



Adopting a constitution

When you are in the process of forming a local Keep Our NHS Public group, you might decide to adopt a written constitution. This can be a good way of explaining the group's aims to new members, and also of setting out the basic procedures of the group.

A constitution will clearly set out your group's aims and objectives, and will describe the formal officers, procedures for appointing the officers, and their core duties. Banks often require you to have a constitution before they will open an account in your name. An example of a model constitution can be found at http://www.vas.org.uk/pdfs/Model_Constitution2.pdf, although you should be aware that this is located as a link on the Charities Information Bureau website (and explicitly political organisations cannot be granted charitable status).

To summarise, the model constitution covers:

- the name of the group;
- the group's aim;
- the group's powers e.g. fundraising, organising events, working with similar organisations;
- membership - who membership of the group is open to;
- management - who the officers of the management committee are, e.g. chair, secretary, treasurer;
- meetings - how often management committee meetings should be held, and how many members must be present;
- voting procedure in the management committee;
- procedure for removal of a member of the management committee;
- officers' duties;
- finance - how funds are managed and independently examined;
- Annual General Meeting - both the timing and the general business of an AGM, and the minimum number of members present;
- other general meetings - how often they should be held, minimum number of members present;
- alterations to constitution;
- procedure for dissolution of group.