

Model Constitution for the Limewood Community Group

1. Name

The name of the group shall be **Limewood Community Group**. A small unincorporated association covering the 138 homes in the Limewood development, Scarva Road, Banbridge.

2. Aims

The aims of **Limewood Community Group** will be:

- a) To represent and to promote the interests of all residents living in our area.
- b) To seek to improve conditions for residents in the area.
- c) To work in partnership with the council and other agencies to achieve our aims.
- d) To represent the interests of residents in consultation with the local authority and other bodies.
- e) To organise and promote activities for the residents.
- f) The Association shall be non-party political and non-sectarian.

3. Membership

Membership is open to anyone who:

- is aged between 16 and 100 years old; and
 - lives in the Limewood development, Scarva Road, Banbridge.
 - supports the aims of **Limewood Community Group**
- a) The Association will challenge any remarks or behaviour at meetings that cause offence and make people feel unwelcome.
 - b) The Association will take positive action to reach those people that are under-represented at meetings and events and will ensure that all members have the opportunity to be involved in the Association and its events.
 - c) All members shall have voting rights on all issues raised at general meetings that they attend.
 - d) Each eligible person shall on request be supplied with a copy of the constitution.
 - e) It shall be a condition of membership that members at all times conduct themselves in a reasonable manner at meetings or in premises used by the Association.

- f) Any members may be excluded for a breach of this condition or for any other conduct contravening the objectives of the Association, by a majority of those present and voting at any general meeting. Any member so excluded shall have the right of appeal to the following general meeting.

Membership will begin as soon as the membership form has been received. The forms can be found here. (www.limewoodcommunity.org/community_support.html)

There will be no annual membership fee however membership is conditional on an up to date membership form having been submitted on an annual basis and permanent residency in the defined area.

A list of all members will be kept by the membership secretary.

Ceasing to be a member

Members may resign at any time in writing to the secretary.

Any member who has moved away from the defined area is deemed to have resigned.

Any offensive behaviour, including racist, sexist or inflammatory remarks, will not be permitted. Anyone behaving in an offensive way or breaking the equal opportunities policy may be asked not to attend further meetings or to resign from the group if an apology is not given or the behaviour is repeated. The individual concerned shall have the right to be heard by the management committee, accompanied by a friend, before a final decision is made.

4. Equal Opportunities

Limewood Community Group will not discriminate on the grounds of gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sexuality, disability, religious or political belief, marital status or age.

5. Officers and committee

The business of the group will be carried out by a Committee elected at the Annual General Meeting. The Committee will meet as necessary and not less than four times a year.

The Committee will consist of 4 members, and be composed of 4 officers. Up to 2 additional members may be co-opted onto the committee at the discretion of the committee.

The officers' roles are as follows:

- Chair, who shall chair both general and committee meetings
- Secretary, who shall be responsible for the taking of minutes and the distribution of all papers
- Treasurer who shall be responsible for maintaining accounts

In the event of an officer standing down during the year a replacement will be elected by the next General Meeting of members.

Any committee member not attending a meeting without apology for three months will be contacted by the committee and asked if they wish to resign.

The Committee meetings will be open to any member of the Limewood Community Group wishing to attend, who may speak but not vote.

6. Meetings

6.1. Annual General Meetings

An Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held within fifteen months of the previous AGM.

All members will be notified in writing at least 3 weeks before the date of the meeting, giving the venue, date and time.

Nominations for the committee may be made to the Secretary before the meeting, or at the meeting.

The quorum for the AGM will be 10% of the membership or 6 members, whichever is the greater number.

At the AGM:-

- The Committee will present a report of the work of the Limewood Community Group over the year.
- The Committee will present the accounts of the Limewood Community Group for the previous year.
- The officers and Committee for the next year will be elected.
- Any proposals given to the Secretary at least 7 days in advance of the meeting will be discussed.

6.2 Special General Meetings

The Secretary will call a Special General Meeting at the request of the majority of the committee or at least two other members giving a written request to the Chair or Secretary stating the reason for their request.

The meeting will take place within twenty-one days of the request.

All members will be given two weeks notice of such a meeting, giving the venue, date, time and agenda, and notice may be by telephone, email or post.

The quorum for the Special General Meeting will be 10% of the membership or 3 members, whichever is the greater number.

6.3 General Meetings

General Meetings are open to all members and will be held at least once every 3 months or more often if necessary.

All members will be given two weeks' notice of such a meeting, giving the venue, date, time and agenda, and notice may be by telephone, email or post.

The quorum for a General Meeting shall be 10% of the membership or 3 members, whichever is the greater number.

6.4 Committee Meetings

Committee meetings may be called by the Chair or Secretary. Committee members must receive notice of meetings at least 7 days before the meeting.

The quorum for Committee meetings is three Committee members.

7. Rules of Procedure for meetings

All questions that arise at any meeting will be discussed openly and the meeting will seek to find general agreement that everyone present can agree to.

If a consensus cannot be reached a vote will be taken and a decision will be made by a simple majority of members present. If the number of votes cast on each side is equal, the chair of the meeting shall have an additional casting vote.

8. Finances

An account will be maintained on behalf of the Association at a bank agreed by the committee. Three cheque signatories will be nominated by the Committee (one to be the Treasurer). The signatories must not be related nor members of the same household.

All payments will be signed by two of the signatories.

- For cheque payments, the signatories will sign the cheque.
- For other payments (such as BACS payments, cash withdrawals, debit card payments or cash payments), a requisition note will be signed by two signatories, and held by the treasurer.

Records of income and expenditure will be maintained by the Treasurer and a financial statement given at each meeting.

All money raised by or on behalf of Limewood Community Group is only to be used to further the aims of the group, as specified in item 2 of this constitution.

9. Amendments to the Constitution

Amendments to the constitution may only be made at the Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting.

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

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

10. Dissolution

If a meeting, by simple majority, decides that it is necessary to close down the group 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 local charitable organisation. The organisation will be agreed at the meeting which agrees the dissolution.

This constitution was agreed at the Inaugural General Meeting of the Limewood Community Group on:-

Date/...../.....

Name and position in group

Signed

Name and position in group

Signed