COMMITTEE MATTERS
A GUIDE FOR VOLUNTEERS RUNNING DIABETES UK LOCAL GROUPS

SEPTEMBER 2015

DIABETES UK
CARE. CONNECT. CAMPAIGN.
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ABOUT THIS PACK

Local groups are at the heart of everything we do. You are our voice and our face in local communities. You inform our work and influence how we develop our services. You make a difference to people affected by diabetes by providing support where and when they need it.

This welcome pack takes you through the basic information that you need to successfully set up and manage your local group and make it effective, accessible and enjoyable.

You can always get more information, support and advice from your local volunteering team. You will find out more about our work later in this pack, but please ask us about anything to do with your group. We are here to make your group successful and to make your role as easy as possible.

To help you run your local group we have also developed a lot of helpful documents which are available on the Diabetes UK website in a section called the Local Groups Portal (to find the portal click on the dark blue tab ‘Get involved’; click on ‘Volunteering’ in the drop down list; click on ‘Local Groups Portal’ in the left hand column). These should be used alongside this pack. Please let us know if there are other resources you would like to see on the portal so we can make sure that you have everything you need.

This pack is divided into sections and there is a list of useful resources at the end of each one. Unless otherwise stated, these are documents or sections on the Local Groups Portal.

We hope you find your role enjoyable and rewarding and look forward to working with you to continue to develop your local group as you provide the vital support that people with diabetes in your community want and need.

Thank you for giving your time to help Diabetes UK. We cannot reach and improve the lives of people with diabetes without you.

From the Volunteering Development Team
WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

About Diabetes UK

We are the UK’s leading diabetes charity.

We care for, connect with and campaign alongside and on behalf of all people affected by and at risk of diabetes.

We help people manage their diabetes effectively by providing information, advice and support.

We campaign alongside people with diabetes and with healthcare professionals to improve the quality of care across the UK’s health services.

We fund pioneering research into care, cure and prevention for all types of diabetes.

We work to prevent the rising number of people diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes through risk assessment, early diagnosis, and by communicating how healthy lifestyle choices can help many people avoid or delay its onset.

One of our main aims is to support and serve more people with diabetes and their families. We want to improve education and emotional support for people to manage their condition effectively.

This is where Diabetes UK local groups and people like you come in. Welcome to your new role.

Local groups

Local groups are varied. There is no typical group.

Some groups support families, some only work with adults and some provide support to adults, families and children. Some groups focus on Type 1 diabetes, some on Type 2 and some on both.

Some groups meet monthly, others quarterly, some have very formal meetings with speakers, and others are Facebook based and just get together in a pub to chat every now and again.

The key thing is to find a style that works for you and the people you are trying to support.

CASE STUDIES

MK Kids is a group run by and for families. The group arranges different activities for children with diabetes including rock climbing and go-karting but also organises events for parents where they can come together and share experiences.

The Rushmoor Group supports the local Nepali community. Rushmoor has a large Nepali population due to its links to the Ghurka regiments of the British Army. The group provides support and advice in Nepali, runs awareness events and also organises fundraising activities.

The Brighton Group supports adults with diabetes in the city. The group arranges regular meetings and events that focus on education including visits to the local diabetes research team, who are working on research funded by Diabetes UK. They also arrange social activities such as ten-pin bowling and barbecues. The group has a website and a Facebook page.
What do Diabetes UK local groups do?
Although every group is different, all provide three activities.

Support and information
Sometimes there is nothing better than support from people with similar experiences. Your group helps us to bring more people with diabetes together, to share informal support, information, understanding and friendship.

“I was so alone and unhappy when diagnosed with diabetes, joining the group felt like meeting family, people who knew what I was going through, people who took me in and cared for me, they were there for me.” Group member, Scotland

“This group made a big difference in my life and I look forward to each session. I live with a few long-term medical conditions and I know without the support from this group I would have felt lonely. I feel that I am able to get support from other members and I made new friends.

It is better to share our stories and listen to others too. We learn many things by talking to others with the same problems.” Group member, Berkshire

Raise awareness
Your group raises awareness and public knowledge of diabetes and Diabetes UK locally. There are lots of ways of doing this. Your local volunteering team helps you to make the most impact and spread understanding of diabetes to as many people as possible.

CASE STUDIES
The Wimbledon Group had a stall at a family fun day and handed out information and talked to people attending. As a family event, there were lots of parents of young children present, including some who had recently been diagnosed with diabetes and had received no support. The volunteers were able to let these parents know where to get more advice and support.

Once a year the East Berkshire Diabetes UK Group has a stall at their local farmers’ market. All of the market stall holders give their customers a raffle ticket and tell them to visit the Diabetes UK stall to check whether they have won a prize. This brings lots of people to the stall where volunteers talk about diabetes and encourage people to have a diabetes risk assessment carried out.
Fundraise

Your group will fundraise to support your activities. You may also raise funds to support the work of Diabetes UK. Over the years groups such as yours have raised funds which have gone towards a range of pioneering diabetes research projects.

CASE STUDY

The Chesterfield & North Derbyshire Diabetes UK Group

Working with their local Tesco Metro store, this local group is a great example of how you can increase fundraising by being creative.

The group has organised specific events linked to important dates, such as:

- selling lavender bags for Valentine’s Day and Mother’s Day
- holding a guess the name of the bunny for Easter
- making and selling reindeer food for Christmas
- selling Tesco/Diabetes UK merchandise.

In six months the group has raised more than £4,000 for Diabetes UK.

Other activities

Some groups choose to provide extra activities such as campaigning and providing services directly to people with diabetes through advocacy or peer support. Your local volunteering team can provide you with more information about how to do this if you are interested.

CASE STUDIES

The South Tyneside Diabetes UK Group

Campaigned for the reopening of one-stop-shop diabetes centres in their area. They campaigned with local health professionals and publicised their aims using the local press. Nine years after the campaign started, three new centres were opened in South Tyneside.

A local GP explained the impact of the campaign.

“This important step means better care, a more personal service with less hassle for the patient. Nine different tests are available at one appointment. This means that GPs are able to spend more time with patients, planning their care together with a full set of results at hand. Lives will be saved as a result.”

The West Lothian Group organise Question and Answer sessions at which local Health Care Professionals answer questions on diabetes care and services in the local area. The group also run exercise workshops to support people to become more active and manage their weight.

The Brentwood Group offer a ‘buddy’ system. A person diagnosed with diabetes, or a parent of a child diagnosed with the condition, can request support from someone who has already experienced the shock of diagnosis and the impact of living with diabetes. The group have worked with their local GP surgeries to promote this service.

Whatever you choose to do, we will help you think about your options and to understand and celebrate what you have achieved. We will also be there to help you to grow and develop your services to reach as many people as possible.
ABOUT YOUR COMMITTEE

Each local group has an elected committee. Each committee has at least three members, the Chair, Treasurer and Secretary.

Different committees may allocate activities differently, but in general:

The role of the Chair includes to:
- lead your local group and co-ordinate the work of your committee and group members
- chair committee and group meetings, including an Annual General Meeting (AGM)
- actively promote the work of your group and look for new ways to reach more people with diabetes
- think about how your group can be sustained
- represent your local group within Diabetes UK and externally.

The role of the Treasurer includes to:
- keep up-to-date records of income and expenditure including receipts
- check your group’s records match the amount of money held in your bank account and tell the committee if there are any errors
- attend local group meetings and the AGM and provide financial updates, as required
- complete an annual report about the finances of the local group and send it to the Diabetes UK head office.

The role of the Secretary includes to:
- keep records of membership and activities
- help to organise meetings, taking notes and minutes
- help with publicity for the group, such as flyers and newsletters.

There is a lot more information about these roles in the written role description.

Organisation

Many groups also have other committee roles. These include:
- Vice-chair – chairs meetings if the Chair is unable to attend
- Membership secretary – keeps records of current membership
- Minutes secretary – takes notes at committee and local group meetings
- Publicity and Recruitment committees – develop materials and plans for increasing membership and manage any social media such as Facebook
- Fundraising secretary – arranges and keeps records of fundraising activities
- Website editor – keeps your website up-to-date and interesting.

Big committees are strong committees – encourage as many people as possible to become active within your committee. As well as providing extra ideas and experience and helping to spread the workload, having lots of committee members helps with making your local group sustainable.

Develop new committee roles based on the needs of your local group and the interests of new committee members. See what skills your members have – lots of people have hidden talents that may be useful to your group.

TOP TIP: Ask people directly to join your committee. A personal approach is often very effective.
**Communication and contact**

Your committee agrees who acts as the main contact for your local group. People need to know how and who to call or email.

Your main contact receives information from your local volunteering team and others within Diabetes UK so it’s important that they are comfortable with email and well organised.

Your committee also decide how you communicate what you are doing. For example:

- how do you let members of your local group know about important and interesting information about diabetes and Diabetes UK?
- do you want to produce a local newsletter?
- do you have a website and, if so, who will look after it?
- do you use social media (for example Facebook) to provide support and publicity?
- how many and what type of meetings you organise for your members?

**TOP TIP: If someone stops coming to meetings then give them a friendly call to see if everything is OK.**

All local groups hold an Annual General Meeting every year and most committees organise a regular programme of activities and meetings through the year. You decide how often you should meet, where and when.

