

The Reading Neighbourhood Network [RNN]

The Constitution

1. Name

1.1 The name of the Organisation will be 'Reading Neighbourhood Network'.

[RNN is the successor of Reading Federation of Tenants and Residents Association].

2. The Charity's object ("the object")

The Charity's object is to promote any charitable purpose for the benefit of the community within the area of benefit without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, race or of political, religious or other opinions, and in particular by:

- (i) building the capacity of neighbourhood groups and providing them with the necessary support, information and services to enable them to pursue or contribute to any charitable purpose.
- (ii) developing the capacity and skills of the members of socially and/or economically disadvantaged communities of Reading in such a way that they are better able to identify, and help meet, their needs and to participate more fully in society.'
- (iii) promoting, organising and facilitating co-operation and partnership working between neighbourhood groups, statutory and other relevant bodies in the achievement of the above purposes within the area of benefit.

3. AREA OF BENEFIT

3.1 The area of benefit is the Borough of Reading.

4. AIMS

4.1 To encourage and support community involvement and activities within the neighbourhoods of Reading.

4.2 To ensure that members are consulted appropriately, effectively and regularly in order for them to influence decision-making.

4.3 To co-operate with organisations including other than member associations and Reading Borough Council on matters of common concern.

4.4 To provide accessible advice, assistance and other support to members and wider beneficiaries within the area of benefit.

- 4.5 To promote the aims and work of RNN and to increase levels of membership and representation.
- 4.6 To be committed to fairness, valuing diversity and working towards the elimination of all forms of discrimination within the 'Area of Benefit'.

5. MEMBERSHIP

- 5.1 Full membership shall be open to constituted 'neighbourhood groups' in the 'Area of Benefit'. A 'neighbourhood group' is one that has a defined neighbourhood area in which it operates and is open to all.

Individual membership is open to any Reading resident.

Associate membership is available at the discretion of the Committee for groups whose aims are consistent with those of RNN but which do not qualify for full membership. Associate members may attend general meetings but do not have voting rights.

Compliance with clause 4.6 of this constitution is a requirement of continued membership.

- 5.2 Each full member group may appoint two voting delegates. Individual members will have one vote, subject to a quota of one-quarter of the total votes for any ballot. All general meetings and events will be open for all who wish to attend, subject to availability.
- 5.3 RNN shall have the power to withdraw membership (by two-thirds majority vote of the General meeting) from any member whose conduct brings disrepute to the detriment of the organisation or breaches clause 4.6.
- 5.4 In such circumstances, members shall have the right of appeal by following RNN complaints procedure.

6. FINANCE

- 6.1 All monies raised by or on behalf of RNN shall be applied to furthering the objects of RNN and its members.

The Treasurer shall maintain a bank account in the name of Reading Neighbourhood Network and will keep proper accounts of the finances and provide reports as required/agreed.

All cheques shall be signed by two officers.

All officers shall be eligible to be signatories with the exception of officers who reside in the same household or who are closely related to another signatory.

- 6.2 Accounts shall be inspected at least once a year by an independent person who shall be appointed by the General Meeting.
- 6.3 Members shall not be allowed to act as auditors or examiners.

7. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

- 7.1 An Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held once every calendar year and at intervals of no more than 15 months and will:
- Approve the minutes of the previous AGM;
 - Receive an annual report from the Chair, summarising the year's activities and a statement of accounts from the Treasurer;
 - Elect officers for the coming year up to a maximum of 15.
 - Consider any proposals for changes to the constitution
- 7.2 The Chair and Vice-Chair may not be from the same member association.
- 7.3 The Chair may stand to be elected for a second year but must retire at the end of the second year and leave at least 12 months before standing for Chair again.
- 7.4 The Secretary shall give members 28 days notice of the date of the AGM and invite them to submit proposals and make nominations for the election of Officers, which should be returned to the Secretary by no later than 14 days prior to the AGM.
- 7.5 A full list of proposals and nominations will be published in the RNN Office and on the website at least 7 days prior to the AGM.
- 7.6 Voting will be carried out by a show of hands, with a system to distinguish individual members from full members. Votes for individual and full members will be counted separately and if the number of individual members voting in any ballot exceeds one-quarter of the total their votes shall be recalculated to one-quarter of the votes cast, rounded to the nearest whole vote with half votes rounded upwards. In the event of a tied vote, consideration will be given to job-sharing to support succession planning, or lots may be drawn.
- 7.7 All voting members are entitled to vote by proxy by notifying the secretary of the name of their nominated proxy, in writing, at least 48 hours prior to the AGM.

