

**Bowers Gifford &
North Benfleet
Residents' Association**

Constitution

Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet Residents Association /Committee

1. NAME

The name of our organisation will be Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet Residents Association (until such time as a formal committee is in place after the elections of 3rd October 2012).

2. AIMS & OBJECTIVES.

The aims and objectives of the organisation will be:

To enable local people within the boundary of Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet, as designated, to participate in local issues which affect their neighbourhood and to endeavour to improve the quality of life for residents.

- To represent and promote the interests of all the residents living in our area.
- To strengthen and promote community engagement and resident participation.
- To promote work for improvements to local services and the local environment.
- To foster a community spirit within the designated area and work together to promote community cohesion.
- To engage effectively with other agencies to achieve the groups aims and objectives.
- The organisation will promote any charitable aim to further the above objectives and aims

3. MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet Residents Association shall be open to all residents living in Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet Parish Council area. **Associate membership can be granted with permission of the Committee/Association if appropriate to do so.**

All members shall have voting rights on all issues raised at meetings.

Annual subscriptions will be free to residents who live within the Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet boundaries.

4. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

This organisation will enable everyone in the area regardless of age, disability race, gender, or ethnicity, to try and overcome any obstacles to people giving their views or getting involved in meetings and events. The organisation will try to make sure that everyone can feel welcome and safe at events organised by the Association /Committee. The organisation will challenge any remarks or behaviour that cause offence and make some people feel unwelcome. The Association /Committee will take positive action to reach those people that are under-represented at meetings and events and will ensure that all members have equal opportunities to participate.

5. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Association/ Committee will be run by a committee elected at an Annual General Meeting.

The Committee will be made up of a Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and 6 ordinary members.

If vacancies occur among the association/committee between Annual General Meetings, the Committee shall have the power to fill those vacancies except where three or more vacancies occur at the same time in which case a Special General Meeting, advertised for that purpose, must be called.

Committee members who miss more than three consecutive meetings without giving reasonable apologies may be asked to resign their post. A member of the committee may be removed or suspended from their post if they bring the good name of the Association /Committee into disrepute. A full meeting of the committee will be called to consider evidence from all sides and a majority vote will be necessary to remove or suspend.

The Committee will have power to co-opt members with skills and knowledge useful to the organisation, who can advise and support the Committee. Co-opted members of the Committee can take part but will have no voting rights at Committee meeting and should not hold officer posts or represent the association at meetings or events.

6. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Committee will call an Annual General Meeting (AGM) in October of each year. Written notice of the meeting must be sent at least seven days in advance to every household and members should be made aware that they

will have the opportunity to make nominations for election or stand for election themselves and to vote for the officers and committee at the meeting.

- i. The minutes of the previous AGM will be presented and approved.
- ii. The existing committee will present a report of the group's activities.
- iii. The existing treasurer will present audited accounts for the year.
- iv. Any amendments to the constitution will be voted on.
- v. The existing committee will stand down.
- vi. The committee for the next year will be elected.

Nominations for officers and committee will be accepted only if the person nominated is present at the Annual General Meeting or has put in writing that they wish to stand.

If there is nobody willing to stand, the Association /Committee will decide whether to start procedures to close the organisation down. Alternatively the committee can continue in office to try and redevelop the organisation for up to six months. It is the responsibility of the committee to recruit a new committee or formally dissolve the organisation within that period.

7. SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

The Association / Committee may, at any time, call a Special Meeting of the organisation, giving at least 7 days written notice to all members, to consider any matter that the Committee may decide should be referred to all members.

A Special Meeting of the Association /Committee can also be called by 10 or more residents who must request this in writing, in the form of a letter, to the Association /Committee Secretary, and must be signed by 10 people from different addresses and different families. The Association /Committee will ensure that the meeting is held within 28 days and that all households are given prior notice of the meeting.

8. MEETINGS

This organisation will be democratic and open to all within the designated boundaries. The committee will hold at least 3 meetings in order to involve all members and hear their views.

At least 5 members of the committee have to be present to make a decision on behalf of the organisation. All members of the committee should be consulted on the dates and venues of meetings. The committee will try to work by general agreement but where this is not possible decisions a majority vote will be taken.

Minutes will be kept of all meetings of the Association /Committee. The minutes will be presented at the next meeting of the Association /Committee

to be approved. The minutes should be made available to any member on request.

All members of the Association /Committee will be expected to treat each other with respect and act in a reasonable manner at events organised by the Association /Committee. The Chair may ask members to leave if their behaviour is disruptive or offensive.

9. FINANCE

The Association /Committee can raise money on behalf of the organisation as they see fit, as long as they spend it in line with the aims and objectives of the Association /Committee.

The elected Treasurer shall keep accurate records of the finances of the organisation and open a bank account in the name of the organisation. The committee will nominate at least three people who can sign cheques. These people must not live in the same household or be close family members. Each cheque will require two authorised signatories.

The accounts will be audited annually and the audited accounts presented at the Annual General Meeting.

The Treasurer should keep receipts for all money paid out in expenses to committee members for duties carried out on behalf of the group.

10. ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

This constitution may only be amended at an Annual General Meeting or at a Special General Meeting. Any proposal to alter the Constitution should be sent to the Secretary at least 14 days before the meeting. Notice of the proposal to alter the constitution should be included in the publicity for the meeting. Any alteration to this constitution requires a two-thirds majority of those present and voting.

11. DISSOLUTION

The association may only be dissolved at a public meeting called for that purpose and publicised to all households. All members have to be informed that a decision about the future of the Association /Committee will be on the agenda.

A proposal to dissolve the organisation must be carried by two thirds of the members present or if the organisation is unable to form a committee. All outstanding bills will be paid and the balance of any grants from funding bodies will be held in trust by Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet Parish Council. Any assets remaining after the payment of all debts and liabilities will be applied towards the charitable benefit of the residents of the area as the Committee may decide subject to the approval of the meeting to dissolve the Association /Committee.

The Constitution will be considered and where appropriate, modified by the elected officers of Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet Residents Association /Committee at the first committee meeting of the Bowers Gifford & North Benfleet Residents Association held after the elections of 3rd October 2012

Signed Chairperson

Signed Secretary

This Constitution should be kept on file and made available to members on request.

Date: