

## Starting a new group

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### Why start a new group?

- Because you have particular interests and want to form a group of people with similar interests such as book group or walking group.
- Because there are no LGBT groups in the area in which you live and you would like to meet new people
- Because there is an issue or campaign that you want to bring people together over
- Because you have just moved to a new area and want to set up a similar group to one you used to belong to
- Just because you simply have a splendid idea for a group!

Whatever the reason for starting a new group and whether you know what sort of group you want to start; this document should lay out things that will get you started!

### What group?

Some of the groups that exist already (in the South West peninsula) are listed on the [www.lgbtcollective.org.uk](http://www.lgbtcollective.org.uk) website. Take a look around the different geographical areas and areas of interest to see what's around. If there is something you like the look of in a different area – it is always worth getting in touch with the group. They may be in a position to give you a hand setting up a similar group, or at least be able to give you some information about how their group works!

Here is a list of some of the types of group that are popular.

- Book group
- Writers group
- Theatre group
- Womens social group
- Mens social group
- Walking/hiking group
- Real ale enthusiasts group
- Films/cinema group
- Cafe events
- Youth action groups
- LGTBQ youth groups
- Hobby groups such as knitting, arts and cooking
- Pride groups
- Group for older LGBT people

The list goes on...

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So once you have chosen what group you would like, there are a few next steps you can take  
Initial advertising

### *First Steps*

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Before you even set anything up– you can gauge how many people might be interested. Set up a new specific e-mail such as [groupname@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:groupname@hotmail.co.uk) (not advisable to advertise your personal details!) then your good to go. Write a short piece on what your new group is, who it's for and when it might meet and get sending.

You can send it to:

A group you already know of,

A local LGBT group with different aims but a similar membership (look on the [www.lgbtcollective.org.uk](http://www.lgbtcollective.org.uk) for groups)

You can also advertise on [www.lgbtcollective.org.uk](http://www.lgbtcollective.org.uk) or gaynews.uk or any other LGBT websites that except local press releases or listings.

Putting up posters or flyer is a good idea to – but remember – don't put your own personal contact details on it!

### *Venues*

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Once you have had interest (don't lose heart this bit can take a while) it's time to decide where you want to meet. Obviously if you're starting an outdoor pursuits group then regular venues are not really going to be an issue but you will still need to meet initially to chat to new members about the group and how it will move forward.

Contact your local community centre, village hall, pub, cafe etc and see if they mind you meeting there, the latter two suggestions will probably be pleased to have your business but you need to consider if meeting in such a public place might put some people off!

Some community centres and village halls like to support new community groups by letting them use their facilities for free initially, until the group gets on its feet – if your local centre or hall doesn't do this – suggest it, or see if you can trade some volunteer hours in exchange for a meeting room.

You can also contact your local Volunteer centre to ask if they know of anywhere. Try and avoid putting your hand in your pocket for hire costs – it's a slippery slope when you start spending your own money!

The reality is that only one, or indeed no one at all may turn up to your first meeting. This happened to some of the groups that have now been running for years and have a very large membership when they first set up! The trick is to stick with it, word will get around and if you keep up the advertising then you should eventually draw some attention.

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However, it may just be that a fly fishing group in a land locked village with no water features for miles just isn't the place for such a group i.e. maybe your group isn't right for the area, maybe you can rethink and relaunch!

Believe it or not – if you get passed this stage and you now have some members you now have group! Now you need to start enjoying it!

### *What next?*

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If you want to apply for some money to help support the group, buy equipment for the group or hire a specific venue then you now need to start looking at the other documents in this section on the website.

Such as

- Structures for groups
- Simple rules for unincorporated groups
- Fundraising

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