

# THAMES VALLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION

**DATE OF ADOPTION:** -----

## **1. Name of the Organisation**

1.1 The name of the organisation is the Thames Valley Neighbourhood Watch Association (hereinafter referred to as the Association).

1.2 The Association shall be a volunteer led non-profit organisation, politically neutral, non-sectarian and religiously neutral. The Association will operate an equal opportunities and non-discriminatory policy and will embrace diversity.

## **2. Objectives of the Organisation**

2.1 To support the Neighbourhood Watch membership and Neighbourhood Watch national charity, within Thames Valley, and assist with the creation, development and support of Neighbourhood Watch schemes and constituent Neighbourhood Watch Groups located across the Thames Valley Police Force Area, to promote good citizenship and greater public awareness, increase the membership of Neighbourhood Watch and support ongoing groups and schemes. To increase public participation in the prevention and detection of crime, reduce the fear of crime, improve police/community liaison and increase community safety in partnership with recognised Authorities and other relevant organisations.

## **3. Powers**

In furtherance of the said Objectives the Association may:

3.1 Promote and assist in the development of constituent Neighbourhood Watch Groups and schemes across the Force Area and participate in the wider promotion of Neighbourhood Watch and more generally to assist, where required, the Membership Support Administrators (MSAs) and coordinators across the Force area.

3.2 Carry out research and surveys, provide and communicate information, services and advice to and on behalf of all constituent Groups, exchange information and share and promote best effective practice and acceptable behaviour and performance standards amongst all Neighbourhood Watch entities and, where relevant, with other organisations provide relevant, accurate and timely information to the public and media in appropriate circumstances.

3.3 Act as a forum, co-ordinate resources and provide services for constituent Groups as appropriate, including the provision of small grants when considered appropriate.

3.4 Act as a consultative and advisory body to Authorities on matters affecting Neighbourhood Watch in the Force Area. Represent the views and needs of the Thames Valley Neighbourhood Watch membership, constituent Groups and exchange information where appropriate to/with Authorities and other Neighbourhood Watch entities. To enter into appropriate agreements with Thames Valley Police and PCC where required.

3.5 Raise funds, invite, receive and handle donations from any persons or bodies by way of subscription, sponsorship or otherwise, in a prudent, reasonable and legal manner and subject to the financial controls specified in para 9.

#### **4. Membership**

4.1 As of the date of adoption of this constitution, the voting membership of the Association shall consist of an organising committee. Committee members shall be drawn from each recognised and authorised constituent area within the Force Area. Each constituent area (as listed in appendix A) will endeavour to provide one committee member with one vote per member.

4.2 Each constituent area shall be entitled to appoint a deputy who is both a member of Neighbourhood Watch and resides within the Force Area.

4.3 A committee member must give written notice to the Association of the name of their deputy, if any. The nominee shall not be entitled to represent the respective constituent area unless the notice has been received by the Association.

4.4 Membership is not transferable. The Association organising committee maintains the right to refuse an application for membership of the committee, if they consider it to be in the best interests of the Association. In such case, the organising committee must inform the applicant in writing of the reasons for the refusal within 21 days of the decision and consider any written representations the applicant may make about the decision. The organising committee's decision following any written representations must be notified to the applicant in writing but shall be final.

4.5 Additional representation nominated by the Neighbourhood Watch Network for England & Wales; the Thames Valley Police, and/or the local authority(ies) with an interest in community safety, shall be entitled to attend and speak at meetings as non-voting contributors.

4.6 The organising committee of the Association will keep a register of names and contact details of the committee members, including authorised deputies, which must be kept and used in accordance with current GDPR legislation.

#### **5. Committee Structure and Management**

5.1 The organising committee shall consist of constituent area members (CAMs) who are duly elected at an Annual General Meeting (AGM) to the following Association committee positions: Voting member and a Hon. (voting) Treasurer shall be delegated responsibility for the general management of the Association. There will be a maximum of one voting member for each of the Association areas as specified in appendix A. Voting members can also take on the role of a non voting CAM for areas which have no participating CAM at the start of any year, thus providing representation for areas that would otherwise have no committee voice.