You also agree how often your committee meets and how you communicate between meetings. Although you do not need to take detailed notes of committee meetings, the main decisions should be recorded.

**TOP TIP: “If you are taking over a committee role make sure you get a list of all important contacts from the previous committee member. Also make sure you get the passwords to email accounts and websites.” **
Chair, North Down and Ards Group

**Promoting your group**

Your committee acts as the voice of your local group. The things you say and the actions you take help to raise awareness of your group and attract new members from your local community.

Promoting your group can take many forms – some seem obvious, such as putting up posters. Ask to put them up in GP surgeries and your local diabetes clinic as well as public venues like libraries and community centres.

Some promotion may require more thought and planning, for example getting coverage in your local papers or local radio.

“**We linked with our local MPs, they included details of our group within the newsletter they send to all constituents.**”
Committee member, London

**CASE STUDY**

The St Edmundsbury Group in Suffolk have worked with their local Health Commissioners so that they attend NHS Type 2 diabetes self-management courses in their area. The group give information to attendees and talk about their group and Diabetes UK during breaks in the course.

**TOP TIP: See if you can get a news story about your group in your local paper – people read the news pages much more than the adverts.**
**Representing your group**

It’s important that the voices of people with diabetes are heard by policy makers, service providers and the public. The stories and experiences of your group members are a very powerful way of making sure that people understand diabetes.

**CASE STUDY**

The Moray Group in Scotland sits on a number of local health board committees, including patient focus groups and the managed clinical network for diabetes, where diabetes care and services are discussed with clinical staff and other relevant organisations. The group represents Diabetes Scotland at these meetings.

You may be asked to find people to join advisory or consultation groups or to comment on ideas and proposals on behalf of your members. Please let your local volunteering team know when you are asked to be involved in this way so we can link with other influencing work going on locally and offer support.

Your local volunteering team will ask for your thoughts and views on the work of Diabetes UK. You may also be invited to attend meetings and conferences to represent your group.

“I’ve built up relationships with diabetes specialists and commissioners in our city and we’re all working together to continuously improve diabetes services. All the hard work the group puts in is recognised and those in charge of diabetes care in Sheffield are now seeking out our input.”
Committee member, Sheffield

“In meetings with commissioners and medical professionals I enjoy representing the views of others and giving them a voice.”
Committee member, Southampton

**Representing Diabetes UK**

Diabetes UK talks a certain way – we do this to reflect the wishes of our members. We talk about diabetes in a way that is straightforward and respectful of people with diabetes.

For example, we don’t use the term diabetic. We talk about someone with diabetes and we describe diabetes as a condition not a disease.

We also look a certain way – our logo tells people who we are and what we do.

You should always use our logo on your materials – please contact your local volunteering team if you want us to provide your local group with its own logo and we can arrange this for you.

It’s a good idea to read our guidance about how we talk and look to help us get our message across.

**Understanding the Group Agreement**

Your Local Group Agreement sets out expectations between Diabetes UK and your group. It provides information about the support provided for your group and what is expected from you. It’s really important that you read and understand the Local Group Agreement.

Your local volunteering team will discuss the Local Group Agreement with you and answer any questions that you have about what it says.

**Group money**

The committee plans, with group members, how the money in your bank account is used. The decision to spend should be recorded in meeting minutes for transparency. Further information on managing finances is in the Money matters section of this guide.
Reporting your achievements

Your group reports on what you have done once a year. You are sent a reporting pack in October or November every year. This includes forms and guidance to help you to complete your report by the end of the following January.

This report has two parts

1. An Annual Return showing how much money you have raised and spent from January to December, and includes information about what cash you hold as petty cash or in the bank.

2. An Achievements and Activity report. A short report on your group’s activities in the local community and key achievements for the year.

Your local volunteering team helps you to complete your report.

TOP TIP: Good record keeping throughout the year makes completing these reports easy. Make sure your committee regularly discusses and records your progress. Is all of the information about what you have done and achieved and how much money you have raised and spent up-to-date and easy to get to?

Training

Training is a great way of meeting other committee members and developing your skills and knowledge. Diabetes UK offers a range of training activities to help your committee, including a course on attracting and welcoming new members. Talk to your local volunteering team for more information about the training available to you.

Useful resources

- Local Group Agreement
- Working with Diabetes UK
- Recruiting a volunteer committee
- Promoting your group section
- Brand guidelines
- Group reporting and funding guidance

“Meeting often has given me a lot more insight into the group and to know that my views matter to the group.” Committee member, London
PRACTICAL THINGS TO DO FOR NEW LOCAL GROUPS

If you are setting up a new group there are some practical steps you need to take.

