



LOCAL GROUPS HANDBOOK

Positive Money

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Why We Exist

MAKING OUR MOVEMENT

Right now the money and banking system isn't working for most people. It causes house price bubbles, high levels of debt, rising inequality and lays the foundations for financial and climate crises.

To deal with the big social, economic and environmental challenges we're facing today, we need to reform our money and banking system.

Positive Money's vision is for a money and banking system that enables a fair, democratic, and sustainable economy. We want to see investment in productive sectors of the real economy such as affordable

housing and green infrastructure, higher incomes, lower inequality and a fairer society. We believe everyone should be able to access their money and make payments without relying on the big banks. We want subsidies for big banks removed, and to grow a more diverse financial ecosystem with new and better models of banking at the fore.

To make these important things happen, together we need to build a connected, resourced and motivated network of supporters and activists to spread the word and demand change.

That's where you come in!



Purpose of Local Groups

Alongside Positive Money's office team, Positive Money local groups work together to campaign for change and to grow and empower a diverse network of activists who are campaigning for change!

Together we educate and empower people with facts about how our money and banking system really works, the problems it causes, and how it can and must work better. We influence people in power by supplying them with cutting-edge research and policies, getting attention in the media, building relationships with politicians, and making policy recommendations and interventions at the Bank of England, Treasury and Parliament.

Building Local Groups

WHAT WE DO TOGETHER

In order to retain regular and high numbers of attendees, it is important that groups both meet up regularly and organise outreach/campaign activities outside of the meetup. This helps people to feel that they are not only learning about how our money and banking system needs to urgently change, but they are also doing something to make change happen. This combination helps maintain momentum and commitment.

Our Community Culture

HOW WE WORK TOGETHER

At Positive Money, we believe:

“Culture eats strategy for breakfast”. Even with the best strategy and plan in the world, how we behave as individuals and together will make or break whether we achieve that strategy. This means we must reflect on our individual and group behaviour and purposefully nurture positive behaviour.

In empowering people. If you want to make something happen, go for it! We are a people-powered movement. We will achieve so much more together if each of us does what we can. So if you have a great idea, don't wait for someone else to do it or to give you permission to: brainstorm it with a friend then get going!

People are good. Most people are doing their best with good intentions.

In the power of open minds and constructive debate. We have a positive approach to people who challenge us. We embrace the complexity of the topic we deal with.

Our diversity is our strength. Background, knowledge, opinions, beliefs, political allegiances or not... we celebrate our diversity, are inclusive and recognise everyone's contribution as equal and important.

In providing a welcoming, safe and supportive environment to everyone of all ages, genders, sexual orientations, disability and ethnicity. Discrimination of any kind is unacceptable in the Positive Money movement.

Your Behaviour as a Core Team

IMPORTANT THINGS TO CONSIDER

To spread the load and build in resilience, Positive Money local groups operate a “core team” model: three to four people who are responsible for organising both the regular meetups and local outreach/campaign activities.

It’s worth meeting up periodically as a core team to plan a series of meetups (eg who’ll facilitate/present/prepare) or priorities for the few months or year ahead.

We advise each member of the core team take responsibility for a different aspect of organising the group, for example: your local mailing list, advertising your meetup, liaison with the office team or planning outreach activities. This helps ensure each person has a small workload, and helps drive group momentum.



Your Meetups

From years of local organising, here's how we suggest you organise your meetups:

Bring supporters in your area together regularly.

Bring supporters in your area together regularly. Either monthly, six weekly, or once every two months. This can be for any kind of campaign

A few refreshments will go a long way!

Consider having free tea and coffee (or fruit juice) and some light snacks available.

Choose a venue that will be accessible to everyone

we require that all regularly used venues have full disabled access and free drinking water.

Choose a welcoming venue in a central location.

Good signs are comfy chairs, natural light, easy to find, and of course a friendly, social vibe! Cafes, bookshops, or community spaces tend to work well.

The meetups should be free to attend.

If the venue has a hire cost, we recommend you ask your attendees to make a small donation towards it (eg £3-£5).

Choose one night and try and stick to it

7-9pm on a Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday tends to work best. Choose one night and try and stick to it.

