

THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF PARKS AND GREEN SPACES

CONSTITUTION

Date of constitution (last amended): 23rd November 2019

1. Name

The name of the Charitable Incorporated Organisation ("the NFPGS") is the National Federation of Parks and Green Spaces

2. National location of principal office

The principal office of the NFPGS is in England.

3. Object[s]

The objects of the NFPGS are

To promote the voluntary sector concerned with the protection and improvement of the UK's parks and open green spaces of all kinds as public facilities and resources for the benefit of the public by:

- a) Influencing strategic decision-making and policy, and lobbying for statutory recognition and adequate funding for public green space;
- b) Addressing the deficiencies of green space in the environment;
- c) Advancing the education of the public in the enjoyment, understanding, appreciation and conservation of open spaces;
- d) Promoting the development and empowerment of Friends/Community Groups for parks and open spaces, and their Forums and Networks, their communication and cooperation, and their full involvement in the management of their parks and open spaces;
- e) Raising the profile of members and the Friends Groups movement as a whole.

"Voluntary sector" is defined as "charities and voluntary organisations". Charities are organisations, which are established for exclusively charitable purposes in accordance with the law of England and Wales. Voluntary organisations are independent organisations which are established for purposes that add value to the community as a whole, or a significant section of the community, and which are not permitted by their constitution to make a profit for private distribution. Voluntary organisations do not include local government or other statutory organisations.

Nothing in this constitution shall authorise an application of the property of the NFPGS for the purposes which are not charitable in accordance with [section 7 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005] and [section 2 of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008]

4. Powers

The NFPGS has power to do anything which is calculated to further its object[s] or is conducive or incidental to doing so. In particular, the NFPGS's powers include power to:

- (1) Borrow money and to charge the whole or any part of its property as security for the repayment of the money borrowed. The NFPGS must comply as appropriate with sections 124 and 125 of the Charities Act 2011 if it wishes to mortgage land;
- (2) Buy, take on lease or in exchange, hire or otherwise acquire any property and to maintain and equip it for use;
- (3) Sell, lease or otherwise dispose of all or any part of the property belonging to the NFPGS. In exercising this power, the NFPGS must comply as appropriate with sections 117 and 119-123 of the Charities Act 2011;
- (4) Employ and remunerate such staff as are necessary for carrying out the work of the NFPGS. The NFPGS may employ or remunerate a charity trustee only to the extent that it is permitted to do so by clause 6 (Benefits and payments to charity trustees and connected persons) and provided it complies with the conditions of those clauses;
- (5) Deposit or invest funds, employ a professional fund-manager, and arrange for the investments or other property of the NFPGS to be held in the name of a nominee, in the same manner and subject to the same conditions as the trustees of a trust are permitted to do by the Trustee Act 2000.

5. Application of income and property

- (1) The income and property of the NFPGS must be applied solely towards the promotion of the objects.
 - (a) A charity trustee is entitled to be reimbursed from the property of the NFPGS or may pay out of such property reasonable expenses properly incurred by him or her when acting on behalf of the NFPGS.

- (b) A charity trustee may benefit from trustee indemnity insurance cover purchased at the NFPGS's expense in accordance with, and subject to the conditions in, section 189 of the Charities Act 2011.
- (2) None of the income or property of the NFPGS may be paid or transferred directly or indirectly by way of dividend, bonus or otherwise by way of profit to any member of the NFPGS. This does not prevent a member who is not also a charity trustee receiving:
 - (a) a benefit from the NFPGS as a beneficiary of the NFPGS;
 - (b) Reasonable and proper remuneration for any goods or services supplied to the NFPGS.
 - (3) Nothing in this clause shall prevent a charity trustee or connected person receiving any benefit or payment which is authorised by Clause 6.

6. Benefits and payments to charity trustees and connected persons

(1) General provisions

No charity trustee or connected person may:

- (a) buy or receive any goods or services from the NFPGS on terms preferential to those applicable to members of the public;
- (b) sell goods, services, or any interest in land to the NFPGS;
- (c) be employed by, or receive any remuneration from, the NFPGS;
- (d) receive any other financial benefit from the NFPGS;

unless the payment or benefit is permitted by sub-clause (2) of this clause, or authorised by the court or the prior written consent of the Charity Commission ("the Commission") has been obtained. In this clause, a "financial benefit" means a benefit, direct or indirect, which is either money or has a monetary value.

(2) Scope and powers permitting trustees' or connected persons' benefits

- (a) A charity trustee or connected person may receive a benefit from the NFPGS as a beneficiary of the NFPGS provided that a majority of the trustees do not benefit in this way.
- (b) A charity trustee or connected person may enter into a contract for the supply of services, or of goods that are supplied in connection with the provision of services, to the NFPGS where that is permitted in accordance with, and subject to the conditions in, section 185 to 188 of the Charities Act 2011.

