

Little Bowden Neighbourhood Forum (2022-2027) Constitution

Rev 1, 6th December 2022

1.0 NAME

The name of the Forum shall be the **Little Bowden Neighbourhood Forum (2022-2027)** (the Forum).

Little Bowden Neighbourhood Forum (2022-2027) was formally proposed by Harborough Town Hub and designated by Harborough District Council on 6th December 2022 as the Qualifying Body. The statutory Forum is to prepare and manage the Neighbourhood Development Plan for Little Bowden Neighbourhood Area with advisory support from Harborough District Council.

2.0 NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

The area in which the Forum will pursue its objectives is the **Little Bowden Neighbourhood Area** which is defined as the whole area included within the boundary of Little Bowden Parish as shown in appendix 1 excluding the area covered by the Town Centre Masterplan.

Little Bowden Neighbourhood Area was formally designated by Harborough District Council on 6th December 2022.

3.0 OBJECTIVES

The objectives and purpose of the **Little Bowden Neighbourhood Forum (2022-2027)** are:

- To be the Qualifying Body that will manage and maintain, including periodic review and update, the **Neighbourhood Development Plan¹** that is made for **Little Bowden Neighbourhood Area**;
- To promote or improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the *Little Bowden Neighbourhood Area*;
- Any other appropriate purpose that is agreed by the Forum.

4.0 POWERS

The **Little Bowden Neighbourhood Forum** is an Incorporated body. In furtherance of its objectives the **Little Bowden Neighbourhood Forum (2022-2027)** 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;

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- Employ contractors and volunteers as are necessary to conduct activities to meet the objectives 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.

5.0 MEMBERSHIP

The **Little Bowden Neighbourhood Forum (2022-2027)** will comprise at least 21 individuals who live or work in the *Little Bowden Neighbourhood Area*; or who are elected members of a county council or district council whose area falls within the *Little Bowden Neighbourhood Area*.

Membership of the Forum is voluntary and is open to individuals with a minimum age of 16 years old, who live or work in the *Little Bowden Neighbourhood Area*. Membership of the Forum is also open to individuals who are elected members of a county council or district council whose area falls within the *Little Bowden Neighbourhood Area*.

Members of the Forum shall give their contact details to the Membership Secretary of the Forum, and shall allow these details to be used for the purposes of administration of the Forum.

A member who joins the Forum while living within the Neighbourhood Area and who subsequently moves out the Neighbourhood Area to live elsewhere will automatically cease to be a member of the Forum. If that individual subsequently moves back to the Neighbourhood Area then they shall re-apply for membership of the Forum if they wish to continue their membership.

A member who joins the Forum while being employed within the Neighbourhood Area and who subsequently ceases to be employed within the Neighbourhood Area will automatically cease to be a member of the Forum. If that individual subsequently resumes employment within the Neighbourhood Area then they shall re-apply for membership of the Forum if they wish to continue their membership.

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

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

Forum Members

The privileges of a **Forum member** are:

- Option to attend Forum Meetings and to participate in the consultation processes and directly contribute to the Neighbourhood Planning process.
- Option to attend Forum Meetings and vote on key decisions, including appointment of, or removal of, members of the Forum Management Committee.
- Option to participate in the process to review and update the Neighbourhood Plan, and to attend Forum meetings to vote on acceptance of the proposed updates to the Plan.
- Eligible to be members of the Forum Management Committee.

The responsibilities of a **Forum member** are:

- If Forum members are taking part in a formal vote or decision-making process at a Forum meeting, then if they have any conflict of interest² in the subject being decided, then they must declare their interest before taking part in any discussion and before a

² For example – a conflict of interest could include where a Neighbourhood Plan policy would affect the business interests of a forum member.

vote is taken and they shall abstain from voting on the matter. A majority vote will be based on the numbers present minus those with a declared interest.

6.0 WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

Little Bowden Neighbourhood Forum (2022-2027) will hold at least one General Meeting each year, and any other Meetings during the year as required to carry out its purpose.

The day-to-day business of the Forum shall be managed by the **Neighbourhood Forum Management Committee** who are all members of the Forum. Membership of the Forum Management Committee is a voluntary position.