8. OFFICER COMMITTEE

- 8.1 The Officer Committee (The Committee) are elected at the AGM and take over the management of RNN immediately after the AGM. The members of The Committee are the trustees of the Charity.
- 8.2 Vacancies arising during the year can be filled by any member through majority vote at the next general meeting (subject to 7.2 & 7.3).
- 8.3 The Committee have delegated authority to act on urgent matters between General Meetings. Any such action will be reported at the next General Meetings.
- 8.4 Decisions will be reached by simple majority and the method of voting as per 10.3 and all proceedings will be minuted and a true copy signed by the Chair and made available to all members by request.
- 8.5 Any member of The Committee who misses 3 consecutive Committee Meetings without apology will be deemed to have resigned.

9. CHAIRS ACTION

- 9.1 The Chair has delegated authority to act on urgent matters, which must be reported back to the next General Meeting. Prior to taking Chairs action, the Chair must seek the verbal views of Officers.
Chairs action will not apply in respect of dissolution.

10. GENERAL MEETINGS

- 10.1 General meetings will be open to all members and invited guests. Any other person wishing to attend a General meeting may do so at the discretion of The Committee, but will not have voting rights.
- 10.2 The method of voting conducted will be at the discretion of the Chair by either secret written ballot or show of hands. In the event of a tie, the Chair shall have a second and casting vote.
- 10.3 All proceedings will be minuted and a true copy signed by the Chair and made available to all members by request.
- 10.4 The Secretary shall prepare an agenda in consultation with The Committee, and this, together with minutes of the previous meeting will be sent to all members (and any other attendees or invitees) not less than 14 days prior to the meeting.

11. SUB-COMMITTEES

- 11.1 RNN Executive will establish sub-committees and working groups as required to prepare proposals and recommendations for The Committee.
- 11.2 Such sub-committees and working groups will follow the brief and terms of reference established from time to time by The Committee.

12. QUORUM

- 12.1 The Quorum for:
- Committee Meetings is 4,
 - All other General meetings is 12

13. SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS

- 13.1 Special General Meetings may be called at any time for the purpose of altering this Constitution or for considering any matter, which needs the urgent attention of all members.
- 13.2 Special General Meetings called either at the written request of:-
- At least four member associations
 - By a simple majority of the General Meeting
 - Any 3 Officer Committee members
- 13.3 At least fourteen day's notice of any Special General Meeting will be given to members in writing, stating the reasons for holding the meeting.

Only the business stated will be discussed.

14. AMMENDMENTS TO THIS CONSTITUTION

- 14.1 This Constitution can only be amended at an Annual General Meeting or at a Special General Meeting called for that purpose.
- 14.2 Any proposals to amend this Constitution must be presented to the Secretary in writing, at least twenty-eight days prior to the meeting at which they are to be considered and circulated to all members at least fourteen days before the meeting.
- 14.3 Any amendments to this Constitution shall require the approval of two- thirds of those members present at the meeting.

15. DISSOLUTION

- 15.1 RNN can be dissolved by resolution at its Annual General Meeting, or at a special meeting called for that purpose.
- 15.2 If such a resolution gains the support of two-thirds majority of those present at the meeting, all liabilities shall be discharged. Any monies or assets remaining will be disposed of to other voluntary organisations with compatible aims, as agreed by the meeting.
- 15.3 All documents including minutes of meetings will be lodged in local archives.

Adopted by RNN on:

Date:

Signed: (Chair):

Signed: (Secretary):

Signed: (Treasurer):

Signed:

Signed:

Signed: