

Constitution of the Askerswell Neighbourhood Forum

1: Name

The name of the Forum shall be the Askerswell Neighbourhood Forum (hereinafter “the Forum”).

2: Area of Benefit

The area in which the Forum will pursue its objectives is the Askerswell Neighbourhood Area, which is the area designated by West Dorset District Council (WDDC) for which the Forum will produce a Neighbourhood Plan. WDDC has designated the Neighbourhood Area as Askerswell Parish.

3. Objects

The purpose of the Forum is:

- 3.1. To prepare and maintain a Neighbourhood Plan for the Neighbourhood Area.
- 3.2. To promote or improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the Neighbourhood Area.
- 3.3. Any other appropriate purpose agreed by the Forum.

4. Powers

In furtherance of its objects, the Forum may:

- 4.1. Invite and receive contributions and raise funds where appropriate, to finance the work of the Forum, and to open a bank account to manage such funds.
- 4.2. Publicise and promote the work of the Forum and organise meetings, training courses, events or seminars etc.
- 4.3. Work with other groups and exchange information, advice and knowledge with them, including cooperation with other voluntary bodies, charities, statutory and non-statutory organisations.
- 4.4. Employ staff and volunteers as are necessary to conduct activities to meet the objects of the Forum.
- 4.5. Take any form of action that is lawful, which is necessary to achieve the objects of the Forum, including taking out any contracts which it may see fit.
- 4.6. The Forum has no power to raise loans.

5. Membership

- 5.1. The Forum will comprise at least 21 (twenty-one) individuals at all times who live or work in the Askerswell Parish or who are elected members of WDDC.
- 5.2. Membership is open to any individual who lives or works in the Neighbourhood Area. Individuals can sign up as members at any Forum public meeting or by contacting the Chair or Secretary of the Forum. It is also open to elected members of WDDC.
- 5.3. Membership is also open to those who work in the Neighbourhood Area including both employers and employees of businesses that have a long-term business interest in the area as evidenced by their activity dating from before when the Forum was formed. Those involved in businesses that post-date the Forum will be able to join if voted for in favour by a majority of Forum members at one of its meetings.
- 5.4. The Forum shall seek to include members drawn from all parts and interests in its community.
- 5.5. Members shall be accepted by the Forum; resignations from membership shall be received by the Forum.
- 5.6. The Chair will have the authority to recruit new members between meetings.

6. Structure

- 6.1. The Forum will have a Committee consisting of the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.
- 6.2. There will be an initial extraordinary meeting of the Forum at which these posts will be elected. The people holding these posts will step down at the beginning of each AGM. Nominations will be sought prior to the AGM and the posts of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer filled by majority votes until the subsequent AGM. Those elected will agree to serve for one

year except in unforeseeable circumstances. If a resignation occurs, an extraordinary general meeting will be held to elect a replacement until the following AGM from nominations received.

- 6.3. The Constitution will be signed as approved by the AGM.
- 6.4. The AGM and other scheduled meetings will have a quorate status providing the Chair, one other Officer and a third of Forum members attend.
- 6.5. A meeting held in June will be the AGM. The AGM of Forum members and other public meetings held give legitimacy to the Forum's Steering Group (as defined below) and the plans they or the Forum's working groups develop.
- 6.6. The AGM will be called with at least 21 (twenty-one) days' notice by informing all residential properties in the Parish.
- 6.7. Decisions can only be taken at any Forum meeting when any two of the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer are present.
- 6.8. The Forum shall hold a minimum of 4 (four) meetings annually, namely the AGM and 3 (three) others. The date for the next meeting will be set by agreement of a majority of Forum members at the end of each meeting. All Forum members will receive an agenda and a reminder of the meeting date at least 21 (twenty one) days prior to it.
- 6.9. An Extraordinary General meeting will be called with at least 21 (twenty one) days' notice if the Chair considers this necessary or receives a request proposed and seconded by Forum members.
- 6.10. The AGM will create a Steering Group (hereinafter "the SG") of the Chair, Treasurer and Secretary and three other Forum members. Its membership will be subsequently confirmed or altered at each AGM.
- 6.11. Members of the SG will step down at each AGM and posts refilled as defined in 6.2. This is to ensure AGM has the power remove any member of the SG by a vote of no confidence and elect a replacement.
- 6.12. Any member of the SG must give at least 28 (twenty-eight) days' notice ahead of an AGM of any intention to resign.
- 6.13. The SG will schedule and monitor the work of the Forum and development of its Neighbourhood Plan. It will report progress to Forum meetings at which all decisions on the content of the Neighbourhood Plan will be taken.
- 6.14. The meetings will be open to non-Forum members who may be invited by the Chair to address the Forum.
- 6.15. All Forum members will be entitled to vote (one vote per member) on any issue raised and seconded by two members. Voted decisions will be by a simple majority at any meeting for which advanced notice of at least 21 (twenty-one) days has been given to all Forum members. If needed, the Chair will have a deciding vote to achieve a simple majority.
- 6.16. All Forum decisions will be recorded in the minutes of each meeting and approved with necessary amendments for accuracy at the following Forum meeting. Subsequently, the minutes will be made available to all with an interest in the Askerswell Neighbourhood Area.