Forum Management Committee

At any time there shall be a minimum of 3 appointed members of the Neighbourhood Forum Management Committee of which at least two are named signatories to the 'Little Bowden Neighbourhood Forum' bank account. If there are fewer than 3 appointed members of the Forum Management Committee in post, or if there are fewer than 2 named signatories to the 'Little Bowden Neighbourhood Forum' bank account in post, then a General Meeting of the Forum shall be called;

The Forum Management Committee shall consist of the following members/roles. Except where stated otherwise below, the minimum age for Forum Management Committee members shall be 18 years old.

Role	Term of Office
Chairperson	1 year. Role to be appointed annually at each Neighbourhood Forum Annual General Meeting. A minimum of 3 months' notice is requested of intent to resign from the role.
Vice-Chairpersons	No fixed term. A minimum of 3 months' notice is requested of intent to resign from the role.
Treasurer	No fixed term. A minimum of 2 months' notice is requested of intent to resign from the role.
Secretary	No fixed term. A minimum of 2 months' notice is requested of intent to resign from the role.
Membership Secretary	No fixed term. A minimum of 2 months' notice is requested of intent to resign from the role. The Chairman may also perform this role.
Management Committee Support Members - minimum age shall be 16 years old	No fixed term. A minimum of 2 months' notice is requested of intent to resign from the role. Support members are appointed and relieved of their role by the Neighbourhood Forum Management Committee.

The initial members of the Neighbourhood Forum Management Committee shall be appointed at the inaugural General Meeting of the Forum.

The responsibilities of the **Neighbourhood Forum Management Committee** are:

- a) To lead and coordinate the Neighbourhood Planning activities, and to ensure that Forum members are given the opportunity to be included in, and contribute to, the Neighbourhood Planning processes wherever possible.

- b) To liaise with Harborough District Council and other stakeholders in the Neighbourhood Planning processes.
- c) To appoint Working Groups or Individuals to carry out investigations, surveys, consultations, etc, as contributions to the Neighbourhood Planning process and associated activities. Places on the working groups shall be assigned preferentially to members of the Forum.
- d) To raise and manage the funds that are needed to carry out the Neighbourhood Planning processes, including the purchase of goods or services that are deemed necessary for the purpose; and to prepare any accounts that are needed for auditing purposes.
- e) To maintain a list of Forum members, and to manage the personal data information appropriately.
- f) To communicate and consult with Forum members, to inform Forum members of progress and issues in the Neighbourhood Planning processes, and to request assistance or contributions to the Neighbourhood Planning processes from Forum members. Communications with Forum Members shall use e-mail as the primary method of group distribution of information. For those members without e-mail, use of telephone or postal mail will be used to provide information communications.
- g) To set the date and agenda for the Forum Annual General Meetings and to communicate the date and agenda to Forum members **by email***.
- h) To call ad hoc meetings of the Forum as and when deemed necessary, and to communicate the date and agenda to Forum members **by email***.
- i) To keep records of meetings, ensuring that any formal decisions taken at meetings are properly recorded. Notes of the meetings are to be approved at the subsequent meeting and signed by the Chairperson.
- j) To arrange for the Neighbourhood Plan to be reviewed and updated as described in section 10 (Monitoring and Review) of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- k) If Management Committee members are taking part in a formal vote or decision-making process at a Forum meeting or Management Committee meeting, then if they have any conflict of interest ³ in the subject being decided, then they must declare their interest before taking part in any discussion and before a vote is taken and they shall abstain from voting on the matter. A majority vote will be based on the numbers present minus those with a declared interest.

The privileges of a **Neighbourhood Forum Management Committee member** are:

- a) Option to attend Forum Management Committee Meetings and participate in the consultation processes and contribute to the Neighbourhood Planning processes and associated activities.
- b) Option to attend Forum Management Committee Meetings and vote on key decisions that are required to carry out the Committee's responsibilities.

The responsibilities of the **Neighbourhood Forum Management Committee members** are:

The **Chairperson** of the Forum Management Committee shall:

- i. call and chair regular meetings of the Forum Management Committee, and meetings of the Forum, and have a casting vote.
- ii. act on behalf of the 'Little Bowden Neighbourhood Forum' and represent it externally.

³ For example – a conflict of interest could include where a neighbourhood plan policy would affect the business interests of a forum member.

The **Vice Chairperson** of the Forum Management Committee shall:

- i. chair meetings of the Neighbourhood Forum Management Committee, and meetings of the Forum, in the absence of the Chairperson, and have a casting vote.
- ii. deputise for the Treasurer or Secretary or Membership Secretary in their absence.
- iii. act as joint signatory on the 'Little Bowden Neighbourhood Forum' bank account.

