

Midlothian Voluntary Action

MVA is the Midlothian Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) and is an independent voluntary organisation. MVA is a partner in the Midlothian Third Sector Interface, and part of the national network, Voluntary Action Scotland.

Midlothian Voluntary Action (MVA) exists to support and develop community and Third Sector organisations in Midlothian and facilitate the effective representation of the sector in powerful partnership working.

- Providing services to assist and develop new and existing community and Third Sector organisations;
- Providing information and resources to community and Third Sector organisations;
- Working with the Community Planning process to increase the involvement and influence of community and Third Sector organisations in service planning and delivery;
- Gathering and distributing information on the Community/Third Sector;
- Promoting the services of the Community/Third Sector in Midlothian.

BEHIND THE COMMUNITY TOOLKIT

Behind the Community Toolkit resource is a small but dedicated team of staff based at Skye and Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations in Portree on the Isle of Skye. Together they offer a wide range of experience in working directly with community groups, volunteers and grass root organisations.

Skye & Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations, a charity registered in Scotland No SC013885. Tigh Lisigarry, Bridge Road, Portree, Isle of Skye IV51 9ER <http://www.slcvo.org.uk> Tel:01478 612921

COMMUNITY TOOLKIT QUALITY ASSURANCE

Community Toolkit content is gathered from a variety of verified sources with each page signposting to **Further Sources of Information** enabling you to explore topics in more depth on the websites of recognised field experts such as OSCR, ACAS and Companies House.

Content is largely written by the Community Toolkit team, and where appropriate reviewed by field experts across Scotland.

The Community Toolkit team is committed to working with grass-root organisations to ensure that the resource continues to respond to the changing needs of the Third Sector. If you would like to see a new topic or you would like to comment on existing content, click on **Contact the Toolkit Editor** at the bottom of any page. Your feedback as a user of the Community Toolkit resource is invaluable.

Midlothian Voluntary Action Supporting Community & Voluntary Organisations

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Midlothian Voluntary Action is registered in Scotland as a company limited by guarantee (No. SC219994), and as a charity (No. SC008286)



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Part of the Midlothian Third Sector Interface.



Containing a wide range of essential topics, guidelines and news relevant to community groups, projects and volunteering.

What is the Community Toolkit?

The Community Toolkit is Voluntary Action Lochaber's online 'one stop shop' of information for voluntary organisations and community groups, helping you to:

- Implement best practice in all aspects of governance and management
- Understand and work towards sustainability
- Identify potential income streams, funders and social investors
- Plan, monitor and evaluate organisational development
- Set up and manage community resources such as building and transport schemes
- Recruit, manage and develop staff and volunteers

SETTING UP A COMMUNITY GROUP

You have an idea for a community project, activity or service - can you make it work? How do you get started? This section offers an overview of the stages involved, and the things you need to consider when setting up a community group or project, including:- *identifying the need, choosing a structure, writing a constitution, the pros and cons of charitable status, your committee and their roles.*

MANAGING AND DEVELOPING YOUR GROUP

Once your volunteer committee or board is in place, they will be responsible for ensuring the community group is run effectively, efficiently and within the law. This section considers day-to day and long term management or governance issues:- *planning and development; continuous assessment; holding meetings; handling finances; trading options; being able to respond to change and recognising legal responsibilities.* It also looks at how you tell others about what you do.

GENERATING INCOME

Whatever the size or nature of your community group, one of your first priorities as a committee member will be identifying suitable sources of income. Being able to finance your services, activities and projects is crucial to your success as a community group, and having income to cover running costs, as well as development, is likely to be an ongoing challenge. This section looks at some of the income generating options available to your group, including trading as a social enterprise .

PEOPLE MANAGEMENT

Your group's most important assets are its people:- volunteers on your committee; voluntary or paid staff who deliver your services or activities; the people who benefit from what you do; your funders and the agencies who support you; donors and sponsors and the wider community. This section looks at the importance of involving those people, respecting them, treating everyone as individuals and listening to their views. It looks at your committee's legal responsibilities in respect of equal opportunities and working with children, people with disabilities and the elderly .

How to Find Information

The Community Toolkit's structure allows you to quickly and easily find information. You can find information using the free text search field, browsing the categories or using one of the quick access functions below:

- **Toolkit A to Z page listing**—a simple to use A to Z list of all pages in the Community Toolkit
- **Simple Step Guides** - Scenario based guides that signpost you to relevant areas of the resource
- **Toolkit sitemap**— hierarchy list of all the pages in the Community Toolkit

Finding Funders and Social Investors

Need help finding suitable funding?

The Community Toolkit **Find Funders** database offers easy access to a wide selection of funders and social investors who will consider grant awards and loans to Third Sector groups Scotland-wide.

Keep up to date with new funders, grant opportunities and social investors in the Community Toolkit's **Latest News** .

VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering is central to the Third Sector. A large percentage of small groups and organisations are run entirely by volunteers, and every community group, club, charity, social enterprise, - large or small - will include volunteers at committee or board level. This section looks at effective recruitment and engagement with volunteers. For more information about and advice about volunteering please contact Volunteer Centre Midlothian on 01316601216

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Responsible for a building or vehicle? This section offers information and tips for group's who run – or are thinking about running - community buildings or community transport schemes. It includes the implications and legal aspects of owning or leasing a village hall (*holding events, licensing and volunteer stewarding, food hygiene regulations*) as well as the considerations for groups who want to own and run a community minibus.

COMMUNITY PLANNING

Community Planning is about making sure that people and communities are engaged in making decisions on public services that affect them. This section looks at the delivery of the Community Planning process, the partnership involvement it requires and the crucial role of the Third Sector.