

THE CONSTITUTION of NOTTING HILL EAST NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

Notting Hill East Neighbourhood Forum (“The Forum”) was established by the amenity society The Westbourne Neighbourhood Association (“The WNA”) to assist in promoting and enhancing the social, economic and environmental well-being of the residents and businesses in the area defined below (“The Area”) primarily through the development and implementation of a Neighbourhood Plan (“The Plan”), and as appropriate neighbourhood development orders and to raise, discuss and resolve neighbourhood issues.

The Area is not governed by a Parish Council.

Name and Area

The name of the forum is The Notting Hill East Neighbourhood Forum. The Area, as outlined on the attached Forum map, is the area previously within the scope of the WNA. It is bordered by Westbourne Park Road to the North, Westbourne Grove to the South, the East side of Ledbury Road to the West, and the West side of Hereford Road to the East. For the avoidance of doubt, the defining description of the area is that of the Forum map.

Objectives

The Notting Hill East Neighbourhood Forum is a group established for the public benefit for the following purposes:

- a. To produce a Neighbourhood Plan to assist in the promotion and enhancement of the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of The Area, its residents and businesses.
- b. To promote the highest standards of urban design and architecture in The Area.
- c. To develop the Neighbourhood Plan in conformity with the strategic planning policies of Westminster City Council (“the Council”) insofar as they are relevant to The Area.
- d. To promote and enhance community cohesion and wellbeing.

The Forum reserves the right to undertake any activities permitted by the relevant neighbourhood planning provisions of the Localism Act 2011.

The Forum is a non-political organisation which aims to benefit both residents and businesses by co-operation with all statutory bodies and all other appropriate organisations on issues of local concern, including improvements to The Area and its environment, its appearance and its amenities.

Where appropriate, The Forum will consult with adjoining forums and other key business stakeholders, such as Business Improvement Districts, on decisions concerning shared issues, including improvements to The Area and the adjoining districts and their environment, appearance and amenities.

The Forum will work with other community groups and bodies within The Area to enable open discussion on issues of concern to the local neighbourhood.

The Forum is independently led by local volunteers to provide good community intelligence, which is to be used by the Council and its partners to shape, refine and improve services to residents, business and visitors in The Area.

The Forum will help to support wider consultation and be informed of council decision-making through regular contact with Westminster City Councillors, Westminster Amenity Society Forum and the London Forum.

The Forum will liaise with the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, and the appropriate adjoining neighbourhood forum in Kensington and Chelsea, to attempt to form a joint group with the aim of improving the junction at “Chepstow Corner”, that of Chepstow Road, Westbourne Grove, Chepstow Place and Pembridge Villas, a junction with “borderline status” for both Westminster and K&C.

The Forum may adopt a broad range of activities and approaches to ensure accessibility and relevance. It will work to ensure that timely responses are received on identified issues and priorities.

Membership

Membership shall be open to everyone with an interest in The Area, including residents, owners of businesses of all sizes, workers, and those aspiring to live in The Area who support the purpose of The Notting Hill East Neighbourhood Forum and complete a membership form.

The Forum membership will be representative of the whole community, with an appropriate balance between residents and businesses.

The Forum shall be constituted of 21 or more individuals, community or business representatives, who live or work in the Area.

Membership is also open to individuals who are elected members of the Council.

Neighbourhood Forum Structure

The Forum welcomes observers from interested stakeholder groups, including all statutory bodies and other appropriate organisations, none of whom will be entitled to vote unless they fulfil the requirements of membership set out above.

The Forum shall normally meet twice a year. One meeting will be deemed the Annual General Meeting.

At least 21 day’s notification must be given to members for a meeting to be held. At least eight members must be present at the start of the meeting for it to be declared quorate.

All members shall be entitled to attend the meetings to propose and, subject to the clause below, to vote for motions.

Each business and non-resident member registered in the Area shall have one vote, regardless of the number of employees who are members.

Residential members, including those who also work in the area, shall have one vote.

Members of the Forum must declare any potential conflict of interest before debating, and potentially voting on, any matter. By majority vote of the Steering Group, an individual may be asked not to participate in the said debate or vote.

