

THE HIGHGATE NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM
CONSTITUTION
amended by the AGM on May 23rd 2013

1 Purpose and Objects

1.1 The Highgate Neighbourhood Forum ('HNF') is a neighbourhood forum as defined in the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011 ('the Act').

1.2 The purpose of HNF is to further the social, economic and environmental well-being of the Highgate Area as defined in section 2 below ('the Area') by acting for the Area under the provisions of the Act.

1.3 HNF membership will be open to residents living in the Area, individuals working or carrying on business in the Area, local representative groups and Borough Councillors representing all or part of the Area. HNF will aim for as wide a representation of communities in the area as possible. Membership and organisation of HNF are set out in section 3 below.

1.4 HNF will monitor development management policy and its application in the Area and will produce and maintain a Neighbourhood Development Plan as defined in section 4 below.

1.5 HNF may initiate Neighbourhood Development Orders or Community Right to Build Orders, identify Assets of Community Value, or carry out any other permitted actions.

1.6 HNF will act in accordance with General Policies and Principles set out in section 5 below.

2 The Highgate Neighbourhood Area ('the Area')

2.1 The Area shall be the area shown in the map in Appendix 1 and may be changed by the Forum Committee as it considers necessary from time to time.

2.2 The Area is the developed residential and business part of the area which local people traditionally consider to be 'Highgate'.

2.3 As defined, the Area falls within the boundaries of two London Boroughs, Camden and Haringey.

3 Membership and Organisation

Membership

3.1 Membership of HNF is open to:

- residents living in the Area, either as individual members or via representative bodies such as those outlined below;
- local businesses and individuals who work in the Area;
- Highgate Ward Councillors from both London Boroughs.

3.2 Affiliate membership (non voting) is open to:

- representative Residents' Associations, friends' groups, and amenity societies and associations, collectively described herein as 'Organisations'. Affiliated organisations are listed on the HNF web site. This list will be updated from time to time as necessary;
- the Conservation Area Advisory Committee[s] (CAAC).

Forum Committee

3.3 A Committee comprising up to 15 members will be elected at each AGM to carry out the day-to-day work of the Forum. The quorum for the Committee will be 7 members.

3.4 The Committee will elect the following officers of the Forum from its number: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. Officers will serve for one year and be subject to re-election, and there will be no limit to the number of terms an officer may serve. The Chair (or the Vice Chair when acting as Chair) will have a casting vote at any Committee or General Meeting.

3.5 The Committee will direct and oversee the work of the Forum and will meet at least quarterly for this purpose.

3.6 Subcommittees or working parties may be appointed by the Committee to carry out specific tasks, to consider policies and to advise the Committee. Such bodies may be appointed from within or outside the membership of the Forum but will be responsible to the Committee.

3.7 The Committee may co-opt up to three additional members to the Committee in any year, and may also co-opt an appropriate replacement for any Committee Member who stands down for any reason during the year. Co-opted members will have the same voting rights as other Committee members. A co-opted member may be elected as an officer. The Committee may remove from the Committee any Member who fails to attend two consecutive meetings of the Committee without good reason.

3.8 Councillors representing the Highgate Wards in both Boroughs will be invited to all Committee meetings and will have the same voting rights as other Committee members.

3.9 The Secretary will make minutes of General and Committee Meetings available to the members of the Forum within three weeks of the meeting unless impracticable. Organisations which are affiliated to HNF will be encouraged to communicate such information to their membership.

Meetings

3.10 Annual General Meetings will be held in May or as close to such date as practicable. An Extraordinary General Meeting may be called by decision of the Committee or by 30 members of the Forum applying to the Secretary. For all General Meetings, a notice of the meeting and details of any resolutions to be put to it will be sent to all Forum members at least 21 days before the meeting.

3.11 At any General Meeting each member present will have one vote. Where practicable, arrangements will be made to enable members unable to attend to appoint a proxy. Decisions of General Meetings will be by simple majority except in the cases set out in section 6 below. The quorum for a General Meeting shall be 30 members.

Notices

3.12 Notices to members will be deemed delivered if sent to the member's last notified email address, or (where no email address is given) sent by post to the last notified address.

