



## **Sussex Neighbourhood Watch Federation**

Registered Charity No. 1059756

### **Constitution No. 8 Adopted on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2012**

#### **1. Definitions**

The name of the Federation shall be **Sussex Neighbourhood Watch Federation**, hereinafter called “the Federation”. The Federation shall be a charitable not for profit organisation, non-party in politics, non-sectarian in religion, operate an equal opportunities and non-discriminatory policy and will embrace diversity.

**Federation Member** shall mean any recognised and authorised Neighbourhood Watch Associations in Sussex, and any recognised and authorised Sussex Neighbourhood Watch Search Teams. Where no Association exists, the Chair may invite potential organisers to attend Federation meetings.

**Authorised Representative** shall mean a Neighbourhood Watch member resident in Sussex who has been appointed by a Federation Member to represent the Federation Member in respect of the Federation’s activities. Up to 2 (two) Authorised Representatives per Federation Member may be nominated. Any recognised Neighbourhood Watch member authorised by the Federation Member concerned and notified in advance to the Federation Chair or Secretary may deputise for that Federation Member’s nominees.

**Executive Officers** shall mean such Neighbourhood Watch members resident in Sussex as are duly elected at an Annual General Meeting to the following Federation positions:

1. Chair,
2. Deputy Chair,
3. Up to 5 (five) Vice Chairs,
4. Secretary,
5. Treasurer,
6. Up to 3 (three) Sales Officers.

In addition, a representative nominated by Sussex Police, or his/her nominated deputy, shall be entitled to attend and speak at meetings of Executive Officers and other Federation meetings, but will not be deemed to be an Executive Officer or permitted to vote on any issue.

## **2. Objectives**

- 2.1. To assist in the creation of Neighbourhood Watch Associations across Sussex, and
- 2.2. to support Neighbourhood Watch Associations across Sussex,

and thereby to promote good citizenship and greater public awareness through Neighbourhood Watch groups, increase public participation in the prevention and detection of crime, reduce the fear of crime, improve police/community liaison and increase community safety, primarily in Sussex, in partnership with recognised Authorities and other relevant organisations.

## **3. Aims and Powers**

The Federation shall do all lawful and prudent things necessary for the attainment of the said Objectives. The Federation, Executive Officers and all members shall comply with all laws and statutory requirements. They shall also follow best effective practice principles and Charity Commission guidance unless there are substantial and justifiable good reasons not to comply.

In furtherance of the said Objectives the Federation may:

- 3.1. Promote and assist in the development of Neighbourhood Watch Associations in Sussex, and the promotion and development of Neighbourhood Watch generally.
- 3.2. Carry out research and surveys, provide and communicate information, services and advice to and on behalf of all Federation Members, exchange information and share and promote best effective practice and acceptable behaviour and performance standards amongst all Neighbourhood Watch entities, and where relevant with other organisations. Provide relevant, accurate and timely information to the public and media in appropriate circumstances.
- 3.3. Act as a forum, co-ordinate resources and provide services for Federation Members as appropriate, including the provision of small grants to Federation Members when considered appropriate by the Executive Officers, arranging, providing for or assisting in the holding of meetings, seminars, training courses, exhibitions and the like.
- 3.4. Act as a consultative and advisory body to Authorities on matters affecting Neighbourhood Watch in Sussex. Represent the views and needs of Federation Members and exchange information where appropriate to/with Authorities and other Neighbourhood Watch entities.
- 3.5. Arrange suitable Public and Products Liability insurance cover to protect the interests of the Federation, and use its best endeavours to make available similar insurance to protect the interests of Federation Members and their members in relation to Neighbourhood Watch activities. The Federation may also arrange such other insurances as the Executive Officers may reasonably consider necessary to protect the interests of the Federation and its Executive Officers.
- 3.6. Raise funds, invite and receive donations from any persons or bodies by way of subscription or otherwise, accept gifts and borrow or raise money in such a prudent, reasonable and legal manner as the Executive Officers shall think fit. The raising of funds may include the wholesale and retail of Neighbourhood Watch street signs and other small items relevant to Neighbourhood Watch.

3.7. Invest the monies of the Federation not immediately required for its purposes in such prudent, reasonable and legal investments as may be deemed fit, subject to such conditions as may be imposed or required by its charitable status.

#### **4. Executive Officers**

4.1. The Executive Officers shall be responsible for the general control and management of the Federation. Executive Officers shall also be Trustees of the Charity and shall agree to their details being registered with the Charity Commission.

4.2. All nominees for the role of any Executive Officer shall undergo a satisfactory Police records check before being allowed to take up their post, and shall from time to time undergo such reasonable additional satisfactory checks as may be required by the Police. Any person who is considered by the Charity Commission to be ineligible to hold a position as trustee shall be barred from all Executive Officer roles.

