



# Getting Set Up

## Define your purpose

Before launching your organisation, you need to define the specific purpose and mission of your organisation. What problem will you solve? What impact do you hope to achieve? If you have a clear purpose, this will help you to stay focused and attract supporters, donors and volunteers who share your vision. This step is integral to your strategy, operations and fundraising efforts.

## Check that you are not duplicating

You must consider whether the need you would like to address is being tackled by other organisations locally. If so, it may be worth talking to existing organisations first to get a sense of the scope of the issue and perhaps collaborating with them instead of setting up a new organisation. A useful tool to find local services on Wirral is the [Wirral Infobank](#) which hosts a directory of local services.

## Choose a legal structure

There are many types of organisations in the not-for-profit sector. Some are very informal, with just a bank account and a team of people who organise the activities of the organisation. However, should the organisation need to access funding, or employ any staff, then the organisation must have a legal structure.

There are a handful of different legal structures to choose from, the most informal being the unincorporated association. You can also set up as a registered charity, a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) or a

Community Interest Company (CIC). Other structures include a Limited by Guarantee company, a Cooperative and Community Benefit societies.

Each structure has its own requirements for governance, financial reporting and tax exemptions. Carefully consider the benefits and obligations of each structure, including liability, funding sources and operational flexibility.

The table on the next page shows the legal structure and the governance structure and governing document that is usually used:

<b>Legal Structure</b>	<b>Leadership Team</b>	<b>Governing Document</b>	<b>Registration Body</b>
Registered Charity	At least 3 unrelated Trustees.	Constitution	Registered with the Charity Commission
Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)	At least 3 unrelated Trustees.	CIO Constitution	Registered with the Charity Commission
Community Interest Company	At least 3 unrelated directors	Articles of Association for a CIC	Registered with Companies House
Company Limited by Guarantee	At least 3 unrelated directors	Articles of Association which must contain a statement of not of profit aims and an asset lock or dissolution clause.	Registered with Companies House
Unincorporated Association	At least 3 unrelated committee members.	Constitution	Not Registered

## Recruit a team to run the organisation

Recruiting a team of committed skilled individuals is essential for the success of your organisation. A strong leadership team, which can be committee members, trustees or directors is responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction of the organisation.

The rule of thumb is to recruit at least three people who are unrelated to ensure a democracy. This will provide accountability and diversity in the interests of the organisation. This team should have a range of expertise, from financial management to marketing skills, to ensure that your organisation is well run and sustainable.

## Adopt a Governing Document

Your governing document (a constitution or articles of association) outlines how your organisation will operate. It sets out the rules for decision-making, responsibilities of the leadership team and the strategic direction of the organisation. This document is required for registering with regulatory bodies and will help your organisation keep on track.

## Register your Organisation

Once you have chosen your legal structure you may need to register with the relevant registration body. Charities must register with the [Charity Commission](#) while CIC's and Companies Ltd by Guarantee will register with [Companies House](#). You might also want to form a [Co-operative](#) or register as a Mutuals society with the [Financial Conduct Authority](#). Consider if you want your organisation to be incorporated or not.

## Open a Bank Account

Open a bank account in your organisations name to ensure that the organisations finances are kept separate from personal accounts.

## Create Policies and Procedures

Policies are essential for protection your organisation and the people involved in it. Policies include protecting your beneficiaries, staff and volunteers, financial management and ethical practice. When you set up, you should have as a minimum the following policies:

- **Health & Safety and Risk assessment**
- **Safeguarding**
- **Equality and Diversity**
- **GDPR**

## Plan for income and sustainability


Securing income is often the most challenging part of starting a not-for-profit organisation. It is crucial to develop a clear plan for generating income, whether through grants, donations, fundraising event, or selling services. Consider the cost of running your organisation and how you will sustain your operation in the long term. Explore diverse income streams to avoid being over reliant on one source of income. If you are going to be applying for funding, you may find our guide [Are you Funding Ready?](#) Helpful.

## **Need more support?**

Wirral CVS is here to help your organisation grow, develop and succeed. Whether you're just starting out or strengthening your foundations, our Development Team can provide one-to-one guidance, training, resources and advice tailored to your needs.

## **Contact us to book a support session**

 **Email:** [info@wirralcvs.org.uk](mailto:info@wirralcvs.org.uk)

 **Phone:** 0151 433 3371

 **Website:** [www.wcvs.org.uk](http://www.wcvs.org.uk)

## **More resources available at:**

[www.wcvs.org.uk/support](http://www.wcvs.org.uk/support)

Including templates, guidance and policy tools across governance, finance, safeguarding, volunteering and more.

## **Disclaimer**

[www.wcvs.org.uk/support](http://www.wcvs.org.uk/support)

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