

ST QUINTIN AND WOODLANDS NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM CONSTITUTION

1. Aims and status of the Neighbourhood Forum

1.1 The aims of the forum shall be:

- to improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing and quality of life of those living and working in the area, through the development and implementation of a Neighbourhood Plan, in accordance with the Localism Act 2011
- in doing so, to represent the majority view of the local community

1.2 The status of the Forum shall be that of an unincorporated association, established for the purpose of neighbourhood planning as defined in Schedule 9 of the Localism Act 2011.

2. Membership of the Forum

2.1 Voting membership of the Forum shall be open to all those living and working (whether for business carried on there or otherwise) in the area covered by the Forum.

2.2 Ward councillors in Dalgarno and St Helens wards will also be eligible for membership of the Forum, whether or not they live in the designated area.

2.2 In the event of breaches of the code of conduct at paragraph 14 of this constitution, membership of the Forum can be suspended or ended by a two thirds majority at any general meeting of the Forum.

2.3 Any person whose membership has been suspended shall have the right to have this decision reviewed at a subsequent general meeting of the Forum.

3. Boundary

3. The area covered by the Forum is as designated by RB Kensington and Chelsea in July 2013. It is bordered by the borough boundary to the west, the A40M to the south, Dalgarno Gardens to the north, and St Marks Road to the east.

4. Equal Opportunities

4. The Forum will operate to principles of equal opportunities and shall not discriminate against any persons on grounds of race, nationality, gender, sexuality, religion, or age.

5. Political neutrality

5. The Forum will operate as a non party political body

6. Open Meetings and Annual General Meeting

6.1 The Forum will hold a minimum of three meetings each year, open to all members.

6.2 The Forum shall hold an Annual General Meeting each year at which officers and management committee members shall be elected through the votes of those members in attendance.

7. Management Committee and Officers

7.1 The Forum shall have a Management Committee made up of no less than 8 and no more than 14 members.

7.2 The Management Committee shall include a chairperson, vice-chair, secretary and treasurer, these officers being elected each year at the AGM.

7.3 No more than one officer shall be elected from any one household.

7.4 The Chairperson shall chair general meetings and meetings of the management committee. In the absence of the chairperson, the vice chair or another management committee members shall take the chair.

7.5 Election or removal of officers or management committee members can only be carried out by votes at the Annual General Meeting or at a Special Meeting called for that purpose. Officers can be re-elected for an unrestricted number of terms.

7.6 Any vacancies on the committee occurring by resignation or otherwise can be filled by co-option of Forum members, pending the next General Meeting.

7.7 The Management Committee may co-opt up to three individuals who do not live or work within the Forum area, where their expertise is considered to be beneficial to the work of the Forum. Such co-opted members shall not have voting rights.

7.8 The Management Committee may establish sub-committees to carry out specific functions. All such sub-committees shall be chaired by a member of the management committee.

8. Business at Annual General Meetings

8.1 Business at Annual General Meetings shall include the following

- a written annual report
- statement of accounts
- nominations for elected officers
- any amendments to the constitution
- any resolutions put forward by members

8.2. Dates and times of Annual General Meetings shall be advertised on the Forum's website (and on the public notice-board of the St Helens Residents Association) at least 14 days before the meeting.

9. Special General Meetings

9.1 A Special General Meeting may be called by the Management Committee or if requested by 10% of the membership. Once summonsed, such a meeting shall be held within 21 days.

10. Decisions, Voting and Quorum

10.1 Decisions at open meetings and at the Annual General Meeting shall be by consensus, or by a simple majority vote. All members present shall be entitled to one vote. Where a show of hands is inconclusive, a ballot vote will be taken and those present may be required to provide evidence that they live or work within the designated neighbourhood area.

10.2 Amendments to the constitution shall require a two thirds majority. Details of proposed changes are required to be circulated to all Management Committee members 14 days before the date of the meeting at which they are to be considered.

10.3 The quorum for an open meeting or AGM shall be a minimum of 20 members present. The quorum for a management committee meeting shall be one third of its membership or 5 of its elected members, whichever is the greater.

10.5 In the event of a tie in voting, the chair of the meeting shall have a casting vote. A casting vote shall not be used to amend the constitution.

11. Finance and Accounts

11.1 A record of income and expenditure must be provided each year to the Annual General Meeting.

11.2 Accounts shall be independently audited if the turnover of the Forum exceeds £5,000 in the year in question.

11.3 Accounts shall be open to inspection by members on request

11.4 The Forum may raise funds by donation, grants, or other means. The proceeds of such fund-raising shall be used in furtherance of the Forum's aims as set out in this constitution.

11.5 The Forum shall maintain a bank account. Cheques, transfers, or other banking instruments and instructions shall be the responsibility of two signatories who must be members of the management committee.

11.6 Signatories must not be related or members of the same household.

11.7 Records must be kept of any petty cash transactions.

12. Minutes

12.1 Minutes shall be kept of General Meetings, Special General Meetings, AGMs and Management Committee meetings. Such minutes shall be available for inspection by members and published on the Forum's website.

12.2 In rare circumstances where there is a requirement for confidentiality, a confidential section of the minutes may be recorded, available to members of the Management Committee.

13. Dissolution

12.1 The Forum can be dissolved only by a Special General Meeting summonsed for that purpose.

13.2 A majority vote of members present is required to dissolve the Forum

13.3 The Special General Meeting shall decide on the disposal of any remaining fund or assets on dissolution, for charitable purposes, after any debts or liabilities have been met.

13.4 Any RBKC or LBHF equipment or assets that the Forum has been allowed to use, and which have not been transferred to the ownership of the Forum, shall be returned to these bodies should they so wish.

14. Code of Conduct for Management Committee members

14.1 The role of the Management Committee is to conduct the day to day business of the Forum in an efficient, fair and responsive way. In taking decisions on behalf of the Forum, Committee members must always be aware of their responsibility to represent all those living and working in the Forum area.

14.2 All Committee members must comply with this constitution and code of conduct at all times.

14.3 Committee members should conduct themselves in a manner which respects the views of others. Racist, sexist, personalised or inflammatory comments are not acceptable.

14.4 Committee members must never use their position to seek preferential treatment for themselves, relatives or members of their household. Any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests must be declared at committee meetings.

14.5 Committee members cannot receive any payment from the Forum, other than for bona fide expenses as approved by the Treasurer and submitted and recorded in writing.

14.6 Any serious breach of this Code of Conduct may result in a committee member being asked to resign, or being suspended by a majority vote of the committee.

Constitution adopted at first Annual General Meeting of the Neighbourhood Forum held on 27th June 2013