



Argyll and Bute Third Sector Interface Getting Started

Meet the need

If you are considering setting up a new voluntary organisation you should be clear about the needs which it will meet. What is new and unique about your work or campaign? Is there an unmet need that you can fulfil?

There are more than 45,000 voluntary organisations in Scotland. One or more of these may well be dealing with similar issues or offering similar services. Could you persuade them to campaign on your issues or deliver that service instead?

If you do plan to deliver a new service, or have a new idea, have you checked out whether there is sufficient demand and the right resources to support that service?

Build a team

You can't do this all alone; you will need other enthusiastic and committed people to form a steering group or committee for the new organisation. Volunteers should have the time, skills, knowledge, contacts and ideas necessary to get things up and running. This group will also need to bond as a team, to get things done.

Define your aims and purpose

Once you've established the team, you will need to agree why the organisation exists and who it will benefit. This will help you get support and be clear about what your focus should be. Usually, an organisation will develop:

- **Vision:** your view of what your organisation is for.
- **Mission:** this spells out what you intend to do to turn that vision into reality.
- **Values:** shared beliefs about the way you should operate.

These should link and together they provide your framework for operation. Good organisations will periodically revisit these every few years to ensure that they are still relevant and work well.

Decide on a name

Under charity law, OSCR can refuse to register a charity if it considers that the name is:

- the same as or too similar to another charity
- likely to mislead the public as to the true nature of the organisation
- likely to give the impression that the organisation is connected to Scottish or UK government or local authorities, when in fact it is not offensive

These points are important to consider even if you are not applying for charitable status.

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