

Starting a CA Branch

There have been CA branches since our inauguration in 1903 and whilst some are celebrating their centenaries this decade, others were only formed in the 2020s; all add to a patchwork of unique and interesting groups around England and Wales which share and promote the ancient world. Branches are affiliated to the CA but run completely independently, as not-for-profit community groups. We are delighted that you're thinking about starting a new branch of the Classical Association and we are here to help.

Advice and support

- Begin by contacting the CA Branches Co-ordinator, Katrina Kelly (branches@classicalassociation.org) who can help you with any queries, offer advice and support, and arrange a £500 start-up grant for your initial costs once you have set up a branch bank account.
- Are you based near another branch? Use our [Branches page](#) to see if there are any other branches near you and get in touch with their committee for a chat. If you can, go along to an event and get a sense of what your branch could do. Some branches cover quite large areas but you can start a branch with a smaller catchment area.
- There's absolutely no need for you to have run a community group before, have a classics background or be part of a university/school; if you'd like to bring your community together to explore the ancient world then starting a branch is a great idea!

Getting started

- Name and logo: decide a name for your branch and choose a branch logo if you wish. You can also download and use the CA logo from our website.
- Constitution: we can send you a template constitution which you can adapt for your branch. You'll need to hold an AGM each year.
- Committee: build a committee of people who share your goals and have complementary skills. As well as Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, you might also like people to help with things like Promotions, Socials, Outreach, Programmes, Membership etc.
- President: ideally, approach a prominent person within the field of Classics to be your (honorary) President.
- Bank Account: set up a community group bank account for your new branch. Here are some top tips:
 - When you set up the bank account, make sure that it is a business account with no charges (as you are a "not for profit" community group). You may want to select one of the providers from this list: <https://www.resourcecentre.org.uk/information/bank-accounts-for-community-and-voluntary-organisations/>.
 - Make sure that you are set up with full online banking immediately so that you can process memberships etc. via BACS. There will need to be two signatories e.g. Treasurer and Chair/Secretary.
 - Public liability insurance - if you're hosting events in person, you'll need to investigate if you're fully covered by the venue's public liability insurance. It would

be unusual if you are so it's probably advisable that you get your own insurance. You can ask the CA for help with this annual expenditure.

- **Membership Fee:** choose a fee for your members by establishing your running costs and overheads. Branches normally charge between £5 and £20 for annual membership with concessionary prices for students/the unwaged. Some branches operate via donations only.
- **Email:** opening a branch email account, rather than using a personal one, will make committee handovers much easier in the future.
- **Events Programme:** are you going to have a programme of lectures running from, for example, September to May? You'll need to book your speakers quite far in advance. Ideally, arrange a back-up speaker who is local and happy to stand in at short notice. As a branch of the CA, you aren't expected to pay commercial fees for speakers (check out our [Speaker List](#) on the Branches page) but you should cover their travelling, accommodation and hospitality expenses: if possible, take your speaker for a celebratory meal or drink before or after the lecture. If you cannot afford to pay speaker travel expenses, you can apply for a CA [Branches grant](#).
- **Venue:** a local educational, arts or community establishment may be able to provide you with a suitable venue to host in-person events. Some branches meet in community halls, school halls, university rooms or members' houses depending on the number of members. Whichever venue you use, you will need to ensure their public liability insurance covers your meetings or you will have to purchase your own insurance – you may wish to put some of your start-up grant towards this or you can get in touch with the CA for further financial assistance. Accessibility, parking and, most importantly, sound and lighting facilities are all important – test the facilities as you may need to buy or borrow additional equipment.
- **Online Events:** if you would prefer to provide members with online lectures and don't require a venue then online platforms such as Zoom Webinar are invaluable. The CA can help you run virtual events ([read more here](#)).
- **Volunteers:** your events will run so much more smoothly if you have people to help e.g. with picking up and looking after the speaker, meeting and greeting, helping people become members, supplying refreshments, running a raffle or something similar, moving equipment and helping with technology.

Publicity

- Find people interested in classics via local societies or educational communities e.g.
 - [your local History Association branch](#)
 - [University of the Third Age](#)
 - [Classics For All network](#)
 - [The Arts Society branch](#)
 - [Young Archaeology Club](#)
- Send details of your events to canews@classicalassociation.org and we will publicise them on our website and social media. You can also spread the word via the [Classics Library](#).

- Create flyers for publicising the branch and place them on supermarket community boards, libraries, post offices, local listings or use them for targeted leaflet drops.
- Get in touch with your local newspapers and [radio stations](#) about the launch of the new branch and upcoming events.
- Social media is the quickest and easiest way to reach people:
 - Set up a branch [Facebook](#) page, share your events in local groups and join groups like [Classics International](#) to grow your network. You can pay for Facebook advertising to reach more people.
 - [X](#) allows you to connect easily with classics communities and [Instagram](#) is a great platform to share classical features and reach a younger audience. If you record your lectures, you may want to publish recordings on [YouTube](#). You can publish unlisted videos if you would like to reserve them for members only.
- Website: you might want to set up a simple website using Wordpress, Weebly or Wix. Here are some examples of branch websites: [Sheffield](#), [Manchester](#), [Guildford](#), [Lytham](#)