

# Finding a Voice within Organisations

A workshop by Yo

Autescape 2013

- You will be handed a small, plastic cube. Please hold on to this. The cubes will be used a bit later to participate in the workshop (if you want to).
- Participation is voluntary. You are welcome to just watch.
- Non-speaking participation is welcome.
- You are welcome to ask questions at any time. Sometimes the presenter (Yo) may need to limit the number of questions or ask people to delay questions until the end of a particular section.

# Finding a Voice within Organisations

A workshop by Yo

Autescape 2013

## Workshop structure

Section 1 – The presenter (Yo) will give a short presentation about why organisations might be useful and the basics of how organisations work

Section 2 – Everyone who chooses to participate will join a pretend organisation that we will set up just as an example for this workshop and the presenter (Yo) will guide that process to show how it works. Some volunteers will be needed to go up to the front and become “committee members” in the pretend organisation.

Section 3 – The presenter (Yo) will give a short presentation about some unwritten rules about how to behave in organisations

Section 4 – The volunteers who are pretending to be “committee members” will be asked to make some pretend decisions and the presenter (Yo) will guide that process to show how it works. Some volunteers (if they choose to) may be asked to role play different behaviours to demonstrate.

Section 5 – The presenter (Yo) will give a short presentation about how decisions get made in organisations

[If there is time Section 6 – more pretend decision making to show more examples of how it works]

# Finding a Voice within Organisations – section 1 (presentation): you and an organisation



A workshop by Yo

Autescape 2013

# What sorts of organisations is this workshop about?

**IT IS ABOUT:**

**Voluntary/Community  
organisations**

Mostly democratic  
(more or less)

Not profit making

**IT ISN'T ABOUT:**

Profit making  
businesses

Government  
departments

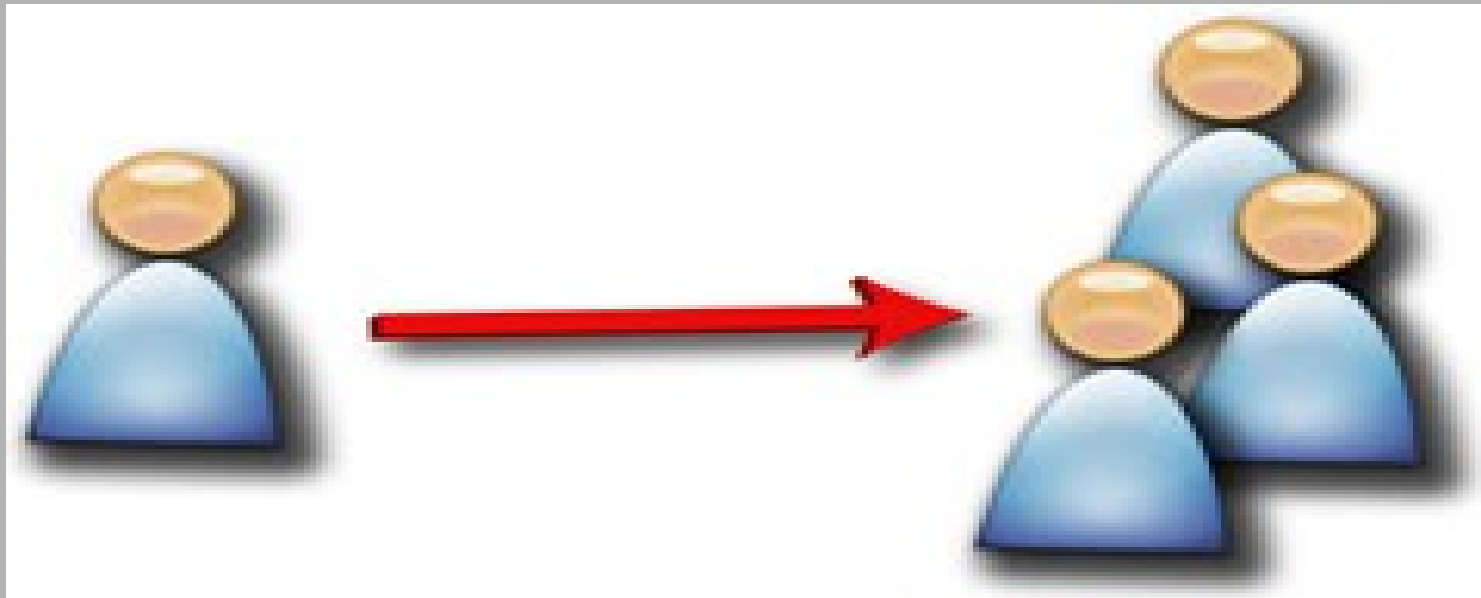
Government  
agencies

# Why join/form an organisation? (1)



# Why join/form an organisation?

(1 continued)



Joe



The Voice  
Society  
Annabel  
+  
Kalini

# Why join/form an organisation? (2)



# The problem with organisations!



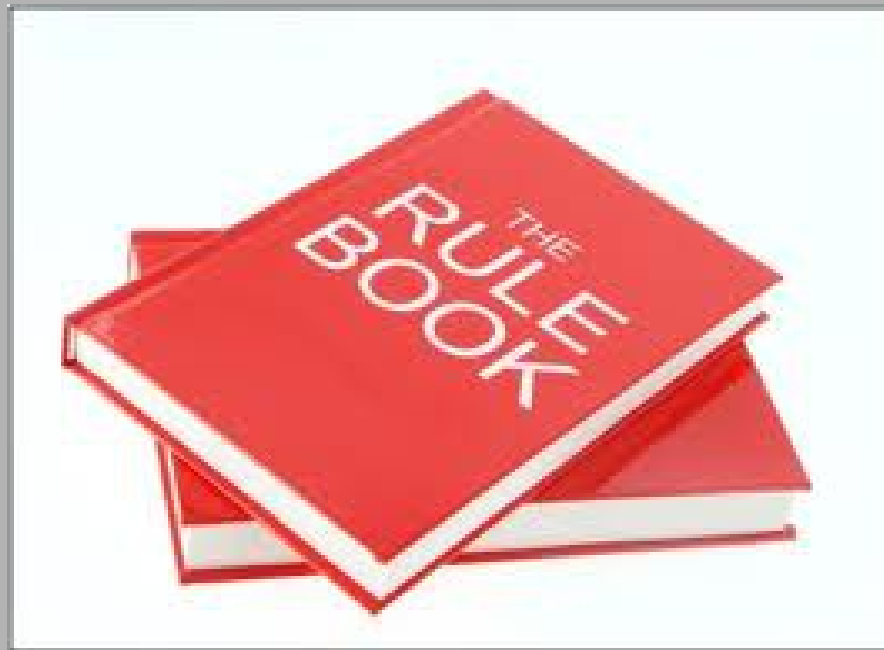


# Solution (1)

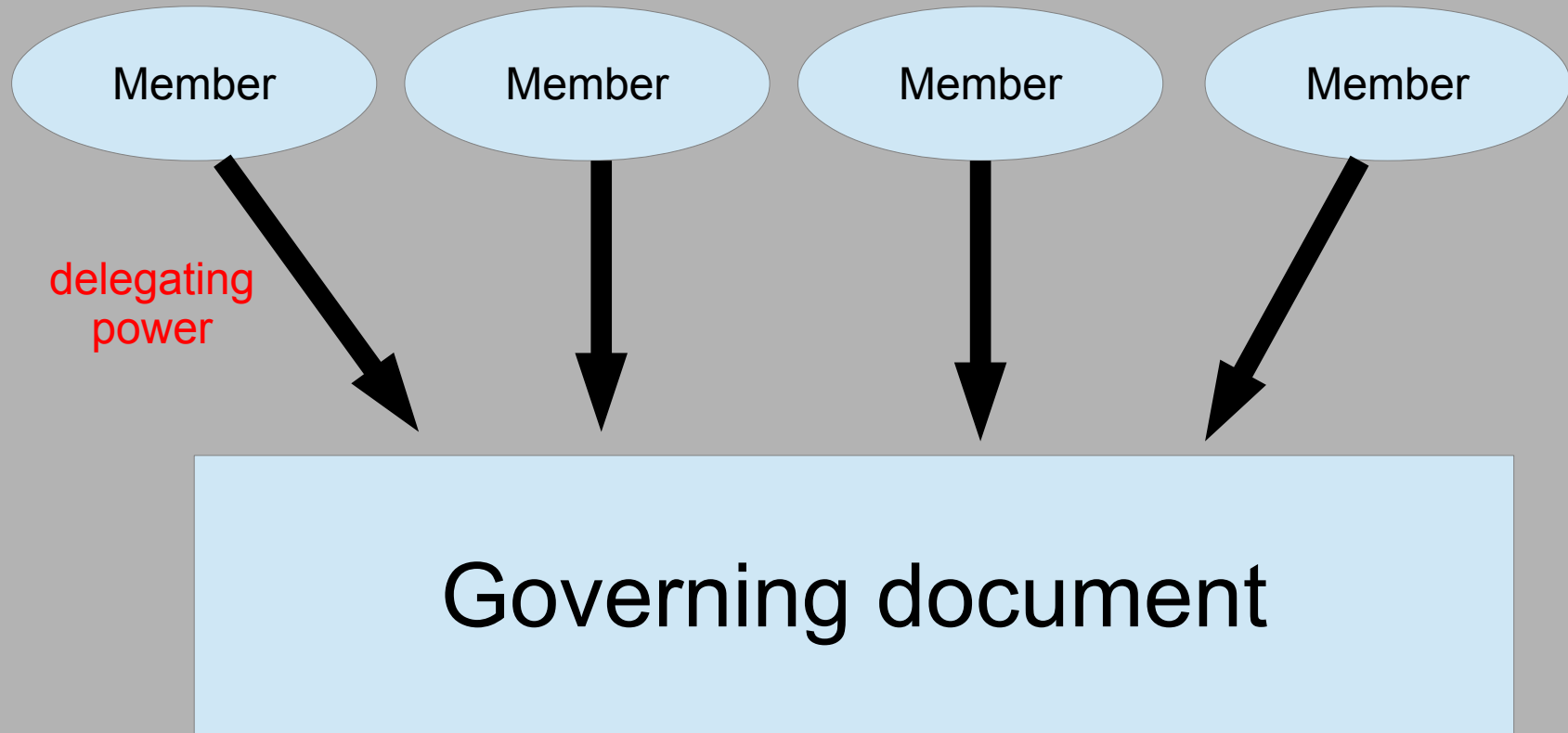
**Goal: fair decision making**

How? rules and structures

