



Friends of Ringwood Forest

Constitution

Title	“Friends of Ringwood Forest” is referred to below as The Association.
Objectives	<p>The Objectives of the Association will be to campaign to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">Protect the forests and heathland of Hampshire & Dorset, in particular Ringwood Forest and heathland, for the recreational use and amenity of residents and visitors.Safeguard these open spaces, their natural ecosystems and the biodiversity they support, and the tranquillity and quality of life they offer particularly to local residents both now and for future generations.Protect Ringwood Forest, including its important pockets of heathland, from development including mineral extraction, landfill and any after use that does not restore the fully functional natural ecosystems of the area.
Membership	<p>Membership of the Association, known as the Interest Group, is open to anyone who has an interest in furthering the above Objectives.</p> <p>There are two groups of members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Online: those people who have an email address, have provided a postal address and to whom communications will be delivered electronicallyOffline: those people who have a Verwood (BH31) postcode, do not have an email address and to whom important communications will be delivered by hand
Management	<p>The Committee will have a Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and such other offices as the Annual General Meeting (AGM) may agree. The Committee may also have a President.</p> <p>The Committee will consist of no more than eleven members, including Officers, and a quorum will be not less than five members. The Committee will be elected or re-elected at the AGM.</p> <p>If a member of the Committee resigns during a year the Committee may co-opt or appoint a replacement until the elections at the next AGM.</p>
Auditor	The AGM will elect an Auditor who shall not be a member of the Committee.
Officers	<p>With the exception of the President all Officers will be elected or re-elected at the AGM.</p> <p>If the position of Chair is vacant for any reason the Vice Chair will preside over the business of the Committee until such time as a replacement Chair is elected.</p>
President	The Association may have a President appointed by the Committee by a simple majority. The President will not be a voting Member of the Committee. The President will retain their position for life or until they resign or they are voted out and/or replaced at an EGM.



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Honorary Members	The Committee may co-opt such expertise considered relevant for any specific work or objectives. Such members are appointed in an advisory capacity only and do not have a vote.
Life Members	The Committee can nominate Members for Life Membership. Such members will have been nominated for their contribution to the work of the Association and will have membership for life. The Members will be asked to endorse such appointments at the next AGM.
Financial Year	The financial year for the Association will run from 1st April to 31st March with Audited Accounts to be prepared for and circulated to Members at the AGM by the Auditor.
Finance/Accounts	<p>The Association's funds will be held in a Bank Account and/or Building Society Account as agreed by the Committee. The Treasurer shall be responsible for depositing funds.</p> <p>No financial commitment exceeding £25.00 may be made on behalf of the Association without prior approval of the Committee. Such prior approval may, for the sake of efficiency, be sought by email to the Committee and approved on the basis of no less than 50% of Committee members (including Officers) agreeing. The Treasurer plus the Chair or the Vice Chair (or any combination of two out of these three officers) will have overriding emergency authorisation powers. In all other cases approval must be sought at Committee meetings.</p> <p>Withdrawal of funds from the Bank or Building Society Account will be agreed and signed by, in general, the Treasurer and one other committee nominated signatory as defined in the Mandate to the Bank. In exception circumstances any two of the Officers authorised by the Bank Mandate may sign for the release of funds.</p>
Committee Meetings	<p>The Committee will meet at least every two months on dates agreed and advertised by the Secretary. The Committee will not hold meetings during the month of August except if requested by a majority of Committee members to address urgent or emergency matters.</p> <p>Minutes of Committee Meetings will be made available to Members on request.</p>
External Contacts	Where new or significant representation on behalf of FoRF is to be made to external bodies, all drafts are to be circulated to the Committee for review. In cases of urgency a proposed publication date will be given and Committee members invited to respond beforehand.
Annual General Meeting (AGM)	The AGM will be on a date, usually in May or June, to be advised by the Committee at which the reports of the Chair, Treasurer and Secretary and such other areas of activity as the Committee deem necessary will be presented to those present.
Extraordinary General Meetings	An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) may be called by Members on giving at least 8 weeks' notice to the Committee and those Members must give their reason for calling that meeting.



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The Committee may call for an EGM by giving at least 4 weeks' notice to Members. This EGM may only be called by a majority vote within the Committee.

An EGM will not be held in any 3 month period before or after an AGM.

Ad Hoc General Meetings

The Association will hold informal meetings from time to time when the Committee agrees there is need to inform or engage with all Members.

Dissolution

In the event that the Association is dissolved any surplus funds after the discharge of all liabilities shall be donated to a project in line with the aims of The Association within Moors Valley Country Park or within the Town of Verwood.

The distribution of these funds shall be at the sole discretion of the Committee.

Amendments to Constitution

Amendments to this constitution can only be made when a resolution has been put to Members at the AGM.

Such amendments should be submitted at least two calendar months before the AGM and must carry the name of the people moving and seconding the amendment. If the members moving and seconding the amendment are not present at the AGM, the amendment will be deemed to have fallen.

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