vote.
- The Management Committee may by a two-thirds majority vote and for a good and proper reason, such as not abiding by the Code of Conduct, remove any Committee

member, provided that person has the right to be heard before a final decision is made.

- The Management Committee may appoint another member of the Group as a Committee member to fill a vacancy provided the maximum number is not exceeded.

6 Duties of the Officers

a) The duties of the Chairperson are to:

- chair meetings of the Committee and the Group
- represent the Group at functions/meetings that the Group has been invited to act as spokesperson for the Group when necessary

b) The duties of the Secretary are to:

- take and keep minutes of all meetings
- prepare the agenda for meetings of the Committee and the Group in consultation with the Chairperson
- maintain the membership list
- deal with all correspondence
- collect and circulate any relevant information within the Group
- ensure adherence to the Code of Conduct

c) The duties of the Treasurer are to:

- supervise the financial affairs of the Group
- keep proper accounts that show all monies collected and paid out by the Group

7 Finance

- Any money obtained by the Group will only be used for the Group.
- Any bank accounts opened for the Group should be in the name of the Group.
- Any cheques issued should be signed by the Treasurer and one other nominated official.

8 Annual General Meeting

a) The Group will hold an Annual General Meeting (A.G.M.) in the month of _____

b) All members will be given at least twenty-one days' notice of the AGM and will be entitled to attend and vote.

c) The business of the AGM will include:

- A report from the Chairperson summarising the Group's activities over the year
- A report from the Treasurer summarising the income and expenditure of the Group
- Electing a new Management Committee
- Considering any other matters.

9 Special General Meeting

A Special General Meeting may be called by the Management Committee or by any member to discuss an urgent matter. The Secretary shall give all members fourteen days' notice of any Special General Meeting together with notice of the business to be discussed. All members shall be entitled to attend this meeting and vote on decisions made.

10 Quorum

The quorum for committee meetings of the Association shall be one-third of its elected membership or 4 members, whichever is the greater. The quorum for all general meetings shall be one-third of the membership or 15 members, whichever is the lesser.

11 Alterations to the Constitution

Any changes to this Constitution must be agreed by at least two-thirds of those members present and voting at any General Meeting.

12 Dissolution

The Group may be wound up at any time if agreed by two-thirds of those members present and voting at any General Meeting. In the event of winding up, any assets remaining after all debts have been paid shall be given to another Group with similar aims.

This constitution was adopted at a general meeting of the Group on

[Date]

Signed by:

Chairperson:

Secretary:

Treasurer:

Other Committee members:

Thanks to Hounslow Council, whose original template provided the basis for this constitution.

III. Sample Code of Conduct

Code of Conduct of *your group*

- Members will at all times only act in the interests of the aims of the group
- Members will abide by the terms of the Constitution
- Members must be courteous to each other at all times and allow each other to speak
- Members will show respect and professionalism in their exchanges with representatives of organisations and services who attend meetings
- Members will welcome all regardless of age, ethnicity, gender, religion and will not discriminate
- Abusive behaviour-verbal/physical will not be tolerated
- Members should not bring the group into disrepute
- Members should not speak or write on behalf of the group without the prior agreement of members. Any correspondence sent on behalf of the group should be made available to all members
- Members should observe collective responsibility for decisions made through their democratic processes
- Members will declare any potential conflict of interest in any issues being discussed and decisions made
- Members who arrive at the meeting under the influence of alcohol and/or recreational drugs shall be excluded from the meeting
- During meetings mobile phones to be switched off or set to silent
- Members will ensure that they arrive on time to meetings/events
- Members will complete all work asked of them in a thorough and timely fashion
- Members will send their apologies if unable to attend
- Members agree to be subject to the disciplinary scrutiny of the Management Committee if they fail to comply with any of the provisions of this Code.

Name:

Signed:

Date:

Thanks to Hounslow Council, whose original template provided the basis for this code.

IV. Project Plan Outline

See also the Project Plan Example document in the Resource Pack.

1. Introduction

- a. Group Aim
- b. Project Description and Aim
- c. Project Need
 - Local evidence of need
 - National evidence of need
 - Previous project evidence of need
- d. Project Personnel & Qualifications

2. Operational Plan

(Optionally use the worksheet in FF_ProjectPlanner.xlsx in the Resource Pack)

- Activities
 - Tasks
 - Tangible products (Outputs)
 - People required
 - Other resources (equipment, transport, refreshments etc)
 - Costs
 - Time taken
- Partners? (Who & Nature of the Relationship)
- Location (any permissions required, costs involved)?
- Legal requirements?
- Insurance? (if you have Public Liability insurance, this will often cover it)
- Promotion? (see Step 6)
- Funding (see Step 5)
- Key Policies

3. Our Impact

(Optionally use the worksheet in FF_ProjectPlanner.xlsx in the Resource Pack)

- Project Outcomes (overall results - these should reflect the Aims specified at point 1 above)
- Specific targets (quantifiable outcome measures)
- Feedback
 - Feedback forms\Interview format\other feedback mechanism
 - Who is responsible?
 - When will it be conducted?
- Relationship to strategy (if relevant)

4. Project Risk Assessment

5. Monitoring Regime

- Reporting Frequency
- Person responsible for changing the plan

6. Project Overview

- Overall budget (*Optionally use the worksheet in FF_ProjectPlanner.xlsx in the Resource Pack*)
- Overall timescales
- Project structure and significant points in the project (Milestones)

7. Final Evaluation

- Results of Feedback
- Lessons Learned
- Overall Conclusions

8. Any Appendices (e.g. references, contact details, distribution list)

Thanks to Let's Go Outside & Learn (<https://www.lgoal.org/>) for providing the basis for this outline

V. Project Tracker

Project: <i>Example - Gardening project</i>			
Action	Who	Due Date	Comments
<i>Example - buy equipment</i>	<i>Example - A.Member</i>	<i>Example - 03/07/21</i>	<i>Example: Awaiting receipt of funds</i>

Thanks to Hounslow Council, whose original template provided the basis for this form.

VI. Strategic Plan Outline

1. Our Group

- i. Our Mission
- ii. The Public Benefit

2. Strategic Context

- i. Strengths
- ii. Weaknesses
- iii. Need
 - ✓ Local Need
 - ✓ National Need

3. Strategic Objectives (repeat for each objective)




- i. Objective
- ii. How they fulfill the Mission
- iii. Why selected?
- iv. Risks
- v. Activities (repeat for each activity)
 - ✓ Description
 - ✓ Resources and people needed
 - ✓ Costs
 - ✓ Timescales
- vi. Links to other objectives
- vii. Impact
 - ✓ Nature of the Impact
 - ✓ How is it to be Measured?
 - ✓ Targets?

4. Conclusion

VIII. Example Feedback Form

EMAG project evaluation

Please complete this short questionnaire to help us understand how successful our project has been:

%	Strongly agree 	Agree 	Disagree 
I HAVE LEARNT ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT AND WILDLIFE			
I HAVE LEARNT A NEW SKILL			
I HAVE MADE FRIENDS			
I HAVE FELT RELAXED			
I FEEL MORE CONFIDENT			
I FEEL BETTER ABOUT MYSELF			
I DON'T FEEL ALONE			
Office use			
What have you gained from the project?			
What have you particularly enjoyed?			
What could we have done better?			

Thank you for your assistance

Thanks to Let's Go Outside & Learn (<https://www.lgoal.org/>) for providing the basis for this template

IX. Agenda Template

Group Name

Agenda

Date & Time:

Place:

1. Welcome and apologies
2. Declaration of interest
3. Minutes and matters arising from last meeting
4. Topic 1
5. Topic 2
6. Topic 3
7. AOB - Any Other Business
8. Date of next meeting

X. Minute Template

Group Name

Minutes

MINUTES of the (month/year) meeting of the (members/management committee) of (group name), held at (place) on the (date) at (time).

Present:

Apologies:

1. Topic 1

(summary of discussion, decisions and votes)

Actions:

2. Topic 2

(summary of discussion, decisions and votes)

Actions:

[Signature]

Chair of the meeting

[Date]

XI. Project Report Template

Project:	
Member Responsible:	
Date:	
Summary Progress:	
Resources used:	
Time taken:	
Problems:	
Agreed changes:	