

**THE CONSTITUTION OF
THE PETTS WOOD AND DISTRICT RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION
Final Version - agreed at March 2008 AGM**

Name: The name of the Association shall be "Petts Wood And District Residents' Association ("the Association")

Definitions: In this constitution the under-noted words and expressions shall have the following meanings:

"Association" the Petts Wood & District Residents' Association.
"Area": the territory within the 'Association Boundary' as shown on the Association's map.
"Member" a Full Member and/or an Associate Member as defined under Membership below.
"Life Member" anyone whom the Committee have nominated and accepted as a life member as defined in these rules.
"Officer" those Committee members occupying the positions of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer or any other officer positions that the Committee decides to appoint.
"Resident" any person residing within the Area.
"Financial Year" shall be from 1st January each year to 31st December of that year.
"Road Steward" any Member who volunteers to collect annual subscriptions from Member Households and to distribute communications from the Association.
"Member Household" all persons residing in the same property as a Member or Associate Member.
"Auditor" a person elected to perform an audit of the Association's accounts.

Aims: The aims of the Association are:

- To conserve and develop the amenities of Petts Wood
- To promote an active interest in the community and in local government
- To foster and promote the development and enhancement of the local community for the benefit of the residents, whether directly or indirectly, and either alone or in association with other organisations having similar interests.

Approach: The Association is strictly non-political and non-sectarian and shall endeavour to meet the aims chiefly but not exclusively through liaison with and making representations to local Councillors, monitoring council minutes and other communications, attending council, police and other local groups' meetings as well as maintaining contact with public service and utility providers in order to exert whatever influence may be possible for the benefit of the residents. The Committee members may concentrate on specific areas (e.g. planning, transport, environment, health, etc) in order to gain experience and improve monitoring but they shall not be deemed experts in those areas and shall not be deemed to provide comprehensive coverage, given the voluntary nature of their role and shall have no liability either to the Association, the Members, the Residents or any other third party.

Rules:

Membership

1. There shall be three classes of Member, namely Full Members, Life Members and Associate Members.
2. Residents in any household within the Area for which the annual subscription has been paid shall be Full Members but only one resident in each Member Household shall have voting rights although all will be eligible for election to the Committee or sub-committees.
3. Persons living in any household outside the Area for which the annual subscription has been paid shall be Associate Members and shall not have voting rights nor be eligible for election to the Committee or sub-committees.
4. Any adult person will be eligible to join as a Full Member or Associate Member assuming they accept and observe the Rules of the Association.
5. Membership will require the payment of an annual subscription per household, regardless of how many residents live there. This shall be that amount determined at each Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting.
6. Any Member Household for which the annual subscription is in arrears at the end of the Financial Year will automatically relinquish membership until such time as the subscription is paid.
7. The Association shall maintain records of Member Households and, via its network of Road Stewards or other means, collect from them the annual subscription. They shall issue to Member Households, via the Road Stewards, regular newsletters and other communications except where an Associate Member or Life Member lives too far away for practical delivery. Associate Members will then be expected to pay the cost of delivery but the cost for Life Members will be borne by the Association.
8. The Association shall maintain, as and when practically possible, an e-mail service and an internet web-site in order to enhance communications with Members.
9. No person other than a current paid-up Full Member, Associate Member or Life Member shall be allowed to attend any meeting of the Association, except by invitation as a guest.
10. No person other than a current paid-up Full Member or Life Member shall be allowed to vote at any meeting of the Association. Voting shall be on the basis of one vote per Member Household. Associate Members and invited guests are not allowed to vote at any meetings of the Association.
11. The Committee will have the power to suspend membership for any Member Household where the conduct of any of its Full / Associate / Life Members is in its opinion detrimental to the welfare of the Association generally, which suspension shall continue until the next General Meeting when a spokesman for the Member Household concerned and a spokesman for the Committee shall be given the opportunity of making a statement and those present shall decide by majority ballot whether they should remain a Member Household, which decision shall be final and binding. This rule shall apply even if the Member concerned is a current Officer of the Association, a serving member of the Committee or a member of any sub-committee.
12. Any Full Member, Life Member or Associate Member may seek general guidance from a Committee member but such guidance will be given only on the basis of a personal opinion and is not offered as professional advice and no liability shall arise or accrue by any Committee member as a result of giving such advice.

Management

13. The Management of the Association shall be vested in a voluntary Committee of Full Members, which will include Officers.
14. The election of the Officers and Committee members shall take place at the Annual General Meeting.
15. Nominations for the appointment of Officers and members of the Committee shall be signed by a proposer and seconder who must both be either a fully paid up Full Member of the Association since 31st January of the preceding year or a Life Member. The consent of the nominee must first have been obtained and nominations shall be sent to the Secretary not later than 1st February each year. To be eligible for nomination to the Committee, the nominee must have been a fully paid up Full Member of the Association on or before 31st January of the preceding year or be a Life Member. Associate Members cannot be nominated as a Committee member.
16. At the AGM, voting for the election of the Officers and members of the Committee shall be by secret ballot of all Full / Life Members present, except in those cases where only one nomination has been received in respect of any one vacancy where voting shall be by show of hands of those Full / Life Members present. The posts of Officers shall be individually nominated and either balloted / voted on in the same way.
17. The Committee shall meet at regular intervals, to be agreed from time to time, to conduct the business of the Association. At a Committee meeting a quorum will consist of 7 members of the Committee.
18. Before discussion of any item in Committee all who have an interest in that item whether pecuniary or otherwise must declare that interest and the other members of the Committee present will decide what participation, if any, that person may take in consideration of that item.
19. The Committee shall have the power to appoint sub-committees for specific purposes and to co-opt Full Members to sub-committees.
20. The Committee shall have the power to deal with any business not otherwise provided for in these rules which is for the general benefit of Members and Residents.
21. The Committee shall have the power to co-opt Full Members to fill any casual vacancies arising during the year.
22. The Committee may from time to time nominate Members of the Association to accept Life Membership to mark meritorious work for the Association, such nominations to be subject to approval by the Annual General Meeting. Any such Life Member shall not be required to pay the annual subscription.

Financial

23. Bank accounts shall be maintained in the name of the Association and all payments out of those accounts must be authorised by the Treasurer or Secretary and any one other Officer authorised by the Committee.
24. All expenditure shall have the prior approval of the Committee and must support the aims of the Association.
25. Any personal expenses for Committee members must be submitted to, and be approved by, the Treasurer on the appropriate form with supporting evidence, thereby providing an audit trail.
26. The Treasurer shall maintain a running set of accounts showing the financial position of the Association. In accordance with good financial practice, these accounts must show at the minimum all income, expenditure, liabilities and assets of the Association at any given point in time and be available for inspection by the Committee or the Auditor upon reasonable request.
27. An Auditor shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting each year and shall perform an interim audit of the accounts as presented to him by the Treasurer by the end of September each year and a final audit at the end of that Financial Year. This will include a Balance Sheet and Income and Expenditure Account summary.
28. The Auditor shall bring to the attention of the Committee at his earliest possible convenience and before the AGM all material matters which he has not been able to resolve to his satisfaction with the Treasurer during the audit process.
29. Following the final audit, both the Treasurer and Auditor shall sign and date the Finance Statements thereby verifying the Association's financial position at the end of the previous financial year. The original documents will be handed to the Secretary for filing with the Association's records and copies distributed to each Committee member at the February meeting for discussion and adoption. The Balance Sheet and Income and Expenditure Summary will be presented to Members at the Annual General Meeting for ratification.
30. The Treasurer shall prepare a financial forecast or budget each year and present this to the Committee at the February meeting.
31. The Treasurer shall, on resigning from the Committee, present the accounts to the Auditor for an interim audit so far as practically possible before their leaving date and shall perform a controlled hand-over to the newly-appointed Treasurer, or if an appointment has not been made, to another Committee member as agreed by the Committee.
32. Nominations for donations by the Association can arise from Members, the Committee or from receipt of a direct request from an external party. Payment of any donations shall only be deemed approved and shall be paid out only on achieving at least a 75% majority of the Committee in favour. Members will be advised of the Committee's decisions via the regular newsletter and at the Annual General Meeting.
33. Adequate insurance cover shall be maintained by the Committee in order to safeguard the funds and assets of the Association and to cover any third party liabilities as may be required by law.
34. The Committee shall be responsible for recommending the level of annual subscriptions after receiving the budget for the coming year from the Treasurer. Any recommended change to subscription levels must be a matter decided by the Full Members present at the Annual General Meeting.
35. The Committee shall have the power to generate income in addition to subscriptions as they deem necessary (eg from selling advertisement space in the newsletter or selling copies of 'A History of Petts Wood', etc.) All such funds raised must be applied to further the aims of the Association and for no other purpose.
36. If the Association should at any time be wound up all remaining funds and assets will be distributed in accordance with the wishes of the Full / Life Members present at a Special General Meeting which will be called for that express purpose.

General Meetings

37. The Annual General Meeting shall so far as practically possible be held in March. Notice of the Agenda plus the audited Balance Sheet and Income and Expenditure Accounts summary plus the names of Committee nominees and the proposers and seconders shall be sent to each Member Household at least 14 days before the date of such meeting, usually via the regular newsletter. At a General Meeting a quorum shall consist of 20 Full / Life Members.
38. A resolution to be put to the Annual General Meeting must be proposed either by the Committee or by a requisition signed by at least 20 Full / Life Members and sent to the Secretary not later than 1st February and shall be circulated with the notice convening the meeting.

39. Voting on any resolution shall be by a show of hands of Full / Life Members present except in cases where the Chairman of the meeting deems it should be by secret ballot.
40. A Special General Meeting shall be called on a requisition signed by at least 20 Full / Life Members specifying the object of the meeting and sent to the Secretary who shall fix a date for a meeting within 14 days of the receipt of such requisition. The Committee shall also have the power to call such a meeting whenever it is considered advisable. The meeting shall as far as practically possible be held within a further 28 days. Giving a minimum of 7 days' notice, the Secretary shall send a notice to all Member Households usually via the regular newsletter and notices on the Association's notice board and web-site specifying the date and purpose of the Special General Meeting. No other business shall be transacted at such meeting.
41. Alteration of this Constitution shall only be made at an Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting called for that express purpose. The proposed alterations or additions shall be included in the notice convening the meeting which shall be sent to all Member Households in accordance with the rules for such meetings as described above and will be deemed approved and passed on achieving at least 75% majority of those Full / Life Members present in favour of the alteration or amendment.