

# **THE CONSTITUTION OF FRIENDS OF ANCELLS FARM**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Friends of Ancells Farm ('the Organisation') is a 'not for profit' community based organisation created by Residents of Ancells Farm and the surrounding areas for the improvement of Ancells Park and other associated benefits.

The Organisation is managed by a Committee of members, according to the rules laid down in this Constitution.

This Constitution is intended to outline the main rules of the Organisation. Any further questions or enquiries should be referred to the Committee.

This Constitution is divided into three parts:

**Part 1: Objectives**

**Part 2: The Organisation**

**Part 3: The Committee**

## **NAME**

The name of the Organisation shall be FRIENDS OF ANCELLS FARM.

## **PART 1: OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the Organisation shall be to work towards maintaining and improving Ancells Park, the surrounding woods, sports field and other communal areas for the benefit of the local community, in partnership with the local Council and other appropriate bodies.

In furtherance of the said objectives the Organisation may, through or in conjunction with its Committee:

- 1) Keep a Development Plan suggested improvements that is agreed with Fleet Town Council from time to time. The top priorities for the forthcoming year will be agreed at the Annual General Meeting.
- 2) Collect annual subscriptions from its membership to meet running costs and to support progress on the Organisation's objectives.
- 3) Work with the local Council and other bodies, as appropriate to:
  - Help maintain and enhance the open space/communal areas, including the children's play equipment.
  - Help maintain and enhance the structural diversity and accessibility of the woodland.
  - Enhance the community, amenity and wildlife value.
- 4) Work towards promoting and developing the leisure, fitness and educationally related uses of the site through activity sessions, signage and liaising with local schools and other appropriate organisations.
- 5) Organise and attend social and other related events for members of the local community.
- 6) Raise money to be used for improvements in the park areas and community activity events.
- 7) Open and manage bank account(s) to hold monies relating to the organisation and in conjunction with this, to operate Business Internet Banking.
- 8) Communicate with its members and the local community.
- 9) Make or commission surveys of the park and related areas and amenities and create maps or plans.
- 10) Develop partnerships with organisations with similar objectives to Friends of Ancells Farm.

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## **PART 2: THE ORGANISATION**

### **MEMBERSHIP**

Membership shall be open to all those who are interested in supporting the objectives of the Organisation. Annual membership shall run from 1st April to the 31st March.

Membership of the organisation shall be by payment of a subscription and completion of the form provided for this purpose. There is no minimum or maximum age for membership.

### **SUBSCRIPTION**

For the year beginning 1st January 2011 and subsequent years, the subscription is £5 per household. The level of the subscription may be set by the Committee as appropriate.

The subscription of a Member joining the Organisation in the three months preceding 31st March in any year shall be regarded as covering membership for the Organisation's year commencing on the following 1st April.

Only fully paid up Members shall have the right to vote at any meeting of the Organisation, i.e. not if their subscription is in arrears at the time of the meeting.

The rate of subscription shall be determined at the Annual General Meeting of the Organisation, based on the recommendation of the Committee.

### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

An Annual General Meeting ("AGM") open to all Members shall be held at the end of each year and not later than the end of June of the following year. The purpose of the AGM is to receive the Committee's report and financial statements, elect the Committee, agree the top priorities from the Development Plan for the forthcoming year and deal with any other matters as specified on the agenda.

The Secretary will, using reasonable endeavours, ordinarily give at least 28 days notice of the meeting. Any business that is desired to be placed on the agenda or nominations for the Committee should be given to the Secretary in writing at least 14 days prior to the meeting. Any proposals must be nominated and seconded by fully paid up members.

The Secretary should, using reasonable endeavours, provide any proposed constitutional changes and an AGM agenda to members via email and on the notice board at least 7 days prior to the meeting.

Where any issues require a vote, all Organisation Members (including the Chairperson and other Committee members) are eligible to vote and the result will be decided by a simple majority on a show of hands, with the Chairperson having the casting vote in the event of a tie.

If at any AGM meeting the Chairperson is absent, those members of the Committee present shall choose one of their number to be the Chairperson for the meeting.

