

THE (INSERT NAME OF GROUP) RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION

The name of our association will be:

(insert name of group)

Our site: (insert address)

This association will refer to the following location as “our site”:

Aims and objectives of our group:

The association seeks to represent and to promote the interests of all the residents living on our site. We will work for improvements

- to our homes
- the local environment.
- We will promote any charitable purpose for the benefit of the community. In particular the advancement of education, furtherance of health, relief of poverty, sickness and distress and we will promote activities for young people.
- We will promote good site management
- We will work to share our experiences and knowledge with other members of the Traveller community.

This association supports no political party.

To achieve our aims:

- We will find out what the aspirations and needs of all the people on the site are, so we can represent the views of all our members.
- We will use every opportunity to raise issues of concern to our members.
- We will do our best to keep our membership informed and give everybody the opportunity to put their views forward. We will aim to make it as easy as possible for everybody to take a full and active part in our organisation.
- We may organise events or meetings to further our aims and allow consultation with residents on all matters relating to accommodation matters on the site.

Membership of our association:

The members of this association are all residents who live on our site. Any member of the association can stand for election to the committee.

All members of the association are welcome to any public events and meetings organised by the association. At events and meetings, members are expected to behave in a reasonable manner. The chairperson or event organiser will have the authority to exclude from a meeting or event anyone whose language or behaviour is offensive.

Co-option of members with skills and knowledge useful to the association:

The association may co-opt advisers to the committee. These cannot be officers of the association and they are not allowed to vote, but they can support and advise the association. Co-opted members cannot represent the association at any outside meetings or forums.

Equal Opportunities Statement

We want people from different backgrounds and different experiences to be part of our association.

This is why we strive to make our Residents Association a place where everyone can feel welcome and safe. We will challenge any remarks or behaviour that cause offence and makes some people feel unwelcome. We will do our best to overcome any obstacles to people giving their view or getting involved in our association. We will take positive action to reach those people that are underrepresented at our meetings and will consider Equal Opportunities in our expenses policy.

How we will organise our committee:

We will have at least a chairperson, treasurer and secretary. The association may elect other officers. We will have a committee that will consist of the officers and at least other members of the association to carry out the day to day business of the association.

How we will make sure we are democratic:

Once per year (no later than after 15 months) we will hold an Annual General meeting (AGM). This is where the officers and committee will be elected by majority vote. Written notice, and an opportunity to nominate people for officers and committee, will be sent to every household. Nominations in advance or from the floor will be accepted only if the person nominated is present at the Annual General Meeting or has put in writing that they want to stand. At least a third of members of the association have to be present at the Annual General Meeting.

What happens at our Annual General Meeting?

- The minutes of the previous AGM will be presented and approved.
- The existing committee will present a report of the association's activities.
- The existing treasurer will present audited accounts for the year.
- The existing committee will stand down.
- The officers and committee for the next year will be elected. We will aim to have an independent person available to take the election.
- Any amendments to the constitution will be voted on.
- If there is nobody willing to stand, the committee will decide whether to start procedures to close the association down. Alternatively the committee can continue in office to try and redevelop the association for up to six months. It is the responsibility of the committee to recruit a new committee or formally dissolve the association within that period.

Special General Meetings:

A Special General Meeting open to all members will be convened if a third of members request this in writing to the secretary stating their reason for wanting one. This could be in the form of a letter signed by a third of members from different addresses. The secretary will ensure that the meeting is held within 28 days and that all households are given prior notice.

How the association will be run:

This association will try to be as democratic and open about its business as possible. We will hold regular meetings and keep records of all meetings and will aim to publicise all meetings in addition to the Annual General Meeting to all households on the site to plan our activities and consult our members.

How many people need to be present to take a committee decision

At least a third of the membership of the committee have to be present to take a decision on behalf of the association. All members of the committee should be consulted on the dates and venues. The committee will try to work by consensus (i.e. we will try to come to an agreement) but where this is not possible decisions will be taken by majority vote.

How will everybody know what has been decided

We will keep minutes of all meetings of the association. We will note down what has been agreed or decided and who is responsible for any jobs involved in that decision. The minutes will be presented to the next meeting and have to be approved. Any member of the association has the right to read the minutes of any public or committee meeting.

Responsibilities of the officers

- Our chairperson will:
Usually chair all meetings. Ensure that all present can contribute without interruption and intimidation. Prepare the agenda with the secretary and ensure that agenda items are resolved.
- Our secretary will:
Deal with all correspondence, keep minutes and records. Keep all members informed. Prepare the agenda with the chairperson.
- The Treasurer will:
Keep up to date records of all financial transactions and make sure all members of the association receive all their expenses promptly. Make regular financial reports and prepare the accounts for the auditor. Present audited accounts to the AGM.
- Members of our committee will:
Work as part of a team and have the right to represent the association on outside bodies.

Finance

The committee can raise money on behalf of the association as they see fit, as long as they spend it in line with the aims and objectives of the association. If necessary, we will open a bank account that provides a cheque book for the association and we will nominate at least two signatories for all cheques. The signatories must not be members of the same household. The association should keep receipts for all money paid out. The treasurer will ensure that all accounts are audited once a year. The association will adopt an expenses policy to make sure all members know exactly how much money everybody will be able to claim on behalf of the association. The expenses policy can be amended at a public meeting to ensure it is flexible enough to suit the needs of this association.

How we can change this constitution:

The constitution may only be amended at an Annual General Meeting or at a Special General Meeting. If anyone wants to make changes to this document, they have to put them in writing and send them to the secretary before the meeting. If possible, the secretary should let all the members know prior to the meeting that a change to the constitution will be on the agenda. Changes to our constitution must not weaken the association's commitment to equal opportunities.

How we can dissolve our association:

The association may only be dissolved at a public meeting. All members have to be informed that a decision about the future of the association will be on the agenda. It is the responsibility of the outgoing committee to ensure that all members are informed in advance of the meeting and its purpose. A proposal to dissolve the association will only be carried if agreed by two thirds of the members present or if the association is unable to form a committee. All outstanding bills will be paid. The remaining funds and possessions will be transferred to a charitable organisation with similar objectives, as agreed at the meeting.

What we can do, if details are not quite clear:

Any interpretation of this document or any additional points not covered as yet will be decided by a majority vote of the committee and ratified by a public meeting. The question should then be referred to the next AGM in the form of an amendment to the constitution.

This constitution was adopted by:	
At the meeting on:	
Signature of the Secretary:	
Signature of the Chairperson:	