

# **FRIENDS OF RAVENSCOURT PARK**

## **DRAFT CONSTITUTION**

### **NAME**

1. The Group shall be known as The Friends of Ravenscourt Park, hereafter referred to as the Friends Group.

### **OBJECTIVES**

2. The objectives of The Friends Group shall be:
  - To encourage access to and positive management of Ravenscourt Park its amenities and environment;
  - To encourage facilities for recreation and amenity with the aim of encouraging a more inclusive and participatory community spirit;
  - To represent the interests of Ravenscourt Park's users in consultation with the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham and other bodies;
  - To provide the principle point of liaison for communication with the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham in order to communicate park related queries and information; and
  - To promote equal opportunities by being positively committed to opposing all direct and indirect discrimination in all its activities and services.
3. The Friends Group therefore seeks to implement a programme of positive action to make this fully effective, by ensuring no park user receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, colour, gender, marital status, ethnic or national background, being lesbian or gay, disability, education, religious belief, political belief, trade union activity, dependency, unrelated criminal conviction or unemployment.

### **PURPOSE**

4. The Friends Group will strive also to encourage and promote the following areas to enhance Ravenscourt Park's function as a community facility and amenity :
  - Biodiversity and conservation
  - Events and activities
  - Children, Young people and older people
  - Sports and play facilities
  - Fundraising and income generation
5. The Friends Group shall have the power to affiliate to any body whose objectives may be of benefit to its membership, and consistent with its objectives.
6. Monies raised by or on behalf of The Friends Group shall only be applied in furtherance of the objectives of The Friends Group (see also paragraph 19).

## **MEMBERSHIP**

7. Membership shall be open to all living within the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham and park users beyond. An annual subscription shall be paid by all members. The annual subscription shall be made payable on such day of the year and be of such amount as the Friends in Membership shall determine. The Committee shall have the power, in deserving cases, to waive the subscription.

## **MEMBERSHIP CONDUCT**

8. It shall be a condition of membership that members at all times conduct themselves in a reasonable manner at meetings or in premises used by The Friends Group. Any member may be excluded for breach of this condition, or for any other conduct contravening the objectives of The Friends Group.
9. Membership shall terminate if:
  - (a) on resignation;
  - (b) the annual subscription is not paid three months after the date on which it should have been paid;
  - (c) Membership is terminated by the Committee in accordance with the provisions of Clause 8, and in such circumstances, the member shall have a right of appeal to the Committee.

## **CONDUCT OF BUSINESS**

10. The business of The Friends Group shall be conducted by a Committee elected at each Annual General Meeting, which shall consist of a Chairperson, Treasurer, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary, hereafter referred to as the Officers, and not less than five other members. No two or more Committee members shall be elected from the same household, and no Chairperson shall hold office for more than three consecutive years. The Committee shall have the power to co-opt onto the Committee up to three co-optees, without voting rights, to serve in an advisory capacity if the Committee so decide.

11. To retain the political impartiality of the group, elected councillors of any London Borough, or the GLA, or having held such a position within the last four years shall not be eligible for election to the Committee of The Friends Group. Elected councillors are eligible to be a member of The Friends Group.

12. The election or removal of officers or members may only be carried out by any General Meeting of The Friends Group. The Committee may temporarily fill any vacancy arising among the officers of The Friends Group from its other members until the next General Meeting of members.

## **COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

13. The Committee shall meet as necessary and not less than four times in each year.

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS**

14. The Committee shall call an Annual General Meeting of The Friends Group each year in the month of APRIL. Not less than 28 days notice of the Annual General Meeting shall be given to all members.

At this meeting:

- The Committee shall present an annual report of The Friends Group;
- Sub Groups shall present an annual report and accounts of their activities;
- The Committee shall present the audited accounts of The Friends Group for the previous year;
- The Committee and Officers for the next year shall be elected;
- Any proposals submitted to the Secretary in writing not less than seven days in advance of the meeting shall be discussed; and
- Agree amendments to the constitution (if any) – see paragraph 22.

As part of the Annual report, The Friends group is required to provide evidence of how inclusive, participatory and representative their activities are of Ravenscourt Park users to retain support from London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham.

## **SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING**

15. The Secretary shall call a Special General Meeting at the request of a majority of the Committee, or on receipt of a written petition by a majority of members of The Friends Group giving reasons for their request. The Secretary shall give not less than seven days' notice of the holding of a Special General Meeting, which shall take place within 28 days of the receipt of the request or petition.

## **QUORUM**

16. The quorum for Committee Meetings of The Friends Group shall be half of its elected membership.

## **SUB GROUPS**

17. The Committee may appoint such Sub Groups as may be required to carry out the activities of The Friends Group. The Committee shall determine in advance the terms of reference of any Sub Group, and timescale, which may then act and apply any finance raised by itself or on its behalf only within those terms. The Chairperson, or Vice Chairperson, and Treasurer of The Friends Group shall be ex-officio members of any Sub Group.

## **DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

18. **THE CHAIRPERSON** (or in his/her absence the Vice-Chairperson or other Committee Member) shall conduct the meetings of The Friends Group.

19. **THE TREASURER** shall open and maintain a banking account in the name of The Friends Group. All cheques shall be signed by the Treasurer and one or two other Committee members nominated by the Committee as signatories. The Treasurer shall keep proper accounts and income and expenditure and report on them or deliver them up as required by the Committee or General Meeting. Such accounts shall be examined by a qualified accountant or a non-member of The Friends Group appointed by the membership at the Annual General Meeting.

20. **THE SECRETARY** shall be responsible for the convening of all meetings and the giving of the prescribed notice to members. She/He shall ensure that a proper record is kept of all meetings of The Friends Group its Committee and Sub Groups in the form of minutes; and shall deliver up such records as required by the Committee or General Meeting.

21. Any member(s) or Officer(s) delegated to represent The Friends Group in consultation with any other body shall act on the instructions of The Friends Group and shall report back to the following Committee or General Meeting, whichever is appropriate.

#### **ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

22. Any proposal to alter this Constitution must be submitted to the Secretary of The Friends Group not less than 28 days before the meeting at which it is to be discussed. Not less than 28 days notice shall be given of such a meeting, together with the wording of the proposed alteration(s). Any alteration shall be decided by the majority present and voting at the meeting. (see also paragraphs 14 and 15)

23. If a Special General Meeting decides to dissolve The Friends Group, the assets, financial and otherwise, remaining when The Friends Group has satisfied its liabilities, shall be applied for such purposes of benefit to the community, as the meeting shall decide.

#### **WORKING RELATIONSHIP**

24. Friends of Parks groups and staff of London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham will work together co-operatively and strive to achieve shared goals and objectives that are defined in the Park Management Plan.

25. A Liaison Officer(s) will be appointed by the Committee as the main contact for the Friends Group with the nominated single point of contact for all formal representation from the group. This officer will notify and consult on all matters relating specifically to the park or open spaces and be responsible for all queries including:

- Managing the development and implementation of the Park Management Plan;
- Requests for new capital expenditure;
- Advising on external funding application preparation and procedure;
- Co-ordinating handover and publicity of completed development projects.

26. Hammersmith and Fulham Council will provide additional officer contacts and procedures for queries and complaints regarding:

- Maintenance problems within the park;
- Urgent security issues;
- Arboriculture issues;
- Dogs, pest control and management;
- Graffiti and vandalism.

27. Relevant Councillors and Officers have agreed to attend two or more evening meetings of The Friends Group each year. Friends of Parks groups will appoint a representative to attend two site meetings during working hours.

28. Hammersmith and Fulham Council will work with The Friends Group to identify and apply for funding from external agencies. Time and officer commitment will be allocated according to the size, complexity, estimated cost, future maintenance requirements and likely benefits to the wider community of the proposal.

29. Hammersmith and Fulham Council will take due notice of recommendations and concerns from The Friends Group and provide a written explanation of their view on these recommendations.