4.3. The Executive Officers shall have power to co-opt up to 4 (four) additional Neighbourhood Watch members resident in Sussex, to fill vacant positions or assist the Executive Officers should the need arise, in order to maintain the integrity and effectiveness of the Federation, subject to Clause 4.2 above.

4.4. The Executive Officers shall elect a representative and a deputy to the Neighbourhood Watch South East Regional Forum (SERF), who shall be Neighbourhood Watch members resident in Sussex. Selection will be by a simple majority vote. Representatives and deputies will serve for a period of up to 15 months but shall be eligible for re-election.

4.5. The Executive Officers may appoint such special or standing Committees as may be deemed necessary, and shall determine their terms of reference, powers, duration and composition. All acts and proceedings of such special or standing Committees shall be reported back to the Executive Officers fully and promptly.

4.6. Executive Officers shall be entitled to an indemnity out of the assets of the Federation for all reasonable expenses and other liabilities properly and necessarily incurred by them in the management of the affairs of the Federation, but this indemnity shall not extend to liabilities arising from any illegal act, wrongdoing or wrongful omission on the part of the member sought to be made liable.

4.7. All Executive Officers and co-opted members shall retire at each Annual General Meeting, but shall be eligible for re-election.

4.8. Executive Officers and Authorised Representatives shall meet not less than 4 (four) times a year.

## 5. General Meetings

- 5.1. The Annual General Meeting of the Federation shall be held in October or as soon as practicable within 4 (four) weeks thereafter. At least 28 (twenty-eight) clear days notice in writing shall be given by the Secretary to each Executive Officer and Authorised Representative. Failure to receive such notice will not invalidate the proceedings. Notice given electronically shall be deemed to be notice in writing.
- 5.2. The Executive Officers may at their discretion declare the Annual General Meeting or any Extraordinary General Meeting to be open to all Neighbourhood Watch members resident in Sussex, or classes of members resident in Sussex. At the discretion of the Chair of the Meeting such invitees may be permitted to vote in person at such Meeting.
- 5.3. At the Annual General Meeting the business to be discussed shall include:
  - 5.3.1. Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting
  - 5.3.2. Chair's Report
  - 5.3.3. Treasurer's Report including presentation of the Audited Accounts
  - 5.3.4. Election of the Executive Officers
  - 5.3.5. Appointment of Auditor or Independent Examiner to review the Accounts
  - 5.3.6. Any other business.
- 5.4. Whenever necessary, consideration of and voting on proposals to alter this Constitution shall be in accordance with Clause 10 hereof.
- 5.5. At the Annual General Meeting, Authorised Representatives shall elect the Executive Officers, and appoint the Auditor and Independent Examiner as appropriate. Efforts shall be made to ensure that at least one Vice Chair resident in each Police Division in Sussex be elected.
- 5.6. Nominations for the Executive Officers, duly proposed and seconded, shall be delivered to the Secretary at least 7 (seven) days before the Annual General Meeting, with the consent of each nominee. Retiring Executive Officers standing for re-election shall not be required to deliver such notice. In the event of no nominations being received for a post prior to the Meeting, at the discretion of the Chair nominations may be accepted from the floor.
- 5.7. Nominations for the role of Auditor and/or Independent Examiner shall exclude Executive Officers, and bar the elected Auditor or Independent Examiner from serving as an Executive Officer for a period of 12 (twelve) months after the end of their term of office as Auditor or Independent Examiner.
- 5.8. An Extraordinary General Meeting may be convened at the discretion of the Executive Officers, or by a written request made to the Secretary by at least 10 (ten) Authorised Representatives stating the specific reasons. The Secretary shall within a reasonable time convene a meeting subject to 21 (twenty-one) clear days notice given to each Executive Officer and Authorised Representative. Every such person shall be entitled to attend and vote at the Extraordinary General Meeting.

## **6. Conduct of Meetings**

- 6.1. At Executive meetings 3 (three) Executive Officers shall constitute a quorum. At all other meetings 6 (six) Executive Officers or Authorised Representatives shall constitute a quorum.
- 6.2. Resolutions shall be proposed and seconded, and ordinarily be passed by a majority of votes on a show of hands. However, a secret ballot may be held upon request of any Executive Officer or Authorised Representative present. This shall be adjudicated by an independent ex officio person, and the outcome recorded in the Minutes of that meeting. Voting by proxy is not permitted.
- 6.3. The Chair of a meeting, when entitled to a vote, shall in the event of a tie also have a second or casting vote at that meeting.
- 6.4. Minutes shall be kept by the Executive Officers and all sub-Committees, and the appropriate Secretary shall enter therein a record of all proceedings and resolutions. An ex-officio Minute Secretary may be appointed for the purpose of this Clause.