- (c) Subject to sub-clause (3) of this clause a charity trustee or connected person may provide the NFPGS with goods that are not supplied in connection with services provided to the NFPGS by the charity trustee or connected person.
 - (d) A charity trustee or connected person may receive interest on money lent to the NFPGS at a reasonable and proper rate which must be not more than the Bank of England bank rate (also known as the base rate).
 - (e) A charity trustee or connected person may receive rent for premises let by the trustee or connected person to the NFPGS. The amount of the rent and the other terms of the lease must be reasonable and proper. The charity trustee concerned must withdraw from any meeting at which such a proposal or the rent or other terms of the lease are under discussion.
 - (f) A charity trustee or connected person may take part in the normal trading and fundraising activities of the NFPGS on the same terms as members of the public.
- (3) Payment for supply of goods only – controls

The NFPGS and its charity trustees may only rely upon the authority provided by sub clause (2)(c) of this clause if each of the following conditions is satisfied:

- (a) The amount or maximum amount of the payment for the goods is set out in a written agreement between the NFPGS and the charity trustee or connected person supplying the goods (“the supplier”). The amount or maximum amount of the payment for the goods does not exceed what is reasonable in the circumstances for the supply of the goods in question.
- (b) The other charity trustees are satisfied that it is in the best interests of the NFPGS to contract with the supplier rather than with someone who is not a charity trustee or connected person. In reaching that decision the charity trustees must balance the advantage of contracting with a charity trustee or connected person against the disadvantages of doing so.
- (c) The supplier is absent from the part of any meeting at which there is discussion of the proposal to enter into a contract or arrangement with him or her or it with regard to the supply of goods to the NFPGS.
- (d) The supplier does not vote on any such matter and is not to be counted when calculating whether a quorum of charity trustees is present at the meeting.
- (e) The reason for their decision is recorded by the charity trustees in the minute book.

- (f) A majority of the charity trustees then in office are not in receipt of remuneration or payments authorised by clause 6.
- (4) In sub-clauses (2) and (3) of this clause:
 - (a) “the NFPGS” includes any company in which the NFPGS:
 - (i) holds more than 50% of the shares; or
 - (ii) controls more than 50% of the voting rights attached to the shares; or
 - (iii) has the right to appoint one or more directors to the board of the company;
 - (b) “connected person” includes any person within the definition set out in clause [31] (Interpretation);

7. Conflicts of interest and conflicts of loyalty

A charity trustee must:

- (1) declare the nature and extent of any interest, direct or indirect, which he or she has in a proposed transaction or arrangement with the NFPGS or in any transaction or arrangement entered into by the NFPGS which has not previously been declared; and
- (2) absent himself or herself from any discussions of the charity trustees in which it is possible that a conflict of interest will arise between his or her duty to act solely in the interests of the NFPGS and any personal interest (including but not limited to any financial interest).

Any charity trustee absenting himself or herself from any discussions in accordance with this clause must not vote or be counted as part of the quorum in any decision of the charity trustees on the matter.

8. Liability of members to contribute to the assets of the NFPGS if it is wound up

If the NFPGS is wound up, the members of the NFPGS have no liability to contribute to its assets and no personal responsibility for settling its debts and liabilities.

9. Membership of the NFPGS

(1) Admission of new members

(a) Eligibility

Membership of the NFPGS is open to all open space forums within England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales which have relevant or similar objectives to the NFPGS and which are predominantly made up of Friends and/or Users groups of parks and open spaces.

(b) Admission procedure

The charity trustees:

- (i) may make invitations or require applications for membership to be made in any reasonable way that they decide;
- (ii) shall, if they get a positive response to an invitation, or approve an application for membership, notify the applicant of their decision within 21 days
- (iii) may refuse an application for membership if they believe that it is in the best interests of the NFPGS for them to do so;
- (iv) shall, if they decide to refuse an application for membership, give the applicant their reasons for doing so, within 21 days of the decision being taken, and give the applicant the opportunity to appeal against the refusal; and
- (v) shall give fair consideration to any such appeal, and shall inform the applicant of their decision, but any decision to confirm refusal of the application for membership shall be final.

(2) Transfer of membership

Membership of the NFPGS cannot be transferred to any individual or other organisation.

(3) Duty of members

It is the duty of each member of the NFPGS to exercise its powers as a member of the NFPGS in the way it decides in good faith would be most likely to further the purposes of the NFPGS and/or its own purposes which overlap with those of the NFPGS.

