GDPR Top tips

- Don't assume that you need consent for everything. You might need consent, particularly for anything that counts as 'direct marketing', but for routine activities, where there really isn't any choice, you are unlikely to need consent and asking for consent may even make your life unnecessarily difficult.

- Remember that 'personal data' can include any information you record about people, including emails where they are mentioned (even if not by name) and photographs, for example. You must use all this data appropriately and look after it carefully.

- You must make sure that people know what you do with their data. This probably means writing different statements for different types of people: staff, volunteers, applicants, beneficiaries, members, etc, so that you can explain things in sufficient detail.

- People have rights over their data. For example they have a right to a copy of the data you hold about them, a right to correct data if it is wrong or incomplete, and a right to stop you using their data, or even holding it at all, if some situations. If someone asks to exercise their right(s) take it seriously and respond promptly, but first make sure that you understand exactly what you are expected to do and whether you have to comply.

- Data Protection must be embedded in how you work, not 'bolted on' afterwards. From the top down you must make it part of your planning and decision-making, and you must make sure that you provide suitable guidance and training to everyone who may handle personal data, from your committee members to your volunteers.

- The Information Commissioner expects you to be able to show what you are doing to comply with your Data Protection obligations. Keep a record of the decisions you make, policies you adopt, statements you write training you provide and actions you take.

- Check whether you need to pay an annual fee to the Information Commissioner. Some charities are exempt; otherwise they have to pay £40 a year. See https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/data-protection-fee/ for details.