Achieved by: agreeing a governing document



# Solution (1)



# Solution (2)

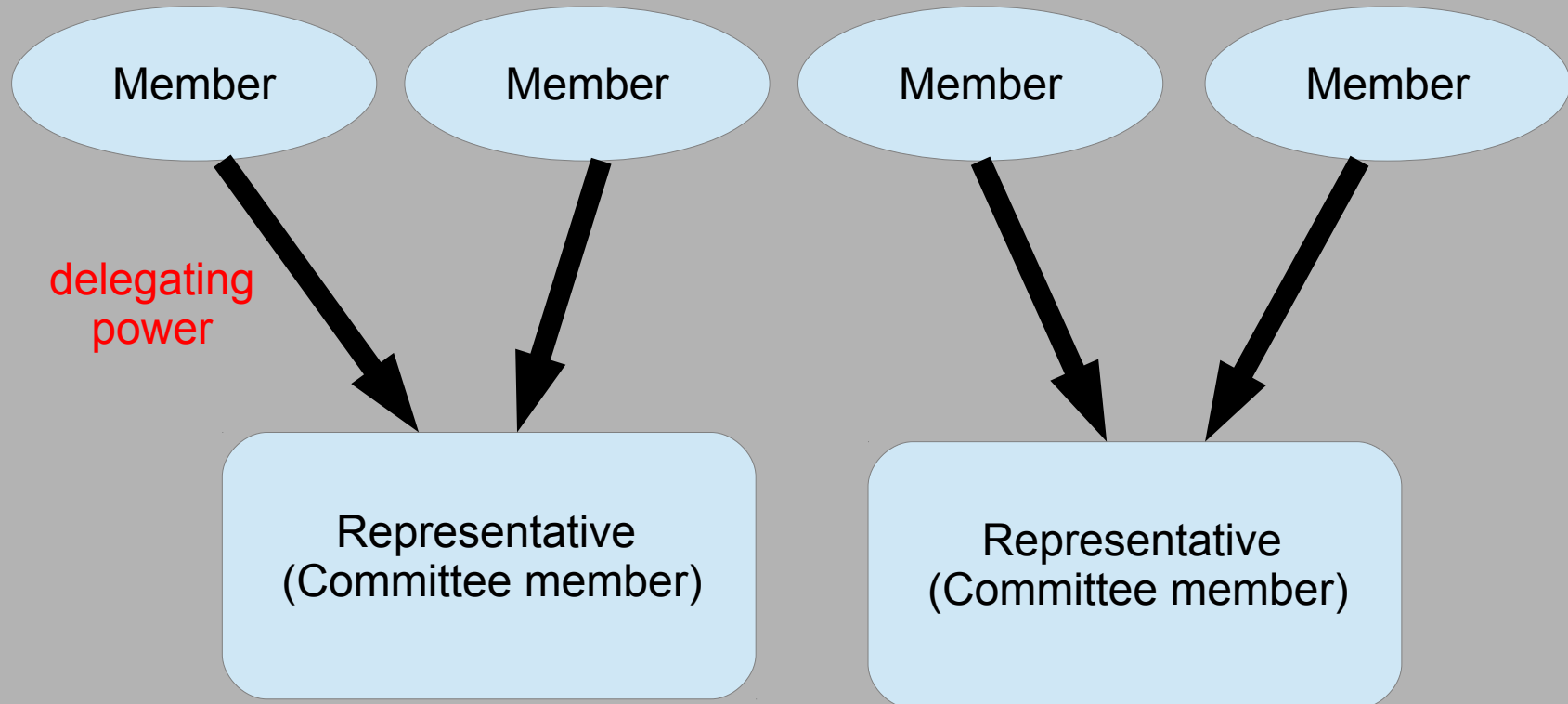
**Goal: Efficient decision making**

How? fewer people involved in most decisions

Achieved by: electing representatives



# Solution (2)



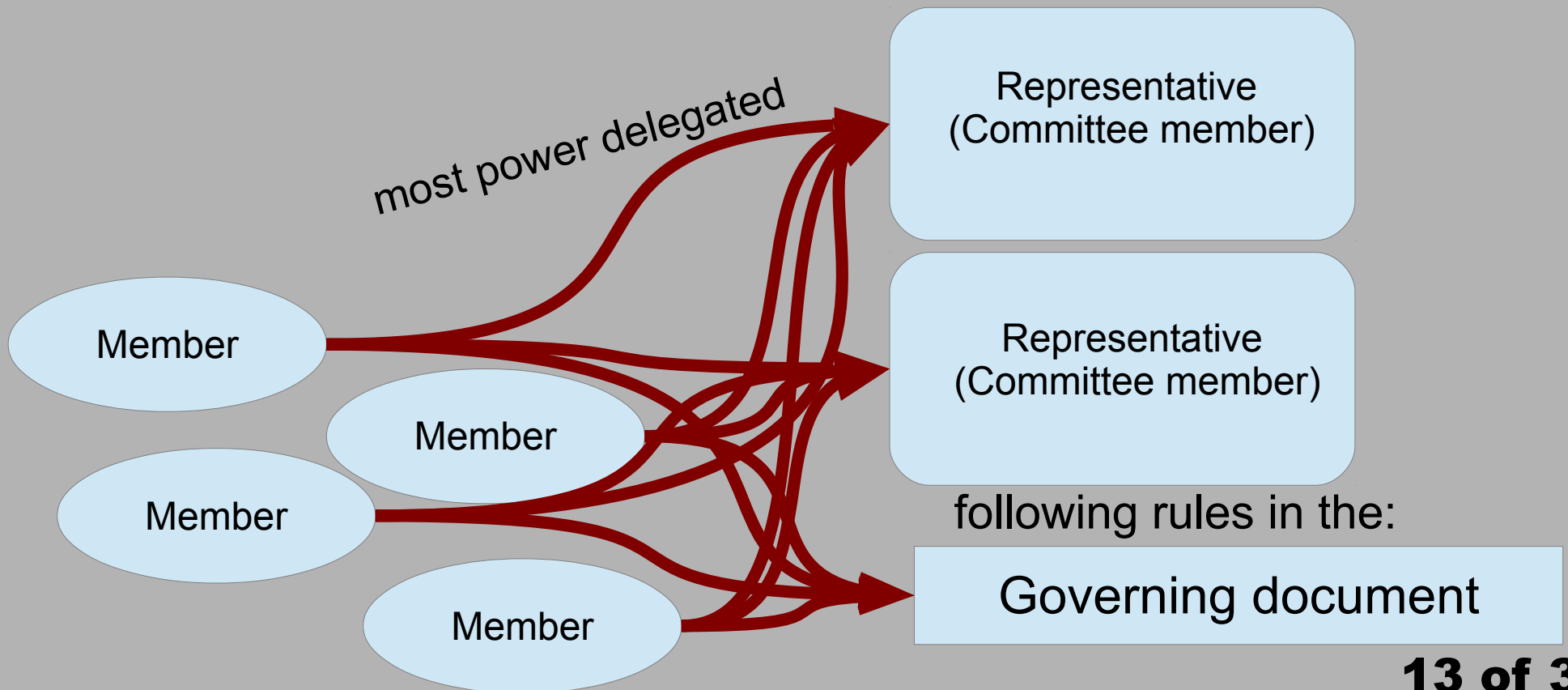
# Functioning democratic organisation

## BIG DECISIONS:

Who should  
representatives be?  
Major changes to  
governing document

## MOST DECISIONS:

How organisation should do things  
What money should be spent on  
Who should be responsible for  
things