(4) Termination of membership

- (a) Membership of the NFPGS comes to an end if:

- (i) the organisation ceases to exist; or
 - (ii) the member organisation sends a notice of resignation to the charity trustees; or
 - (iii) any substantial sum of money owed by the member to the NFPGS is not paid in full within a year of its falling due; or
 - (iv) the charity trustees decide that it is in the best interests of the NFPGS that the organisation in question should be removed from membership, and pass a resolution to that effect.
- (b) Before the charity trustees take any decision to remove an organisation from membership of the NFPGS they must:
- (i) inform the member organisation of the reasons why it is proposed to remove it from membership;
 - (ii) give the organisation at least 21 calendar days' notice in which to make representations to the charity trustees as to why it should not be removed from membership;
 - (iii) at a duly constituted meeting of the charity trustees, consider whether or not the member organisation should be removed from membership;
 - (iv) consider at that meeting any representations which the member organisation makes as to why the member should not be removed and should not be included in the Register of Members.
 - (v) allow a representative of the member organisation to make those representations in person at that meeting if the member organisation so chooses.

(5) Membership fees

The NFPGS may require member organisations to pay reasonable membership fees to the NFPGS.

(6) Informal or associate (non-voting) membership

- (a) The charity trustees may create associate or other classes of non-voting membership, particularly for those organisations who have relevant, similar or complementary objectives, and may determine the rights and obligations of any such members

(including payment of membership fees), and the conditions for admission to, and termination of membership of any such class of members.

- (b) Other references in this constitution to “members” and “membership” do not apply to non-voting members, and non-voting members do not qualify as members for any purpose under the Charities Acts, General Regulations or Dissolution Regulations.

10. Members’ decisions

(1) General provisions

Except for those decisions that must be taken in a particular way as indicated in sub-clause (4) of this clause, decisions of the members of the NFPGS may be taken either by vote at a general meeting as provided in sub clause (2) of this clause or by written resolution as provided in sub- clause (3) of this clause.

(2) Taking ordinary decisions by vote

Subject to sub-clause (4) of this clause, any decision of the members of the NFPGS may be taken by means of a resolution at a general meeting. Such a resolution may be passed by a simple majority of votes cast at the meeting.

(3) Taking ordinary decisions by written resolution without aGeneral meeting

- (a) Subject to sub-clause (4) of this clause, a resolution in writing agreed by a simple majority of all the members who would have been entitled to vote upon it had it been proposed at a general meeting shall be effective, provided that:
 - (i) a copy of the proposed resolution has been sent to all the member organisations eligible to vote; and
 - (ii) a simple majority of members has signified its agreement to the resolution in a document or documents which are received at the principal office within the period of 28 days beginning with the circulation date. The document signifying agreement must be authenticated by execution according to its usual procedure, by a statement of their identity accompanying the document, or in such other manner as the NFPGS has specified.

- (b) The resolution in writing may comprise several items to which one or more members has signified their agreement.
- (c) Eligibility to vote on the resolution is limited to one representative of each member organisation which is a member of the NFPGS on the date when the proposal is first circulated in accordance with paragraph (a) above.
- (d) Not less than 10% of the member organisations of the NFPGS may request the charity trustees to make a proposal for decision by the members.
- (e) The charity trustees must within 30 days of receiving such a request comply with it if:
 - (i) The proposal is not frivolous or vexatious, and does not involve the publication of defamatory material;
 - (ii) The proposal is stated with sufficient clarity to enable effect to be given to it if it is agreed by the members; and
 - (iii) Effect can lawfully be given to the proposal if it is so agreed.
- (f) Sub-clauses (a) to (c) of this clause apply to a proposal made at the request of members.

(4) Decisions that must be taken in a particular way

- (a) Any decision to remove a trustee must be taken in accordance with clause [15(2)].
- (b) Any decision to amend this constitution must be taken in accordance with clause [29] of this constitution (Amendment of Constitution).
- (c) Any decision to wind up or dissolve the NFPGS must be taken in accordance with clause [30] of this constitution (Voluntary winding up or dissolution). Any decision to amalgamate or transfer the undertaking of the NFPGS to one or more other NFPGSs must be taken in accordance with the provisions of the Charities Act 2011.

11. General meetings of members

(1) Types of general meeting

There must be an annual general meeting of the members of the NFPGS. The first annual general meeting must be held within 18 months of the registration of the NFPGS, and subsequent annual general meetings must be held at intervals of not more than 14 months. The annual general meeting must

receive the annual statement of accounts (duly audited or examined where applicable) and the trustees' annual report, and must elect trustees as required under clause [13].

