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A Neighbourhood Planning Forum Constitution for 'network Wapping'

This is a neighbourhood planning forum constitution applying to the area of the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Ward of St Katherine's and Wapping and the (south-east) part of the Ward of Shadwell, (with reference to networks of diverse kinds within and connecting to the area).

1) NAME

The name of the group shall be network Wapping, hereafter referred to (in this constitution only) as the Forum.

2) OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Forum are:

- to improve the area to the benefit of all inhabitants and workers of the area and visitors to the area
- to improve - to a world class standard and having a locally specific appropriateness - the social, environmental and economic standards found within the whole area
- to foster community spirit, initiative, achievement and awareness
- to prepare, towards achieving the first three objectives, a neighbourhood plan for the area in liaison with relevant stakeholders, the local planning authority, and any other forums in adjacent areas
- to encourage, towards achieving the first three objectives, the goodwill, support and involvement of all communities within and relevant to the area, and the goodwill, support and involvement of the best assistance available particularly within the area, and also from beyond the area
- to strengthen, towards achieving the first three objectives, networks within the area and to the area

3) POWERS

In furtherance of the objects, but not otherwise, the Neighbourhood Planning Forum Committee may exercise the power to:

- (i) Promote the health and social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the residents of the area and to work together as residents irrespective of age, sex, ethnicity, ability, religion or political

view.

(ii) Promote sustainable development, environmental improvement and conservation by educating, encouraging and assisting the local population in environmental practice, working in partnership with similar groups and organisations.

(iii) Invite and receive contributions and raise funds where appropriate, to finance the work of the Forum, and to open a bank account to manage such funds.

(iv) Publicise and promote the work of the Forum and organise meetings, training courses, events or seminars etc.

(v) Work with groups of a similar nature and exchange information, advice and knowledge with them, including cooperation with other voluntary bodies, charities, statutory and nonstatutory organisations.

(vi) Employ staff and volunteers as are necessary to conduct activities to meet the objects.

(vii) Take any form of action that is lawful, which is necessary to achieve the objects of the Group, including taking out any contracts which it may see fit.

4) MEMBERSHIP

(i) Membership shall be open to anyone who has an interest in assisting the Group to achieve its aim and is willing to adhere to the rules of the Forum:

membership is open to all who live and work in the area

membership is open to elected Council members

membership shall be drawn from different places in the neighbourhood and different sections of the community in the neighbourhood

(ii) Where it is considered membership would be detrimental to the aims and activities of the Group, the Neighbourhood Planning Forum Committee shall have the power to refuse membership, or may terminate or suspend the membership of any member by resolution passed at a meeting.

(iii) Any member of the association may resign his/her membership by providing the Secretary with written notice.

(iv) The forum shall have a minimum of 21 members before any decision on neighbourhood planning may be made. The Secretary shall maintain a list of members at all times and publish this online.

5) Neighbourhood Planning Forum Committee

(i) The Forum shall be administered by a Neighbourhood Planning Forum Committee of no less than three (3) people and no more than nine (9), who must be at least 18 years of age. Members will

be elected for a period of up to one year, and may be re-elected at the Group's AGM.

6) OFFICERS

(i) The Forum shall have a committee consisting of:

The Chair

The Treasurer

The Secretary

and any additional officers the Group deems necessary at the meeting required to carry out the required activities.

7) MEETINGS

- (i) The committee shall meet at least six times a year. Meetings shall enable the Group to discuss actions and monitor progress to date, and to consider future developments.
- (ii) All members shall be given at least fourteen (14) days' notice of when a meeting is due to take place, unless it is deemed as an emergency, this shall also be publicised in the area to non-members.
- (iii) Two-thirds of committee members must be present in order for a meeting to take place.
- (iv) It shall be the responsibility of the Chairperson to chair all meetings or a designated deputy in her/his absence. All meetings must be minuted and accessible to interested parties as well as being published on the Forum's website.
- (v) The AGM shall take place no later than three months after the end of the financial year. At least fourteen (14) days' notice must be given before the meeting takes place.
- (vi) All members are entitled to vote at the AGM. Voting shall be made by a show of hands on a majority basis. In the case of a tied vote, the Chairperson or an appointed deputy shall make the final decision.

8) FINANCE

- (i) Any money acquired by the Group, including donations, contributions and bequests, shall be paid into an account operated by the Neighbourhood Planning Forum Committee in the name of the Group.
All funds must be applied to the objects of the Group and for no other purpose.
- (ii) Bank accounts shall be opened in the name of the Group. Any deeds, cheques etc relating to the Group's bank account shall be signed by at least two (2) of the following committee members: Chairperson; Treasurer; Secretary.
- (iii) Any income/expenditure shall be the responsibility of the Treasurer who will be accountable to ensure funds are utilised effectively and that the Group stays within budget. Official accounts shall be maintained, and will be examined annually by an independent accountant who is not a member of the Group. An annual financial report shall be presented at the AGM. The Group's accounting year shall run from 01 April to 31 March.

9) NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

- (i) Any decision to undertake, consult on or submit to the local planning authority for approval any neighbourhood Plan shall be subject to a vote of the full forum.
- (ii) All consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan will be subject to all residents and businesses whether members of the forum or not.
- (iii) The forum shall hold public meetings and set up a website to publicise the neighbourhood planning process, record it and seek views of the public.
- (iv) The Neighbourhood Planning Forum Committee, Neighbourhood Plan Team (as below) shall be delegated to liaise with the local planning authority and any independent experts and advisor's on the neighbourhood plan as they see fit.
- (v) At the discretion of the forum a Neighbourhood Plan Team can be delegated the tasks of preparing the Neighbourhood Forum other than under 9(i) above. The membership of this team shall be decided by a full meeting of the forum and the team may co-opt members as it sees fit.

9) ALTERATION OF THE CONSTITUTION

- (i) Any changes to this constitution must be agreed by a majority vote at a special general meeting.
- (ii) Amendments to this forum or dissolution of the forum must be conveyed to the Secretary formally in writing. The Secretary and other officers shall then decide on the date of a special general meeting to discuss such proposals, giving members at least four weeks (28 days) notice.

10) DISSOLUTION

- (i) The Group may be dissolved if deemed necessary by the members in a majority vote at a special meeting. Any assets or remaining funds after debts have been paid shall be returned to their providers or transferred to local charities or similar groups at the discretion of the Neighbourhood Planning Forum Committee.