# Finding a Voice within Organisations – section 2 (interactive): forming a pretend organisation



A workshop by Yo

Autescape 2013

# Finding a Voice within Organisations – section 3 (presentation): unwritten rules

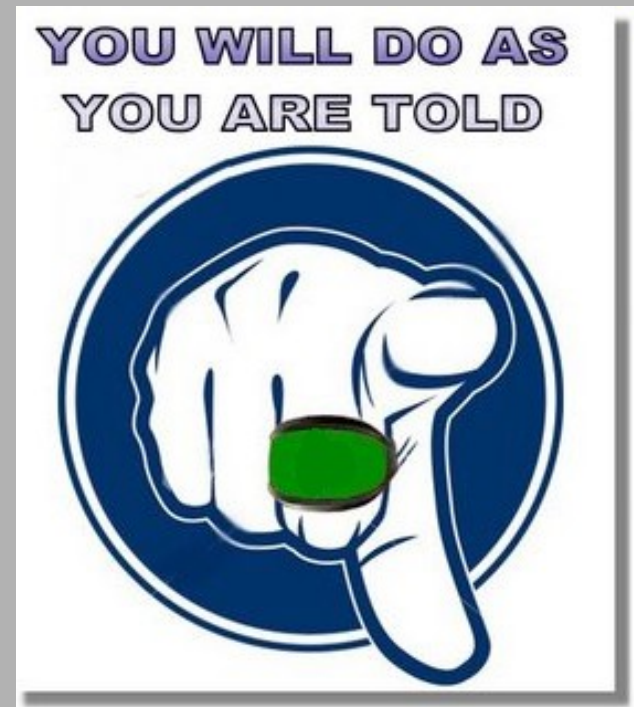


A workshop by Yo

Autescape 2013

So most power is delegated from the members to the committee.

Does that mean the committee can just do whatever it likes?





# Basic rules

- **The law**

e.g. charities can't make a profit, licences for things

- **Democracy**

e.g. majority rule (even if you are in the minority and think they are wrong)

- **Ethical rules**

e.g. conflict of interest

- **Procedural rules**

e.g. how many people can be on the committee

# Ethical rules



You are representing other people

# Ethical rules



# Ethical rules: conflict of interest



# Finding a Voice within Organisations – section 4 (interactive): unwritten rules



A workshop by Yo

Autescape 2013

# Finding a Voice within Organisations – section 5 (presentation): getting things done



A workshop by Yo

Autscap 2013

# Procedural rules: how to get things done!



# How decisions get made (1)

Proposal → Debate → Decision

Decisions happen at meetings

before the  
meeting

**AGENDA**



after the  
meeting

**MINUTES**



# How decisions get made (2)

## Governance

Committee  
Board



- Issues which governing document says they do
- Important issues which affect whole organisation, money or reputation
- Overall policy
- Asking for authority to do something

## Management

Volunteers  
Employees



- Most practical issues e.g. where something should be, how something should be achieved.
- Most decisions which affect small groups of people, amounts of money, periods of time.

**If in doubt, ask!**

# Who is who?

- Chair

Not the boss! First among equals.

- Treasurer

The money person

- Secretary

Not just a note taker!

# Getting things done (1)

- Members can ask their representatives (committee members) to propose decisions. [But committee members \*don't\* have to.]
- Any committee member can propose any decision to the committee. The best way to do this is usually to ask the SECRETARY to put the issue on the AGENDA for the next MEETING.
- Clear proposal leads to good decision  
e.g. Do we approve this draft policy? (Yes or No)  
rather than -  
We need to work out what to do about merchandise this year.
- Wording worries? Secretary can help even if they disagree

# Getting things done (2)

## Effective debate

Independence

Integrity

### **Disagree professionally**

Disagree **about** issues not **with** people  
e.g. “I think that position is nonsensical because ...”  
rather than “No-one in their right mind could think that”

**But DO disagree**

# Getting things done (3)

## Good communication

- Read documents
- Listen to what others say, even when you disagree
- Accept feedback about your communication and try to improve
- Ask questions, don't be afraid to look silly

# Summary: Getting things done



# Finding a Voice within Organisations – [if there's time] section 6 (interactive): getting things done



A workshop by Yo

Autscap 2013

# Sources of information and advice

- Secretary
- NCVO, CVS and similar
- Books (e.g. The ICSA Charity Trustees Guide, Robert's Rules of Order)
- Charity Commission (look for guides numbered CC\*)
- Companies house
- Directory of Social Change
- Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators (ICSA)