



***Insert Name* Neighbourhood Forum Constitution**

Name

The name of the Forum shall be the *Insert Name* Neighbourhood Forum (the Forum).

Area of Benefit

The area in which the Forum will pursue its objects is the *Insert Name* Neighbourhood Area, which is the area designated by *Insert Name* Council for which the Forum will produce a Neighbourhood Plan.

Objects

The purpose of the *Insert Name* Neighbourhood Forum is

- To prepare a Neighbourhood Plan for the *Insert Name* area;
- To promote or improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the *Insert Name* area*;
- Any other appropriate purpose agreed by the Forum.

** Note - This wording is contained in the Act and has to be used in the constitution. In some instances, the Forum could also have the purpose of promoting the carrying on of trades, professions or other businesses in the area. The purpose should reflect the character of the neighbourhood area.*

Powers

In furtherance of its objects the *Insert Name* Forum may

- 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;
- Publicise and promote the work of the Forum and organise meetings, training courses, events or seminars etc.;
- Work with groups of a similar nature and exchange information, advice and knowledge with them, including cooperation with other voluntary bodies, charities, statutory and non-statutory organisations;
- Employ staff and volunteers as are necessary to conduct activities to meet the objects of the Forum;
- 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.

Note – The above are indicative of the powers which the Forum may employ. It may be considered appropriate to delegate some of these powers to a Management Committee,

whose membership would need to be defined in this constitution. It may be advisable to exclude certain categories of Forum members from employment by the Forum (i.e. management committee members).

Membership

The *Insert Name* Neighbourhood Forum will comprise at least 21 individuals who live or work in the *Insert Name* Neighbourhood Area or who are elected members of a county council, district council or London borough council, any of whose area falls within the *Insert Name* Neighbourhood Area.

Membership is open to individuals who live or work in the *Insert Name* Neighbourhood Area. It is also open to individuals who are elected members of a county council, district council or London borough council, any of whose area falls within the *Insert Name* Neighbourhood Area.

Membership shall be drawn from different parts of the *Insert Name* Neighbourhood Area and different sections of the community in the *Insert Name* Neighbourhood Area.

Members shall be accepted by the Forum; resignations from membership shall be received by the Forum.

Notes – Membership of a neighbourhood forum is set out in the Localism Act 2011. You can adjust the wording to reflect the type of local government area (delete whichever does not apply in county, district, London councils). You should also include procedures for replacement of members where necessary, bearing in mind that the forum must have a minimum of 21 members and its membership must reflect the diversity, character and inclusivity of the area. It may be advisable to include a definition of “individuals who work in the area” to ensure that membership is only available to persons with a genuine long term business interest in the area.

Working Arrangements

Notes - Details of how the neighbourhood forum operates are not set out in the Act, but should be set out in the constitution and this could include:

- *details of how decisions will be made, including who will be entitled to vote in the making of decisions;*
- *details of how decisions will be recorded and how minutes of meetings will be approved;*
- *details of governance, including official positions (e.g. chair, treasurer, secretary), procedures for election to positions, the means and duration of the notice given regarding elections to positions, size of quorum, etc.*
- *the composition of any management committee, working groups, or sub-groups, a definition of their roles, and the procedure for appointment or election to such groups;*
- *a statement of the powers to be delegated to the management committee, working groups, and sub-groups;*

- *the frequency and pattern of meetings including annual general meetings, management committee and other sub-group meetings (e.g. the forum will meet monthly);*
- *the procedure for calling an extraordinary general meeting;*
- *the arrangements for financial management (e.g. who has access to the bank account, how payments are made, how are expenses dealt with, etc.);*
- *details of how declarations of interest and potential conflicts of interest will be recorded and managed (e.g. conflicts of interest could include where neighbourhood plan policy would affect the business interests of a forum member).*

It may be advisable to devote a section of the constitution to each of the above categories.

Alteration to the Constitution

The procedure for altering or amending the constitution.

Note – Alterations to the constitution should be made by meetings of the full Forum, rather than by a sub-committee.

Duration

The duration of the *Insert Name* Neighbourhood Forum is 5 years from *Insert neighbourhood forum designation date*.

The procedure for dissolving the *Insert Name* Neighbourhood Forum, in the event that it is not longer required.

Notes – The Act sets out the 5 year life of a forum from the designation date. It could continue in a different guise after this time, but it would cease to be the neighbourhood planning body.