Other general meetings of the members of the NFPGS may be held at any time, at least one per annum.

All general meetings must be held in accordance with the following provisions.

(2) Calling general meetings

- (a) The charity trustees:
 - (i) must call the annual general meeting of the members of the NFPGS in accordance with sub-clause (1) of this clause, and identify it as such in the notice of the meeting; and
 - (ii) may call any other general meeting of the members at any time, at least one per annum.
- (b) The charity trustees must, within 21 days, call a general meeting of the members of the NFPGS if:
 - (i) they receive a request to do so from at least 10% of the member organisations of the NFPGS; and
 - (ii) the request states the general nature of the business to be dealt with at the meeting, and is authenticated by the member(s) making the request.
- (c) If, at the time of any such request, there has not been any general meeting of the members of the NFPGS for more than 12 months, then sub-clause (b)(i) of this clause shall have effect as if 5% were substituted for 10%.
- (d) Any such request may include particulars of a resolution that may properly be proposed, and is intended to be proposed, at the meeting.
- (e) A resolution may only properly be proposed if it is lawful, and is not defamatory, frivolous or vexatious.
- (f) Any general meeting called by the charity trustees at the request of the members of the NFPGS must be held within 28 days from the date on which it is called.
- (g) If the charity trustees fail to comply with this obligation to call a general meeting at the request of its member organisations, then the member organisations which requested the meeting may themselves call a general meeting.

- (h) A general meeting called in this way must be held not more than 3 months after the date when the member organisations first requested the meeting.
- (i) The NFPGS must reimburse any reasonable expenses (for the venue and other essential costs, in line with the previous general meeting) incurred by the member organisations calling a general meeting by reason of the failure of the charity trustees to duly call the meeting, but the NFPGS shall be entitled to be indemnified by the charity trustees who were responsible for such failure.

(3) Notice of general meetings

The charity trustees, or, as the case may be, the relevant members of the NFPGS, must give at least 21 clear days' notice of any general meeting to all of the members, and to any charity trustee of the NFPGS who is not a member.

- (a) If it is agreed by not less than 90% of all members of the NFPGS, any resolution may be proposed and passed at the meeting even though the requirements of sub-clause (3) (a) of this clause have not been met. This sub-clause does not apply where a specified period of notice is strictly required by another clause in this constitution, by the Charities Act 2011 or by the General Regulations.
- (b) The notice of any general meeting must:
 - (i) state the time and date of the meeting;
 - (ii) give the address at which the meeting is to take place;
 - (iii) give particulars of any resolution substantially affecting NFPGS policy or operations which is to be moved at the meeting, if known in advance, and of the general nature of any other business to be dealt with at the meeting; and
 - (iv) if a proposal to alter the constitution of the NFPGS is to be considered at the meeting, include the text of the proposed alteration;
 - (v) include, with the notice for the annual general meeting, the annual statement of accounts and trustees' annual report, details of persons standing for election or re-election as trustee, or where allowed under clause [23] (Use of electronic communication), details of where the information may be found on the NFPGS's website.

- (c) Proof that an envelope containing a notice was properly addressed, prepaid and posted; or that an electronic form of notice was properly addressed and sent, shall be conclusive evidence that the notice was given. Notice shall be deemed to be given 48 hours after it was posted or sent.
- (d) The proceedings of a meeting shall not be invalidated because a member who was entitled to receive notice of the meeting did not receive it because of accidental omission by the NFPGS.

(4) Chairing of general meetings

The person elected as chair by the AGM shall, if present at the general meeting and willing to act, preside as chair of the meeting. Subject to that, the members of the NFPGS who are present at a general meeting shall elect a chair to preside at the meeting.

(5) Quorum at general meetings

- (a) No formal or binding business may be transacted at any general meeting of the members of the NFPGS unless a quorum is present when the meeting starts.
- (b) Subject to the following provisions, the quorum for general meetings shall be the lesser of 5% or 5 members. An organisation represented by a person present at the meeting in accordance with sub-clause (7) of this clause, is counted as being present in person. Trustees who also represent a member organisation will count towards the Quorum if no other representative from that member is present.
- (c) If the meeting has been called by or at the request of the members and a quorum is not present within 15 minutes of the starting time specified in the notice of the meeting, the formal meeting is closed but an informal discussion of the relevant issues should continue and be minuted.
- (d) If the meeting has been called in any other way and a quorum is not present within 15 minutes of the starting time specified in the notice of the meeting, the chair must adjourn the formal meeting, but an informal discussion of the relevant issues should continue and be minuted. The date, time and place at which the formal meeting will resume must be notified to the NFPGS's members at least seven clear days before the date on which it will resume.
- (e) If a quorum is not present within 15 minutes of the start time of the adjourned meeting, the member or members present at the meeting constitute a quorum.
- (f) If at any time during the meeting a quorum ceases to be present, the

meeting may discuss issues and make recommendations to the trustees but may not make any decisions. If decisions are required which must be made by a meeting of the members, the formal meeting must be adjourned as in clause (d) above

(6) Voting at general meetings

- (a) Any decision other than one falling within clause [10(4)] (Decisions that must be taken in a particular way) shall be taken by a simple majority of votes cast at the meeting. Every member organisation has one vote.
- (b) A resolution put to the vote of a meeting shall be decided on a show of hands, unless before or on the declaration of the result of the show of hands a poll is duly demanded. A poll may be demanded by the chair or by at least 20% of the members present in person at the meeting.
- (c) A poll demanded on the election of a person to chair the meeting or on a question of adjournment must be taken immediately. A poll on any other matter shall be taken, and the result of the poll shall be announced, in such manner as the chair of the meeting shall decide, provided that the poll must be taken, and the result of the poll announced, within 30 days of the demand for the poll.
- (d) A poll may be taken:
 - (i) at the meeting at which it was demanded; or
 - (ii) at some other time and place specified by the chair; or
 - (iii) through the use of postal or electronic communications.
- (e) In the event of an equality of votes, whether on a show of hands or on a poll, the chair of the meeting shall have a second, or casting vote.
- (f) Any objection to the qualification of any voter must be raised at the meeting at which the vote is cast and the decision of the chair of the meeting shall be final.

(7) Representation of organisations

An organisation which is a member of the NFPGS may, in accordance with its usual decision-making process, authorise a person to act as its representative at any general meeting of the NFPGS.

The representative is entitled to exercise powers on behalf of the organisation

(8) Adjournment of meetings

The chair may with the consent of a meeting at which a quorum is present (and shall if so directed by the meeting) adjourn the meeting to another time and/or place. No

business may be transacted at an adjourned meeting except business which could properly have been transacted at the original meeting.

12. Charity trustees

(1) Functions and duties of charity trustees

The charity trustees shall manage the affairs of the NFPGS and may for that purpose exercise all the powers of the NFPGS. It is the duty of each charity trustee:

- (a) to exercise his or her powers and to perform his or her functions as a trustee of the NFPGS in the way he or she decides in good faith would be most likely to further the purposes of the NFPGS; and
- (b) to exercise, in the performance of those functions, such care and skill as is reasonable in the circumstances having regard in particular to:
 - (i) any special knowledge or experience that he or she has or holds himself or herself out as having; and
 - (ii) if he or she acts as a charity trustee of the NFPGS in the course of a business or profession, to any special knowledge or experience that it is reasonable to expect of a person acting in the course of that kind of business or profession.

(2) Eligibility for trusteeship

- (a) Every charity trustee must be a natural person.
- (b) No one may be appointed as a charity trustee:
 - if he or she is under the age of 16 years; or
 - if he or she would automatically cease to hold office under the provisions of clause [15(1)(f)].
- (c) No one is entitled to act as a charity trustee whether on appointment or on any re-appointment until he or she has expressly acknowledged, in whatever way the charity trustees decide, his or her acceptance of the office of charity trustee.
- (e) At least one of the trustees of the NFPGS must be 18 years of age or over.

(3) Number of charity trustees

- (a) There must be at least three charity trustees. If the number falls below this minimum, the remaining trustee or trustees may act only to call a meeting of the charity trustees, or appoint a new charity trustee.

- (b) The maximum number of charity trustees is 18. The charity trustees may not appoint any charity trustee if as a result the number of charity trustees would exceed the maximum.

(4) First charity trustees

The first charity trustees of the NFPGS under this constitution as amended are Dave Morris, Nigel Sharp, Michelle Furtado, Roland Bruce, Sarah Royal, Martin Willis.

13. Appointment of charity trustees

(1) Elected charity trustees

- (a) At the first annual general meeting of the members of the NFPGS all the elected charity trustees shall retire from office;
- (b) All elected trustees shall be from organisations which are members of the NFPGS and shall be elected for a term of one year at an annual general meeting.
- (c) A Chair, Deputy Chair, Treasurer and Honorary Secretary of the trustees shall be elected by members of the NFPGS at annual general meeting;
- (d) Regional representatives will be invited to stand for election as trustees at the AGM.
- (e) Any vacancies not filled at the annual general meeting may be filled as provided in sub-clause (f) of this clause;
- (f) The members or the charity trustees may at any time decide to appoint a new charity trustee, whether in place of a charity trustee who has retired or been removed in accordance with clause [15] (Retirement and removal of charity trustees), or as an additional charity trustee, provided that the limit specified in clause [12(3)] on the number of charity trustees would not as a result be exceeded;
- (g) A person so appointed by the members of the NFPGS shall serve until the following annual general meeting when they may be re-appointed by election of the members.