Have a more casual social meetup now and again

For example, one at Christmas and one in summer. This gives members an opportunity to bond and renew enthusiasm for coming together to take action.

3 Key things you need to do every time you have a group meetup!



Have an official Positive Money signup form at the door and ask all new attendees to fill it in. Then take a clear picture of the sign ups and send them to info@positivemoney.org.uk after the meetup.



If you have any running costs, such as hiring the venue, remember to request small donations to cover them, so your local group stays sustainable!



Ensure one member of the core team starts by welcoming everyone to the space, explains what Positive Money is and the structure of the activity or meetup, and asks if anyone has any accessibility needs. For example, they may be colourblind or hard of hearing, so that could impact their ability to take part then take steps as best you can to adapt so they can fully participate.





Your meetups can have all sorts of activities but we recommend you alternate between...

ACTION MEETUPS

Where you do or plan an action which helps a specific current campaign, grows support for Positive Money or involves outreach to more people in your community.

LEARNING MEETUPS

Where you and attendees learn more about the problems our broken money and banking system causes, and ideas to make it a much fairer, more democratic and more sustainable system

Action meetups

Periodically the office team will coordinate and encourage all local groups to take part in a certain campaign action. But here are some action meetups we encourage you to organise yourselves:

- 1** Local festival or community event happening? Find out if you can hold a Positive Money stall! Several local groups hold stalls at events like the Miners Gala, Mayday festivals, Festivals of Ideas, local political party events and more!
- 2** Any universities in town? Reach out to their Rethinking Economics or history/politics/environment societies, and offer to host a talk or workshop.
- 3** Any other local community groups? Friends of the Earth, University of the Third Age, political parties, Quaker groups... contact them and offer an introductory talk about why they need to know about Positive Money. Do your homework and find out which specific Positive Money issues are most relevant to their interests.
- 4** Run a “presentations practice”: support each other to improve your presentation skills so you can deliver talks at other local civil society, political or youth groups. Wherever possible, deliver talks in pairs to support each other.
- 5** A petition push. Gather signatures for the latest Positive Money petition on your local highstreet or at local festivals or community events. Experiment with or role play which opening lines work best.
- 6** Plan a Positive Money demonstration in your area. This could be a stunt outside a bank branch (closed ones work too!), or a crowd-gathering spectacle in a public place that sends the right message. Positive Money’s head office sometimes coordinate with multiple local groups around the UK to make all the demonstrations happen together - giving our message a big people-powered boost. Remember to invite local journalists and any other influential commentators from your community who might share your story!
- 7** Meet with your MP. Call your local MP’s office and ask for a meeting to discuss one of our current campaigns. Please contact the office team so we can give you support on what to focus on when you contact them. We can also provide you with policy briefings to give them.
- 8** Get into your local media. Doing any of the above activities might be enough to interest your local newspaper or radio station, or you could submit an article directly. Remember to take photos which can be reused in the future and please let the staff team know if you’re featured in a news story so we can then share it even further.

Learning Meetups

- Invite a speaker from a local organisation to give a talk or run a workshop. This could be another campaign group, a university society, trade union... ask around your group to see who has good contacts locally, or do some research. You could also run a joint event with another group. This could halve your workload and double your audience simultaneously
- Host a screening of a documentary, interesting video or film. There are some great videos on the Positive Money website you can show to newcomers. And feel free to get in touch with us at HQ for some topical documentary suggestions. Popular past ones include “The Spider’s Web” and “The Big Short”.
- Hold an open discussion with your members on a popular subject. This could be current political or economic events, one of our active campaigns, or an interesting new research paper. Remember to ask attendees for their ideas and wishes too. A good tip is to ask for everyone’s views at both the start and end of the meeting - then you can find out if the debate changed anyone’s mind!
- ‘Get Creative’ and run a workshop! This could involve playing one of the popular games about how money is created, or getting out the pens and paper and sketching a group vision for all the changes you’d like to make to our economy.
- Run a group trip to an interesting play, art show or museum. This is an excellent way to get everyone together and try something new as a team!
- **Finally, remember you should always ask for ideas for meetups from your members and invite them to host one! This gives attendees ownership of the group, which helps to empower them and ensure they’ll come back. You can also check news headlines and Positive Money’s blog for comment pieces to help spark discussions.**

Empowering Everyone In Your Group

Within your local groups, you should try to harness people's passion for changing society for the better, by encouraging and creating opportunities for them to take action. This empowers group members, builds confidence, and gives meaning and momentum to the group. This is crucial for the long-term success of your local group.

