

Constitution for 'Bell Lane Residents' Association'

1. Name

The name of the association is:

Bell Lane Residents' Association

2. Area

The Association covers the following defined geographical area:

Bell Lane

3. The aims of the Association are:

- a) To represent the interests of all Residents within Bell Lane.
- b) To maintain the Lane to a passable and safe standard for all residents and Bridleway users of Bell Lane.
- c) To promote the interests and rights of Residents and to encourage them to be more actively involved and help build a community within Bell Lane.
- d) To ensure all Residents are consulted and updated regularly with works involving the maintenance of Bell Lane.
- e) To represent the majority view of the Residents in Bell Lane.

4. Membership

- a) Membership of the association is open to all residents living in or regularly using Bell Lane.
- b) Every member shall receive a copy of the constitution, contact details for committee members, details of any planned meetings and how to include an item on an agenda.
- c) Any membership fee will be decided and reviewed at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Any money raised by, or on behalf of, the association will be used to further the Association's aims.
- d) Membership will end when a member stops living in Bell Lane, or resigns, unless the Committee decides to grant associate membership.

5. Code of Conduct

- a) Members shall conduct themselves in a manner that will not cause offence to others. Harassment, bullying, intimidation, or discriminatory behaviour will not be tolerated and will be grounds for suspension of individual members. The Chairperson and committee members have the right to warn the member(s) of their behaviour. If they persist they will be suspended until further notice.
- b) Members must never personalise issues, and should be willing to recognise that everybody is entitled to express their point of view without unduly preventing progress of discussion.
- c) Voters should always be prepared to accept the majority decision.
- d) Members cannot receive any payment from the Association other than for bona fide expenses agreed by the Committee and approved in advance. Expense claims must be submitted to the Treasurer at least seven (7) days before the next committee meeting.
- e) Members must never use their position to seek preferential treatment for themselves, their family or relatives. Nor should they use their position to be treated more or less favourably when requesting services from the Council or other organisations.
- f) Committee members must not divulge any association business which is treated as confidential to other persons or organisations.

6. The Committee

- a) To be part of the committee members have to reside in the Lane, and contribute the annual fee towards the maintenance of the lane.
- b) The Committee shall monitor the work, finances and membership of the Association.
- c) The Committee will produce and update a simple action plan throughout the year to be used to prepare an Annual Report to members at the AGM.
- d) The Committee shall have a minimum of the following officers: a Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer.
- e) Committee members shall be elected at an Annual General Meeting. The Committee will also include a named person or persons that the Council can contact for consultation.
- f) The Committee shall have a minimum of five (5) and a maximum of fifteen (15) members at any one time, plus the officers.
- g) The quorum for Committee Meetings shall be five (5) or 50 percent (whichever is the greater) of committee members. This quorum should also be applied when making decisions other than at meetings.
- h) The committee has the power to make decisions using electronic media outside of committee meetings (e.g. e-mail). Any vote held by electronic or other means must be logged and recorded by the Secretary and formally approved at the next meeting (general or committee).
- i) Committee meetings may be called by the Chairperson and Secretary, or at the request of one third of committee members. At least seven (7) days notice must be given.
- j) A minimum of two (2) committee meetings will be held in each calendar year.

7. Duties of the officers

- a) All the officers (Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer) of the Association have a duty to further all the aims of the Association.
- b) The Chair shall conduct the meetings of the Association.
- c) The Secretary is responsible for convening all meetings and giving the relevant notice to members. The Secretary shall ensure that a proper record is kept of all meetings of the Association and its committees in the form of minutes.
- d) The Secretary shall keep a record of all correspondence, consultation and activities carried out on behalf of the Association, and provide them as required by the Committee or general meetings. The Secretary shall maintain a register of committee members and paid up members of the Association.
- e) The Treasurer shall oversee all banking and financial arrangements, be responsible for keeping proper accounts of income and expenditure and report on the Associations financial matters to the Committee and AGM. All cheques must be signed by the Treasurer and one other signatory.

8. Meetings

- a) The Association shall hold an AGM once each calendar year.
- b) All members must receive an invitation in writing not less than seven (7) days notice of the AGM. Notice of the AGM shall be sent via email or hand delivered.
- c) The AGM shall:
 - Agree the minutes of the last AGM
 - Receive an Annual Report from the Committee
 - Present a statement of accounts to members
 - Elect committee members
 - Agree rates for membership fees (if any)
 - Vote on amendments to the Constitution
 - Consider any proposals put forward by members
- d) General meetings are open to all people living in Bell Lane. Everyone who is present who has paid the annual fee is entitled to put forward proposals and to one vote per household on the proposals put forward.
- e) Decisions of the General Meeting shall be binding on the Committee.
- f) Nominations for the Committee must be received by the Secretary in writing at least three days before the meeting, unless the Committee makes a decision to accept nominations at the AGM.
- g) Nominees should be present at the AGM unless they are unable to attend due to illness, holiday, etc at the discretion of the Committee. The Secretary must be informed before the meeting.

9. Voting

- a) Decisions at meetings (except those dealing with alterations to the constitution) shall be taken by a simple majority of those voting, including any proxy votes.
- b) The named proxy must be a general committee member. The Secretary must be informed of the proxy not later than three (3) days before the meeting.
- c) In the event of a tie of the vote the Chairperson of the meeting shall have the casting vote.
- d) Should there be a requirement for any additional extra ordinary spend that would prevent us from meeting the BLRA commitments a separate Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) will be held for all residents of the Lane to vote on the decision
- e) Members who opt not to contribute the annual fee forfeit the right to vote on any decisions at any meetings.

10. Subscriptions

- a) Each person on becoming a member of the Association shall be asked to pay a yearly fee to help maintain the upkeep of Bell Lane.
- b) Until otherwise reviewed yearly by Association in the AGM the fee will be £100.
 - a. This can be paid in quarterly instalments
 - b. Additional voluntary contributions would be welcome
- c) Accounts should be open to inspection by members on request

11. Dissolution

- a) The Committee, or if a committee no longer exists, a majority of remaining members of the Association, can propose that the Association should be dissolved. They must give at least fourteen (14) days notice to all eligible members that a meeting is taking place proposing to dissolve the Association. For the sole purpose of dissolution a quorum need not apply, and the Association may be dissolved by a two-thirds majority of those present. Any assets remaining after settling any liabilities shall be applied for the benefit of the community in accordance with the aims of the Association.

12. Committee

The members of the Committee are omitted from this online document but are available on application to the Chairman.