

Hoe Valley Neighbourhood Forum Constitution

October 2022.

This updated constitution was adopted at an annual general meeting held at Old Woking Community Centre, on 15th October 2022

Signed: _____

Chairman

Ratified by Members;.....Date.

1 Purpose and Objectives

- 1.1 The Hoe Valley Neighbourhood Forum ('HVNF') is a neighbourhood forum as defined in the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011 ('the Act')
- 1.2 The purpose of HVNF is to further the social, economic and environmental well-being of the Hoe Valley ward Area as defined in section 2 below ('the Area') by acting for the Area under the provisions of the Act.
To foster community spirit and encourage civic pride.
- 1.3 HVNF membership will be open to residents living in the Area, individuals working or carrying on business in the Area, local representative groups, County Council and Borough Councillors representing all or part of the Area. HVNF will aim for as wide a representation of communities in the area as possible. Membership and organisation of HVNF are set out in section 3 below.
- 1.4 HVNF will monitor development management policy and its application in the Area and will produce and maintain, in partnership with the Local Planning Authority, a Neighbourhood Development Plan as defined in section 4 below.
- 1.5 HVNF may Initiate Neighbourhood Development Orders or Community Right to Build Orders, identify Assets of Community Value, or carry out any other permitted actions.
- 1.6 HVNF will act in accordance with General Policies and Principles set out in section 5 below

2 The Hoe Valley Neighbourhood Area ('the Area')

- 2.1 The Area shall be the area as defined by the Woking Borough Council Ward of Hoe Valley.
- 2.2 This Area includes the villages of Old Woking, Kingfield and Westfield, and Claremont Avenue (including roads off this).

3 Membership; and Organisation Membership

- 3.1 Membership of HVNF is open to:

- ✓ Residents over 16 living in the Area
- ✓ Ward Councillors from the Borough of Woking representing the Area.
- ✓ County Councillors covering Hoe Valley ward.
- ✓ Business owners operating within the Area
- ✓ People employed within the Hoe Valley Area

- 3.2 Membership Ethos

Members are expected to have an interest in assisting the Forum to achieve its aims and are willing to adhere to the rules of the Forum.

3.2 Affiliate membership (non-voting) is open to:

- ✓ Representative Residents' Associations, friends' groups, and amenity societies and associations, collectively described herein as 'Organisations'.
- ✓ Proprietors of local businesses
- ✓ Surrey Wildlife Trust
- ✓ Representation from The Friends of Woking Palace
- ✓ Representation from local community centres

This list will be updated from time to time as necessary

Forum Committee

3.3 A Forum Management Committee comprising up to 7 members will be elected at each AGM to carry out the day-to-day work of the Forum. The quorum for the Committee will be 3 members.

3.4 The Committee will elect the following officers of the Forum from within its number: Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer.

3.4 Officers will serve for one year and be subject to re-election.

3.5 All members shall have an equal vote.

3.6 The Chairman (or the Vice Chairman when acting as Chairman) will have a casting vote at any Committee or General Meeting.

3.7 The Committee will direct and oversee the work of the Forum and will meet at least quarterly for this purpose.

3.8 Subcommittees or working parties may be appointed by the Committee to carry out specific tasks, to consider policies and to advise the Committee. Such bodies may be appointed from within or outside the membership of the Forum but will be responsible to the Committee.

3.9 The Committee may co-opt up to three additional members to the Committee in any year. Co-opted members will have the same voting rights as other Committee members. A co-opted member may be elected as an officer.

3.10 Councillors representing the Hoe Valley Ward in WBC will be invited to all Committee Meetings.

3.11 The Secretary will make minutes of General and Committee Meetings available to the members of the Forum within three weeks of the meeting unless impracticable. Organisations which are affiliated to HVNF will be encouraged to communicate such information to their membership.

3.12 The Secretary (or Membership Secretary if applicable) shall maintain a list of members who have registered for communication purposes at all times.

Meetings

3.13 Annual General Meetings will normally be held in October or as close to such date as practicable. An Extraordinary General Meeting may be called by decision of the Committee or by 30 members of the Forum applying to the Secretary. For all General Meetings, a notice of the meeting will be sent to all Forum members at least 21 days before the meeting, unless exceptional circumstances prevail.

3.14 At any General Meeting each member present will have one vote. Where practicable, arrangements will be made to enable members unable to attend to appoint a proxy. Decisions of General Meetings will be by simple majority.

3.15 Notices to members will be deemed delivered if sent to the member's last notified email address, or (where no email address is given) sent by post, or hand delivered to the last notified address.