The **Treasurer** shall:

- i. be responsible for maintaining the accounts of the Little Bowden Neighbourhood Forum.
- ii. be responsible for presenting a budget, annually for the following year to a Forum Management Committee Meeting.
- iii. when requested, submit a detailed summary of the accounts at a Forum Management Committee Meeting.
- iv. act as a joint signatory on the 'Little Bowden Neighbourhood Forum' bank account. Cheques or other financial transactions of the Forum require two signatories.

The **Secretary** shall:

- i. be responsible for organising meetings, maintaining the minutes and Constitution of the Little Bowden Parish Neighbourhood Forum and making them available to Forum members.
- ii. act as joint signatory on the 'Little Bowden Neighbourhood Forum' bank account.

The **Membership Secretary** shall:

- i. be responsible for maintaining a list of the members of *Little Bowden Neighbourhood Forum (2022-2027)*, and for appropriately managing and protecting the member's personal information in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.
- ii. be responsible for maintaining a list of the elected officers and members of the Forum Management Committee, including their appointment date and term of office.
- iii. provide a copy of the Forum membership list to Harborough District Council in order to validate the Forum membership criteria.
- iii. act as joint signatory on the 'Little Bowden Neighbourhood Forum' bank account, except for when this role is also performed by the Chairman.

The **Neighbourhood Forum Management Committee Support Members** shall:

- i. attend Neighbourhood Forum Management Committee Meetings and participate in the consultation processes and contribute to the Neighbourhood Planning processes and associated activities.
- ii. attend Neighbourhood Forum Management Committee Meetings and vote on key decisions that are required to carry out the Committee's responsibilities.
- iii. take on specific tasks and duties in support of the Neighbourhood Planning processes, as delegated by the Forum Management Committee.

A meeting of the Forum shall be chaired by the Management Committee Chairperson or by the Vice Chairperson in the Chairperson's absence. Where a Forum meeting is called in order to vote on formal decisions, then at least 6 members of the Forum, including members who are also a member of the Management Committee, are required to be in attendance for the Meeting to be quorate. Decisions will generally be agreed by a majority show of hands.

A meeting of the Forum shall be called by the Forum Management Committee or by a request from at least 5 members of the Forum to the Forum Management Committee. Members of the Forum shall be given at least 7 days' notice of any Forum meeting.

The Forum Management Committee shall meet as often as is necessary to lead the plan making process or the review and update process. A meeting of the Forum Management Committee shall be chaired by the Management Committee Chairperson or by the Vice Chairperson in the Chairperson's absence. Where a Forum Management Committee meeting is called in order to vote on key decisions that are required to carry out the Committee's responsibilities, then at least 3 members of the Management Committee are required to be in attendance for the meeting to be quorate. Members of the Forum Management Committee shall be given at least 7 days' notice of such a meeting.

If a vacancy occurs for the role of Chairperson the Vice Chairperson will take over the role, but a Forum meeting must be held within three months of the assignment to formally appoint a Chairperson to the Forum Management Committee.

If vacancies occur for the roles of Treasurer, Secretary, Membership Secretary or Committee Members, the Forum Management Committee can temporarily co-opt new members into post subject to the endorsement by the Forum at the next Forum meeting.

7.0 ALTERATION TO THE CONSTITUTION

Amendments to the constitution may only be made at a Forum Annual General Meeting which has been pre-notified of the proposed changes, or at a Special General Meeting which has been pre-notified of the proposed changes.

Any proposal to amend the constitution must be given to the Secretary in writing. The proposal must then be circulated with the notice of the meeting.

Any proposal to amend the constitution will require a simple majority vote of those present and entitled to vote.

8.0 DURATION

The duration of the Little Bowden Neighbourhood Forum (2022-2027) is 5 years from Little Bowden Neighbourhood Forum designation date, ie from 6th December 2022 to 5th December 2027.

If a meeting of the Forum Management Committee, by simple majority, decides that it is necessary to close down the Forum it may call a Special General Meeting to do so. The sole business of this meeting will be to dissolve the group.

If it is agreed to dissolve the group, all remaining money and other assets, once outstanding debts have been paid, will be donated to a community group or local charitable organization, in order to benefit Little Bowden. The group/organisation to receive the donation will be agreed at the meeting held to agree the dissolution.

9.0 DOCUMENT HISTORY

Rev 1: The original version of the Constitution was approved at the inaugural General Meeting dated 6th December 2022.

10.0 APPROVAL

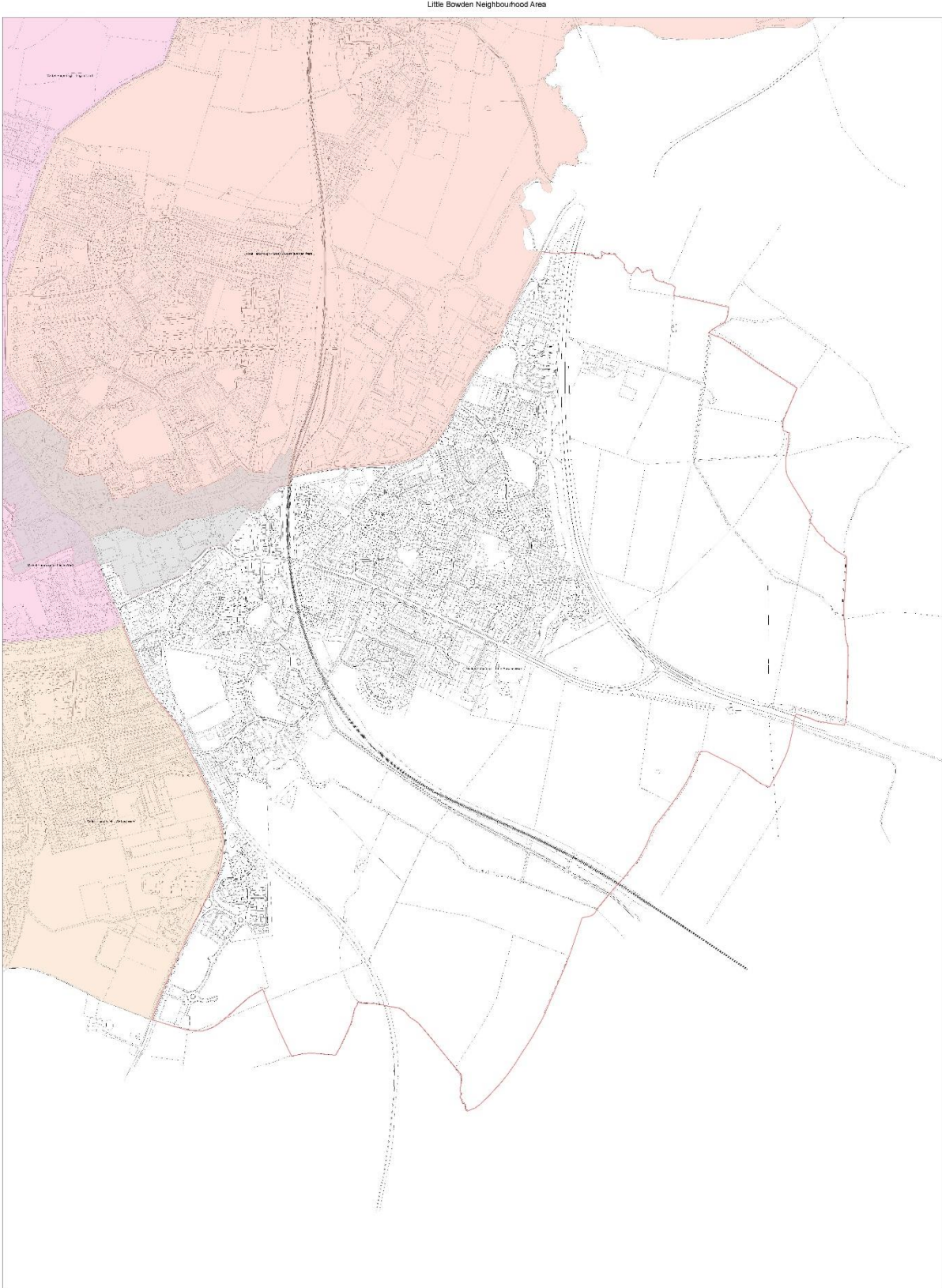
This Constitution was approved at the Inaugural General Meeting of the Little Bowden Neighbourhood Forum (2022-2027) on 6th December 2022.

Name: Beverley Brown
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Chair, Little Bowden Neighbourhood Forum

Signature

Date:

Appendix 1: Little Bowden Neighbourhood Area



Little Bowden Neighbourhood Area boundary

Little Bowden Neighbourhood Area was formally designated by Harborough District Council on 6th December 2022.