5.2 The Voting members shall have the power to co-opt up to 3 additional Neighbourhood Watch members, residing in the Force Area, to fill vacant positions, extend current positions or assist the voting members should the need arise, in order to maintain the integrity and effectiveness of the

Association. Such co-opted members are entitled to attend and speak at meetings but will not be permitted to vote on any issue unless they hold the position of Hon (voting) Treasurer.

5.3 The voting members may appoint specific roles, (such as but not limited to designated liaison leads to The National Neighbourhood Watch charity, Thames Valley Police and PCC), special or standing teams and groups, as may be deemed necessary, and shall determine their terms of reference, powers, duration and composition, including Team leads and recording duties. All acts and proceedings of such special roles or standing teams shall be reported back to the organising committee at the next committee meeting.

5.4 Each of the Voting members, Hon. Treasurer and co-opted members shall retire at each AGM following their appointment but shall be eligible for re-election.

## **6. Termination of Membership**

6.1 A Voting member may resign from the committee by giving written notice to the organising committee. ~~membership will be deemed void if no activity or communication is observed or received by the inactive member after a period of 90 days. A deputy may resign by giving written notice to their voting member, who shall inform the committee.~~

6.2 The Voting Members shall have the right, for good and sufficient reason, (including the 90 day rule in 6.1) to decline, discipline, suspend or terminate the membership of any voting member or their deputy, providing that the voting member or deputy is afforded the opportunity of being heard by the organising committee before a final decision is made.

6.3 The organising committee shall have the right, in partnership with the constituent area member concerned, to decline, discipline, suspend or terminate the membership of any Neighbourhood Watch member in the Force Area including a member of any sub-committee, who displays unacceptable behaviour or performance standards, commits any illegal act, or conducts themselves in a manner which threatens or may threaten the integrity and/or bring into disrepute, both nationally and within Thames Valley, the reputation of Neighbourhood Watch. Such a member shall be afforded the opportunity of being heard by the voting members before a final decision is made.

6.4 The agreement by a simple majority of the voting members shall be necessary to decline, discipline, suspend or terminate any membership. If a tie in voting, then consultation with the National Neighbourhood Watch Network for resolution can apply.

## **7. General Meetings**

7.1 The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Association shall be held in May each year or as soon as practicable within 4 weeks thereafter. At least 21 days' notice in writing shall be given by the committee to the voting members. Any delay beyond May will be agreed before the last day of May. All voting CAMs and Hon. Treasurer will be elected for the next year at the AGM.

7.2 The Voting members may, at their discretion, declare the AGM or any Extraordinary General meeting (EGM) to be open to all Neighbourhood Watch coordinators and/or members residing in the Force Area. At the discretion of the Committee such invitees may be permitted to vote in person at such meeting. .

7.3 At the AGM, the voting members shall elect the Hon. Treasurer and appoint the Auditor and Independent Examiner, if appropriate.

7.4 An EGM may be convened at the discretion of the voting members, or by a written request made to the committee by at least 50% of the voting members, stating the specific reasons. The committee shall within a reasonable time convene a meeting subject to 21 days' notice given to each voting member. Every voting member shall be entitled to attend and vote at the EGM.

7.5 Minutes and other documents from the AGM and any EGM shall be kept by the AGM/EGM recorder and the recorder shall enter therein a record of all proceedings and resolutions. It is discretionary for minutes (and/or video recordings) in full or part to be made available via the Association's website (public domain).

## 8. Conduct at Meetings

8.1 At Association meetings, a quorum shall constitute a minimum of 50% of voting members. Within a period of a minimum 10 working days before any proposed meeting date, a majority of voting members shall agree a meeting lead, for the facilitation and running of the meeting, and a meeting recorder (voting or coop). Any voting member can propose themselves to be meeting lead. The responsibility for initially drafting and issuing, after consultation, the appropriate committee meeting agenda lies with the meeting lead. Voting members may vote on a seconded proposal by proxy (the proxy vote is only applicable to the proposal and to no other business and only used if the member cannot be present).

8.2 Resolutions shall be proposed and seconded, and ordinarily be passed by a majority of votes on a show of hands. However, a secret ballot may be held upon request of any voting member or this shall be adjudicated by an independent ex officio person, and the outcome recorded in the minutes of that meeting. Resolutions that cannot command a simple majority will be withdrawn or held in abeyance until a majority is achieved. (A resolution held in abeyance must be passed within 30 days of proposal).

8.3 Details and decisions of any committee meeting shall be taken by the meeting recorder and shall be kept by the committee in a shared accessible file and shall enter therein a record of all proceedings and resolutions. It is discretionary for details (and/or video recordings) in full or part to be made available via the Association's website (public domain).

8.4 The Association shall meet not less than 4 times a year, with 21 days' notice given to each Voting member of the proposed meeting and its agenda items within 10 days.

## 9. Finance

9.1 The financial year shall end on 31<sup>st</sup> March.

9.2 All monies raised by or on behalf of the Association shall be applied to further the purposes of the Association and not otherwise. Nothing herein contained shall prevent the reimbursement in good faith of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses necessarily and properly incurred in furtherance of the objectives of the association. Such expenses should be claimed within 30 days of expenditure, or a shorter period if necessary to allow the Treasurer appropriate closure of accounts for the financial year.

9.3 The Treasurer shall keep proper and accurate Accounts of the finances of the Association. The Treasurer will report to each meeting of the Association, at each AGM, and whenever requested by the members, a true and fair view of the financial situation of the Association. In addition, the Treasurer will produce for inspection at any reasonable time the bank books, cash books and other financial documentation and information concerning the Association where requested.

9.4 Where relevant, a bank account shall be maintained in the name of the Association with such bank as the voting members shall from time to time decide. The voting members shall authorise in writing (one always being the Treasurer) and at least two other members who shall from time to time determine to make payments on behalf of the Association. All payment authorisations and cheques must be signed by two of the authorised signatories.

9.5 The account may be used to hold, reserve and so ring-fence funds on behalf of other approved Neighbourhood Watch organisations, the decision to do so at the discretion of the voting members.

**10. Dissolution**

10.1 If the voting members decide, by a simple majority, it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the Association, the organising committee shall call an EGM stating the terms of the Resolution to be proposed. If such decisions shall be confirmed by a majority of at least 50% of votes of those present and voting at such meeting, the voting members shall have the power to dispose of any assets held by or on behalf of the Association.

10.2 Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be given or transferred to such other charitable institution(s) having objectives similar to the objectives of the Association as the members may decide, or may be applied to some other charitable or Neighbourhood Watch purpose. Any funds being held by the association on behalf of any other organisation to be returned to the owning organisation in a manner specified by them.

**11. Amendments to the Constitution**

11.1 Any proposed alterations to this constitution shall require the assent of not less than 50% of voting members. Any changes will be enacted by a majority of votes of those present and voting at an AGM. Notice of any such alteration and details of same must have been received by the committee in writing not less than 21 days before the Meeting at which the alterations are to be proposed.

11.2 In circumstances, where minor changes to the constitution are deemed necessary, such changes may be made following a simple majority vote of approval by the voting members. These changes, including such items as change of committee numbers and/or responsibilities, frequency of meetings, etc., that are considered necessary by circumstances prevailing at the time, may be made provided that such changes in no way alter Clauses 1,2,3,4, 10 and 11.

**12. Declaration of Adoption**

12.1 On behalf of the Thames Valley Neighbourhood Watch Association, I hereby declare that this Constitution was approved and adopted at our Annual General Meeting held at

..... on.....

APPENDIX A

**TVNWA constituent areas.**

Aylesbury Vale

Bracknell and Wokingham

Cherwell and West Oxon

Milton Keynes

Oxford

Reading

Slough

South Buckinghamshire

South Oxon. and Vale of the White Horse

West Berkshire

Windsor and Maidenhead