

Deepcut Neighbourhood Forum Constitution

1) NAME

The name of the Forum shall be the Deepcut Neighbourhood Forum, hereafter referred to as the Forum.

2) OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Forum shall be:

- (i) To improve the area known as Deepcut for the benefit of the inhabitants of the area (See area defined in the attached map);
- (ii) To promote the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area;
- (iii) To prepare in partnership with the local planning authority a neighbourhood plan for the area, or in partnership with other forums any wider area;
- (iv) To protect the rural character of the area;
- (v) To work with local people in assessing the priority of needs, and to work together to address these needs;
- (vi) To encourage the goodwill and involvement of the wider community;
- (vii) To foster community spirit and encourage civic pride.

3) POWERS

In furtherance of the objectives, but not otherwise, the Management Committee may exercise the power to:

- (i) Promote the health and social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the residents of the area and to work together as members irrespective of age, sex, ethnicity, ability, religion or political view.
- (ii) Promote sustainable development, environmental improvement and conservation by educating, encouraging and assisting the local population in environmental practice, working in partnership with similar groups and organisations.
- (iii) Invite and receive contributions and raise funds where appropriate, to finance the work of the Forum, and to open a bank account to manage such funds.
- (iv) Publicise and promote the work of the Forum and organise meetings, training courses, events, seminars, etc.
- (v) Work with groups of a similar nature and exchange information, advice and knowledge with them, including cooperation with other voluntary bodies, charities, statutory and nonstatutory organisations.

(vi) Employ staff and/or volunteers (who shall not be members of the Management Committee) as are necessary to conduct activities to meet the objectives.

(vii) Define and maintain the definition of the area covered by the Forum.

(viii) Take any form of action that is lawful, which is necessary to achieve the objects of the Forum, including taking out any contracts which it may see fit.

4) MEMBERSHIP

(i) Membership of the Forum shall be open to anyone who has an interest in assisting the Forum to achieve its objectives and is willing to adhere to the rules of the Forum:

- Membership is open to all who live or work in the defined area;

- Membership is open to elected Council members whose electoral area falls in the Deepcut area;

- Membership shall be drawn from different places in the neighbourhood and different sections of the community in the neighbourhood.

(ii) Any member of the Forum may resign his/her membership by providing the Secretary with written notice.

(iii) The forum shall have a minimum of 21 members before any decision on neighbourhood planning may be made. The Secretary shall maintain a list of members at all times.

(iv) All members shall have an equal vote.

5) MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

(i) The Forum shall be administered by a management committee of no less than three (3) people and no more than fifteen (15), who must all be at least 18 years of age.

(ii) Management committee members will be elected for a period of one year, but may be elected / re-elected at the Forum's AGM.

(iii) Management committee members can appoint officers from within the management committee, to fill vacancies that arise during the year.

6) OFFICERS

(i) The Forum shall have a management committee consisting of:

- The Chairperson

- The Treasurer

- The Secretary

- A minimum of three (3) other members as the management committee deems necessary.

7) MEETINGS

(i) The management committee shall meet as often as agreed by the committee. Meetings shall enable the committee to discuss actions and monitor progress to date, and to consider future developments.

(ii) All management committee members shall be given at least seven (7) days' notice of when a management committee meeting is due to take place, unless any such meeting is deemed as an emergency.

(iii) Three or more committee members must be present in order for a management committee meeting to take place.

(iv) It shall be the responsibility of the Chairperson, or in his/her absence, a designated deputy, to chair all meetings.

(v) Minutes must be taken for all meetings by the Secretary, or their designated replacement, and such Minutes must be accessible to interested parties, as well as being published on the Forum's website for access by all members.

(vi) The AGM shall take place no later than three months after the end of the financial year. At least fourteen (14) days' notice must be given before the AGM takes place.

(vii) All members are entitled to vote at the AGM. Voting shall be made by a show of hands on a Simple Majority basis. In the case of a tied vote the Chairperson, or an appointed deputy, shall make the final decision.

(viii) When required, the management committee can decide to call a Special General Meeting (SGM). An SGM shall only take place after at least fourteen (14) days' notice.

(ix) All members are entitled to vote at an SGM. Voting shall be made by a show of hands on a majority basis. In the case of a tied vote the Chairperson, or an appointed deputy, shall make the final decision.

8) FINANCE

(i) Any money acquired by the Forum, including donations, contributions and bequests, shall be paid into an account operated by the Management Committee in the name of the Forum.

(ii) All funds must be applied to the objectives of the Forum and for no other purpose.

(iii) Bank account(s) shall be opened in the name of the Forum.

(iv) Any deeds, cheques etc relating to the Forum's bank account shall be signed by at least two (2) from the following committee members: Chairperson; Treasurer; Secretary; other committee members.

(v) Any income/expenditure shall be the responsibility of the Treasurer who will be accountable to ensure funds are utilised effectively and that the Forum stays within budget.

(vi) Official accounts shall be maintained, and will be examined annually by an independent person with adequate financial expertise.

(vii) An annual financial report shall be presented at the AGM. The Forum's accounting year shall run from 01 April to 31 March.

9) NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

(i) Any decision to undertake, consult on or submit to the local planning authority for approval any Neighbourhood Plan shall be subject to a vote of the Forum.

(ii) All consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan will be open to all residents and businesses whether members of the Forum or not.

(iii) The Forum shall set up a website to publicise the neighbourhood planning process, record it and seek views of the public.

(iv) The management committee and the Neighbourhood Plan Team (as below) shall be delegated to work with the local planning authority and any independent experts and advisor's on the neighbourhood plan as they see fit.

(v) At the discretion of the management committee, a Neighbourhood Plan Team can be delegated the tasks of preparing the Neighbourhood Plan, other than under 9(i) above. The membership of this team shall be decided by a management committee meeting and the management committee may co-opt members as it sees fit.

10) ALTERATION OF THE CONSTITUTION

(i) Any changes to this constitution must be agreed by a majority vote at a Special General Meeting (SGM) or at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

(ii) Amendments to the constitution of the Forum or dissolution of the Forum must be conveyed to the Secretary formally in writing at least 14 days before any AGM or SGM.

(iii) The Secretary and management committee members shall then decide on the date of an appropriate General Meeting to discuss such proposals, giving members at least two weeks (14 days) notice.

11) DISSOLUTION

(i) The Forum may be dissolved if deemed necessary by the members in a majority vote at an SGM or AGM.

(ii) Any assets or remaining funds after debts have been paid shall be transferred to local charities or similar groups at the discretion of the Management Committee.

This constitution was adopted at an AGM held at _____ on _____
by:

Signed: _____ Member

Signed: _____ Member

Signed: _____ Member