Opening a bank account

Each local group requires a dedicated bank account under our umbrella banking scheme to pay for your activities. Each bank account needs a minimum of three signatories. These are usually the Chair, Treasurer and Secretary.

Your bank account is organised by the Diabetes UK head office. In order to open an account your committee members need to complete a bank mandate form. A separate form needs to be completed if you want the facility to draw cash. All of the details about how to do this are sent to you by the volunteering team once the signed Local Group Agreement is received.

Your starter grant

Once your bank account is opened, Diabetes UK transfers a starter grant into the account to meet the costs of setting up your group. This is usually in your account when you start to use it.

Agreeing contact details

People with diabetes should be able to easily contact you and find out more about the support your group provides.

Your group should have a contact telephone number and an email address.

Your phone

We recommend that you buy one pay-as-you-go mobile phone to use as the main contact number for your local group. This has two big advantages to using your own phone:

1. it keeps the boundaries between the local group and your personal life
2. it means that the contact number remains constant when committee members change – reducing confusion and cost.

We recommend that at least two committee members agree to deal with phone calls to provide cover for holidays or illness.

Your email

An email address should be set up especially for your group. It should have a general format, eg groupname@gmail.com. Make sure you agree who is going to monitor and answer emails.

We recommend that at least two committee members have access to the email.

TOP TIP: Make sure the email address is easy to remember and short.

TOP TIP: Have named people to call by phone – it’s easier for someone to call you if they know the name of who they will be speaking to. For example, on your website you could write “To find out more about what we do, call Dave or Lucy on 07777 123 456.”

Don’t forget to let Diabetes UK know these details so that we can promote your group through the main website. Fill in the New Group Information Sheet and return it to your local volunteering team.

“Being chair has taught me many things and shown me how many people are affected by diabetes and how much more there is to be done in improving awareness.” Committee member, Berkshire
Your website
We strongly recommend that you have a website for your local group. Your local volunteering team can provide you with a prepared website template which you add local details to.

Updating and editing the website template is simple but you need to find someone who is happy and confident using a computer to do this. If you can use a computer to upload photos and videos to Facebook and use online banking, you have the skills to update the website.

Please talk to your local volunteering team about setting up a website.

Appointing a safeguarding point of contact
Your group needs a safeguarding point of contact. This person may be one of the committee or another group member. Their role is to promote safeguarding knowledge amongst your members and to liaise with your local office about any safeguarding concerns.

Your local volunteering team can put you in contact with your local safeguarding lead to discuss this role in more detail.

Welcoming new members
You want new members of your group to feel welcome and have all the information they need about what they can do to get and give support. You have spent time, energy and money on trying to attract new people to join so you really want to encourage them to stay in contact and become active.

It’s a good idea to give new members a welcome pack which provides more information about your local group.

There are more ideas for welcoming new members in the People Matters section of this pack.

Useful resources
- New group information sheet
- The launch event
- Local group website agreement
- Local group website user guide
- Welcome pack for new members template
PRACTICAL THINGS TO DO WHEN COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

When a committee member changes there are some practical things that need to be done to allow the group to continue to run without any disruption.

Updating Group Information Form

We need to know who the new committee members and bank account signatories are for your group. After any change in your committee or if your safeguarding lead changes, there is a simple form for you to complete and send to Diabetes UK’s head office.

Changing signatories on bank account

Your group’s bank account requires at least two signatures to make any withdrawals or payments. Your new signatories need to complete a bank mandate to allow them to sign cheques.

Updating publicity materials

Check that all of your publicity materials have got the right phone number and email address on them. Hopefully, your group bought a pay-as-you-go phone and has a group email address so contact details will be unchanged. Nice and easy – but you need the password for the email though!

Sometimes a local group may have used a personal telephone number and email address as contacts. If this is the case then you need to change these and add details of your new main contact.

Think about what information you need to change. This could include:

- posters and flyers in clinics, surgeries, libraries, places of worship and other public places
- information packs your local diabetes clinic gives to newly diagnosed people with diabetes
- information on health support groups held by your local council
- information in a welcome pack for new local group members.
- Diabetes UK website – search using Google for your local group and see what comes up – you may be surprised!

Safeguarding

Your group needs to have a safeguarding point of contact. If the current person is remaining in their role then you should arrange to meet them to understand their role and make sure you are both clear about how to handle any safeguarding concerns. If a new safeguarding point of contact has been appointed or is required you should talk to your local volunteering team about the role and the training and support they need.

Letting your group members know

If you are new to a committee it’s a good idea to let your members know a bit about you, especially if they weren’t at the meeting where you were elected. The easiest way to do this is by email or by putting something in your local newsletter (if you have one).