The default method of Forum correspondence shall be by email.

Composition of the Steering Group

The Forum will have a Steering Group which will manage The Forum. The Steering Group shall be comprised of nine members of the Neighbourhood Forum including the Chairman, all of whom shall volunteer. As far as practicable, the Steering Group will be composed and be representative of the Area's residential and business community.

All members shall be entitled to stand for the annual election to the Steering Group. Voting shall take place only if a quorum is present and shall be by a show of hands in the first instance. The individuals receiving the highest proportion of votes shall be elected to the Steering Group.

The Steering Group shall elect its own officers, including a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary.

The Forum members may:

- Receive and comment on the report from the Steering Group.
- Approve the annual report and accounts, where relevant.
- Adopt constitutional amendments.

Meetings of the Steering Group

The Steering Group shall meet as often as is necessary, but no less than quarterly, to develop the Neighbourhood Plan and for any other purposes the Forum shall determine. If vacancies occur the Steering Group can co-opt new members subject to the endorsement of the Forum at the next meeting.

The Steering Group may delegate powers on specific matters to such persons as might be deemed appropriate, including administrative support from a third party.

All Steering Group decisions must be agreed by a quorum of the Steering Group's members who are present or in communication via conference call or proxy. A quorum will be four members, plus the Chairman.

The Chairman of the Steering Group shall:

- Call and Chair meetings of the Steering Group.
- Have a casting vote on elections and resolutions in the event of a tie.
- Act on behalf of The Notting Hill East Neighbourhood Forum and represent it externally.
- Interpret the constitution. The Chairmans' interpretation may only be overturned by more than four of the Steering Group's members.
- Act as joint signatory on the The Notting Hill East Neighbourhood Forum bank account alongside the Secretary and Treasurer.

The Vice Chairman shall:

- Chair the meeting if the Chairman is absent.
- Act alongside the Chairman on behalf of the The Notting Hill East Neighbourhood Forum and represent it externally when the Chairman is unavailable.
- Assume the Chairman's responsibilities if the Chairman resigns until which time a new Chairman can be appointed.
- Assist the Chairman with interpreting the constitution.
- Act as joint signatory on the The Notting Hill East Neighbourhood Forum bank account alongside the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer.

The Secretary shall:

- Be responsible for organising meetings, maintaining the minutes and Constitution of the The Notting Hill East Neighbourhood Forum and making them available to members within 21 days of a meeting.
- Chair the meeting if the Chairman and Vice Chairman are absent.
- Act as joint signatory on the The Notting Hill East Neighbourhood Forum bank account alongside the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Treasurer.

The Treasurer shall:

- Be responsible for maintaining the accounts of The Notting Hill East Neighbourhood Forum.
- Be responsible for presenting an annual budget for the following year to the Forum.
- Submit a detailed summary of the accounts at every Steering Group meeting.
- Act as a joint signatory on the The Notting Hill East Neighbourhood Forum bank account alongside the Chairman, Vice Chairman and the Secretary.
- Chair the meeting if the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary are absent.
- Take the minutes if the Secretary is absent or acting as the Chairman.

Affiliation and Independence

The Notting Hill East Neighbourhood Forum shall not be affiliated to any political party or organisation.

Governance and Operation

All members of the Forum shall act in meetings of the Forum, and as appropriate the Steering Group, in the best interests of the Forum and the residents of the area and shall follow the good governance guidance, available at <http://www.governancecode.org>.

The Forum shall act in accordance with best practice in the preparation of neighbourhood plans and in accordance with Government guidance for such preparation and shall seek to work collaboratively with the Local Planning Authority to achieve this.

Cheques and other financial transactions of the Forum require two signatories.

Constitutional amendments shall require a simple majority of Steering Group members present at a quorate meeting (except in order to comply with current legislation) and ratified by two thirds of the Forum at a quorate meeting, provided that 21 days' notice of the proposed amendment has been given to all members.

Dissolution

In the event of the dissolution of the Neighbourhood Forum, any net assets, including monies shall go to local amenity societies, as agreed by the majority of the Forum.

