

NEW FOREST DOG OWNERS GROUP CONSTITUTION

1. NAME - The name of the Group shall be "New Forest Dog Owners Group" ("The Group").

2. OBJECTIVES – The Objectives of The Group shall be to promote responsible dog ownership in the New Forest area, to work to help ensure the freedom of dog owners to exercise their dogs off lead in the New Forest, to promote the welfare of dogs and to raise such funds as the Committee shall from time to time deem appropriate to support the aforementioned objectives.

3. MEMBERSHIP

3.1. Membership shall be open to users of the New Forest who support the Objectives and undertake to support The Group in a peaceful manner. There shall be two categories of membership, annual membership by renewable subscription and life membership by a single payment.

3.2 Those wishing to become members may apply using the NFDog membership application form to the Committee who will consider and, if thought fit, approve the application. The Committee may delegate the approval of applications to the Membership Secretary.

3.3 Members may be expelled from The Group by the Committee if they bring The Group into disrepute or fail to observe the objectives of the Constitution.

4. FINANCIAL YEAR

4.1 The Financial Year shall run from 1 June to 31 May.

4.2 Annual accounts shall be produced by the Treasurer and verified by a suitably qualified person not holding office on the Committee.

4.3 The annual accounts shall be made available at the Annual General Meeting in accordance with Clause 9 and may be obtained from the Treasurer by request accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.

5. SUBSCRIPTION and INCOME

5.1 Prior to the start of each Financial Year, the Committee will determine the membership fees payable for that year and will advise members of the fee due.

5.2 For members joining after 1 January the Committee shall have discretion to extend the current year's subscription to the following financial year. For existing members, the membership fee for any subsequent year becomes payable on 1 June of that year.

5.3 Donations are welcome. Funds may be raised by collection and the sale of goods as and when the Committee deem appropriate.

5.4 Any excess of income over expenditure received by The Group in any one year shall be placed in a reserve fund.

6. MANAGEMENT OF THE GROUP

6.1 The management of the Group shall be in the hands of the Committee. The Officers of the Committee, all being honorary, shall comprise Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary and such other paid-up members of The Group as shall be elected from time to time by existing members of the Committee. Receipted expenses incurred by the Committee members for Group management will be reimbursed if approved by a majority of the Committee when presented at a Committee meeting. The committee may delegate this responsibility to the Treasurer.

6.2 The Chairman may appoint a Deputy Chairman to support the duties of the Chairman if and when he/she sees fit.

6.3 The Deputy Chairman shall hold the powers of the Chairman in his/her absence from any meeting of the Committee.

6.4 Subject to Clause 7 below, all decisions of the Committee which are put to the vote shall be by simple majority. Where there is a tied vote, the Chairman or his/her Deputy shall have the casting vote.

6.5 A quorum shall require 4 Committee Members at least one of whom must be the Chairman or, in the absence of the Chairman, a Committee Member appointed by the Chairman for that purpose.

6.6 A resolution shall be put to the Committee in writing. The Committee may elect to hold a meeting to vote on the issue or it may conduct the vote via email or a combination of the two. The Chairman will set out the procedure and timescale for the process providing for a minimum notice period of 7 days between the sending of the resolution and closure of voting on it.

7. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE

7.1 The offices of Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Membership Secretary shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting ("AGM") and shall hold office for a term of four years. Each year, at the AGM, the longest serving Officer shall retire. He/she shall be eligible for re-election.

7.2 An Officer may retire at any time within his/her 4 year term of office. If this happens, members of the Committee may appoint a replacement officer on a casual basis to fill the place of a retiring officer until the next AGM. Officers appointed to fill a casual vacancy will be entitled to stand for election at the next AGM if they wish to continue to hold office.

7.3 The Committee reserves the right to expel any member of the Committee at any time. Any such expulsion by the Committee shall be by vote of the Committee and shall require a two-thirds majority of the whole Committee.

8. PRESIDENT

8.1 The Committee may, at its option, offer a retiring Chairman the post of Honorary President. The post may be offered for life or for a finite period of years.

8.2 The President shall be entitled to attend meetings of the Committee but shall not be entitled to vote.

9. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ("AGM")

9.1 The Group shall hold an AGM for all members. The date and time for the meeting will be determined by the Committee. The Committee shall give members at least 21 days' notice of the date and time of the AGM.

9.2 The purpose of the Meeting shall be for the Treasurer to report the verified annual accounts to the members and for the election of any retiring Officer and/or newly appointed officer as provided in Clause 7. The Meeting may also be used for members to discuss any other business, as appropriate, relating to The Group.

10. SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING ("SGM") AND PUBLIC MEETINGS

10.1 The Committee may at any time, upon giving twenty one days' notice in writing, call a SGM of the Group for any special business, the nature of which shall be stated in the notice convening the meeting, and the discussion at such meeting shall be confined to the business stated in the notice sent to members.

10.2 The Committee shall call a SGM upon request in writing supported by at least fifty members of the Group, the signatures of support to be sent to the Membership Secretary. The SGM must be called within twenty one days of a request. The Committee shall give twenty one days' notice in writing of any such SGM.

10.3 A notice and statement of the business to be transacted at the SGM shall be advertised by circulation to members and/or by an advertisement in at least one paper local to the New Forest not less than twenty one days before the date of such meetings.

10.4 No decision shall be taken at any such SGM except on business clearly identified in the notice and statement referred to in Clause 10.1 and except by vote requiring a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at the Meeting.

10.5 A Public Meeting may be called at the discretion of the Committee.

11. GROUP ASSETS

11.1 The Officers shall in all respects act, in regard to any assets of the Group held by them, in accordance with the directions of the Committee.

12. CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES

12.1 No constitution rule shall be deleted or amended and no new rule made, except by a two thirds majority of Group members present and voting at a SGM or AGM.

12.2 Notice of any such intention shall be advised in writing by the Group Secretary at least 28 days prior to the date of such Meeting.

12.3 Any matters not provided for in this Constitution shall be dealt with by the Committee whose decision shall be final and binding on all members of the Group.

13. DISSOLUTION

13.1 The Group may be dissolved at any time by a resolution passed by not less than three-quarters of those Group members present and voting either in person or by proxy at a SGM called for that purpose. A minimum of 28 days' notice shall be given to members for such a resolution. Such resolution shall also provide information on the dissolution process with a target date for completion. A system for lodging proxy votes will be described in the notice calling the meeting. Up to date accounts will be presented to the meeting.

13.2 If The Group approves dissolution, the next step in the process will be for The Group to discharge all liabilities before donating any remaining funds to one or more organizations to benefit dogs and chosen by the Committee.

13.3 No member of The Group shall be entitled to any payment in respect of his or her membership of The Group at the time of dissolution.

13.4 No member of the committee shall be entitled to any payment in respect of his or her work for The Group, except for any proven expenses incurred.

13.5 Upon satisfaction of all debts and transfer of funds The Group may then be fully dissolved.