

Constitution of Friends of Eastfield Park

(Revised Constitution – Revised at the February 2022 AGM)

1) Name

The name of the organisation shall be ‘Friends of Eastfield Park’ abbreviated in this document and elsewhere to ‘FoEP’.

2) Aims

The FoEP shall:

- a. Make every effort to ensure that the Park’s qualities, resources and facilities are cared for and improved for the benefit of the whole community,
- b. Endeavour to protect the Park’s natural beauty, heritage and biodiversity,
- c. Develop schemes to monitor and develop resources and facilities within the park,
- d. Encourage greater use of the Park for sport, play and relaxation in the interests of community welfare, health and wellbeing, with the intention of improving the quality of life for local residents,
- e. Work to improve access to the Park for all sections of the community,
- f. Ensure a community-based involvement in the future of the park,
- g. Promote knowledge and understanding of the Park’s history and wildlife,
- h. Seek to improve the Park and its management to a level sufficient to achieve a Green Flag Award.

3) Powers

In order to achieve its aims, the FoEP may:

- a. Raise money, open bank accounts and take out insurance,
- b. Employ staff,
- c. Acquire, lease or rent buildings and manage them in the interests of the FoEP,
- d. Organise talks, courses, events and activities on, or away from, the Park,
- e. Work and negotiate with other groups, including local authorities, and exchange information with them,
- f. Consult with local residents and/or the general public,
- g. Do anything else that is lawful in pursuance of its aims.

4) Membership

- a. Membership of the FoEP shall be open to anyone over the age of 18 who supports the FoEP’s aims, is willing to receive information from the FoEP, and who pays any subscription fee agreed at an Annual General Meeting.
- b. Membership shall be available to anyone without regard to gender, race, nationality, disability, sexual preference, religion or belief.
- c. Every member shall be entitled to one vote at General Meetings.

- d. The Management Committee may terminate the membership of any individual but the member has a right to be heard by the Management Committee before a final decision is made. The individual concerned shall also have the right to be accompanied by a representative or friend at the meeting when the issue is considered. If the individual disagrees with the expulsion, they can appeal against the decision within fourteen days. A Special General Meeting shall then be called, the Chair providing a summary of the reasons for the decision; the individual can make their claim, and a vote shall be taken by the members present. The final decision shall be decided on the majority of votes. (Reasons for expulsion include, but are not limited to, threatening or abusive behaviour, disregard for the safety of park users or FoEP members, or persistent failure to follow FoEP policies.)

5) Equal Opportunities

- a. The FoEP shall operate within its equal opportunities policy at all times.
- b. Racist, sexist or homophobic behaviour shall be considered as sufficient grounds for the immediate suspension of membership.

6) Management

- a. The FoEP shall be administered by a Management Committee, elected from the membership by members attending an AGM.
- b. Committee members shall be elected for a period not exceeding three years but may be re-elected for further three-year periods without restriction.
- c. The maximum number of Committee members shall be twelve, including officers. The Committee may co-opt members but they may not exceed one third of the total Management Committee. Co-opted members are not entitled to vote.
- d. The quorum required to take a vote shall be at least one-third of the elected members or a minimum of four, whichever is the fewer. Voting shall be decided by a show of hands on a simple majority vote (including the Chair's deliberative vote). In the event of equal votes, the Chair shall have a casting vote.
- e. The Management Committee shall meet at least six times a year.
- f. Members of the public may be invited to attend Committee meetings at the discretion of the Management Committee. Visitors may be invited to speak and join in discussions but are not entitled to vote.
- g. Minutes shall be kept by the Minutes Secretary or other Committee member and shall be circulated to members and other interested members of the community by arrangement.
- h. The Management Committee may appoint sub-committees where deemed appropriate in the pursuance of FoEP objectives.
- i. Any member of the Committee who is absent from three consecutive Committee meetings, without notifying reasonable cause, may be required to resign their seat on the Committee until the next AGM, when they will be allowed to seek nomination to the Committee in the normal way. It will be up to the Committee to decide what constitutes a 'reasonable cause' in each particular case.

