

## Questions to think about when developing a constitution

- The name of the group
- What are the aims and purposes of the group?
- Who is the group set up to help?
- Who should be entitled to become a member of the group (e.g. Do they have to live within a certain area? Is membership open to groups, individuals or both? Should members be between certain ages?)
- What should people have to pay to become a member?
- Should there be different types of membership for different types of people / groups?
- How many people should be on the committee? What is the smallest number and what is the largest number that should make up the committee?
- How will the committee be chosen or elected? Who should be allowed to sit on the committee?
- What sorts of things should the committee be responsible for?
- Are there other people who should be allowed to come to committee meetings? Should these people be allowed to vote?
- How often should the committee meet?
- Are there any particular rules that should be set?
- How long should people serve on the committee for?
- Should there be any people on the committee with special responsibilities? (e.g. chairperson, secretary, treasurer) If so, how will these people be chosen or elected?
- How will the committee keep all the other members of the group informed about the decisions they make and the work they do?
- How should the money and property of the Association be looked after?
- What happens if the rules in the constitution need to be changed, or new things have to be added?
- What happens if the Association is not needed any more? How can it be ended?

## Steps to take when developing a constitution?

- Pull together a group of interested people, which could be done by calling a public meeting to establish the need for such a group. People who are interested in driving things forward are sometimes known as the steering group or the steering committee.
- From the steering committee, set up a working group to develop a constitution (models constitutions and support are available from PAVS)
- Working group presents a draft constitution to the steering committee.
- Steering Committee puts forward comments & suggestions
- Working group amends constitution and re-presents it for further amendments or for adoption
- Steering Committee agrees and adopts constitution (the adoption of the constitution needs to be minuted)
- Steering Committee signs and dates constitution
- Bank account for the group is set up (Bank account name should be the same as the name on the constitution)
- Constitution formally approved at the first AGM. This meeting could double up as a formal launch of the group. This process does not cost anything. There is no need to register with any formal bodies unless the group intends to be a Company Limited by Guarantee or a registered Charity.