

Constitution of the **Friends of Garendon Park**

1. Name.

To be commonly known as Friends of Garendon Park and referred to in this document as 'the Group'.

2. Origin.

The Friends of Garendon Park was formed in 2024 at a time when Garendon Park had recently been open to the public for the first time in living memory.

The Friends of Garendon Park was inaugurated on the 10th June 2024 at a public meeting held at the Charnwood College, Loughborough, at which members of the community formally agreed to the formation of the Group. This followed a published invitation to all residents in the area.

3. Residential Area Covered.

The area covered is Loughborough, Shepshed, and Hathern.

4. Objectives of the Friends of Garendon Park

To promote a high-quality environment and safeguard the interest of residents in Garendon Listed Park and Gardens known as Garendon Country Park; to maintain a good quality of life and to promote a sense of community amongst all residents of the area.

The Group will take an interest in, and promote (a) the local history (b) the wildlife and biodiversity, (c) the health and wellbeing of all users (d) use by wider organisations such as schools, children, walking, cycling, running, and disability groups, so that the best interest of residents and the park are served as a whole.

The Group will uphold equal opportunities and work towards good relations between all members of the community including new residents, the Borough Council as the local planning authority, Persimmon Homes, as the Park owners, and other interested parties.

5. Membership of the General Meeting

- a) Membership shall be open to all Loughborough residents, irrespective of tenure. Residents from Shepshed, Hathern and surrounds are also

welcome to join. A membership list will be maintained, from those registering at General Meetings or giving their details to a member of the committee, and be used solely for the purpose of notification of meetings and sharing items of interest approved by the committee or its management group.

- b) All voting members must be at least 16 years of age.
- c) Formal membership will end upon request, ceasing contact or upon leaving the area defined in a) above.
- d) Membership will be free of subscription.
- e) There will be an Annual General Meeting in each calendar year, as well as General Meetings, depending on issues it is necessary to raise with members.

6. The Management Committee

- a) A committee will be elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Group and shall serve for 12 months or until the next AGM, whichever comes first.
- b) The committee will consist of at least eight members, who shall have the power to co-opt other members on to the committee, during the course of the year. All members will have voting rights.
- c) The committee will elect, each year, a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. No committee member shall fill more than one of these positions.
- d) The committee will make and carry out decisions in accordance with the objectives of the Group.
- e) Meetings of the committee will be open to any member of the Friends of Garendon Park who wishes to attend.
- f) There must be at least five of the committee members present for any decisions to be made at a committee meeting.
- g) Committee members can be voted off if they have not attended three consecutive meetings without good reason and have not submitted their apologies.
- h) Committee members must declare any interest they may have in the topic under discussion and the committee will decide if they need to forfeit their right to vote on that occasion.

7. Conduct of business and standing orders for Committee and General Meetings.

- a) Decisions will be agreed by a simple majority; voting by show of hands.
- b) Meetings will end at the time agreed by the committee unless those present agree to extend the meeting.
- c) The role of the Secretary shall be to prepare the agenda for the Committee and for the General Meetings and to keep the minutes of all formal meetings. The Secretary will take advice from the Chairperson/Vice

Chairperson in drawing up the agenda and preparing the minutes before they are circulated. A correspondence secretary may also be appointed who will be responsible, jointly with the Chairperson/Vice Chairperson, for all formal communications of the Group.

- d) Agendas will be published in advance of both the Committee and General Meetings. Items for the agenda should be forwarded to the Secretary and Chairperson/Vice Chairperson fourteen days before the meeting, where possible.
- e) Minutes will be distributed to the membership as soon as reasonably possible after a meeting.

8. FINANCES

- a) The Group's finances shall be the responsibility of the Treasurer and the Management Committee jointly.
- b) The Group may raise funds by obtaining grants from other bodies or by asking for donations at both the General Meetings and the Committee Meetings in order to pay for the meeting room and general expenses of the meeting. All money raised by, or on behalf of the Group, shall be applied to further its objectives.
- c) All funds shall normally be kept in a bank account that will be opened in the name of the Group and managed by the Treasurer. However, the Treasurer may maintain a small petty cash balance for items of expenditure less than £20.00. In such case a petty cash book shall be kept recording all items of income and expenditure supported by receipts.
- d) The Secretary, Treasurer and the Chairperson shall be signatories on the bank account and all cheques will require two of these three signatures.
- e) No officer shall sign a blank cheque – all cheques to be filled in before signatures are added. All payments must be supported by invoices/receipts.
- f) Accounts shall be kept by the Treasurer, and a report made to every committee meeting of income received, expenditure made and the current balance of the account.
- g) Once a year, the accounts will be prepared in advance of the Annual General Meeting and presented to the Chairperson and Secretary for them to agree and sign as a true and accurate record. These accounts will then be checked and verified (audited) by an independent person of good repute and presented to the General Meeting for discussion and approval.

9. GENERAL MEETINGS.

These will be held as requested by 20 or more members and notified to members.

- a) Members will be given at least 14 days' notice of a general meeting.
- b) All votes will be decided by a simple majority of the members present.

- c) Any member, having the written support of 20 other members, may request the committee to call a Special Public Meeting of the Group. The committee shall call the meeting within 21 days of this written request.

10. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

- a) An AGM shall be held every year to discuss the activities of the Group, to receive the audited accounts and to elect the committee.
- b) The AGM shall be held at a suitable venue to accommodate as many members as possible.
- c) The quorum shall normally be not less than 20 people including those on the committee and present at the meeting.
- d) The date of the AGM will normally be arranged in advance. However, members will normally be reminded fourteen days before the meeting takes place.
- e) At the AGM the resignation of all committee members will be accepted and a new committee elected to take office at the close of the meeting.

11. CHANGES TO CONSTITUTION

- a) This constitution shall only be changed at the AGM or at a Special Public Meeting of the Group.
- b) For decisions to be taken there must be a majority of at least 51% of members present. The voting shall be by show of hands.
- c) Proposed changes to the constitution shall be submitted to the secretary in writing not less than 21 days before the AGM. The secretary must notify members of any proposed changes in advance.

12. Commitments and Agreements

All commitments and agreements properly entered into by the Chairperson and the Management Group shall be adopted by successor appointees to these posts.

13. DISSOLUTION OF THE GROUP

- a) The Group may only be dissolved by a special meeting called for that purpose. Such a meeting shall come about following a proposal in writing and signed by a simple majority of those remaining on the committee being submitted to the Secretary.
- b) All members shall be informed of such a meeting at least 14 days before the date of the meeting.
- c) Dissolution of the Group shall only take effect if agreed by two thirds of the members present and voting at that meeting.
- d) Any assets remaining, after meeting liabilities, are to be distributed among local charities or other community group nominated by the meeting.

e) Any money received via funding bodies should be returned to the funders in relation to the rules of that body.

14. Adoption of the constitution.

This revised constitution was adopted at the General Meeting of Members dated 10th June 2024 and signed by;

Chairperson.....

Treasurer.....

Secretary.....