

CONSTITUTION OF THE FIRS DRIVE RESIDENTS GROUP

1. NAME

The name of the organisation shall be *Firs Drive Residents Group* (hereafter referred to as the group).

2. OBJECTIVES

To safeguard and promote the interest of residents in the area on matters concerning housing and the environment. To help to improve living conditions, community facilities and services for residents living in the groups area. In order to do this we are committed to representing the views of residents in our area of operation.

The group will uphold equal opportunities and work towards good relations amongst all members of the community, specifically prohibiting any conduct which discriminates or harasses on grounds of race, religion, disability, political belief, sex or sexual orientation.

3. MEMBERSHIP

- a) Membership shall be open to all residents, irrespective of tenure, in the Cranford area.
- b) All voting members must be at least 16 years of age.
- c) Membership shall cease immediately upon a person leaving the area defined in paragraph 3a).
- d) *Membership shall be a minimum of £1 per annum (to be collected on meeting dates)*

4. THE COMMITTEE

- a) A committee shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the group and shall serve for 12 months.
- b) The committee shall consist of at least three members, who shall have the power to co-opt other members on to the committee, during the course of the year. All members will have voting rights.
- c) The committee shall elect from within their number a Chairperson, (*Vice Chairpersons*), Secretary and Treasurer. No committee member shall fill more than one position.
- d) The committee and office bearers shall make and carry out decisions in accordance with the objectives of the group.
- e) Meetings of the committee shall be open to any member of the group who wishes to attend.
- f) There must be at least three of the committee members present for any decisions to be made at a committee meeting.
- g) Elected Councillors may attend committee meetings as and when invited by the committee.
- h) Voting members may be co-opted from residents to fill casual vacancies throughout the year.
- i) Committee members can be voted off if they have not attended three consecutive meetings without good reason and have not submitted their apologies.
- j) Committee members must declare any interest they may have in the topic under discussion and the committee will decide if they need to forfeit their right to vote on this occasion.

5. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS OR STANDING ORDERS

- a) Members may speak only through the Chair.
- b) Decisions will be agreed by a simple majority, voted in through a show of hands, or a secret ballot.
- c) Meetings will end at the time agreed by the committee unless all those present agree to extend the meeting.
- d) Any offensive behaviour, including racist, ageism, sexist or inflammatory remarks will not be permitted.
- e) Any member who brings the group into disrepute or refuses to comply with the constitution shall be expelled on a majority vote of the full committee.
- f) Any such member will have the right to appeal within 28 days of the expulsion. The appeal shall be heard by the membership at a Special General Meeting called for that purpose.
- g) The Secretary shall deal with all correspondence.
- h) Agendas will be distributed to the membership at least four days before a meeting, where possible. Items for the agenda should be forwarded to the Secretary and Chair seven days before the meeting, where possible.
- i) Minutes will be distributed to the membership 7 days after a meeting, where possible.

6. FINANCES

- a) The group may raise funds by obtaining grants from other bodies or by fundraising schemes. All money raised by or on behalf of the group shall be applied to further its objectives.
- b) All funds shall be kept in a bank account that shall be opened in the name of the group.

- c) The Secretary, Treasurer and the Chairperson shall be signatories on the account and all cheques shall require two of these signatures.
- d) Accounts shall be kept by the Treasurer.
- e) All expenditure shall be agreed and controlled by the committee. Receipts should be acquired for all expenditure over one pound.
- f) All payments over ten pounds shall be made by cheque, not cash. Any exception to this rule shall be discussed and agreed by the committee.
- g) No officer shall sign a blank cheque – all cheques to be filled in before signatures are added.
- h) Once a year, the accounts will be audited and presented to the Annual General Meeting of the group. The Auditors will be either:

A Council Officer, Bank Employee or:
The committee of another constituted local community organisation.
- i) All correspondence of the group including the bank statement, shall be addressed to the secretary.

7. PUBLIC MEETINGS

- a) Public meetings of the members shall be regularly held to discuss matters of importance and to keep the members fully informed of the groups activities.
- b) Members shall be given 14 days notice of a public meeting.
- c) All votes shall be decided by a simple majority of the members present. This applies to all meetings of the group.
- d) Any member, having the written support of 20 other members, may request the committee to call a Special Public Meeting of the group. The committee shall call the meeting within 21 days of this written request.

8. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

- a) An AGM shall be held every year to discuss the activities of the group, to receive the audited accounts and to elect the committee.
- b) The AGM shall be held at a suitable venue to accommodate as many members as possible.
- c) The quorum shall be 51 % of members present, with a minimum of 5 attendees.
- d) At least 14 days notice needs to be given to members of the AGM.
- e) At the AGM the resignation of all committee members will be accepted and a new committee elected.

9. CHANGES TO CONSTITUTION

- a) This constitution shall only be changed at a Special Public Meeting of the group, or at the AGM.
- b) For decisions to be taken there must be a quorum of at least 51% of members present, with a minimum of 5 attendees. The voting shall be by simple majority of those present.
- c) All members shall be given 14 days notice of the meeting and proposed changes.
- d) Proposed changes must be submitted to the secretary in writing not less than 28 days before the AGM. The secretary must notify members of any proposed changes within 21 days of the meeting.

10. CHILD PROTECTION

- a) The group will ensure that any activities they are involved with will be a safe environment for children.

- b) If group activities are to involve children a Child Protection Policy will be adopted and a committee member will be appointed to take responsibility for its implementation.

11.LEASES AND AGREEMENTS

- a) As trustees for and on behalf of the group, the current Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer, may enter into leases and access agreements that are transferable to ongoing elected office bearers to further the objectives of the group as set out in clause 2.

12.DISSOLUTION OF THE GROUP

- a) The group may only be dissolved by a special meeting called for that purpose. Such a meeting shall come about following a proposal in writing signed by a simple majority of those remaining on the committee being submitted to the Secretary.
- b) All members shall be informed of such a meeting at least 21 days before the date of the meeting.
- c) Dissolution of the group shall only take effect if agreed by two thirds of the members present and voting at that meeting.
- d) Any assets remaining after meeting liabilities must be distributed among local charities or other community group with similar aims of the group nominated by that meeting.
- e) Any money received via funding bodies should be returned to the funders in relation to the funding criteria.
- f) On dissolution, any documents belonging to the group shall be disposed of in a manner agreed by that meeting.

This constitution was adopted at a committee meeting of the Firs Drive Residents Group on ... 3 June 2014.

Signed

Print name

Chairperson  JANET M-STEVENS.
Secretary RUPINOER GILL 
Treasurer  SUMIR AHLUWALIA