7. Working Arrangements

- 7.1. Only the Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, will have access to the Forum's bank account and must approve all expenditure and are designated signatories of any cheques issued. Cheques must be signed by any two of these signatories. The accounts will be independently checked annually by a non-Forum member.
- 7.2. All work of the SG or Forum members will be voluntary and not involve payment.
- 7.3. Forum members may only incur expenses after pre-agreement of the Chair. They will be reimbursed within a reasonable time after presentation of third party paper receipts to the Treasurer.
- 7.4. All members must declare interests and potential conflicts of interest before working or voting on an issue. They will not contribute to the debate and voting on that issue.
- 7.5. Forum members may be contacted by the SG between meetings to seek opinions about ideas and proposals under development prior to presentation at a meeting and to invite their involvement in activities.

- 7.6. The SG may set up task or working groups of Forum members to complete specific projects and tasks.
- 7.7. The SG members may co-opt additional members with specialist skills including non-forum members who will not have a vote.
- 7.8. The SG will receive and consider reports from relevant project groups and panels.
- 7.9. At each AGM, the Chair will provide a written report, the Treasurer will provide a set of accounts for the previous year and the minute Secretary will record proceedings.

8. Alteration to the Constitution

- 8.1. Any changes to this Constitution must be agreed by a simple majority vote at a Special General Meeting, called specifically for the purpose under the same conditions that apply to Annual General meetings, as specified above.
- 8.2. Any proposed amendment(s) to this Constitution or proposed dissolution of the Forum must be conveyed to the Chair and Secretary formally in writing. The Chair and other officers shall then decide whether to put the proposed amendment(s) to a Special General Meeting of the Forum for discussion.

9. Duration

- 9.1. The duration of the Forum is 5 (five) years from 24th February 2015.
- 9.2. The Forum will be dissolved at an AGM if its objectives have been achieved, cannot be met or are no longer necessary or appropriate.
- 9.3. On termination, unspent balances will be returned to donors and grant awarding bodies *pro-rata* to funds received. No return will be made of funds spent in pursuit of the Forum's objects.

Activities of the Steering Group of Askerswell Neighbourhood Area

The steering group meets informally between Forum meetings. Its activities are defined in the constitution above. It follows the mandate provided to it at each Forum meeting and set the agenda for the following meeting. Its activities and progress is provided to the Forum via the Chair's report which is circulated with the minutes of each Forum meeting. All decisions on the content of the Neighbourhood Plan are taken in Forum meetings. Ms Jo Witherden (Dorset Planning Consultant Ltd) has been a co-opted member of the Steering group from 10/2017 to 1/2/2018 as part of her role in providing professional planning support on the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Table 1: Membership of Askerswell Neighbourhood area to 17/1/18., red dates indicates those leaving the Forum.

First name	Surname	EGM 1	AGM 1	OM 21/10/15	OM 22/2/16	AGM 229/6/16	OM 28/9/16	OM 27/9/17	OM 17/1/18
Pat	Atkinson	19/9/14							
Howard	Atkinson	19/9/14							
Dinks	Boden		24/6/15						
Peter	Boden								17/1/18
Tim	Boden	19/9/14							
Dillon	Creedon			21/10/15					
Brish	Dutt						28/9/16		
Sue	Dutt	19/9/14							
Michael	Dyson	19/9/14							
Gillian	Evans	19/9/14			22/2/16				
Graham	Foot	19/9/14							
John	Glover				22/2/16				
Rosie	Glover				22/2/16				
Elizabeth	Guard	19/9/14							
Nigel	Guard	19/9/14							
Graham	Hall	19/9/14							
Mandy	Hall	19/9/14						27/9/17	
Patsy	Harrison	19/9/14				29/6/16			
Peter	Harrison	19/9/14				29/6/16			
Jena	Hatton	19/9/14							
Frank	Hemmings	19/9/14							
Jenny	Hemmings					29/6/16			
Kathy	Hince		24/6/15						
Richard	Hobbs	19/9/14							
Sarah	Howard				22/2/16				
Steve	Howard				22/2/16				
Caspar	Hulacki			21/10/15					
Tadeusz	Hulacki			21/10/15					

First name	Surname	EGM 1	AGM 1	OM 21/10/15	OM 22/2/16	AGM 229/6/16	OM 28/9/16	OM 27/9/17	OM 17/1/18
Alan	Hussey							27/9/17	
Harriet	Laurie	19/9/14							
Godfrey	Lancashire	19/9/14		21/10/15					17/1/18
John	Mahoney	19/9/14							
M-Anne	O'Brien	19/9/14							
David	Parkinson	19/9/14						27/9/17	
Maya	Pieris	19/9/14							
Barbara	Roberts	19/9/14			22/2/16				
Mark	Roberts	19/9/14							
Ian	Russell	19/9/14		21/10/15					
Buffy	Sacher	19/9/14							
Janet	Thomasson	19/9/14							
Corrie	Van Rijn							27/9/17	
Judith	Webb						28/9/16		
Cecil	Whichelo						28/9/16		
Doris	Whichelo						28/9/16		
Vivien	Wilkes	19/9/14							

Founder members on 19/9/14 numbered 29 (minimum required 21); 8 have left; 16 new members have joined; one leaver has re-joined.

Askerswell Neighbourhood Forum, 12/02/2018