14. Information for new charity trustees

The charity trustees will make available to each new charity trustee, on or before his or her first appointment:

- (a) a copy of this constitution and any amendments made to it; and
- (b) a copy of the NFPGS's latest trustees' annual report and statement of accounts.

15. Retirement and removal of charity trustees

- (1) A charity trustee ceases to hold office if he or she:
 - (a) Has completed the term of office to which he or she was elected
 - (b) retires by notifying the NFPGS in writing (but only if enough charity trustees will remain in office when the notice of resignation takes effect to form a quorum for meetings);
 - (c) is absent without the permission of the charity trustees from all their meetings held within a period of six months and the trustees resolve that his or her office be vacated;
 - (d) dies;
 - (e) in the written opinion, given to the company, of a registered medical practitioner treating that person, has become physically or mentally incapable of acting as a director and may remain so for more than three months;
 - (f) is removed by the members of the NFPGS in accordance with sub-clause (2) of this clause; or
 - (g) is disqualified from acting as a charity trustee by virtue of section 178180 of the Charities Act 2011 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that provision).
- (2) A charity trustee shall be removed from office if a resolution to remove that trustee is proposed at a general meeting of the members called for that purpose and properly convened in accordance with clause [11], and the resolution is passed by a two-thirds majority of votes cast at the meeting.
- (3) A resolution to remove a charity trustee in accordance with this clause shall not take effect unless the individual concerned has been given at least 14 clear days' notice in writing that the resolution is to be proposed, specifying the circumstances alleged to justify removal from office, and has been given a reasonable opportunity of making oral and/or written representations to the members of the NFPGS.

16. Reappointment of charity trustees

Any trustee who has completed their term of office following election at a general meeting or by giving notice to the NFPGS is eligible for reappointment by election at an annual general meeting. They can serve for up to a maximum period of five years in succession in the same specific post.

17. Taking of decisions by charity trustees

Any decision may be taken either:

- at a meeting of the charity trustees; or
- by resolution in writing or electronic form agreed by a majority of the charity trustees with none against, which may comprise either a single document or several documents containing the text of the resolution in like form to each of which one or more charity trustees has signified their agreement.

18. Delegation by charity trustees

- a. The charity trustees may delegate any of their powers or functions to a subcommittee or committees, and, if they do, they must determine the terms and conditions on which the delegation is made. The charity trustees may at any time alter those terms and conditions, or revoke the delegation.
- b. This power is in addition to the power of delegation in the General Regulations and any other power of delegation available to the charity trustees, but is subject to the following requirements -
 - i. a sub-committee may consist of two or more persons, but at least one member of each committee must be a charity trustee;
 - ii. the acts and proceedings of any sub-committee must be brought to the attention of the charity trustees as a whole as soon as is reasonably practicable; and
 - iii. the charity trustees shall from time to time review the arrangements which they have made for the delegation of their powers.

19. Meetings and proceedings of charity trustees

(1) Calling meetings

- (a) Any charity trustee may call a meeting of the charity trustees.
- (b) Subject to that, the charity trustees shall decide how their meetings are to be called, and what notice is required.

(2) Chairing of meetings

The Chair of Trustees shall chair their meetings, or, in their absence, the Deputy Chair will preside. If neither is present within 10 minutes after the time of the meeting, the charity trustees present may appoint one of their number to chair that meeting.

(3) Procedure at meetings

- (a) No decision shall be taken at a meeting unless a quorum is present at the time when the decision is taken. The quorum is three charity trustees, or the number nearest to one third of the total number of charity trustees, whichever is the lesser, or such larger number as the charity trustees may decide from time to time. A charity trustee

shall not be counted in the quorum present when any decision is made about a matter upon which he or she is not entitled to vote.

(b) Questions arising at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of those eligible to vote.

(c) In the case of an equality of votes, the chair shall have a second or casting vote.

(4) Participation in meetings by electronic means

(a) A meeting may be held by suitable electronic means agreed by the charity trustees in which each participant may communicate with all the other participants.

(b) Any charity trustee participating at a meeting by suitable electronic means agreed by the charity trustees in which a participant or participants may communicate with all the other participants shall qualify as being present at the meeting.

(c) Meetings held by electronic means must comply with rules for meetings, including chairing and the taking of minutes.

