

The information below is an overview of requirements and for further more detailed information, support and guidance plus associated templates etc please contact the BVA Group Development team via telephone 01256 423816 or email admin@bvaction.org.uk (please quote "BVA Group Assistance" in title). www.bvaction.org.uk

All organisations should be actively involved within their community and have a clear operating guide regarding services for members plus a planned schedule of events and activities. If Advice, Information and Guidance is provided then knowledge must be maintained and demonstrated. Networking with other relevant organisations must be established and maintained.

Operating Guide

The organisation has an operating guide outlining its services.

What is required?

An operating guide is a simple document that describes your services and standards and is published for staff, volunteers and users to see. It will include such things as a calendar, timetable of events, opening times, services provided, expected standards of behaviour by users, limitations of the service (what it can and cannot do), and contact details. The document will be as detailed as is necessary but should be clear and regularly updated.

In some circumstances it may include guidelines for users or a simple "contract" stating roles and responsibilities, what the organisation will do for clients and users and what they will do in return.

It should be a useful document and source of reference that brings a lot of basic information in one place. The guide should be either online or available on view in the premises with a date it was published plus review date visible.

Information, Advice & Guidance

If organisations give IAG this is delivered to a quality assured standard.

What is required?

Information, Advice and Guidance is an essential delivery activity for many charities and community groups which must be delivered consistently to a quality level with robust information systems to support the information given.

Organisations should consider what type is provided and ensure that there is a policy or detailed procedure read and understood by management and staff. IAG should be spot checked and staff and volunteers reminded of its importance at reviews. Client feedback should be sought via feedback mechanisms.

Networking

As organisations develop it is important that they link with other groups to get and provide mutual support. There are often several groups with similar objectives and users may attend more than one group.

Duplication of services may be valid; however some funders and statutory agencies may encourage joint working.

In the long term it may be in the financial interest of an organisation to consider sharing the costs of resources, training and activities.

Across the voluntary and community sector as a whole, groups will find that they share similar difficulties and sharing problems can make it easier to find solutions.

Working with other organisations can also improve access to local knowledge and increase the likelihood of finding out about opportunities.

Organisations should maintain a record of relevant meetings associated networking (Especially local Borough Council or Voluntary Services team) and ensure these are discussed at committee meetings.

Promotion and Publicity

Promotion and Publicity is key to any organisation and should be planned and managed effectively.

See Guide 4.3 – In development

Event organisation

Events can be great ways of promoting services and raising funds but should be considered carefully and planned correctly.

See Guide 4.4