

## **Getting started**

## How to start a Soil Association local group

## The steps to take

- 1. Discuss the idea of setting up a local group with like-minded people (see *How to recruit and support members*). Look at other groups' newsletters to get an idea of the kind of things you might like your group to get involved in.
- 2. Decide on a time and venue for the first meeting and then prepare a poster or fliers to publicise it.
- 3. Put your posters up and distribute your fliers in health food shops, garden centres, libraries, health centres and community centres etc. You could contact other local community and green groups and invite them along to see what best practice ideas could be exchanged.
- 4. Contact your local newspaper and ask them to publish an invitation with details of the meeting. This should make sure that the information reaches as wide an audience as possible.
- 5. Before the meeting, prepare:
  - An agenda of things that need to be done at the meeting
  - A brief presentation of the kind of thing you think the group might get involved
  - Relevant materials and leaflets for people to look at
  - Plans for socialising after the meeting

- 6. At the meeting you could do the following:
  - Choose a name for your group
  - Take down the names, addresses and telephone numbers of all attendees
  - Decide how often you will meet and where and when the next meeting will take place
  - Elect officers, for example a Chair, Secretary and Treasurer
  - Brainstorm ideas for future meetings, including possible speakers, events and visits
  - Choose a team of people to put together your local group newsletter
- 7. Follow up the meeting by preparing minutes explaining what happened and what has been planned for the future.
- 8. Distribute these minutes to the outlets you used to promote the first meeting and ask for them to be displayed.
- 9. At the second meeting, adopt a set of rules or constitution then sign the local group charter to affiliate as a Soil Association local group. A copy of the charter is included here. Please contact us if you would like to discuss this further.