

Middleton Community Group Constitution

1. The name of Association shall be the:

Middleton Community Group

2. Aims of the Association:

- a) To promote the interests of all residents in the area, and to assist in maintaining good relations between all members of the community.
- b) To promote all residents' rights and the maintenance and improvement of housing conditions, amenities and the environment.
- c) To promote social activities for all members in the community.
- d) To work towards the elimination of all forms of discrimination within the community by encouraging all members of usually excluded groups to participate in the association.
- e) To work with our landlord(s), and other organisations for the benefit of all Residents.
- f) The Association shall be **non-political** to ensure all of our community is represented.
- g) To engage our community, local policing teams/ PCSO's and Safer Leeds in a collaborative group.

3. Membership

- a) Membership shall be open to all residents living in the Middleton Community Group area of benefit (Middleton Parish boundaries – see Appendix 1), but those in surrounding areas can apply and be accepted with Committee approval.
- b) All members shall have an equal vote. On those issues specifically relating to Housing Association finance, only housing association tenants will have voting rights. On those issues specifically relating to Council House finance, only Council tenants will have voting rights.
- c) All members should actively seek to represent the various needs of the area and must not discriminate on the grounds of nationality, political opinion, race, religious opinion, age, gender, sexuality or disability.
- d) Members shall at all times conduct themselves in a reasonable manner when attending meetings or any other function in connection with the Association.
- e) Individuals can be chosen by the Committee from outside the area for special reasons who shall be known as co-opted members. Co-opted members shall not have any voting rights.

4. The Committee

- a) A committee shall be elected to carry out the business of the Association.
- b) The committee shall be made up of a secretary, chair, treasurer (otherwise known as Officers) and a minimum of four other general members.
- c) The committee shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

- d) Elected officials such as Councillors, Members of parliament and Police Commissioners may not be elected to the committee in order for the group to remain **non-political**, any member of the committee elected to these roles must stand down once elected.
- e) Officers shall carry out the duties given to them at General Meetings.
- f) The committee shall meet no less than 4 times per calendar year and General meetings (Public meetings) held for the Community on at least 8 occasions.
- g) Minutes of committee meetings shall be available to all members.
- h) Vacancies arising during the year can be filled by an election at a general meeting. The committee may fill any vacancies arising amongst officers of the committee until the next general meeting.

5. Finance

- a) All money raised by or on behalf of the Association is to be used only to further the aims of the association and for no other purpose.
- b) The treasurer shall open a bank account in the name of the Association.
- c) Cheque signatories will be nominated by the committee (one to be the treasurer). There shall be three signatories. These should **not** be from the same household or the same family.
- d) All cheques and instructions to the Association's bankers shall require two of the agreed signatures.
- e) The treasurer shall have the accounts checked by an independent person appointed by the AGM with adequate financial experience, for example, a representative of a community organisation, law centre or council for voluntary service, at the end of each financial year.
- f) The accounts shall be made available to members at the AGM for approval and copies sent to the Customer Involvement officer, Aire valley Homes Leeds.

6. Annual General Meeting

- a) There shall be an Annual General Meeting (AGM) held every 12 months at which the committee shall report on its work, present a statement of accounts and resign.
- b) The AGM shall elect the officers and committee for the next year.
- c) The AGM shall vote on recommendations and any amendments to the constitution.
- d) The secretary will notify all registered members of the date of the meeting not less than 21 days before the AGM.

7. Other General Meetings.

- a) General meetings (Public meetings) will be held for the Community on at least 8 occasions and will be open to all members and potential members.
- b) A special General Meeting (SGM), open to all members, will be held if twelve or more members submit a request for such a meeting in writing to the secretary. The secretary shall arrange for the meeting to take place within twenty one days.
- c) The secretary will publicise all general meetings at least five days in advance.

8. Quorum

- a) No committee meeting shall take place if less than two thirds of the committee are present.

9. Voting

- a) Any member may make a proposal. In order for it to be voted on by other members it must be seconded or supported by someone else.
- b) Only members present at the meeting may vote.
- c) Before voting any member may propose an amendment which must also be seconded.
- d) No member shall exercise more than one vote.
- e) In the event of an equal vote, the chair shall have the casting vote.