The most obvious actions are:

- speaking opportunities at events or to other local civil society groups, events or to other
- meeting your local MP, on stalls or festivals.

Everyone should feel empowered to help create these opportunities and time should be dedicated to help practice and finesse the message you want to put across during local group events.

To support your group members in this, we recommend asking your more experienced and confident local group members to invite newer or less confident members to team up with them when representing Positive Money for the first time.

Then the more experienced person can be on hand to help if somebody approaches with a difficult question, or is behaving in an unhelpful or challenging way.

Facilitation Tips

As a local organiser and core team member, you represent the Positive Money community and are often the first point of contact for a new supporter. That means your behaviour can make/break whether they decide to engage with Positive Money in the future. So we ask you to be kind, considerate and respectful to everyone while you're involved with your local group.

Listening and friendliness are key skills which can go a long way to making people feel heard, welcomed and valued. As hosts of meetups, it's up to you to set the tone and structure of the evening. Some warm and clear opening words go a long way to helping people feel at ease, in good hands and aware of how the meetup will run.

Getting Started:



Allow a few minutes after the advertised starting time of the meeting - before the activities get going - for everyone to greet each other and settle in. We suggest around 15 minutes. This can be a nice time to offer refreshments too!



Introduce the topic/presenter/purpose of the evening. Explain how the evening will be structured and ask about accessibility needs. For example, "Shonan will give a presentation for 20 minutes, then we'll break out into discussion groups, before concluding with a Q&A. Does anyone have any accessibility needs?"



Ask these questions early on: "Is it anyone's first time at a Positive Money meetup? Welcome to the group! Would you like to introduce yourself?"



Let your members know beforehand if the meeting will include discussion about anything sensitive or controversial. Examples of sensitive subjects: exploitation, poverty, discrimination



Keep the conversation friendly and constructive:

Practice active listening (find tips here: [positivemoney.org/active-listening/](https://www.positivemoney.org/active-listening/))

Operate a “step forward, step back” policy:

“Would anybody who hasn’t said anything yet like to speak?”

“You’ve spoken for ten minutes, would anyone else like to share their

thoughts?” Encourage your attendees to welcome a diversity of viewpoints.

Staying on topic and on time :



Try to keep all discussion or activity on topic. When you sense someone is taking the discussion down a rabbit hole, you should intervene and bring the conversation back on topic - for example: “That risks taking us down a rabbit hole. Perhaps you could host a meetup on that another time, but for now let’s get back to the agreed topic for this evening.”



Add short breaks to the schedule between activities, to allow attendees to use the bathroom, get a drink, and chat amongst themselves.



Be strict about time-keeping. Whilst some members might be able to keep discussions going for several hours, other attendees might not be as time-rich due to a range of other commitments, so do try and keep meetings to the length they’re publicly advertised.



If some members are keen to continue, you can formally close the session but invite people to stay and informally continue the conversation. This allows attendees who do need to leave to do so without feeling impolite.

Encourage democratic audience participation:

Ask everyone to pair off and talk to the person next to them for a short time about a subject.

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Always allow room for questions. Make sure to let guests know whether they are welcome to raise their hands at any time, or if you'd prefer to take questions at the end.

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Ask attendees to form small groups with people they've not met before. Then hand out pens and paper and ask the groups to collectively write down their thoughts on a question or topic. This works really well for breaking the ice and getting great conversations started!

“

Breakout groups work: Immediately after everyone has heard a presentation or watched a film, it's very useful to break into pairs for five minutes to discuss.

Ask a question and take a show of hands.

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Non-verbal communication techniques build consensus quickly

These are different ways you can communicate without using words or sounds.

As well as being quick, easy and fun, another benefit of NVC is that it allows all members in a group to express how they're feeling without interrupting a speaker. This means the speaker can sense how the room is reacting to what they're saying without being talked over or prevent others from hearing what's being said due to verbal interruptions.