### **SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING**

A Special General Meeting (SGM) of the Organisation may be convened at the request of the Committee at any time or may be called by the Secretary within 14 days of the receipt by him/her of a requisition in writing signed by no less than 30% of the Organisation membership, stating the single item of business to be brought before such a meeting.

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## **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Any Member that has a conflict of interest regarding any Agenda item at any AGM, SGM or Regular Committee Meeting must declare this at the start of the meeting and may not take part in any vote related to that particular Agenda item.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Information on the Organisation and its activities is provided by a variety of media, including, but not restricted to, community notice boards, newsletters, flyers, a website, the local press, social media and any other communication methods agreed in advance with the Committee.

A newsletter is issued to Members of the Organisation by email from time to time and will be posted on the Organisation's website and Community notice boards, as appropriate. The newsletter and website contain information on events organised or related to the Organisation, as well as reports from Members. All Members are invited to contribute to this publication.

## **EVENTS**

The Organisation may organise and/or attend social and other related events for members of the local community and in pursuance of the objectives of the Organisation.

The Organisation may hold meetings, lectures and exhibitions as agreed in advance with the Committee.

The Organisation accepts no liability for any injury or loss incurred as a result of participation in events organised or attended by members of the Organisation.

## **INSURANCE**

The Organisation pays a premium in respect of Public Indemnity Insurance, as required and from time to time. A copy of the Policy Schedule is available on request from the Chairperson.

## **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY**

The Organisation values diversity in its community and will not discriminate for any reason, including on (but not limited to) grounds of disability, gender, race, religion, religious or political beliefs, age, sexual orientation, occupation, family circumstances or social background.

## **DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE**

If it shall appear to the Committee that there is evidence that any member is in breach of this Constitution, or if it appears to the Committee that the continued membership of the Organisation by any Member is detrimental to the Organisation, the Secretary shall write to the Member concerned setting out the alleged breach and invite the Member in question to comment in writing within 7 days of the letter being sent. This letter will be signed by both the Chairperson and the Secretary of the Committee.

The Committee will then consider any response at its next regular meeting. A letter will be sent to the Member concerned confirming the Committee's decision and its reasoning.

## **ALTERATIONS TO CONSTITUTION**

Any alteration to this constitution shall require the approval of a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at an Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting.

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## **DISSOLUTION**

The Organisation may be dissolved by a Resolution passed by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at a Special General Meeting convened for this particular purpose, of which 21 days notice shall be given to the Members. Such Resolution may give instructions for the disposal of any assets held by, or in the name of, the Organisation, provided that, if any property remains after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities, such property shall not be paid to or distributed among the Members of the Organisation but shall be given or transferred to such other charitable institution or institutions having objectives similar to some or all of the objectives of the Organisation.

## **PART 3: THE COMMITTEE**

### **ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE**

Friends of Ancells Farm shall be managed by a committee, whose role is to:

- (i) ensure the Organisation's financial probity;
- (ii) to examine, distil and to take note of the views advanced from members of the Organisation on matters of interest or concern related to the Organisation, its aims and its operation;
- (iii) to keep, review and update the Development Plan from time to time;
- (iv) where appropriate, to formulate proposals for possible developments in order to pursue the stated objectives;
- (v) to carry through any agreed priorities as far as possible, and/or to oversee projects where they are delegated;
- (vi) to operate bank account(s), including the use of Business Internet Banking.

The Committee shall have the right to nominate a Sub-committee consisting of Committee and/or other Members in order to facilitate agreed programmes and activities.

### **APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS & VACANCIES**

Any Member of the Organisation is eligible to stand for appointment to the Committee.

Appointments will be made at the AGM or at a regular meeting of the Committee. Those wishing to stand for appointment must be proposed and seconded by two fully paid up Members. The appointment must be ratified by a majority of those present at the AGM or Committee meeting.

Where possible the outgoing Committee members should attend the first meeting of the next year to ensure a smooth handover to new Committee members.

If a vacancy occurs amongst the members of the Committee, the Committee shall have the power to fill it by co-opting an existing Member of the Organisation.