Finance

3.13 The Forum will have the power to raise funds as necessary for its activities, by grant, donation or any other appropriate means.

3.14 The Committee will open one or more bank accounts as necessary in the name of the Forum. All funds raised for the Forum will be held in such accounts. The Committee will nominate bank signatories.

3.15 The Committee will where necessary insure any assets it holds, and by insurance or otherwise indemnify its officers against liabilities arising from their work for the Forum.

3.16 Subject to funding, the Committee may commission advisory services, surveys or any other activity in support of the Objects.

Declaration of Interests

3.17 The Secretary will keep a Register of Committee Members' Interests detailing any financial interests in the Area or any other interest which could be deemed to have an influence on decisions likely to come before the Committee. Members will abstain from voting on any matter in which they have a financial interest.

3.18 Any participant in any meeting of the Forum, including committees, subcommittees and working parties, will disclose to the meeting any financial interest he/she has in any topic under discussion, and will not discuss or vote on such topic except with the express approval of the meeting.

4 Neighbourhood Development Plan

4.1 The Highgate Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) will set out policies for the development and use of land within the Area. As provided for in the Act, it will be subject to extensive consultation and examination, including where appropriate a referendum within the Area.

4.2 The NDP will include, where appropriate, specific policies for identified parts of the Area, including conservation policies. In a Conservation Area, conservation policies will be agreed with the relevant CAAC.

4.3 The NDP will aim to:

- complement the Local Development Frameworks and Conservation Area Appraisals as produced by the relevant Planning Authorities to ensure that all development is sympathetic to the character of the Area;
- identify locations for potential sensitive development that will, within the Local Development Frameworks, include affordable housing, retail, business and community use;
- express aspirations for the future development of traffic and transport serving or passing through the Area;
- provide for the preservation and improvement of private and public open space;
- nominate Assets of Community Value for listing by the appropriate local authority;
- set a framework for the retail and business improvement of the Area;
- guide the Planning and Highway Authorities towards improvements in the public realm;
- pay due attention to sustainability and carbon reduction;
- pay due attention to the surface and underground water environment, flood and pollution risks and soil stability.

4.4 The NDP will include policies aimed at generating employment in the Area and promoting business activity, including retail. It will aim to promote a good range of shops in the community with particular emphasis on encouraging smaller enterprises.

5 General Policies and Principles

5.1 HNF will take the distinctive character and heritage of Highgate into account in all its actions, and will aim to ensure that all development in the Area preserves or enhances this character.

5.2 HNF will aim to promote Highgate as a vibrant business and residential community with an improved public realm.

5.3 HNF will aim for improvements in the local environment including those directed towards carbon reduction.

5.4 HNF will generally support actions aimed at generating employment in the Area.

5.5 HNF will promote policies to maximise social benefit, community links, services for young people, crime reduction and support for elderly and vulnerable members of the community.

5.6 HNF will operate respecting all differences including gender, age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability and income.

5.7 HNF will encourage all interested residents and all representative groupings of residents or businesses in the Area to become members of HNF and to work alongside HNF to further their joint objectives.

6 Amendments and Dissolution

6.1 Amendments to the body of this Constitution will be by decision of a General Meeting carried out in accordance with 3.10 and 3.11 above, with the exception that such a vote will only be carried if supported by 75% or more of those voting.

6.2 HNF may be dissolved by decision of a General Meeting specifically called for this purpose and carried out in accordance with 3.10 and 3.11 above, with the exception that such a vote will only be carried if supported by 75% or more of those voting.

6.3 In the event of dissolution, any property or funds held by HNF will be

- subject to the agreement of the Members at General Meeting, allocated to one or more nominated organisations set up to continue the work of HNF, or
- in the absence of any such organisation and subject to any statutory regulations, distributed equally to the constituent local organisations who are its members (but not to individual members).

6.4 In accordance with the Act, a formal review of the functions and achievements of HNF will be carried out five years after its formation. Following such review, and consultation with its members, HNF will decide to continue, amend or dissolve itself as considered appropriate.

Appendix 1

Map of proposed Highgate Neighbourhood Forum Area

last updated July 12, 2012: for future updates see
<http://www.highgateneighbourhoodforum.org.uk/Area.html>

