

SLIP END & DISTRICT **COMMUNITY PROJECTS GROUP** **CONSTITUTION**

This Constitution of the Slip End Community Projects Group supersedes all previous Constitutions. This Constitution was agreed to at a Core Committee meeting held on 24th January 2012 and was signed by the Chairperson, and deemed to come into effect, on the 24th January 2012.

For all matters related to Slip End & District Community Projects Group, the terms “*Slip End*” and “*The Parish*” include the village of Slip End and the adjoining hamlets of Woodside, Aley Green and Pepperstock.

Slip End & District Community Projects Group is a not-for-profit organisation established to support and manage projects within the Parish of Slip End. These projects will be of benefit to all or part of the local community. The Slip End & District Community Projects Group is supported by, but not part of, Slip End Parish Council.

1. Aims of the Slip End Community Projects group are:

- a) To be a voice for the residents of this community regarding the future of their parish.
- b) To enable all residents to participate in projects and activities that will enhance the quality of life through the provision of social, cultural and practical amenities, opportunities and events.
- c) To uphold equal opportunities and work for good relations amongst all members of the community.
- d) To promote opportunities for existing local business, charitable and interest groups to explore the benefits of working together and raising awareness of what they currently do.
- e) To be a forum for ideas, discussions and suggestions that will maintain a relevant Parish Plan for our parish.
- f) To actively engage and consult with all sections of our community.
- g) To be an “umbrella” group providing administrative and management support for the existing Youth Club and Village Day Team and other such groups which may be formed in the future.
- h) To receive funds from the Parish Council to distribute amongst local charitable and not-for-profit organisations as democratically agreed by Committee members.

- i) To distribute Christmas gifts to residents of the Parish who are over 65 years of age and have resided in the Parish for 5 years or more (one gift per household) with funds from the Parish Council augmented by donations from local businesses and groups.
- j) To actively seek funding to ensure the long-term viability of this group. This may be via grants from the public or private sector. Funding will be used not only for projects but also for the employment of administrative staff and volunteers to run the group and to supply the resources they need.
- k) To be an open-minded and welcoming group that will consider suggestions from all residents where the aim is to improve the quality of life in this parish.
- l) To work with Central Bedfordshire Unitary Authority and other organisations for the benefit of the community.
- m) Slip End & District Community Projects Group shall be non-political.

2. Membership

- a) Membership shall be open to all residents of Slip End Parish and to those who work in Slip End Parish or have other meaningful links with the Parish. Membership shall be free.
- b) All residents of a voting age will have an equal vote. For youth related issues young people will be fully consulted.

3. Core Committee

- a) The Core Committee will carry out the day-to-day management of the group.
- b) The Core Committee shall consist of 7 (seven) members including Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Community Projects Manager and Treasurer.
- c) At all times the Core Committee will include a minimum of two active members of Slip End Parish Council,
- d) Officers shall carry out the duties given to them at public meetings.
- e) There will be an Annual General Meeting every May to elect members to the Core Committee and agree the purpose of any sub-committees, which may change over time as new projects are launched and completed.

4. Meetings

- a) There will be at least four meetings each year.
- b) Meetings are open to all members.

- c) The quorum for all Meetings of the Slip End & District Community Projects Group will be 5 members including at least two members of parish council and 2 members of the core committee.
- d) Amendments to the constitution may be proposed at any meeting.
- e) Slip End & District Community Projects Group has the power to affiliate to any organisation, which may be of benefit to its members.
- f) Any member may make a proposal. In order for it to be voted on by other members it must be seconded or supported by someone else.
- g) Only members present at the meeting may vote.
- h) Before voting any member may propose an amendment that must also be seconded.
- i) No member shall exercise more than one vote.
- j) In the event of an equal vote, the Chair shall have the casting vote.
- k) At all meetings any offensive behaviour, including racist, sexist or inflammatory remarks, will not be permitted. Anyone behaving in an offensive way or breaking the equal opportunities policy may be asked not to attend further meetings or to resign from the Slip End & District Community Projects Group if an apology is not given or the behaviour repeated.

5. Annual General Meeting

- a) The Committee will call an Annual General Meeting in the month of May.
- b) Not less than 14 days notice will be given to all residents.

At this meeting:

- c) The Committee will present an annual report of the Slip End & District Community Projects Group.
- d) The Committee will present the Accounts of the Slip End & District Community Projects Group for the previous year.
- e) The Officers and Core Committee for the next year will be elected.
- f) Any proposals given to the Community Projects Manager at least seven days in advance of the meeting will be discussed.

7. Code of Conduct at Meetings

- a) The chair should welcome members and others to the meeting

- b) Declarations of interest should be made at the start of the meeting or as they arise during the meeting.
- c) The chair should generally avoid getting involved in debates at meetings, their main task is to chair the meeting
- d) Speakers should go through the chair and keep to the subject being discussed
- e) Only one member should speak at a time and there should be no cross talking
- f) Meeting must start at the stated time and abide by the agenda
- g) Late arrivals should enter quietly and not disrupt the meeting with apologies
- h) Mobile phones should be switched off during the meeting
- i) If things are getting heated a five-minute time out can be called for at the discretion of the chair
- j) Wherever possible jargon should be avoided. If it is used then a full explanation should be given
- k) It is the responsibility of each member to ensure that they are prepared for the meeting by reading all the relevant papers and bringing them to the meeting.

Notwithstanding the above frame of reference and good practice, it is the aim of the Slip End & District Community Projects Group to be accessible and welcoming. To this end, the Committee will aim for a more relaxed, informal approach to meetings.

8. Finance

- a) All money raised by or on behalf of Slip End & District Community Projects Group is only to be used to further the aims of the Slip End & District Community Projects Group.
- b) The treasurer shall maintain a bank account in the name of Slip End & District Community Projects Group.
- c) Cheque signatories will be all current members of the core committee excluding the Community Projects Manager. These should not be from the same household or the same family.
- d) All cheques and instructions to the Slip End & District Community Projects Group's bankers shall require two of the agreed signatures.
- e) The core committee is able to authorize payments of up to £250. A public meeting must authorize any payments exceeding this amount.
- f) Accounts will be submitted to Slip End Parish Council for scrutiny in May & November each year.

- g) The treasurer shall have the accounts checked by an independent person with adequate financial experience, for example, a representative of a community organisation, law centre or council for voluntary service, at the end of each financial year.
- h) The annual accounts shall be made available to members at the AGM.

9. Grant Awards & Funding

- a) Slip End & District Community Projects Group will hold a public meeting every November to decide on grant awards to be made in the following financial year.
- b) Any members with a vested interest in a particular application must declare their interest at the beginning of discussions. They may make representations to the meeting but are not permitted to vote on the application.
- c) Representatives of all groups applying for a grant will be invited to attend the meeting to make representations.
- d) Grant applications may be made at any time of the year but may be deferred for discussion until the meeting in November.
- e) Slip End & District Community Projects Group will submit a funding request to Slip End Parish council each November. This will detail the funding requirement for the running of the Slip End & District Community Projects Group, any groups within Community Projects Group, e.g. Youth Club and the provision of grants to local not for profit organizations.

10. Equal Opportunities Policy

- a) We will not discriminate on any grounds. This includes those of race, colour, age, religious or political beliefs, disability or illness, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, class, learning difficulty, appearance or employment status.
- b) Slip End & District Community Projects Group will ensure there is full participation and equality of opportunity of all members in the composition and operation of its core committee, sub-committees, meetings and in the election of its officers. We will encourage representation from those currently under represented.
- c) In its meetings and the conduct of its business generally, Slip End & District Community Projects Group will not tolerate any racist, sexist, or other discriminatory remarks
- d) Slip End & District Community Projects Group will ensure equality in its provision of facilities, support, services & funding.
- e) Slip End & District Community Projects Group will consider the needs of the whole community when booking venues and arranging times of meetings.
- f) Slip End & District Community Projects Group will monitor the effectiveness of its equal opportunities policy and look for continued improvement of involvement each year.

11. Dissolution

- a) The Slip End & District Community Projects Group may be dissolved at any time with a two-thirds majority vote at a quorate Meeting. At least fourteen days notice must be given to all residents.
- b) Any assets (financial or otherwise) remaining, after the payment of all debts and liabilities, shall be returned to Slip End Parish Council to be administered appropriately.

SIGNED -----

POSITION -----

DATE -----