

***Love's Farm Community
Association***
Constitution

**“Making Love's Farm the place to
live in St Neots”**

DRAFT: This version to be adopted on February 12th 2014

1. Name of the Group

- a) The Group shall be known as *Love's Farm Community Association*.

2. Aims of the Group

The aims of the Group are to:

- a) Represent and promote common interests of the community at Love's Farm.
- b) Work for good relationships amongst all members of the community;
- c) To improve conditions, the environment, facilities, and services for the residents of Love's Farm;
- d) To promote Equality and Diversity within the community and to work towards the elimination of discrimination within it by encouraging all members of usually excluded groups to participate in the Group;
- e) Represent the interests of residents in consultation with bpha, the local authorities, and other bodies.
- f) Promote social and other activities that will assist in the development of a thriving community;
- g) Actively encourage all residents to become involved in the Community Association and to encourage the support of other interested people and organisations.
- h) Associate with any body whose aims may be of benefit to our members;
- i) Be non-party political.

3. Powers

The Committee may exercise the following powers:

- a) The power to raise funds and invite and receive contributions to further the aims of the group.
- b) The power to buy and own equipment necessary for the achievement of the group's aims.
- c) The power to organise and run activities, events and to produce and distribute leaflets and other publicity material.
- d) The power to consult the public by arranging meetings and surveys.
- e) The power to co-operate with other charities, voluntary bodies and statutory authorities operating to further the group's aims and to exchange information and advice with them.
- f) The power to do all such other lawful things as is necessary for the achievement of the group's aims.

4. Membership

- a) Membership is automatic, irrespective of nationality, race, ethnic or national origin, sex, colour, disability or political or religious beliefs, for all residents over the age of 18 in the area known as *Love's Farm* or as defined on the attached map contained within the constitution, unless an individual expresses their wishes, in writing, not to be a member.
- b) All members are eligible to vote for the committee. The Group encourages and welcomes Committee membership which represents the diversity of the community it serves.
- c) Members must at all times conduct themselves in a reasonable manner and in accordance with the aims of the Constitution and the agreed Standing Orders of the Group. Any member may be excluded for breach of this condition or for any other conduct contravening the objects of the Group by a majority of those present and voting at any Committee or General Meeting. Any member so excluded shall have the right to appeal to the following General Meeting.
- d) Junior membership is open to members under the age of 18 who are interested in the work of the Association. Junior members shall not have the right to vote at members' meetings although they can vote within their own sub-committee.

5. Financial Control

- a) Any subscriptions, donations, grants of other monies raised by or on behalf of the Group shall only be used to further the aims of the Group.
- b) The accounts will be checked annually by an individual external to the Group.
- c) Any expenditure over £100 shall be authorised by the committee at meetings.
- d) All cheques shall be signed by two out of the three appointed signatories nominated by the Committee. Each signatory must come from a different household.

6. The Committee

- a) The business of the Group shall be conducted by a Committee elected at each Annual General Meeting which shall consist of a Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary and not less than 3 other members.
- b) The election or removal of officers of Committee members may only be carried out by a General Meeting of the Group. The Committee may temporarily fill any vacancy arising among the officers of the Group from its other members until the next General and/or Special General Meeting of members.
- c) Any officer or Committee Member must declare any relevant personal interests. The Committee shall have the right to determine whether that Member should withdraw, or be allowed to speak but not vote, or be allowed to speak and vote.
- d) The Committee shall meet regularly and not less than **6 times per year. In addition, the officers of the committee will meet not less than 4 times per year.**
- e) **Notice of Committee Meetings will be displayed on the www.ourlovesfarm.co.uk website and facebook page, and in Love's Farm publications where possible.**

- f) Committee meetings shall be open to any member of the Group wishing to attend who may speak but not vote.
- g) A quorum shall be 4 Committee members including at least 1 officer.
- h) The Chairperson shall have no general vote, but in the event of a tied decision s/he will have the casting vote.
- i) The committee will decide who will represent the Group at meetings/events with other organisations.
- j) The Committee may co-opt members onto the Committee in order to fill vacancies that occur during the year, or to ensure appropriate representation of all people in the community. Co-opted members cannot hold office (that is, the positions of Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary or Treasurer).

7. Duties of Officers

- a) All the officers of the Group have a duty to further all the aims of the Group.
- b) The CHAIRPERSON (or in his/her absence a vice-chairperson or other Committee member) shall conduct the meetings of the Group.
- c) The TREASURER shall open and maintain a bank account in the name of the Group. All cheques shall be signed by the Treasurer and one other Committee member nominated by the Committee as signatories. The Treasurer shall keep proper accounts of income and expenditure and report on them at each Committee meeting.
- d) The SECRETARY shall be responsible for the convening of all meetings and the giving of the prescribed notice to members. S/he shall ensure that a proper record is kept of all meetings of the Group, its Committee and sub-committees in the form of minutes, and shall deliver up such records as required by the Committee or General Meetings. The Secretary shall produce records of Committee and General Meetings and make these available to members on request.
- e) Any Member or officer delegated to represent the Group in consultation with any other body shall act on the instructions of the Group and shall report back to the following Committee or General Meeting, whichever is sooner.

8. General Meetings

- a) **The Committee shall arrange to hold a General Meeting not less than once a year.**
- b) The General Meeting may coincide with Special General Meetings and/or the Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- c) Members shall be able to vote on decisions which shall be binding on the Committee.
- d) The quorum for all General Meetings shall be 10.
- e) Decisions shall be taken by a simple majority of full members present at the meeting and voting.
- f) Notification of not less than fourteen days shall be given to all members of any general meeting.
- g) Notice of all General Meetings **will be displayed on the www.ourlovesfarm.co.uk website and facebook page, in Love's Farm publications where possible and by email to all known resident addresses.**

9. Special General Meetings

- a) The Chairperson and Secretary of the Group may, at times, call a Special General Meeting of the Group either for the purpose of altering the constitution or for considering any matter which the Committee may decide should be referred to the members in general.
- b) They shall call such a meeting at the request of not less than 4 Committee members or on receipt of a written petition by not less than 10 full members of the Group giving reasons for their request.
- c) The Secretary shall give not less than 7 days notice to all members of the Special General Meeting which shall take place within 21 days of the receipt of the request or petition.

10. Annual General Meetings (AGM)

- a) The Committee shall arrange the AGM for the purpose of:
 - receiving the Annual Report of the Committee and a checked Statement of Accounts
 - accepting the resignations of the Committee
 - electing a new Committee
- b) Not less than 28 days notice shall be given to all members.

11. Making Changes to the Constitution

- a) Any proposal to alter this Constitution must be submitted to the Secretary of the Group not less than 21 days before the meeting at which it is to be discussed.
- b) Not less than 21 days notice shall be given to all members of such a meeting together with the wording of the proposed alteration(s)
- c) Any alteration shall require the approval of two thirds of those present and voting at the meeting.

12. Working Groups (or sub-committees)

- a) The Committee may appoint Working Groups (or sub-committees) to carry out the activities of the Group.
- b) Such Working Groups will be directly accountable to the Committee.
- c) The Committee will agree in advance the terms of reference for any Working Group.
- d) If any Working Group continues after the AGM, its members must be re-elected at the AGM.

13. Winding-up the Group

- a) If a majority decides at a General Meeting to dissolve the Group then notice must be given to all members of the Group, with at least 21 clear days notice, and stating the motion, of a Special General Meeting at which the resolution must be passed by a majority of those present and voting.
- b) Such a resolution may give instructions as to the disposal of any assets held by or in the name of the Group, provided that, if any property remains after the satisfaction of debts and liabilities, such property shall be given or transferred to such other institutions which have objectives similar to those of this Group and which will benefit the residents of the estate or area.
- c) If due to lack of interest, the Committee is no longer able to function according to its Constitution, the remaining Committee Members will pass all assets to bpha on the condition that, if and when residents of Love's Farm subsequently elect a new Committee to represent their views in accordance with the aims of this Constitution, the assets will be returned to the Committee.

14. Acceptance

This Constitution was adopted at a General Meeting on.....

Signed: _____ **Secretary**
_____ **Chair**