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| **Legal Structures: Summary of the key features of the different legal forms** |
| **Legal Form** | Regulatory Body | Limited Liability | Charitable Status | General Trading Activities | Corporation Tax | Suitable for Grants | Can it issue shares? | Advantages | Disadvantages |
| **Unincorporated Charity** | Charity Commission | No | Yes | No | No | Yes | No | Simple to set up. Inexpensive | No limited liability. Trustees are personally liable |
| **Charitable Incorporated Organisation** | Charity Commission | Yes | Yes | No | No | Yes | No | Inexpensive | Evidence of funds in advance |
| **Charitable Company** | Charity Commission & Companies House | Yes | Yes | Possibly | No | Yes | No | The best known form for charitable initiatives. Strict regulation by the Charity Commission | Evidence of funds in advance. Needs to do returns to Companies House and Charity Commission |
| **Charitable Recognised Society for the Benefit of the Community** | Financial Conduct Authority | Yes | Yes | Possibly | No | Yes | Yes | Flexible for trading related activities, obtain grants, donations and other forms of generating funds | Expensive. <https://charity-registration.com/community-benefit-society/>  |
| **Society for the Benefit of the Community** | Financial Conduct Authority | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Highly popular with community trusts that promote employment and trading activities | Has no charitable recognition and is Subject to Corporation Tax |

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| **Community Interest Company (Limited by Guarantee)** | Companies House and CIC Regulator | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | A widely accepted structure for organisations aiming at establishing social enterprises. Can apply for grants | Has no charitable recognition and is subject to Corporation Tax |
| **Community Interest Company (Limited by Shares)** | Companies House and CIC Regulator | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Maybe (depends on share issue) | Yes | A widely accepted structure for organisations aiming at establishing social enterprises. Grants will depend upon profit distribution | Has no charitable recognition and is subject to Corporation Tax |
| **Company Limited by Guarantee** | Companies House | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Very simple to establish and widely recognised in the Third Sector. | Has no charitable recognition and is subject to Corporation Tax |
| **Company by Shares** | Companies House | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | No | No | Simple to establish and able to attract capital | It is not a recognised structure for SE |
| **Co-operative** | Financial Conduct Authority | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Possible | Yes | Easy to join and democratic control | Requires collective action and management |
| **Partnership / Self-employment** | HMRC | No | No | Yes | Income Tax | No | No | Easy to establish | No limited liability |