A good example is "Jazz hands". Invite your members to quickly wave their hands to quietly express their support for a point made.

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Another is raising your hand to your ear when you can't hear and would like the speaker to talk more loudly.

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Look online for more NVC techniques, or consider creating some of your own!

Advertising Tips

As well as great content and facilitation, a great meetup also needs an audience. So here are some top tips for spreading the word out about your activities.

Email the meetup info to your current mailing list at least two weeks in advance so people can add it to their calendars. You can also send a reminder the day before.

Upload details of your meetup in the 'Local Events' channel of Mobilize. The office team will then send an invitation to all supporters on our mailing list in your area (email info@positivemoney.org for full instructions on how to do this).

Physically: by printing posters or leaflets with the event details and an image and hand them out at other local events or stalls, or ask local shops, student unions, libraries or community centres to put them up on their notice board.

Digitally: by sharing the event on social media, either via a personal or local group Facebook, Twitter or Instagram account. We suggest writing a short blurb to grab people's attention, along with the basic event details (time, date and postcode of the location). Posts with images reach larger audiences so find a nice image. Once added to the 'Events' page on the Positive Money website you'll have a weblink to your event too.

For more tips on using social media check out the national Positive Money social media channels or contact the office team.

Make, use + find more Positive Money resources

You can find all the introductory Local Groups Resources on the Positive Money website: positivemoney.org/resources/local-groups/

- this guidebook
- the introduction to Positive Money foldout postcard flyer
- the official, GDPR-compliant Positive Money signup form
- downloadable Positive Money videos

Campaign Resources

For campaign resources, we use a shared Google Drive Folder, which all local group core team members have access to. Here you can find:

- the latest campaign one-sheets (an introduction to the campaign with key background information and instructions for actions you can take).
- resources made by other local group leaders. Some of our local group members have made some fantastic resources over the years.
- the “Introduction to Positive Money” presentation for you to use locally.

This is your folder so we encourage you to own, use and add to it! Find the link to it in the Highlights section of Mobilize.

If your group plans to run or attend events regularly (and hopefully you will!), the office team can provide you with:

- a 6ft x 2ft Positive Money pvc banner. This rolls up and is light to carry.
- several copies of the introduction to Positive Money foldout postcard flyer

Make the most of the **Positive Money** online community, **Mobilize:**

If you need help or information quickly, writing a message on Mobilize is the best thing to do. Another member of the community might well be able to help if the office team cannot respond straight away.

Join discussions with members from other local group members To share ideas for meetups and campaign/outreach activities. On the topics Positive Money deals with.

Receive important updates from the office team, details and instructions about the latest campaign actions for local groups, and invites to quarterly conference calls with other local group core teams.

Post your meetups and events. As detailed above, this makes sure the office team can let other Positive Money members in your area about your meetups.

Invite keen members of your local group to join Mobilize too! Either share with them the link: positive-money-network.mobilize.io/ or tell them to email info@positivemoney.org.uk and ask to be invited to join Mobilize. This will help build a connected online community across the UK for ideas to be shared and discussed.

Final top tips for being a Positive Money champion

Always ask new local group attendees to sign up to the Positive Money email newsletter.

This is really important - it's the main way the office team communicate with and empower all supporters of our campaign. We send an email every couple of weeks about our campaigns, actions, research and events, so people can choose how to get involved and keep on top of important updates.

We'll provide you with an official GDPR sign up sheet for you to print and take to all meetups and events. Simply ask all new members to add their name, email address and postcode on the sign-up sheet, and tick the consent box. Then send us a photo of the sheet by email to info@positivemoney.org. This is quick and easy and makes a huge difference!

If you are able to use a spreadsheet, such as Google Sheets or Excel, please also type up the contact details in a sign up spreadsheet and email them to us. We get a lot of paper sign ups, so this extra step really helps us out!

You can also encourage people to go directly to positivemoney.org and sign up for our email newsletter there!

**The Positive Money
campaign is made by the
people in our movement**

**Thank you so much for all
that you do!**

PositiveMoney 