## **7. Finance**

- 7.1. The Financial Year shall end on 31st August.
- 7.2. All monies raised by or on behalf of the Federation shall be applied to further the purposes of the Federation and not otherwise. Nothing herein contained shall prevent the reimbursement in good faith of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses necessarily and properly incurred in furtherance of the Objectives.
- 7.3. The Treasurer shall keep proper and accurate Accounts of the finances of the Federation. The Treasurer will report to each meeting of the Executive Officers, at each Annual General Meeting, and whenever requested by the Chair, Deputy Chair or a Vice Chair, a true and fair view of the financial situation of the Federation. The Accounts will be audited, certified or examined annually by the appointed Auditor or Independent Examiner, and such audited Accounts presented at the Annual General Meeting. The Treasurer will produce for inspection at any reasonable time the bank books, cash books and other financial documentation and information concerning the Federation.
- 7.4. A Bank Account shall be maintained in the name of the Federation with such bank as the Executive Officers shall from time to time decide. The Executive Officers shall authorise in writing nominated Executive Officers, one always being the Treasurer, who shall from time to time determine to make payments or sign cheques on behalf of the Federation. All payment authorisations and cheques must be signed by two of the authorised signatories.

## **8. Patrons**

One or more Patrons may be elected by Federation Members at an Annual General Meeting for such a period as the Federation Members think fit, whether or not the proposed Patron is a member of Neighbourhood Watch. Such Patrons shall be entitled to all privileges of membership but shall not entitle the Patron as such to vote at any Federation meeting.

## **9. Termination of Membership**

- 9.1. A Federation Member may resign by giving written notice to the Federation Secretary. An Authorised Representative may resign by giving written notice to their Federation Member, who shall inform the Federation Secretary accordingly.
- 9.2. The Executive Officers shall have the right, for good and sufficient reason, to decline, discipline, suspend or terminate the membership of any Federation Member, provided that the Authorised Representatives representing that Member are afforded the opportunity of being heard by the Executive Officers before a final decision is made.
- 9.3. The Executive Officers shall have the right, in partnership with the Federation Members for the area concerned, to decline, discipline, suspend or terminate the membership of any Neighbourhood Watch member in Sussex, including a member of any Committee or sub-Committee, who displays unacceptable behaviour or performance standards, commits any illegal act, or conducts themselves in a manner which threatens or may threaten to bring into disrepute the good name or reputation of Neighbourhood Watch or its members, or causes or may cause Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators or members to resign. Such a member shall be afforded the opportunity of being heard by the Executive Officers before a final decision is made.
- 9.4. The agreement by a simple majority of the Executive Officers shall be necessary to decline, discipline, suspend or terminate any membership.

## **10. Alterations to the Constitution**

- 10.1. Any proposed alterations to this Constitution shall require the assent of not less than 75% (seventy-five percent) majority of votes of those present and voting at an Annual General Meeting. Notice of any such alteration must have been received by the Secretary in writing not less than 21 (twenty-one) clear days before the Meeting at which the alterations are to be proposed. At least 14 (fourteen) clear days notice in writing of such a Meeting, setting out the terms of the proposed alterations, must be sent by the Secretary to every Executive Officer and Authorised Representative. No alteration to Clause 2 (Objectives), this Clause 10 (Alterations to the Constitution) or Clause 11 (Dissolution) shall come into force until the approval of the Charity Commission or other authority having charitable jurisdiction shall be obtained, and no other alterations shall be made which would have the effect of causing the Federation to cease to be a charity at law.
- 10.2. In circumstances where minor changes to the Constitution are deemed necessary, such changes may be made following a simple majority vote of approval by the Executive Officers. These changes, including such items as change of name, change of Committee numbers and/or responsibilities, frequency of meetings, etc, that are considered necessary by circumstances prevailing at the time, may be made provided that such changes in no way alter Clauses 2, 10.1 or 11.

## **11. Dissolution**

- 11.1. If the Executive Officers and Authorised Representatives jointly decide, by a simple majority, it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the Federation, the Executive Officers shall call an Extraordinary General Meeting stating the terms of the Resolution to be proposed thereat. If such decisions shall be confirmed by a 75% (seventy-five percent) majority of votes of those present and voting at such meeting, the Executive Officers shall have the power to dispose of any assets held by or on behalf of the Federation.
- 11.2. Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities shall be given or transferred to such other charitable institution or institutions having objects similar to the objects of the Federation as the Executive Officers may decide, or may be applied for some other charitable or Neighbourhood Watch purpose.
- 11.3. A copy of the Statement of Accounts or Account and Statement for the final accounting period of the Federation must be sent to the Charity Commission.

## **12. Constitution Amendment Declaration**

Having obtained the prior written consent of The Charity Commission, this amended Constitution Number 8 (eight) was approved at the Annual General Meeting held at Sussex Police Headquarters, Malling House, Church Lane, Lewes BN7 2DZ on 7th November 2012.

**Signed:**

**John Wright**

**Chairman**

7<sup>th</sup> November 2012