### **COMMITTEE SIZE & APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS**

There is no limit on the number of Committee members, but the Committee shall normally consist of a minimum of a Chairperson, Secretary and a Treasurer.

The standard term of office for all committee members shall be one year. On vacating office, other than by disqualification, a Committee member shall be eligible for re-election. A Committee member shall be deemed to take office from the date of which their election is announced.

At the AGM, or at a subsequent meeting of the Committee, the Committee shall elect three of its number to be Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. If there are no volunteers for any of these roles, a vacancy will occur until such time as it can be filled.

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The committee shall appoint other officers, such as Vice-Chairperson, Membership Secretary, Grants Co-ordinator, Web Master, Events Co-ordinator, Press/Publicity Officer, Fund Raising Co-ordinator and Newsletter Editor, as it sees fit.

### **ROLE OF COMMITTEE OFFICERS**

Role profiles will identify the key aspects to each role. Although roles are generally appointed to Committee officers, the Committee will work in a collaborative fashion, and tasks and responsibilities will be shared across all Committee officers, and other Members, as much as possible.

The role of the Chairperson is to chair any meetings and oversee the running of the Organisation.

The role of the Secretary is to attend meetings of the Committee, including the AGM, and to keep proper minutes of all proceedings thereof. The Secretary shall circulate the minutes of the Committee meetings, including the AGM in a timely manner, to all Committee members. The Secretary shall also ensure that an archive is kept of all minutes, correspondence, amendments to the Constitution and other correspondence and will ensure that this is passed onto his successor.

The role of the Treasurer is to:

- Provide a financial report to the Committee at each meeting, including the AGM;
- To maintain the Organisation bank account, including making withdrawals and deposits, where appropriate, and in a timely manner, using Business Internet Banking where appropriate;
- To reimburse members promptly such reasonable expenses incurred by them within the rules agreed with the Committee, where they are supported by a valid receipt or invoice;
- To hold an amount of petty cash, as agreed by the Committee, so that small amounts of expenses (but only where supported by a valid receipt or invoice) can be promptly reimbursed in cash;
- To maintain an up to date set of accounts which can be made available for examination by any Committee member through the year, together with the Organisation bank account paying-in book;
- To prepare the annual accounts for audit and presentation to the Committee and Members of the Organisation;
- Any other tasks appropriate to the Treasurer.

It is the responsibility of the Treasurer to pay any payments as instructed by the Committee.

### **REGULAR COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

The Committee shall determine the frequency of meetings, however there shall be a minimum of two meetings per annum, in addition to the AGM.

A Minimum of two Committee members must be present at any Committee meeting to form a quorum.

Ordinarily at least one week's notice will be given by the Secretary for any Committee Meeting.

Where any matters require a vote, all Committee members (including the Chairperson) are eligible to vote (unless where a conflict of interest has been declared) and the result will be decided on a simple majority on a show of hands.

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If the Chairperson or Secretary is absent from any meeting, the Committee shall choose one of their number to take the role for that meeting.

Non-Committee Members may attend Committee meetings in a non-voting capacity, if they wish to raise, advise or consult on a particular agenda item.

### FINANCE & EXPENSES

All monies raised by or on behalf of the Organisation shall be applied to further the objects of the Organisation and for no other purpose.

All cheques or Authorisation shall be jointly signed by the Treasurer and one other Committee member. There shall be at least two signatories for the Bank account at any time.

The financial year shall run from 1st April to 31st March.

The accounts shall be independently audited annually prior to the A.G.M.

Members shall be entitled to be reimbursed, promptly, all such reasonable travelling and other expenses incurred by them within the rules agreed with the Committee. Members shall not be entitled to any additional remuneration for the performance of their duties.

**This Constitution was originally adopted as the Constitution of Friends of Ancells Farm at a Meeting held in the Falkners Arms, Falkners Close, Fleet, Hampshire in 2011 and has been amended at the AGM held on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2017.**

*Jimson Taylor* CHAIRPERSON

*J Paton* SECRETARY

Dated: 15/3/17.