7) Election of the Management Committee

- a. Three months before an AGM, the serving Management Committee shall inform members of the number of vacancies on the Management Committee available to be filled at the next AGM and shall invite members to suggest nominations to fill these vacancies. Those making nominations should ensure that each nominated person is willing to serve on the Committee. The deadline for suggestions shall be six weeks before the AGM.
- b. The existing Management Committee shall then consider all the nominations received and may make its own nominations for membership of the Committee.
- c. If the total number of nominations exceeds the number of vacancies available, the FoEP Secretary shall prepare a ballot slip to allow secret voting at the AGM where each member attending is allowed to vote for up to the number of candidates corresponding to the number of available places.
- d. If the total number of nominations is equal to or less than the number of vacancies available, the FoEP Secretary may prepare a ballot slip where each member attending the AGM simply votes ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ for each candidate in a secret vote. Under these circumstances, however, those members attending the AGM may decide to hold an open vote to elect all the candidates *en bloc*.

8) Officers

- a. The officers of the FoEP Management Committee shall be Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.
- b. The first meeting of the new Committee following the AGM shall be chaired throughout by the former Chair who shall supervise the election of new officers for the new Committee. If the former Chair is no longer a Committee member the meeting shall be chaired by, in order of preference, the former Vice-chair, Secretary or Treasurer, or the longest serving committee member.
- c. Any position for an officer becoming vacant during the year shall be filled at the discretion of the Committee.

9) General Meetings

- a. An Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held in the February of each year (or as soon as is practical thereafter) and shall include reports of the FoEP’s activities during the preceding calendar year.
- b. The purpose of the AGM is to receive reports, approve accounts, vote on any amendments to the constitution, note policy documents, elect members to the Management Committee and discuss any other matters relevant to the aims of the FoEP. Agreement of any annual subscription shall be made at the AGM.
- c. A Special General Meeting (SGM) may be called at any time during the year at the discretion of the Management Committee or as a result of a written request to the Management Committee signed by at least four FoEP members.
- d. The Management Committee must give members at least two weeks’ notice of a General Meeting (AGM or SGM) including date, time and venue for the meeting. In the case of a SGM, the reason for the meeting should also be stated.

- e. Copies of reports and papers for discussion at General Meetings should be sent to members at least one week before the meeting.
- f. General Meetings shall be open to all members. A quorum of at least one-tenth of the membership, or ten members, whichever is the fewer, is required to vote on issues. Voting shall be decided by a simple majority, and in the event of equal votes the chair shall have a casting vote.
- g. The general public may be permitted to attend General Meetings at the discretion of the Chair. Visitors may also be permitted to make comments and take part in discussions but they are not entitled to vote.

10) Finance

- a. The financial year shall run from January 1st to December 31st each year.
- b. Annual accounts shall be prepared and presented at the AGM for approval by members. Accounts shall also be examined by an independent competent person.
- c. Any money obtained by the FoEP shall be used solely by the FoEP to help fulfil its objectives.
- d. Any bank accounts opened by the FoEP shall be in the name of the FoEP.
- e. Any cheques issued shall be signed by the Treasurer and another nominated official. (If the Treasurer is indisposed, cheques may, with the approval of the Management Committee, be signed by two nominated officials.)

11) Changes to the Constitution

Any alterations to this Constitution must be agreed by at least two-thirds of those members present and voting at a General Meeting.

12) Dissolution

- a. The FoEP may be dissolved by a resolution passed by at least two-thirds of those members present and voting at a General Meeting called for that purpose.
- b. In the event of dissolution, and after all debts and liabilities have been met, all records, moneys and assets shall be given or transferred to an organisation or organisations having similar objectives as the FoEP.

This constitution was adopted at the AGM on 19th February 2019 and revised at the AGM on 15th February 2022. It replaces the FoEP Constitution approved at the Inaugural General Meeting held on 22nd November 2007 and revised at the AGM on 21st February 2011.

Chair: Vice-chair:

Secretary: Treasurer: