



WRENTHORPE NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM CONSTITUTION

1. NAME

- 1.1 The name of the Forum shall be the Wrenthorpe Neighbourhood Forum, hereafter referred to as the Forum.
- 1.2 The Forum is established within the terms of the Localism Act 2011 (the Act), to consider and exercise rights conferred under the Act, in addition to undertaking other activities outlined below for the public benefit in Wrenthorpe Neighbourhood Area.

2. WRENTHORPE NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA (The Area)

- 2.1 The Area shall be the area shown on the map in Appendix A. The area defined is considered to be appropriate to be designated as the neighbourhood Area for the following reasons:
 - It is a co-terminus with existing local government boundaries;
 - It is inclusive and will enable the designated neighbourhood to reach all potential areas of proposed development;
 - It will enable the fullest range of consultation within the designated area;
 - It permits the local authority to operate this plan together with adjoining neighbourhoods and does not leave any gaps;
 - Should the Forum Management Committee determine a future need to amend these boundaries it is understood that this would require further statutory consultation with Wakefield Council and the local community.
- 2.2 The area is the open countryside and associated developments, residential and business part of the area which local people traditionally consider to be the “Village of Wrenthorpe” and part of the sub-regional City of Wakefield.
- 2.3 As defined, the Area falls within the boundary of Wakefield District Council, within West Yorkshire.

3. OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The objectives of the Forum are to promote and improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of Wrenthorpe Neighbourhood Area (Consideration has been given to the issues which could arise in respect of Paragraph 033 of NPPG Neighbourhood Planning guidance).
- 3.2 The Forum will seek to achieve this by:
 - Actively encouraging all Members to participate fully in the activities of the Forum for the promotion and improvement of the Area;
 - Encouraging the goodwill and involvement of the wider community;
 - Fostering community spirit and encouraging civic pride;
 - Preparing a Neighbourhood Plan in partnership with the Local Planning Authority which will set out the Forum’s policies for use of the land in the Area or, in partnership with other Forums, Parish Council’s or planning authorities of the wider

area, taking into account the need to balance the different concerns of the people who live and work in the Area and the powers and resources of the Local Authority in relation to planning matters;

- Promoting high standards of town planning in the Area;
- Providing a forum for the discussion of issues that may affect the Area as well as ideas that may enhance it, such as transport planning, management of streets, health, local public services, local businesses and open spaces;
- Supporting projects that are of benefit to the Area;
- Considering proposals by public or private sector bodies likely to have a significant impact on the social, economic and environmental well-being of the Area;
- Securing the preservation, conservation, development and improvement of features of general public amenity or of historic or public interest in the Area;
- Monitoring and expressing views on any issues of planning and development in the Area.

3.3 The Forum recognises that members may belong to different political parties but shall conduct all business in a non-partisan political manner and ensure, through the direction of the Management Committee that meetings are conducted in this manner and that members observe this stricture in their own conduct in meetings.

3.4 The Forum members should represent views which accord with the Forum's objectives as opposed to personal or political objectives and identify any such personal interest which they could be perceived as motive for bias, particularly, but not entirely, a financial or commercial interest.

4. POWERS

In furtherance of the objectives, but not otherwise, the Forum, through the Management Committee shall have the following powers:

- Promote the health and social, economic and environmental well-being of the residents of the area and to work together as residents, irrespective of age, gender, ethnicity, religion or political view;
- Promote sustainable development, environmental improvement and conservation by educating, encouraging and assisting the local population in environmental practice, working in partnership with similar groups and organisations;
- To support sustainable development; in line with the Local Development Framework and any replacement Local Plan;
- The WNF will work to influence policies within the Councils Local Plan to support the improvement and further development within the Area of the present social, cultural and meeting places so that they increasingly become places where residents and visitors can go to engage with people in our community generating a variety of reasons to visit;
- To promote and support measures to provide the necessary transport links to improve the sustainability of the Area and the interests of all residents;
- To promote and support the development of abandoned sites and buildings for the community benefit;
- To promote and support the improvement of the aesthetic environment in all its forms;

- To make surveys and prepare maps and plans and collect information in relation to any place, building, park, or historic interest within the area of benefit;
- To promote research and to publish the results of any such research and to publish and distribute papers, reports and other literature;
- Invite and receive contributions and raise funds where appropriate to finance the work of the Forum, and to open a bank account to manage such funds;
- Publicise and promote the work of the Forum and organise meetings, training courses, events or seminars etc;
- To develop and maintain an up to date, attractive and informative website and to develop any method which enhances communication with members, adjacent community organisations and the wider media where appropriate in furtherance of the above objectives;
- Work with groups of a similar nature (Wrenthorpe Environmental Society, Wrenthorpe Community Association) and exchange information, advice and knowledge with them;
- Employ staff and volunteers as are necessary, to conduct activities to meet the objectives;
- Take any form of action that is lawful which is necessary to achieve the objectives including entering into any contracts which it may see fit;

It is noted that a designated Neighbourhood Forum would only be able to interact with the local authority as a consultee on planning applications, subject to the Councils regulations regarding this. The forum would wish to actively co-operate with the local authority, planning and highway committee, sanitary, drainage, environmental and all other local and statutory authorities.

It is understood that the Council's Planning & Highways Committee will be responsible for making decisions regarding the designation of the NA and NF. Planning applications may be determined at the Planning and Highway Committee or under delegated powers using relevant policies in any future "made" Wrenthorpe Neighbourhood Plan.

5. MEMBERSHIP

- 5.1 The Wrenthorpe Neighbourhood Forum will comprise of at least 23 individuals, aged 18 or over, who live or work in the Wrenthorpe Neighbourhood Area. Elected Members serving on the Council's Planning & Highways Committee are not eligible to form part of the Forum as this could be construed as a "conflict of interest" once the Neighbourhood Plan is made.
- 5.2 Members shall be accepted by the Forum, resignations from membership shall be received by the Forum. Where a member resigns from the Forum, they will need to be replaced if the number of members drops below 23 no action is required if the Forum maintains 23 or more members.
- 5.3 Membership will begin as soon as the membership form has been completed and returned.
- 5.4 A list of members will be kept by the Secretary.
- 5.5 Members may resign at any time in writing to the Secretary.

- 5.6 Offensive behaviour, including racist, sexist or inflammatory remarks will not be permitted. Anyone behaving in an offensive way may be asked not to attend further meetings or resign from the group.
- 5.7 The Wrenthorpe Neighbourhood Forum will not discriminate on grounds of gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sexuality, disability, religious or political belief, marital status or age.
- 5.8 The Wrenthorpe Neighbourhood Forum recognises that there may be residents outside of our Neighbourhood Forum Area who would have a valuable impact on our planning processes and would like to be kept up to date with developments.
- 5.9 A record of supporters will be maintained and any updates shared with them. They will also be welcome to join any social media groups for the group.
- 5.10 At times, supporters may be asked to attend committee meetings or working groups where their expertise may be beneficial, however, they are not able to vote at AGM's or any other meeting.

6. OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

- 6.1 The business of the Forum will be managed by a Management Committee. The Committee will consist of a minimum of 5 members and at most 12 members.
- 6.2 Special roles within the Management Committee will be as follows:
 - Chair
 - Vice Chair
 - Secretary
 - Communications Secretary
 - Treasurer
- 6.3 The officers of the Committee shall be elected by the members.
- 6.4 In the event of an officer standing down during the year, a replacement will be elected by the next General Meeting of members.
- 6.5 Any committee member not attending a meeting without apology for 3 months will be contacted by the Committee and asked if they wish to resign.
- 6.6 The officer's roles are as follows:
 - Chair – who shall chair both General and Committee meetings
 - Vice Chair – who shall deputise for the Chair
 - Secretary – who shall be responsible for the taking of minutes, maintaining membership and the distribution of papers
 - Communications Secretary – shall help and assist the Secretary with all matters of communications received or sent by the Forum
 - Treasurer - who shall be responsible for overseeing accounts

- 6.7 The Committee has the power to co-opt up to 7 additional members so the maximum number the Management Committee could comprise would be 12 persons to ensure maximum feasible representativeness of the people who live and/or work in the Area.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 7.1 The overall management of the business of the Forum.
- 7.2 Agreeing and ensuring the implementation of the Communications and Community Engagement Strategy.
- 7.3 Co-ordinating the work of the Working Groups (Working Groups are referred to in more detail in Section 9).
- 7.4 Drafting, agreeing and promoting the implementation of the Wrenthorpe Neighbourhood Plan.

8. MEETINGS

- 8.1 The Committee will normally meet monthly, using a variety of venues across the area to discuss actions and monitor progress to date, and to consider future developments.
- 8.2 Agenda Papers and Minutes will be posted on the Wrenthorpe Neighbourhood Forum website and will be available in printed format on request.
- 8.3 The quorum for the Committee will be 4 members.
- 8.4 It shall be the responsibility of the Chairperson to chair all meetings or appoint a designated deputy in his/ her absence. All meetings shall be minuted.
- 8.5 An Annual General Meeting shall be held on the 1st anniversary of the inaugural Meeting and every subsequent year that the Neighbourhood Forum is in existence.

9. WORKING GROUPS

- 9.1 The Working Groups and their Leaders are established by the Management Committee.
- 9.2 A Working Group will comprise a minimum of 2 people from the Forum area.
- 9.3 Working groups develop the working arrangements to which suit them best and meet as required to investigate and discuss the issues assigned to them.
- 9.4 The Leader or Deputy Leader reports to the Forum Management Committee normally once per month.

10. FINANCE

- 10.1 Accounts for Wrenthorpe Neighbourhood Forum will be managed through Wrenthorpe Community Association Ltd (WCA) who will act as the Local Trusted organisation. The Treasurer of WNF will oversee the accounts in conjunction with the Treasurer of WCA.
- 10.2 Records of income and expenditure will be maintained by the Treasurer and a financial statement given to each meeting.

- 10.3 The money raised by or on behalf of the Wrenthorpe Neighbourhood Forum is only to be used to further the aims of the group, as specified in Section 3 of this Constitution.
- 10.4 Officers and members of the Management Committee and other committees shall not be liable for any loss suffered by the Forum as a result of the discharge of their respective duties on its behalf, except such as arise from their own respective wilful default, and they shall be entitled to an indemnity out of the funds of the Forum against the expense incurred by them in discharge of such duties. The Forum shall seek insurance cover, or other provision through the local Authority, to protect its members and officers from any action which may arise from the legitimate exercise of the functions of the Forum.

11. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

- 11.1 Amendments to the Constitution may only be made at the Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting.
- 11.2 Any proposal to amend the constitution must be given to the Secretary in writing. The proposal must then be circulated with the notice of the meeting.
- 11.3 Any proposal to amend the constitution will require a two thirds majority of those present and entitled to vote.
- 11.4 The council will be given the opportunity to comment on any proposed amendments to the WNF constitution, in line with its statutory obligations regarding neighbourhood planning.

12. DISSOLUTION

- 12.1 If a meeting of the Committee, by simple majority, decides that it is necessary to close down the Forum, it may call a Special General Meeting to do so. The sole business of this meeting will be to dissolve the group.
- 12.2 If it is agreed to dissolve the group, all remaining money and other assets, once outstanding debts have been paid, will be donated to the Community Groups in order to benefit the Wrenthorpe Neighbourhood. The group / organisation(s) to receive the donation will be agreed at the meeting held to agree the dissolution.
- 12.3 Any decision to dissolve the WNF following designation will be communicated to the Council, as it has statutory obligations following such a decision, as set out in regulation 12 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

13. FORUM DURATION

- 13.1 The WNF designation will only have effect for a five year period, starting on the date it is designated by the Council in line with Statutory requirement, set out in part (a) of section 61F(8) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). . After this period re-designation of the Neighbourhood Forum would be required to continue preparing a Neighbourhood Plan.