

# Support for treasurers

You don't need to be a financial wizard to keep a group's accounts, and it can be a straightforward and satisfying job. Anyone can learn it – but you do need to know what is expected of you and feel confident you are doing it right. You don't have to do this on your own – the Resource Centre can give you lots of help. This is flexible, and can be designed to fit in with the time you've got available.

We can offer this support to volunteer-run groups based in Brighton & Hove which are:

- ◆ Tenants' or Residents' Associations for Brighton & Hove City Council tenants and leaseholders, and/or
- ◆ Groups run by and for people living in an area of social housing, and/or
- ◆ Groups run by and for black and minority ethnic people, and/or
- ◆ Groups run by and for disabled people.

If you think you may be eligible, contact us to find out whether we can help.

## First step – how to keep your books

The first step is to arrange to meet with someone from the Resource Centre. We'll organise a short session – about an hour and a half – to go through the practicalities of book-keeping and the basic role of the treasurer.

If you want to keep your accounts on a computer we'll help you set up a spreadsheet, or we can provide a ledger to write them up by hand.

Get in touch to arrange an appointment. Usually people come to the Resource Centre, but we are happy to arrange a time and place that suits you.

## Role of treasurer and the committee

It's useful to follow this up with a session to look at the role and responsibilities of the treasurer and the committee in more detail.

It's important that the committee overall, not just the treasurer, is aware of general financial principles, and has thought about how it wants to manage its money.

You might want to include other members of your committee in this session. If it's useful, we can come to a committee meeting.

## Review session

Sometimes people choose to come back after they've been keeping books for a month or so. This gives the chance to review how things are going and pick up on any problems or questions. We can do this several times if it's helpful.

## Troubleshooting

If you find you've got a problem with your books, don't panic! It's not uncommon for people to get a bit behind entering things up, or to have a problem getting the accounts to balance.

Often people feel really anxious if the accounts have got a bit out of control and want to pretend it's not happening. This is never a good idea – it will only get worse if left.

The Resource Centre is here to support you, and our focus is always on helping your group. We're independent and neutral, and have a lot of experience. We know the mistakes people are likely to make, and how to put them right. So don't worry alone, ring us as soon as you spot a problem and get help resolving it.

## Independent Examination of Accounts

Once a year, the Resource Centre can do an independent examination of your books. This means we look through everything you've done over the year, and produce a statement for a group meeting – usually the Annual General meeting. If there are any problems we will discuss them with you, and look at ways to improve.

From your point of view, this means you have a clear, independent report to present to a meeting. It shows that you've kept the books well and can account for any grants you've received, and that it's not just you saying this. If your group is getting a grant from the Council they will ask you to have your accounts examined once a year as a condition of the grant.

## More information

For support with keeping books for your group, get in touch.

You may also find some information you're looking for on these other information sheets about keeping accounts. You can find them on our website, or ask us for a paper copy.

- ♦ Role of the Treasurer
- ♦ Your group's money
- ♦ Financial rules
- ♦ Examination of accounts
- ♦ Independent examinations of accounts at the Resource Centre