Useful resources

- Updating group information form

“Make a plan! Set yourself goals for three, six and 12 months and try to meet as many of them as possible.” Committee member, Sheffield
For example, you could send an email to all of your members like this:

**Hello**

I am emailing you to introduce myself as the new Secretary of the Anytown Diabetes UK local group. I’m really pleased to have been elected to the position and to have the chance to help us build an even stronger and more active group.

For those of you who don’t know me, I live on Anytown Road and I have recently retired from working as a classroom assistant in Anytown Primary School. I have Type 2 diabetes, which was diagnosed five years ago and have been a member of the Diabetes UK group for the past three and a half years.

As Secretary I really want to make sure that you know what is going on in the group and to pass your thoughts on to the other committee members.

We know that there are around 1,000 people with diabetes in Anytown who have never been in contact with our group, so I hope to organise more publicity for our activities. I’d really like to hear from anyone who would be interested in helping with this – we will be discussing this at our next meeting on 7 July.

Please do contact me with any questions about the committee or your group. I can’t promise to have all the answers but I’ll go away and find them if I can or put you in contact with someone who can help. This is your group so we really want you to be involved and have a voice.

I’ll be picking up emails from this account every couple of days or you can leave a message on the group phone 07777 123 456.

Yours etc.
MONEY MATTERS

Your Treasurer has the main role in making sure that financial records are up-to-date and accurate. You do not need to be an accountant to be a Treasurer but you do need to be organised, good at record keeping and confident with numbers.

Here are some tips and information about money and your local group.

Fundraising

All local groups fundraise to support their activities. How much you spend and plan to fundraise varies from group to group.

You receive a starter grant from Diabetes UK when your group starts, but need to think of different ways of raising money locally too.

Many local groups have a fundraising committee to suggest and plan fundraising events.

The Local Group Finance Policy provides you with guidance about how to fundraise and manage your finances but there are a couple of really important points you need to know.

• You need the permission of the property owner or your local council if you want to organise a public collection. If you want to organise a street collection give plenty of notice to your local council.
• Wherever possible, any money you collect should be counted by two people. This helps to make sure that all records are accurate, shares responsibility and helps ensure accountability.
• If you want to apply for local grants or approach a local business for money, please speak to your local volunteering team first to ensure the organisation does not already have a relationship with the same funder. Please do not apply for any grants without talking to your local Diabetes UK office.

Fundraising for other parts of Diabetes UK

Many local groups also raise general funds for Diabetes UK. These funds are vital to support research, campaigns or information that we provide for people with diabetes.

You can influence how any money you raise is spent. For example, if you raise more than £1,000 you can adopt a research project. Your local volunteering team will explain how to donate funds to other parts of the charity.

The Diabetes UK website has an area dedicated to fundraising to inspire and help your group to go that extra mile to raise vital funds.

Financial records

You need to keep written records of money received (receipts) and money spent (payments).

The easiest way of doing this is using a cash book to record all receipts and payments as they happen. A sample spreadsheet that you can use is available on the Local Groups Portal.

Payments

Please keep the original invoices/receipts/petty cash slips for all payments entered into the cash book. If you give people cash for their expenses they should sign a petty cash slip to confirm receipt of the money. You do not need to send these to Diabetes UK but they do need to be retained for six years to comply with financial regulations.

It is also possible that our External Auditors could request them at the year end.
Money received (receipts)
Using duplicate receipt books is a useful way of helping to record income received. For example, if you are given a donation you can use the receipt book to log the amount and who gave it to you, and whether it was for something specific.

The donor then takes a copy as acknowledgement from us of their donation and you retain a copy. You can then use this to log the details in your cash book at a later date.

A receipt book can be purchased at any stationery shop.

Review of bank statements
It is useful for you to check the transactions you have logged in the cash book against your bank statement at least once a quarter. This makes sure your records are correct and allows you to update your records if there are unexpected items, eg interest paid on your account.

If there are any unexplained differences, you should talk to your local volunteering team.

By reviewing throughout the year, you can find and solve any differences quickly and easily. This makes the production of the Annual Report easier. If you have to log a lot of items each month you may check your records more often.

Cash
Think about when you may need petty cash. For example, if you are arranging an activity and want to pay travel expenses you need to have cash available.

Annual returns
Each year Diabetes UK has to produce a set of annual accounts. UK law says that these accounts have to accurately reflect the income and expenditure of the whole organisation including all the local groups.

The accounts have to be audited (checked) and sent to the Charity Commission and Companies House.

You will be sent information on this in October or November each year. It is important that your annual return is received by 1 February. This ensures that your figures are included in the annual accounts before the audit starts.

Reserves
Local groups may keep £3,000, or six months running costs, in their bank account at the end of the year. Each year local groups will be given a list of Diabetes UK work areas that they can support with their excess funds. This is included in the annual return process.