20. Saving provisions

a. Subject to sub-clause (2) of this clause, all decisions of the charity trustees, or of a committee of charity trustees, shall be valid notwithstanding the participation in any vote of a charity trustee:

- who was disqualified from holding office;
- who had previously retired or who had been obliged by the constitution to vacate office;
- who was not entitled to vote on the matter, whether by reason of a conflict of interest or otherwise;

if, without the vote of that charity trustee and that charity trustee being counted in the quorum, the decision has been made by a majority of the charity trustees at a quorate meeting.

b. Sub-clause (1) of this clause does not permit a charity trustee to keep any benefit that may be conferred upon him or her by a resolution of the charity trustees or of a committee of charity trustees if, but for clause (1), the resolution would have been void, or if the charity trustee has not complied with clause 7 (Conflicts of interest).

21. Advisory Committee

(a) The NFPGS shall have an advisory committee of which all the trustees, and regional Delegates from affiliated regional and sub-regional

Networks (or co-opted regional representative from a member Forum or hub where no regional network yet exists), and co-opted advisors, shall be members.

- (b) Members shall be elected to the committee from member regional organisations.
- (c) No member organisation may have more than one voting place on the committee
- (d) The advisory committee may from time to time appoint sub-groups or co-opt additional committee members where they offer specific skills or experience, for such purposes and with such powers as it thinks fit.
- (e) The advisory committee may advise the trustees on the management of the NFPGS, but decisions by the trustees are final.
- (f) The Advisory Committee may co-opt non-voting Committee members.
- (g) Decisions of the Advisory Committee shall be by majority show of hands. Quorum shall be 3 members.

22. Execution of documents

- (1) The NFPGS shall execute documents by signature.
- (2) A document is validly executed by signature if it is signed by at least two of the charity trustees.

23. Use of electronic communications

(1) General

The NFPGS will comply with the requirements of the Communications Provisions in the General Regulations and in particular:

- (a) the requirement to provide within 21 days to any member on request a hard copy of any document or information sent to the member otherwise than in hard copy form;
- (b) any requirements to provide information to the Commission in a particular form or manner.

(2) To the NFPGS

Any member or charity trustee of the NFPGS may communicate electronically with the NFPGS to an address specified by the NFPGS for the purpose, so

long as the communication is authenticated in a manner which is satisfactory to the NFPGS.

(3) By the NFPGS

- (a) Any member or charity trustee of the NFPGS, by providing the NFPGS with his or her email address or similar, is taken to have agreed to receive communications from the NFPGS in electronic form at that address, unless the member has indicated to the NFPGS his or her unwillingness to receive such communications in that form.
- (b) The charity trustees may, subject to compliance with any legal requirements, by means of publication on its website –
 - (i) provide the members with the notice referred to in clause 11(3) (Notice of general meetings);
 - (ii) give charity trustees notice of their meetings in accordance with clause 19(1) (Calling meetings); and
 - (iii) submit any proposal to the members or charity trustees for decision by written resolution in accordance with the NFPGS's powers under clause 10 (Members' decisions), 10(3) (Decisions taken by resolution in writing),
- (c) The charity trustees must:
 - (i) take reasonable steps to ensure that members and charity trustees are promptly notified of the publication of any such notice or proposal;
 - (ii) send any such notice or proposal in hard copy form to any member or charity trustee who has not consented to receive communications in electronic form.

24. Keeping of Registers

The NFPGS must comply with its obligations under the General Regulations in relation to the keeping of, and provision of access to, registers of its members and charity trustees.

25. Minutes

The charity trustees must keep minutes of all:

- (1) appointments of officers made by the charity trustees;
- (2) proceedings at general meetings of the NFPGS;

- (3) meetings of the charity trustees and sub-committees of charity trustees including:
 - the names of the trustees present at the meeting;
 - the decisions made at the meetings; and
 - where appropriate the reasons for the decisions;
- (4) decisions made by the charity trustees otherwise than in meetings.

26. Accounting records, accounts, annual reports and returns, register maintenance

- a. The charity trustees must comply with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 with regard to the keeping of accounting records, to the preparation and scrutiny of statements of accounts, and to the preparation of annual reports and returns. The statements of accounts, reports and returns must be sent to the Charity Commission, regardless of the income of the NFPGS, within 10 months of the financial year end.
- b. The charity trustees must comply with their obligation to inform the Commission within 28 days of any change in the particulars of the NFPGS entered on the Central Register of Charities.

27. Rules

The charity trustees may from time to time make such reasonable and proper rules or bye laws as they may deem necessary or expedient for the proper conduct and management of the NFPGS, but such rules or bye laws must not be inconsistent with any provision of this constitution.

