



**Friends of
the Earth**

Constitution for South Bedfordshire Friends of the Earth

Name and Objectives

- 1.** The name of the group shall be South Bedfordshire Friends of the Earth.
- 2.** The group shall work within the following geographical area. The Boundaries of South Bedfordshire District Council, thereby including Dunstable, Houghton Regis, Leighton Buzzard, and the villages within these boundaries. There has been local government reorganisation and therefore Central Bedfordshire has replaced South Bedfordshire. Our main focus is within the area of South Bedfordshire. We occasionally work in what used to be mid Bedfordshire in association with a coalition of Parish councils. However we would not work in Bedford or in Milton Keynes or Aylesbury or Luton as there are or might be other Friends of the Earth Groups in these areas.
- 3.** The group shall operate within the terms of the Partnership Agreement and Trade Mark Licence Agreement agreed by the group and Friends of the Earth England Wales and Northern Ireland.
- 4.** The aims of the group are to support the campaigns of National Friends of the Earth whose vision is one of working with others to create a sustainable global community; societies where people have decided to build the conditions for everyone to enjoy a dignified existence and good livelihood while not impinging on the rights of others. The sustainable societies we are seeking will conserve a diverse planet and improve conditions for people now and future generations.
The aim to reduce CO2 emissions at a global national, regional and local level.

Membership

5. Membership of the group is open to any person supporting the aims of the group, who pays a subscription fee as shall be determined by the Annual General Meeting of the group.

6. Membership is open to all persons without discrimination.

7. Only local group members can participate in the election of postholders to the local group and vote at the Annual General Meeting of the group.

Meetings and Officers

8. The group shall have at least six meetings a year; to be known as General Meetings. Members shall be notified of all General Meetings at least 7 days in advance. A General Meeting shall be the forum at which the major policies of the group shall be agreed. A record of all decisions taken at meetings shall be kept.

9. A General Meeting shall have a quorum to be determined by the Annual General Meeting of the group. If that quorum is not met, major group policy cannot be altered or formulated, nor can any expenditure above a sum to be determined by the Annual General Meeting of the group be sanctioned.

10. The group shall have a number of elected postholders (one of whom shall be a Treasurer). The duties of these postholders will include; managing the finances of the group and keeping accounts; distributing information to the appropriate postholders within the group; supplying Friends of the Earth Limited with a mailing contact and address for receiving information from Friends of the Earth staff; supplying Friends of the Earth Limited with a telephone contact name and number for receiving information from Friends of the Earth staff; supply Friends of the Earth Limited with a telephone name and number and/or postal address which can be made available to members of the public. The minimum age at which people can act as postholders of the group is sixteen.

11. The Treasurer shall be responsible for presenting the accounts of the group at least once a year to a General Meeting, and also to any other meeting if requested to do so by a General Meeting, at one month's notice.

12. The group shall open a bank or building society account in the name specified above. At least two of the elected postholders shall be signatories to the account, and at least two signatures shall be required on any cheque drawn on this account.

13. Policy decisions on a specific issue may be delegated at a General Meeting to a sub-group. The sub-group shall be required to keep records of its business and to report regularly at General Meetings.

14. The group must hold an A.G.M. every year and re-elect postholders every year.

Resignations and Terminations of Membership of Group

15. If any postholder wishes to resign (s)he shall inform the General Meeting in writing and/or verbally. When necessary a group member can be co-opted to carry out that postholder's duties until the next General Meeting. Election of a new postholder may take place at the following General Meeting. The group will inform Friends of the Earth of new postholders and/or co-optees as appropriate.

16. The group has the right and responsibility to suspend or expel a member who has contravened the licence agreement with Friends of the Earth EWNI, or brought the name of the local group into disrepute, or been deemed to work against the aims of the group. Such a decision can only be made at a quorate meeting of the group, after at least one months notice has been given to all members.

17. Each member has the right and responsibility to call the attention of Friends of the Earth EWNI to any of the group's activities which in his/her view contravene the licence agreement, provided s/he has the written support of at least two other members of the group.

Termination

18. The group shall be wound up by a vote at an Annual General Meeting or by an Extraordinary General Meeting called for that purpose. Notice of intention to wind up the group must be sent to all members and Friends of the Earth EWNI at least one month before any such meeting. At the meeting where it is decided to wind up the group, a decision shall also be taken as to what shall be done with any remaining funds. In the event of a decision not being taken, the money will revert to Friends of the Earth Limited