Useful resources
• Fundraise your way www.diabetes.org.uk/fundraise
• Local group finance policy
• Volunteer expenses policy
• Annual returns guidance booklet
• Adopt a Project www.diabetes.org.uk/Research/Our-research-projects/Adopt-a-Project
• Cash book spreadsheet example
RELATIONSHIP MATTERS

Getting to know people and having good relationships helps your local group be successful.

“Make as many local links as possible – GP practice managers, school staff, libraries, the police and local charities.”
Committee member, London

Local people with diabetes

Your most important relationship is with the people in your community who have diabetes, have a family member with diabetes or are interested in diabetes – after all, they are the people who your group is set up to support.

“I have learnt more about my daughter’s condition from this talk than I have done since we first found out she had diabetes. Thank you so much.”
Parent of a child with diabetes who attended a public talk, London.

You should ensure that members understand the purpose of your group and your committee roles and receive all of the information they need to encourage them to get involved. Let members know that you want them to contribute their thoughts and that different ideas and views are listened to. Differences of opinion should be accepted as being normal and useful unless they become disruptive.

Health services

It’s really helpful for your local group to have good links with your local diabetes team and GP surgeries. They are the people who can recommend the group to people with diabetes and to let you know about interesting opportunities for your group members to be involved in consultations and discussions about services.

CASE STUDY

The Norwich and District Youth Group bought ‘Carbs & Cals’ books that were given to children who were newly diagnosed with diabetes at their local clinic. They added a small note about their group in each book and a gift voucher in order to make newly diagnosed children and their families aware of the group.

Make it easy for professionals to find out about your group.

• Talk to your diabetes nurse or doctor about your new role and the group.
• Suggest that someone attends one of their team meetings to talk about your group.
• Invite clinic staff to talk to your group or provide information for your website.
• Explain how your group can help to support the work of medical professionals.
• Most GPs attend learning network events – ask your practice whether your GP could take some leaflets about your group with him or her to the next event.

CASE STUDY

The Brentwood Group have got their local pharmacies to put a flyer about their group into the bag with each diabetes prescription they dispense.

Make sure that your local group’s contact details are available in clinics and surgeries and ask for them to be included in information that people who are newly diagnosed with diabetes receive.
Your local Diabetes UK team

Your group is part of Diabetes UK and we are committed to supporting your group and your members. You should have regular contact with your local volunteering team. Their role is to support the development of local groups, providing advice and making it easy for you to share helpful information and experiences.

Your local volunteering team arrange networking days where local group committees share experiences and offer peer support. These usually take place at least once a year and you will be invited to attend.

Talk to other local group committee members whenever you get the chance – they can give you tips and ideas that will make your role easier and more rewarding.

At least once a quarter your local volunteering team will get in contact to find out how your local group is doing, give you updates from the rest of the organisation and to offer more support where needed.

“It is truly humbling to see the amount of work which our local groups put into all of their activities. They are passionate and committed to what they do and are always ready to go the extra mile to help someone in need. They spend long hours planning and preparing meetings and attending events. I am always delighted to be asked to go along to a local group meeting. We do not always get it right but there is a recognition that we are all working towards the same goals. It’s the best job I ever had!” Volunteer Development Manager, Scotland

Useful resources

- Welcome pack for new members template
- Developing local links and attracting members to your group
- How to develop links with the NHS
- Working with Diabetes UK

TOP TIP: Try to attend an activity or meeting organised by another local group to see how they do things and build relationships – ask your local volunteering team for suggestions.
Many local groups hold regular meetings to offer support and hear from interesting speakers. Your committee plans and arranges every meeting and makes sure that everything runs smoothly.

Remember to publicise every meeting to new and existing members. Send reminders to your current members and arrange for information to go on websites and in public places.

It’s a good idea to double check everything a week before – including calling the venue to check that all is still in order. If you are using a public venue like a pub or hotel it’s always worth checking that they don’t have anything else booked for the same time and will be open.

Agree who invites any speakers and make sure that everything that they need is available on the day.

During the meeting the role of the Chair is to make sure that everything runs smoothly. For example to:

• make sure new members are welcomed to the group
• involve members in discussions
• welcome and introduce any speakers
• make sure the meetings run to time.

At the meeting collect the names of the members who attend and make sure that any new members complete a new member registration form or give you their contact details.

Someone also needs to take brief notes of the meeting. These don’t need to be detailed minutes, just enough information to allow your committee to provide an accurate report on your group’s activity at the end of the year and record any decisions. A sample note could be:

*Debbie Wilson, the Diabetes Specialist Nurse at Anytown, talked about the changes to clinic hours and the ways that people with diabetes could get advice over the internet. She invited two people to join an advisory group to look at future changes. It was agreed that Anwar and Farooq would join the group.*

Once a year you hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM). The AGM allows your local group to review and celebrate what you have achieved.