Copies of any such rules or bye laws currently in force must be made available to any member of the NFPGS on request.

28. Disputes

If a dispute arises between members of the NFPGS about the validity or propriety of anything done by the members under this constitution, and the dispute cannot be resolved by agreement, the parties to the dispute must first try in good faith to settle the dispute by mediation before resorting to litigation.

29. Amendment of constitution

As provided by clauses 224-227 of the Charities Act 2011:

- (1) This constitution can only be amended:
 - (a) by resolution agreed in writing by all members of the NFPGS; or

- (b) by a resolution passed by a 75% majority of votes cast at a special general meeting of the members of the NFPGS called for that purpose, or at an AGM.

Any alteration of clause 3 (Objects), clause [30] (Voluntary winding up or dissolution), this clause, or of any provision where the alteration would provide authorisation for any benefit to be obtained by charity trustees or members of the NFPGS or persons connected with them, requires the prior written consent of the Charity Commission.

- (3) No amendment that is inconsistent with the provisions of the Charities Act 2011 or the General Regulations shall be valid.
- (4) A copy of any resolution altering the constitution, together with a copy of the NFPGS's constitution as amended, must be sent to the Commission within 15 days from the date on which the resolution is passed. The amendment does not take effect until it has been recorded in the Register of Charities.

30. Voluntary winding up or dissolution

(1) As provided by the Dissolution Regulations, the NFPGS may be dissolved by resolution of its members. Any decision by the members to wind up or dissolve the NFPGS can only be made:

- a. at a special general meeting of the members of the NFPGS called for this specific purpose, in accordance with clause [11] (Meetings of Members), of which not less than 21 days' notice has been given to those eligible to attend and vote:
 - (i) by a resolution passed by a 75% majority of those voting, or
 - (ii) by a resolution passed by decision taken without a vote and without any expression of dissent in response to the question put to the special general meeting; or (b) by a resolution agreed in writing by all members of the NFPGS.

(2) Subject to the payment of all the NFPGS's debts:

- a. Any resolution for the winding up of the NFPGS, or for the dissolution of the NFPGS without winding up, may contain a provision directing how any remaining assets of the NFPGS shall be applied.
- b. If the resolution does not contain such a provision, the charity trustees must decide how any remaining assets of the NFPGS shall be applied.
- c. In either case the remaining assets must be applied for charitable purposes the same as or similar to those of the NFPGS.

(3) The NFPGS must observe the requirements of the Dissolution Regulations in applying to the Commission for the NFPGS to be removed from the Register of Charities, and in particular:

- a. the charity trustees must send with their application to the Commission:
 - (i) a copy of the resolution passed by the members of the NFPGS;
 - (ii) a declaration by the charity trustees that any debts and other liabilities of the NFPGS have been settled or otherwise provided for in full; and
 - (iii) a statement by the charity trustees setting out the way in which any property of the NFPGS has been or is to be applied prior to its dissolution in accordance with this constitution;
 - b. the charity trustees must ensure that a copy of the application is sent within seven days to every member and employee of the NFPGS, and to any charity trustee of the NFPGS who was not privy to the application.
- (4) If the NFPGS is to be wound up or dissolved in any other circumstances, the provisions of the Dissolution Regulations must be followed.**

31. Interpretation

In this constitution:

“parks” includes, but is not limited to, any public park, gardens, green open space, woods, nature reserve or recreation ground

“connected person” means:

- (a) a child, parent, grandchild, grandparent, brother or sister of the charity trustee;
- (b) the spouse or civil partner of the charity trustee or of any person falling within sub-clause (a) above;
- (c) a person carrying on business in partnership with the charity trustee or with any person falling within sub- clause (a) or (b) above;
- (d) an institution which is controlled –
 - (i) by the charity trustee or any connected person falling within sub clause (a), (b), or (c) above; or
 - (ii) by two or more persons falling within sub-clause (d)(i), when taken together
- (e) a body corporate in which –

- (i) the charity trustee or any connected person falling within sub-clauses (a) to (c) has a substantial interest; or
- (ii) two or more persons falling within sub-clause (e) (i) who, when taken together, have a substantial interest.

Section 118 of the Charities Act 2011 apply for the purposes of interpreting the terms used in this constitution.

“General Regulations” means the Charitable Incorporated Organisations (General) Regulations 2012.

“Dissolution Regulations” means the Charitable Incorporated Organisations (Insolvency and Dissolution) Regulations 2012.

The “Communications Provisions” means the Communications Provisions in [Part 10, Chapter 4] of the General Regulations. “charity trustee” means a charity trustee of the NFPGS.

A “poll” means a counted vote or ballot, usually (but not necessarily) in writing.