Finance

3.16 The Forum will have the power to raise funds as necessary for its activities, by grant, donation or any other appropriate means.

3.17 The Forum will have its own bank account.

3.18 The Committee will open one or more bank accounts as necessary in the name of the Forum. All funds raised for the Forum will be held in such accounts. The Committee will nominate bank signatories.

3.19 An annual financial report shall be presented at the AGM. Official accounts shall be maintained, and will be examined annually by an independent person with adequate financial expertise who is not a member of the Forum.

3.20 The Committee will where necessary ensure any assets it holds, and by insurance or otherwise indemnify its officers against liabilities arising from their work for the Forum, apart from fraud or wilful neglect.

3.21 Subject to funding, the Committee may commission advisory services, surveys or any other activity in support of the Objectives.

3.22 The Secretary will keep a Register of Committee Members' Interests detailing any financial interests in the Area or any other interest which could be deemed to have an influence on decisions likely to come before the Committee. Members will be required to declare any conflict of interest and abstain from voting on any matter in which they have a financial interest.

4 Neighbourhood Development Plan

4.1 The Hoe Valley Neighbourhood Plan (NP) sets out policies for the development and use of land within the Area. As provided for in the Act, it will be subject to extensive consultation and examination, including where appropriate a referendum within the Area.

4.2 The NP includes, where appropriate, specific policies for identified parts of the Area, including conservation policies.

The NP will aim to:

- Complement the Local Development Frameworks and Conservation Area Appraisals as produced by the relevant Planning Authorities to ensure that all development is sympathetic to the character of the Area.
- Identify locations for potential sensitive development that will, within the Local Development Frameworks, include affordable housing, retail, business and community use.
- Express aspirations for the future development of traffic and transport serving or passing through the Area.
- Provide for the preservation and improvement of private and public open space.
- Nominate Assets of Community Value for listing by the appropriate local authority.
- Set a framework for the retail and business improvement of the Area.
- Guide the Planning and Highway Authorities towards improvements in the public realm.
- Pay due attention to sustainability and carbon reduction.
- Pay attention to elements that will positively improve the health and wellbeing of residents in the area.
- Pay due attention to the surface and underground water environment, flood and pollution risks and soil stability.

4.3 The NP will include policies aimed at generating employment in the Area and promoting business activity, including retail. It will aim to promote a good range of shops and community facilities in the area with particular emphasis on encouraging smaller enterprises.

5 General Policies and Principles

5.1 HVNF will take the distinctive character and heritage of the villages of the Hoe Valley area into account in all its actions, and will aim to ensure that all development in the Area preserves or enhances this character. HVNF will:

- Strive to maintain a good balance between the residential, business and environmental interests of The Area, including the best use of our green spaces.
- The Committee will seek to establish and represent the views of the general members and promote the majority view.
- Aim to promote the Hoe Valley Area as a vibrant business and residential community.
- Aim for improvements in the local environment including those directed towards carbon reduction.
- Generally support actions aimed at generating employment in the Area and the wider community.
- Promote policies to maximise social benefit, community links, and services for young people.
- Promote activities to aid reduction of crime and anti- social behaviour.
- Support for elderly and vulnerable members of the community.

- Respect and promote inclusion of all.
- Encourage all interested residents and all representative groupings of residents or businesses in the Area to become members of HVNF and to work alongside HVNF to further their joint objectives.
- Endeavour to monitor development in areas immediately adjoining the Area and to co-operate with forums and / or authorized bodies in adjoining areas with the intent of ensuring that the objectives of this constitution are met.
- Consult with adjoining neighbourhood forums and wards will take place where any development in the Hoe Valley directly affects other communities.

6 Amendments and Dissolution

6.1 Amendments to the body of this Constitution will be by decision of a General Meeting carried out in accordance with 3.13.

6.2 HVNF may be dissolved by decision of a General Meeting specifically called for this purpose and carried out in accordance with 3.13 and 3.14 above.

6.3 In the event of dissolution, any property or funds held by HVNF will be:

- Subject to the agreement of the Members at General Meeting, allocated to one or more nominated organisations set up to continue the work of HVNF, or
- In the absence of any such organisation and subject to any statutory regulations, distributed equally to the constituent local organisations who are its members (but not to individual members)

6.4 In accordance with the Act, a formal review of the functions and achievements of HVNF will be carried out five years after its formation. Following such review, and consultation with its members, HVNF will decide to continue, amend or dissolve itself as considered appropriate.

References

Thanks to WBNF and other existing neighbourhood plans in the Borough for assistance in wording this constitution.

Town & Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011 ('the Act').

<http://www.woking2027.info/neighbourhoodplanning>