

The Constitution of the Friends of Harrold-Odell Country Park

Updated July 2013

1. Title

1.1 The Organisation shall be called **The Friends of Harrold-Odell Country Park**, hereafter referred to as “the Organisation”.

2. Aims and Objectives

2.1 To foster and promote the activities of Harrold-Odell Country Park (HOCP) at all levels in providing opportunities for outdoor recreation, wildlife conservation, education and raising public awareness of countryside activities.

2.2 The Friends will seek to achieve its aims by working in partnership; primarily with Bedford Borough Council, Ivel and Ouse Countryside Project, Harrold and Odell Parish Councils.

3. Headquarters

3.1 The main office of the Organisation shall be situated c/o Harrold-Odell Country Park, Carlton Road, Harrold, Bedford, MK43 7DS.

4. Membership

4.1 Membership is free.

4.2. Membership of the organisation shall be open to any person, group or organisation, regardless of race, age, gender, sexual orientation or ability who complete a membership application form and wishes to be associated with HOCP on an informal basis.

5. Officers

5.1 The Officers of the Organisation shall be Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer.

5.2 All officers are elected for a period of one year, but may be re-elected to the same office or another office the following year.

6. Committee

6.1 The affairs of the Organisation shall be controlled by a General committee comprising the Officers and a maximum of two others elected from and by the full members of the Organisation. In addition the Committee may co-opt other members of the staff of HOCP in a non-executive capacity.

6.2 The duties of the Committee shall be:

- 6.2.1 To control the affairs of the Organisation on behalf of the members and in compliance with the Objects stated in 2 above.
- 6.2.2 To keep accurate accounts of the finances of the Organisation through the Treasurer. These accounts should be available for reasonable inspection by the members and should be audited prior to every Annual General Meeting. The Organisation shall maintain a bank current account and the following persons shall be authorised to sign Organisation cheques: Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and two HOCP staff members.
- 6.2.3 To co-opt additional members of the Committee as the Committee feels this is necessary. Co-opted members shall not be entitled to a vote on the Committee.
- 6.2.4 To make decisions on the basis of a simple majority vote. In the case of equal votes, the Chairperson shall be entitled to an additional casting vote.

7. General Meetings

- 7.1 The Annual General Meeting shall be held not later than the end of July each year. 21 clear day's notice shall be given to Members of the Annual General Meeting by posting a copy of the Notice on the Public Notice Board at HOCP on the Friends' website and in the Friends' Newsletter. Members must advise the Secretary, in writing, of any business to be moved at the AGM at least 14 days before a meeting. The Secretary shall make available the Agenda for the AGM not less than 7 days before the meeting.
- 7.2 The business of the Annual General Meeting shall be to:
 - 7.2.1 Confirm the minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting and any General Meetings held since the last Annual General Meeting.
 - 7.2.2 Receive the audited accounts for the year from the Treasurer
 - 7.2.3 Receive the annual report of the Committee from the Chair.
 - 7.2.4 Elect an auditor for the upcoming year.
 - 7.2.5 Elect the Officers of the Organisation i.e. Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer and other General Committee members.
 - 7.2.6 Transact any such other business received in writing by the Secretary from Members 14 days prior to the meeting and included on the Agenda.
- 7.3 Special General Meetings may be convened by the General Committee or on receipt by the Secretary of a request in writing from not less than five full members of the Organisation. At least 21 days notice of the meeting shall be given by the process mentioned in (7.1)

- 7.4 Nomination of candidates for election of Officers shall be made in writing to the Secretary at least 14 days in advance of the Annual General Meeting date. Nominations can only be made by Full Members and must be seconded by another Full Member.
- 7.5 At all General Meetings, the chair will be taken by the Chairperson or, in their absence, by a deputy appointed by the Full Members attending the Meeting.
- 7.6 Decisions made at a General Meeting shall be by simple majority of votes from those Full Members attending the meeting. In the event of equal votes then the Chairperson shall be entitled to an additional casting vote.
- 7.7 A quorum for a General Meeting shall be three Full Members and shall include one from the Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer.
- 7.8 Each Full Member shall be entitled to one vote at General Meetings.

8. Alterations to the Constitution

- 8.1 Any proposed alterations to the Organisation Constitution may only be considered at an Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting convened with the required notice of the proposal. Any alteration or amendment must be proposed by a Full Member and seconded by another Full Member. Such alterations shall be passed if supported by not less than two-thirds of those Full Members present at the meeting, assuming that a quorum has been achieved.

9. Dissolution

- 9.1 If, at any General Meeting of the Organisation, a resolution shall be passed calling for the dissolution of the Organisation, the Secretary shall immediately convene a Special General Meeting of the Organisation to be held not less than one month thereafter to discuss and vote on the resolution.
- 9.2 If, at that Special General Meeting, the resolution is carried by at least a two-thirds majority of the Full Members present, the General Committee shall thereupon, or at such date as shall have been specified in the resolution, proceed to realise the assets of the Organisation and discharge all debts and liabilities of the Organisation.
- 9.3 After discharging all debts and liabilities of the Organisation, the remaining assets shall not be paid or distributed amongst the Full Members of the Organisation, but shall be given or transferred to some other local voluntary organisation having objects similar to those of the Organisation to be dissolved.

10. Competitions

The Committee has the right to locally organise competitions, arbitrate on procedure, rules and prize giving.

Amended by the AGM 25th July 2013