

# Arden Neighbourhood Forum (2023-2028)

## Constitution

Rev 1, 13<sup>th</sup> November 2023

### 1- NAME

The name of the Forum shall be the Arden Neighbourhood Forum (2023-2028) (the Forum).

The statutory Forum, as the Qualifying Body, is to prepare and manage the Neighbourhood Development Plan for Arden as set out in the Neighbourhood Area designated by Harborough District Council on XX. The Neighbourhood Development Plan for Arden Neighbourhood Area will be prepared with advisory support from Harborough District Council, other professionals and volunteers.

### 2- NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

The area in which the Forum will pursue its objectives is the Arden Neighbourhood Area which is defined as the whole area shown in red on the map shown in appendix 1, which is the boundary of Arden Ward, excluding the area covered by Great Bowden Parish and the Town Centre Master plan.

Arden Neighbourhood Area was formally designated by Harborough District Council on XX

### 3- OBJECTIVES

The objectives and purpose of the Arden Neighbourhood Forum (2023-2028) are:

- To be the Qualifying Body that will manage and maintain, including periodic review and update, the Neighbourhood Development Plan<sup>1</sup> that is made for Arden Neighbourhood Area;
- To promote or improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the Arden Neighbourhood Area;
- Any other appropriate purpose that is agreed by the Forum.

### 4- POWERS

The Arden Neighbourhood Forum is not an Incorporated body. In furtherance of its objectives the Arden Neighbourhood Forum (2023-2028) 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 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- MEMBERSHIP

The Arden Neighbourhood Forum (2023-2028) will comprise at least 21 individuals who live or work in the Arden Neighbourhood Area; or who are elected members of a county council or district council whose area falls within the Arden 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 Arden 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 Arden Neighbourhood Area.

Members of the Forum shall give their contact details to the 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 should be drawn from different parts of the Arden Neighbourhood Area and different sections of the community in the Arden Neighbourhood Area.

The Forum shall be informed of any new or resigning members, at each Forum meeting.

## Forum Members

The privileges of a Forum member are:

a	Option to attend Forum Meetings and to participate in the consultation processes and directly contribute to the Neighbourhood Planning process.
b	Option to attend Forum Meetings and vote on key decisions, including appointment of, or removal of, members of the Forum Management Committee.
c	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.
d	Eligible to be members of the Forum Management Committee.

The responsibilities of a Forum member are:

a	<p>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 interest** 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.</p> <p>A majority vote will be based on the numbers present minus those with a declared interest.</p>
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*\*\* For example – a conflict of interest could include where a Neighbourhood Plan policy would affect the business interests of a forum member.*

## 6- WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

Arden Neighbourhood Forum (2023-2028) 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. If there are fewer than 3 appointed members of the

Forum Management Committee in post, or if there are fewer than 2 in post, then a General Meeting of the Forum shall be called.

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

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, except in exceptional circumstances.
Vice-Chairpersons	1 year	A minimum of 3 months' notice is requested of intent to resign from the role.
Secretary	1 year	A minimum of 2 months' notice is requested of intent to resign from the role.
Management Committee	No fixed term.	A minimum of 2 months' notice requested of intent to resign from the role.
Support Members		Support members are appointed and relieved of their role by the Neighbourhood Forum Management Committee.
A minimum age shall be 16 years old		

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 \*\*\* 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.

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

**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 Arden Neighbourhood Forum and represent it externally.

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 Secretary in their absence.

The **Secretary** shall:

- i. Be responsible for organising meetings, maintaining the minutes and Constitution of the Arden Neighbourhood Forum and making them available to Forum members.
- ii. Be responsible for maintaining a list of the members of Arden Neighbourhood Forum (2023-2028), and for appropriately managing and protecting the member's personal information in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.
- iii. 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.
- iv. Provide a copy of the Forum membership list to Harborough District Council in order to validate the Forum membership criteria.

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.

The **Neighbourhood Forum Meeting** shall:

- i. Be chaired by the Management Committee Chairperson or by the Vice Chairperson in the Chairperson's absence.
- i. Be quorate when called to vote on a formal decision when at least 6 members of the Forum, including members who are also members of the Management Committee are in attendance.
- ii. Agree decisions generally by a majority show of hands.
- iii. Be called by the Forum Management Committee or by a request from at least 5 members of the Forum to the Forum Management Committee.
- iv. Give at least 7 days notice of any ad-hoc or Special Forum Meeting to members of the Forum and at least 28 days notice of the Forum Annual General Meeting.
- v. Call a meeting within 3 months of a vacancy of Chairperson to formally appoint a Chairperson.

**The Forum Management Committee:**

- i. Shall meet as often as is necessary to lead the plan making process or to review and update the process.
- i. Shall be chaired by the Management Committee Chairperson or by the Vice Chairperson in the Chairperson's absence.
- ii. Shall be quorate when called to vote on key decisions that are required to carry out the Committee's responsibilities when at least 3 members are in attendance.
- iii. Shall give at least 7 days notice of any Management Meeting to its members.
- iv. May temporarily co-opt new members to vacant posts of Secretary, or Committee Members subject to endorsement at next Forum Meeting.

**7- 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 – DURATION**

The duration of the Arden Neighbourhood Forum (2023-2028) is 5 years from Arden Neighbourhood Forum designation date, i.e. from -- December 2023 to -- December 2028.

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 the Arden area. The organisation to receive the donation will be agreed at the meeting held to agree the dissolution.

#### 9- DOCUMENT HISTORY

Rev 1: The original version of the Constitution was approved at the inaugural General Meeting dated 13th November 2023.

#### 10- APPROVAL

This Constitution was approved at the Inaugural General Meeting of Arden Neighbourhood Forum (2023-2028) on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2023

Name            John Fannon .....

                    Chair, Arden Neighbourhood Forum

Signature        .....

Date              13/11/23.....



APPENDIX 1 – Map of the Arden Neighbourhood Area