10. Equal Opportunities

The Middleton Community Group is aiming to be an equal opportunities organisation. The Association will therefore ensure that:-

- a) It will not discriminate on any grounds. This includes those of race, ethnicity, age, religious or political opinions, disability or illness, gender, marital status,
- a) Sexual orientation, class, learning difficulty, appearance or unemployed status.
- b) There is full participation and equality of opportunity for all members in the composition and operation of its committee, sub-committees and general meetings, and in the election of its officers. In particular, the Association will encourage representation from those currently under represented.
- c) In its meetings and the conduct of its business generally, it will not tolerate any racist, sexist, or other discriminatory remarks. Racial or sexual harassment are grounds for expulsion from the Association.
- d) It will actively assist disadvantaged minority groups and identify their needs by establishing relationships with other relevant local organisations e.g. Women's groups, play groups, LGBT+ centres, black minority ethnic centres, disability groups, HIV support groups, pensioners' groups and youth and sport clubs.
- e) It will consider the needs of different communities when booking venues and arranging times of meetings.
- f) It will arrange training for all members of the committee on equal opportunities and provide training opportunities for its members to enable them to develop skills in equal opportunities.
- g) It will monitor the participation of different groups at meetings and on the committee, and will set targets for improvements of involvement each year.

11. Changes to the Constitution

- a) The constitution can only be altered at an AGM or at a Special General Meeting (SGM) called for that purpose.
- b) Any suggested changes to the constitution must be handed in to the secretary 14 days before the AGM or SGM.

- c) Changes to the constitution must be agreed by two thirds of the members present at the meeting.

12. Code of Conduct / Rules of Procedure (Appendix 2).

- a) All members shall agree to abide by the group's code of conduct / rules of procedure and failure to do so will result in the member being asked to resign.
- b) All meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the rules drawn up by the committee, and revised by them when necessary, subject to the approval of the AGM or a SGM.

13. Dissolution.

- a) The Association may only be dissolved at a Special General Meeting called for that purpose, which must be advertised fourteen days before the meeting.
- b) A proposal to dissolve the Association shall take effect only if agreed by two thirds of the members present at the meeting.
- c) Any assets (financial or otherwise) remaining, after the payment of all debts and liabilities, shall be given to local charitable organisations and groups, according to the wishes of the members of the meeting.

This Constitution was adopted as the Constitution of the Middleton Community Group at a general meeting of its members held at:-

Tuesday 30th October 2018.

Print & Sign name:
Chair

Print & Sign name:
Secretary

Print & Sign:
Witness 1.

Print & Sign:
Witness 2.

MEMBERSHIP BOUNDARIES

Appendix 1.

CODE OF CONDUCT - RULES OF PROCEDURE

Appendix 2.

Conduct of meetings

- Members of the association should at all times observe accepted practice while taking part in a meeting:
- To follow the guidance of the Chair in the conduct of the meeting.
- Members should not speak or write on behalf of the group without the prior agreement of the group.
- Any correspondence sent on behalf of the group should be made available to all members of the group.
- Members must be courteous to each other at all times and allow each other to speak.
- Members must remember that the purpose of the meeting is to benefit residents generally and not specific individuals.
- To operate within the rules laid down in the Constitution.

Conflicts of Interest

Members should disclose any interest, whether personal or on behalf of any group they represent, that they consider affect or influence their approach to the matter under discussion.

Political Affiliation

Individual members may be affiliated to/or be members of a political party and as residents of the village they are entitled to be on the Committee and have a vote. However they may not represent a political party in their role as a Committee Member.

Confidentiality

Members should respect all individual tenants / residents confidentiality. Information about individual tenants and residents will not be discussed at public meetings.

Breach of Rules of Procedure

- If a member of the Committee or those attending the meeting do not abide by the code of conduct they will be warned by the Chair that if they break the code again they may be asked to leave the meeting.
- The Chair may give the person concerned two further warnings (a maximum of three warnings in any one meeting and/or three consecutive meetings).
- If the person continues to ignore these Rules and refuses to leave the meeting after being warned by the Chair then the Chair has the power to close the meeting.
- The Committee shall have the power to suspend until further notice a Committee member, subject to ratification of the next General Meeting.