

# NORWOOD PLANNING ASSEMBLY

## CONSTITUTION (DRAFT 3 Dec 2014)

### Name

1. The name of the organisation is the “Norwood Planning Assembly” (hereinafter “the NPA”).

### Aim and Objects

2. The NPA is a voluntary association of individuals and organisations. Its purpose is to produce and implement a Neighbourhood Plan, in accordance with the Localism Act 2011, to further the social, economic, environmental and general well-being of individuals living in the Area of Norwood as defined below and to further the interests of businesses operating in the Norwood Area. It shall operate without distinction or discrimination on the grounds of sex, disability, sexual orientation or race, or of political, religious or other opinions.

### Area

3. The NPA shall cover the area of Norwood shown on the attached map in Schedule A (“Norwood Planning Assembly: Neighbourhood Map”), comprising the three wards of Knights Hill, Gipsy Hill and Thurlow Park.

### Membership

4. a. Membership shall be open to
  - i. individuals who live or who have an interest in the Area;
  - ii. individuals who work in the Area, whether for business carried on there or otherwise;
  - iii. community organisations which operate in any part of the Area, through their duly appointed representatives;
  - iv. businesses, educational establishments or other corporate entities which operate in the Area, through their duly appointed representatives;
  - v. Elected Members of Lambeth Council representing the three wards will be *ex officio* members.
- b. Not less than 21 members eligible for membership under paragraph 4a and who meet the requirements of the Localism Act 2011, shall

become “designated members” of the NPA and will be recorded as representatives of the “Neighbourhood Forum” for statutory purposes. Such designated members will:

- i. Provide satisfactory evidence of eligibility
  - ii. Provide contact details which may be used by the NPA for its lawful purposes and be supplied to Lambeth Council as the local planning authority.
- c. The Executive may refuse to accept, or may revoke, membership of any individual or organisation which in its opinion fails to meet the criteria for membership or which acts in a way inimical to the aims and objects set out in paragraph 2. Any person or organisation whose membership is revoked shall have the right to appeal to an Assembly Meeting of the NPA.

## **5. The Assembly**

- a. An Assembly, open to all members, will be convened at least twice per year to include an Annual General Meeting (AGM). The Assembly will be convened by the two founding community groups; the Norwood Action Group and the Norwood Forum. The Assembly will be chaired alternatively (or as agreed) by the respective chairs of the founding community groups.
- b. The AGM will be presented with an annual report and accounts by the NPA Executive, will elect the Executive Officers and will transact such business as to promote the aims and objects of the NPA and other such business as determined by the founding community groups.
- c. The NPA constitution can be amended only by majority vote at the Assembly.

## **6. The Executive and Officers**

- a. The day-to-day business of the NPA shall be conducted by the Executive, subject to decisions of an Assembly Meeting. The Executive shall consist of four Officers elected by a General Meeting and others as set out below. The term of office of any Officer of the Executive shall expire at the next Assembly Annual Meeting but members shall be eligible to stand for re-election for a continuous period not exceeding five years.
- b. The Officers will comprise a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. The two chairs of the founding community groups will be *ex-officio* members of the Executive. The Executive may co-opt up to ten additional members for a term to expire no later than the next following AGM. Such co-optees may chair any working parties formed for the purposes of the NPA. Officer duties shall include:
  - i. The Chair: chairing the Executive, reporting to the Assembly and being jointly responsible with the Treasurer to answer to the

Assembly Annual Meeting on the conduct of the financial affairs of the NPA

- ii. The Vice-Chair: deputising and assuming the Chair's responsibility for chairing meetings in the event of the Chair being unable to do so
  - iii. the Secretary: handling the NPA's administration including minutes of meetings, maintaining the register of "designated members" and all matters relating to applications for and records of membership, ensuring compliance with data protection legislation;
  - iv. The Treasurer: handling all the NPA's financial business, preparing financial reports and jointly with the Chair answering to the Assembly Annual Meeting on the conduct of the financial affairs of the NPA.
- c. The Executive shall meet not less than once every three months. The Secretary shall give at least seven days' notice of meetings to all members of the Executive.
  - d. The Executive may appoint sub-committees (or task groups) to carry out specific roles or projects. Any such sub-committee may co-opt such persons as it thinks fit to enable it to perform its function but shall not take any action beyond the terms of its appointment and shall report on its activities to the Executive.
  - e. Decisions of the Executive shall be taken by a simple majority of those present.
  - f. The Executive shall keep minutes of all its proceedings which shall be available for inspection by any member on giving no less than ten days' notice to the Secretary.
  - g. Any member may attend any meeting of the Executive and may speak at the discretion of the Chair but may not vote.

## **Meetings**

- 7.** The Assembly of all members shall be the controlling body of the NPA and will be convened by the Norwood Action Group and the Norwood Forum which are the founding community groups.
- 8.** Assembly Annual Meeting (AGM)
  - a. An AGM shall be held on a day to be agreed by the founding groups not later than three months after the end of the NPA's financial year.
  - b. The business of the AGM shall include

- i. a report from the Executive Chair on the activities of the Executive since the previous AGM and its plans for the forthcoming year;
  - ii. consideration of and if thought fit approval of the accounts of the NPA for the previous financial year together with an independent report on those accounts;
  - iii. appointment of an independent auditor to report to the following AGM on the accounts for the current financial year;
  - iv. any other business as required by the Constitution or as directed by the founding groups;
  - v. consideration of any motion which has been submitted by a member of the NPA in time for circulation with the notice of the AGM;
  - vi. Election of the Executive Officers for the forthcoming year.
- c. The founding groups shall give all members (individuals or groups) at least 14 days' notice of the time and place of the AGM. Such notice shall include details of all business to be transacted at the meeting.
- d. Nominations for election to the Executive shall be invited in the notice calling the AGM and must be proposed and seconded in writing by members with the signed consent of the candidate. Nominations may be made at the AGM at any point until immediately after the reports of the Executive and the Treasurer. A proposal speech in support of candidates may be given at the discretion of the chair and will be limited to two minutes.
- e. Election of Executive Officers may be taken *en bloc* if there are no more nominations than there are vacancies to be filled in accordance with para. 6. b. unless any member objects, in which case the meeting shall vote on each nomination separately.
- f. In the event of there being more nominations than vacancies a ballot shall be held with ballot papers being distributed at the AGM for return by the end of the meeting. Voting shall be by simple majority. The meeting shall agree to the appointment of one or more scrutineers to act as returning officers and to advise the Assembly Chair on the results.
- g. The AGM may by a majority vote of those present and voting agree to consider any urgent or important business which has arisen since dispatch of the notice of the meeting.

## **9. Other Assembly Meetings**

In the period between AGMs, the NPA shall meet at least once as an Assembly Meeting of all members, to receive an interim report and

transact any other business. At least 14 days' notice shall be given to all members.

**10. Conduct of Assembly meetings**

- a. Twenty one members shall constitute a quorum. A quorum is not required to receive the report and accounts.
- b. Voting at Assembly meetings shall be by show of hands, except as provided in sub-paragraph 8.f above.
- c. Proxy votes will not be allowed.

**Finance**

**11. The finances of the NPA shall be controlled as follows.**

- a. The NPA's accounting period shall be annual ending on 30 April.
- b. A General Meeting may decide to set a subscription rate, no greater than the rates which apply to the founding groups, for membership of the NPA together with such different categories of subscription or concession as it thinks fit.
- c. The Treasurer shall maintain for a period of six years or until the winding up of the NPA whichever is the sooner and pass on to his or her successor all accounting records which shall be subject to independent inspection and reporting to the AGM as provided in paragraph 8.b.ii and such records shall be available for inspection by any member on giving not less than 10 days' notice.
- d. The Treasurer shall open and maintain a bank or other appropriate account in the name of the NPA which account or accounts shall be controlled by a mandate requiring the signature of no fewer than two of the Officers as listed in paragraph 6.b..

**12. Constitution and Interpretation**

- a. Definitions. In this Constitution, "community organisations" includes residents' associations, charities, churches and other religious establishments, welfare organisations and other bodies which operate wholly or partly within the Area and whose aims are consistent with the objects of the NPA; "Neighbourhood Plan" includes but is not limited to a neighbourhood development plan as defined in the Localism Act 2011.
- b. In the event of any question arising where the interpretation of this Constitution is in doubt or where it is silent, the Executive shall have the power to act according to its own interpretation and at its discretion, subject to ratification by the Assembly.

- c. Other than as may be required by law, amendments to this Constitution may only be made by a majority vote of the members present and voting at a quorate Assembly Meeting.
- d. Any requirement in this Constitution for notice or reports to be given by the NPA to its members shall be deemed to have been satisfied if such notice or reports have been sent by e-mail, by posting on the NPA's website or by other electronic means. Any individual member may still request hard copies and in such a case the Executive reserves the right to make a charge to cover the extra cost incurred. Notices from a member to the NPA may also be sent by e-mail subject to validation against a written signature submitted to the Secretary in advance.

## **SCHEDULE A**

Norwood Planning Assembly: neighbourhood area designated by the London Borough of Lambeth: