

## **NATIONAL OPEN SPACES FORUM CONSTITUTION**

### **1. NAME**

The name of the organisation is the NATIONAL OPEN SPACES FORUM (hereinafter called "NOSF").

### **2. OBJECTIVES**

To promote, protect and improve UK parks and green spaces by linking together the Friends and Users' Forums and Networks throughout the country.

The objectives of the NOSF are broadly facilitative, empowering, educational and environmental.

- To promote and enhance UK parks and open spaces as a public recreational facility, for the benefit of UK residents and visitors.
- To promote the protection and improvement of parks and open green spaces throughout the UK.
- To address the deficiencies of green space in the UK.
- To advance the education of the public in the enjoyment, understanding, appreciation and conservation of open spaces.
- To promote the protection, conservation and improvement of the physical and natural environment.
- To promote the full involvement of Friends/Users groups in management of their parks and open spaces.
- To promote the development and empowerment of Friends/Users Groups and Friends/Users Forums and Networks.
- To promote communication and co-operation among Friends/Users Forums and Networks.
- To influence decision making about green spaces.
- To lobby for statutory recognition for parks and green spaces.
- To raise the profile of the NOSF individual members throughout the U.K.

### **3. POWERS**

To carry out the said objectives the NOSF may:

- a) Admit to membership any forum interested in the expansion, improvement and sustainability of open spaces.
- b) Promote the improvement of parks and open spaces, in partnership with those in the public, private and voluntary sectors who share our aims.
- c) Promote and carry out surveys and investigations and publish the useful results thereof.
- d) Arrange and provide for, or join in arranging and providing for, the holding of exhibitions, meetings, lectures, classes, working parties, seminars and training courses.
- e) Collect and disseminate information on all materials affecting the said objectives and exchange such information with other bodies having similar objectives.
- f) Arrange to be written or print, publish, issue and circulate books, papers, etc, to further the objectives.
- g) Accept gifts and raise money for the said objectives subject to such consents as may be required by law.
- h) Seek contributions to the NOSF by personal or written appeals or grant applications, public meetings or otherwise.
- i) Hire staff or rent premises, if deemed necessary.
- j) Affiliate to and work in partnership with other organisations in order to further NOSF objectives.
- k) Do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the attainment of the said objectives.
- l) Encourage the formation of local green space networks and forums throughout the UK.

### **4. MEMBERSHIP**

Full automatic membership with voting rights – one vote per Forum/Network - shall be available to all open space forums made up of predominantly Friends/Users groups within the UK who have relevant or similar objectives as NOSF.

All members shall:

- i. Be interested in furthering the work of the NOSF
- ii. Pay an annual subscription as decided by the AGM.

Associate membership without voting rights shall be available to all organisations which have relevant, similar or complementary objectives as NOSF.

## **5. MANAGEMENT AND CO-ORDINATION**

The Committee shall manage the affairs of the NOSF. The Committee shall be made up of four Honorary Officers and area/regional Delegates from affiliated Forums/Networks. The Honorary Officers shall be a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. A quorum for any meeting of the Committee shall be four persons.

The Honorary Officers shall be elected annually. The Honorary Officers so elected at an AGM can serve for a maximum of 5 years in succession in the same post.

The Committee may from time to time appoint sub-committees, or co-opt additional committee members where they offer specific skills, experience or improved area/regional representation, for such purposes and with such powers as it thinks fit.

The Committee shall meet at least twice a year, as needed, meetings to be open to all members.

## **6. MEETINGS**

### **Annual General Meeting**

- i. An AGM of the members of the NOSF shall be held, as far as practical, within 14 months of the previous one. Three weeks notice shall be given to all members.
- ii. The business of the AGM shall include:
  - a) The election of Honorary Officers.
  - b) The election of 4 bank signatories from Committee members (to include the Treasurer).
  - c) The presentation of the accounts relating to the previous year.
  - d) The setting of membership subscription fees.
  - e) The appointment of an auditor or independent expert scrutiniser.
  - f) The receipt of reports.
  - g) Discussion of any resolutions received at least 14 days before.
  - h) Amendments to the Constitution received at least 14 days before.
- iii. No member forum shall have more than one vote in a meeting.
- iv. Decisions (except for amendments to the Constitution - see below) will be made by a simple majority of those voting.
- v. The quorum shall be six members or a quarter of membership, whichever is less.
- vi. There shall be an option to implement a system of proxy votes. Any system adopted for such votes shall be in the format that the Committee shall from time to time determine.

## **Extraordinary General Meetings**

An Extraordinary General Meeting can be called by the Committee or by a fifth of the general membership. All members shall be given three weeks notice.

The same quorum and voting provisions apply as for the AGM.

## **7. FINANCIAL MATTERS**

- i. All money raised for the NOSF shall be used to further the objectives of the NOSF.
- ii. The Committee shall be responsible for maintaining accounts of all money raised and all sums disbursed on behalf of the NOSF.
- iii. The Committee in the name of the NOSF shall open a current (and if needed, deposit) account.
- iv. All cheques shall be signed by no less than two of the signatories, one of whom should be the Treasurer if possible.
- v. The Committee shall secure the provision of any insurance arrangements that they may from time to time deem appropriate for the attainment of the objectives of the NOSF.
- vi. An auditor or independent expert scrutiniser appointed at the AGM shall audit the accounts at least once a year.

## **8. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

This Constitution will be made available to all members. It may only be changed by a two-third-majority vote of those present at an AGM or at an Extraordinary General Meeting called specifically for such a purpose. Amendments must be received at least 14 days before the appropriate meeting and must be sent to the members at least 7 days before the meeting.

## **9. DISSOLUTION**

The NOSF may be dissolved by a two-third-majority vote of those present at an Extraordinary General Meeting called for that sole purpose. That meeting shall charge a specific Executive Sub-Committee with paying any debts and liabilities. All remaining assets shall be given to another organisation or organisations, which have objectives similar to those of the NOSF.

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This Constitution of the National Open Spaces Forum [NOSF] was approved at the Annual General Meeting held on the 6 February 2010.

**Signed on behalf of the National Open Space Forum:**

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Position  
Address

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