



Dunstable Good Neighbours

Constitution

1. Name

The name of the Group shall be Dunstable Good Neighbours

2. Administration

Subject to the matters set out below the Group shall be administered and managed in accordance with this constitution by members of the Steering Group, constituted by clause 7 of this constitution (the Steering Group).

3. Aims

The aims of the group are:

To provide to the residents of Dunstable friendly visits to those who are lonely or isolated, occasional help with small tasks around the house or garden, assistance with form filling, occasional lifts to the doctors, shops etc. through local volunteers and to encourage friendship within the local community.

4. Powers

In furtherance of the aims of the Group, the Steering Group may exercise the following powers:

- a) raise funds and to invite and receive grants, donations and other contributions
- b) to buy or lease and to maintain any equipment or materials necessary for the achievement of the aims
- c) sell, lease or dispose of all or any part of the property of the Group
- d) publish books, periodicals, pamphlets and other materials in printed, recorded or electronic format, and to hold intellectual property rights in any such material
- e) organise conferences, debates, seminars, and such other special events as the Steering Group may determine
- f) co-operate with other organisations in furtherance of any of the aims or of any similar purposes
- g) do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the achievement of the aims.

5. Membership

- a) Membership of the Group shall be open to any person over the age of 18 years. Members under 18 may be considered at the Steering Group's discretion where the younger member would be accompanied on their volunteering by a DBS checked volunteer at all times and/or where the volunteering undertaken by the younger member would not involve being alone with a service-user.

- b) Membership shall be open to any person irrespective of Race, Colour, Nationality, Age, Ethnic or National Origin, Religion or Creed, Gender, Marital Status, Sexual Orientation or Disability.
- c) The secretary shall be responsible for ensuring membership records are kept and that new members receive and return any paperwork necessary for membership.
- d) The Steering Group have the right to agree or reject applications for membership. The Steering Group may by unanimous vote and for good reason terminate the membership of any member ('member' defined as 'care scheme volunteer') - provided that the member concerned shall have the right to be heard by the Steering Group, accompanied by a friend, before a final decision is made.
- e) Current legislation dictates that all volunteers be submitted for checking by the Government Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Only those passing such checks can be accepted as members.

6. Honorary Officers

At the Annual General Meeting the members shall elect from among themselves the following Honorary Officers, who shall hold office from the conclusion of that meeting:

- Chair
- Vice Chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Minute Secretary

The Honorary officers shall be in post until the end of the Annual General Meeting after their election but shall be eligible for re-election if they wish to continue in post.

In addition to the Honorary Officers and the members elected, the Steering Group may appoint co-opted members. There must be less than one third of the Steering Group who are co-opted.

7. Steering Group

The Steering Group shall consist of the Honorary Officers specified in the preceding clause and any co-opted members.

All the members of the Steering Group shall retire from office together at the end of the annual general meeting next after the date on which they came into office, but they may be re-elected or re-appointed.

A member of the Steering Group shall cease to hold office if she or he:

- a) has been convicted of any offence involving dishonesty or deception;

- b) has been adjudged bankrupt or sequestration of her/his estate has been awarded and s/he has not been discharged;
- c) has made a composition or arrangement with, or granted a trust deed for, her/his creditors and has not been discharged;
- d) has been removed by the Charity Commissioners or by any court or under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986 or the Insolvency Act 1986 from being concerned with the management or control of any body;
- e) has become incapable by reason of mental disorder, illness or injury of managing his or her own affairs;
- f) is absent, without the permission of the Steering Group, from three consecutive meetings and the Steering Group resolves that s/he shall cease to hold office; or
- g) notifies the Steering Group of her/his resignation: Provided that at least three members of the Steering Group will remain in office when the notice of resignation is to take effect.

8. Meetings and proceedings of the Steering Group

- a) The Steering Group shall hold at least six meetings each year. A special meeting may be called by the Chair or by any two members of the Steering Group upon 21 days' notice being given to the members of the Steering Group of the matters to be discussed
- b) There shall be a quorum when three persons or one third of the Steering Group (whichever is the greater) are present at the meeting.
- c) When a vote is taken the matter shall be decided by a majority of those present and voting. In the case of equality of votes the Chair shall have a casting vote.
- d) The Minute Secretary shall keep minutes of the proceedings of the Steering Group.
- e) In the absence of the Chair, Vice Chair or Secretary the first business of the meeting shall be to ensure that a substitute is appointed for the duration of the meeting.

9. Sub-committees

The Steering Group may appoint such sub-committees as it thinks fit for supervising or performing any activity or service, defining the terms of reference and determining each sub-committee's composition and the duration of its activities. All acts and proceedings of each sub-committee shall be reported as soon as possible to the Steering Group.

10. Receipts and expenditure

- a) A bank account shall be opened in the name of the Group. The funds of the Group including all donations, contributions and bequests, shall be paid into the bank account at such bank or other financial institution as the Steering Group shall decide.
- b) The Steering Group shall authorise (in writing to the Secretary) the Treasurer and up to two other members of the Steering Group to sign cheques on behalf of the Group. Signatories shall be appointed by the Steering Group annually at the Steering Group's first meeting following the Annual General Meeting.
- c) Where funds are received by donation, grant, gift, bequest or otherwise for specifically designed purposes, such funds shall be held as restricted funds and shall be used only for the purposes defined by the donor(s). They shall be reported in the accounts as restricted funds. If such moneys cannot be spent in accordance with the conditions of their donation, any unspent balance shall be returned to the donors or to their trustees, or otherwise used only as the donors or trustees permit. In the absence of such requirement or permission, after reasonable notice to the donors(s) or trustee(s), the Steering Group shall apply such funds to purposes as near as possible to those for which they were granted.
- d) The funds of the Group shall be applied to further the aims and no payments shall be made to any members of the Steering Group except reasonable and proper out of pocket expenses.

11. Accounts

- a) The Treasurer shall present to each meeting of the Steering Group an up-to-date statement of the accounts.
- b) The Treasurer shall prepare annual statements of accounts which, after examination by an independent person appointed by the Steering Group, shall be presented to the Annual General Meeting.

12. Indemnity

No member of the Steering Group shall be liable by reason of any mistake or omission made in good faith by any member of the Steering Group other than wilful and individual fraud, wrongdoing or wrongful omission on the part of the member whom it is sought to make liable.

13. General meetings

- a) There shall be an Annual General Meeting of the Group which shall be held in the month of April each year or as soon as is practicable thereafter. Every Annual General Meeting shall be called by the Steering Group. The Secretary shall give at least 21 days' notice of the Annual General Meeting to all the members of the Group, who shall be entitled to attend and vote at the meeting.
- b) Nominations for Honorary Officers and member representatives shall be notified, in writing to the Secretary, at least 7 days prior to the Annual General Meeting.
- c) The business of each Annual General Meeting shall be:
 - i. to receive the Annual Reports of the Steering Group;
 - ii. to receive the accounts of the Group for the preceding financial year,
 - iii. to elect the Honorary Officers specified in Clause 6 of this constitution;
 - iv. to elect co-opted members of the Steering Group;
 - v. to appoint qualified auditors or independent examiners for the coming year to audit or examine the accounts of the Group;
 - vi. to consider and vote on any proposals to alter this constitution in accordance with clause 15 of this constitution;
 - vii. to consider any other business of which due notice has been given.
- d) The Steering Group may call a Special General Meeting at any time. If at least ten members of the Group request such a meeting in writing stating the business to be considered the Secretary shall call such a meeting without delay. At least 21 days' notice must be given and the notice must state the business to be discussed.

14. Procedure at general meetings

All general meetings shall be chaired by the Chair appointed at the preceding Annual General Meeting or, in his/her absence, by the Vice Chair. If both the Chair and Vice Chair are absent another person shall be appointed at the beginning of the meeting. The Minute Secretary or some other person specially appointed by the meeting shall keep a full record of proceedings at every general meeting. There shall be a quorum when 10 persons or one tenth of the membership, whichever is the lesser, are present.

15. Alterations to the Constitution

No alteration or addition to this Constitution shall be made except at a General Meeting. This Constitution may be altered by a resolution passed by not less than two thirds of the members present and voting at a General Meeting. At least 21 days' notice must be given to all members.

16. Dissolution

If the Steering Group decides that it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the Group it shall call a General Meeting of all the members of the Group, of which not less than 21 days notice shall be given. If the proposal is confirmed by a two thirds majority of those present and voting, the Steering Group shall have the power to realise any assets held by or on behalf of the Group. Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be transferred to groups who have provided funding held by or on behalf of the Group, as a General Meeting or the Steering Group (in the absence of direction from the General Meeting) may determine.

17. Signatures:

Position/Role:

Dated:



CHAIRPERSON

2nd December 2020

Andrew Harland