You need to make sure that you invite all of your members to the AGM and give plenty of notice.

At the AGM the Chair reports on the activities of the group and the Treasurer reports on finances.

The AGM also has a more formal role to play as it is where the Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, and other committee members, are elected.

Following the AGM you should send details of any changes to your committee, and other group members, to your local volunteering team.

**Useful Resources**

• Running successful group activities
• Planning template for group activities
• Holding an AGM
PEOPLE MATTERS

Inclusion

Think about how you can make your local group open and easy to join. Being an inclusive group helps to attract new members and makes sure that anyone who wants to contribute feels welcomed.

Being inclusive is thinking about and respecting differences and treating others as you would wish to be treated.

It’s about much more than where you hold meetings and whether it is easy for your members to get to and get into the venue (although these are important). It’s also about the images you use on your publicity, the language you use and how you welcome and involve people.

Think about whether there are any barriers to joining your activities – for example could you provide childcare to allow parents to join in.

Comments from your group

You may also have to deal with comments within your group, for example two members may have a disagreement.

If a group member makes a complaint against you or another committee member you should let your local volunteering team know as soon as possible so that they can support you while the complaint is dealt with.

If a group member makes a complaint against another group member your committee should think about whether you could reasonably try to resolve the issue.

If you decide to try to resolve the issue here are some tips.

• Ask the two people involved to talk to each other to sort it out. Could they sit down together and discuss what has happened to understand each other’s point of view?
• If a personality clash is affecting other members of your group, for example if it disrupts meetings, then you should arrange a time to talk to the people involved and explain the impact of their behaviour.
• Avoid agreeing with either person or being seen to take sides.
• Avoid becoming a messenger, eg “He says that you said...”.

It’s a good idea to let your local volunteering team know whenever you are dealing with any personality clashes in your group.

Please note that if a complaint is about safeguarding children or adults at risk you must never investigate but should contact your group’s safeguarding point of contact.

If you are unhappy with Diabetes UK, please talk to your local volunteering team. They will help you to resolve your complaint.

If you get positive comments, about your local group or Diabetes UK, please also pass these on to your local volunteering team.

Useful resources

• Volunteer equal opportunities policy
• Diabetes UK complaints procedure www.diabetes.org.uk/Get_involved/ways-to-donate/Diabetes-UK-complaints-procedure

CASE STUDY

The Carshalton Group has traditionally met on a Friday afternoon. They realised that they were not supporting those living with diabetes who were still working and so arranged another meeting every other month in the evening.

Potential members look at your materials and decide whether your group looks like something for them. Think about what your words and pictures say about your group and remember that lots of people do not read English well so may feel excluded if you use lots of jargon and unnecessarily complicated language. Choose your words to suit your audience.

Comments from the public

As a representative of Diabetes UK you may find that people wish to talk to you about services they have received from the charity.

Remember you do not have to have an answer to every question. If you are unsure ask people to call us or go to our website.

If someone wants to complain about Diabetes UK they should call 0345 123 2399.* Alternatively, you should take their name and contact details and pass them through to your local volunteering team as soon as possible. More details on complaints are on our website.
LEGAL MATTERS

Safeguarding

Safeguarding children and adults at risk is an essential part of the work that Diabetes UK does and is part of the work of everyone who volunteers or works for us.

Safeguarding is taking a common sense approach to the activities you organise by thinking about how you will keep any children or adults at risk safe from harm and understanding what you need to do if you are worried about the safety or well-being of one of your members.

Your group should have a safeguarding point of contact for information and enquiries. You should make sure that you talk to them when an activity is being planned.

If a safeguarding issue crops up your role is to make sure that any concerns are reported – if you do this then you are helping to protect children and adults at risk. Your group should never try to investigate or resolve a safeguarding issue.

Examples of safeguarding concerns that should be reported:

• a member expresses a wish to harm themselves or others
• a member says that someone is stealing their money
• you notice that a child or adult has unexplained injuries
• a child or vulnerable adult is harmed at an activity you have organised
• a concern about the welfare of another member of the group.

Insurance

The activities you organise are covered by Diabetes UK’s Public Liability Insurance. This means that if anyone is hurt at an event you have organised your group is insured against any claim for damages.

The insurance does not cover some activities which are seen as being dangerous. For any new or unusual activity you will need to check there is insurance coverage with Diabetes UK, through your local volunteering team, and complete a risk assessment before the event. Our insurer will need a copy of the risk assessment if a claim is made. An example of a risk assessment form is given at the end of this pack. If you are using a third party to deliver an activity you will need to check that third party’s insurance cover.

