

Thinking of setting up a new group?

1. Gauge interest, it would be good to have two or three people on board who have already shown interest. As a rule of thumb, we would expect new groups to have a minimum of six members within six months of starting.
2. Decide on aims and objectives, just a few sentences to explain what the group will do. Include a brief statement as to the health and social benefits of participation. If appropriate, give examples of the session content ie. 'a range of opportunities to engage in'.
3. What kind of venue will you use – a hired room or a private home? In principle, all groups should be open to all, so think carefully about accessibility given the age profile of our members. If you are planning to rotate around private homes, firstly make it clear that it is not a requirement to host and secondly that not all homes may be suitable. Remember that you will need to complete a risk assessment for each location that you use.
4. Consider how participants will get to the venue and whether there is adequate parking space and/or public transport links. Those that do drive should always be encouraged to offer lifts to others, especially if there is no public transport.
5. Decide on time of day and frequency of meetings. Check other groups to see which day of the week would fit best. Try to avoid the first Monday in the month as this is when our monthly meeting takes place.
6. List the resources you will need and how these will be obtained. Include an application for funding from the special purposes fund if you need start-up costs for equipment or materials or to cover venue hire in the early stages.
7. Submit your proposal to the committee. The committee meets at least four times a year so you won't have too long to wait. Ask the Secretary for meeting dates.
8. If agreed by the committee, you will get help from a link coordinator to get your group established. The committee will ask for an update after six months to see how the group is progressing.

NB. This guidance is for new subject areas. If you are planning to set up a new group because the existing one is full, then the best way forward would be to talk to the group leader and link coordinator – and then submit a proposal to the committee as above.

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