You receive a copy of the Public Liability Insurance certificate every year and should ensure this is stored safely.

Health and Safety and Risk Management

As the committee of your local group, you need to make sure that you use common sense when arranging activities. This is the basis of Health and Safety and Risk Assessments.

The responsibilities of your committee are:

• to understand how to assess and record risk associated
• to report any accidents or near misses.

For some activities you are asked to carry out a risk assessment. This is really easy to do and your local volunteering team will help you with any questions you have.

CARRYING OUT A RISK ASSESSMENT IS IMPORTANT FOR TWO MAIN REASONS.

1. It reduces the chances of someone being harmed at an event or activity you have organised.

2. It helps to make sure that you are covered by Diabetes UK’s Insurance.

An example of a risk assessment is included at the end of this pack.
Data Protection

The Data Protection Act sets rules about how personal information must be stored and used. Within your local group you are likely to have access to some of your members’ personal information such as names, addresses, phone numbers and medical information.

**Your committee should understand:**
- what is meant by personal and sensitive data
- our guidance about how to obtain, process, and retain any personal or sensitive data
- how to report any loss of data.

Further information is in the Local Groups Portal along with the ICO guidance on data protection which can be found here: [www.ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/data-protection-principles](http://www.ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/data-protection-principles)

**The main things that you need to know about data protection.**
- Let people know that information they give you will be stored by you.
- Don’t use the information for anything apart from local group activities.
- Keep all personal information safe and in one place, ideally in a locked drawer or box.
- If you keep records on a computer use a password on your documents.
- Never leave any personal information lying around where others could pick it up.
- Once a year remove the details of any people who are no longer involved in your local group.
- If you keep phone numbers on your phone, make sure you only use first names or initials.
- Never record information about someone’s private life – for example their race, religion, sexual orientation or medical condition. This type of information is called sensitive data and UK law is very strict about how this must be handled.

Confidentiality

Although they have links, data protection and confidentiality are different. While data protection is a legal requirement, confidentiality is not covered or defined in the same way by UK law.

Keeping information confidential is a basic requirement for all groups – members need to know that any personal information they tell you will not be shared outside the group. Members need to be able to trust you to be discreet and sensitive.

Make sure that you avoid gossip or discussing group issues in public places. For example if you hold a committee meeting in a café or pub, make sure that you do not use members’ full names while discussing issues.

It’s good to remind people at the beginning of every meeting about your group’s approach to confidentiality.

**Useful resources**
- Volunteer insurance guidance
- Confidentiality and data protection policy
This checklist is mainly designed for when committee members change, but we recommend that every committee reviews it at least once a year to check that any changes have been recorded.

VDM – Volunteer Development Manager
VSO – Volunteer Support Officer

### Local volunteering team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of VDM:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phone number of VDM:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email of VDM:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of VSO:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phone number of VSO:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email of VSO:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Agree contact methods and expectations

### Local contacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main contact in diabetes clinic:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phone/email:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| GP link:                        |                  |
| Phone/email:                    |                  |

### Local Group Agreement

- Agree contact methods and expectations
- Read through and understand agreement

### Updating group information

- Complete and send to Diabetes UK

### Bank account

- Read and understand Groups Finance and Fundraising Policy
- Change signatories – complete UK Amendment Mandate Form
- Get and change passwords/pin numbers
- Check bank balance and budget for year

### Welcome pack/materials

- Change contact details in Welcome Pack/Publicity Materials

### Safeguarding

- Conversation with Safeguarding Lead in Local Office

### IT/phones

- Check and change passwords for email/website
- Update relevant information on website
- Check phone contact details (group phone) and answering arrangements
# Example Risk Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hazard</th>
<th>Who could be harmed and how?</th>
<th>Precautions to reduce hazard</th>
<th>Level of Risk (Low, Medium or High)</th>
<th>Is risk level acceptable?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to meeting</td>
<td>Adults with reduced mobility/ young children – trips and falls</td>
<td>Ground floor room used. Access ramp from car park to meeting room. Accessible toilet next to meeting room.</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catering</td>
<td>Children, adults – food allergies, food poisoning</td>
<td>Venue is preparing food. Hot food will be freshly prepared. Plates will be labelled to show content.</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illness</td>
<td>Members/audience – low blood glucose levels</td>
<td>Glucose drinks will be available. Food will be available before the meeting starts. Trained first-aider will be present.</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of young children</td>
<td>Children – slips, trips and falls</td>
<td>Parents to take responsibility for their children. Trailing cables will be secured to the floor using tape.</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lost/missing child</td>
<td>Childcare available from qualified childminder during meeting. All children will remain in the meeting room. All children to be accompanied by parent/carer if they need to go to the toilet.</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>