

Abram Ward Community Cooperative

Abram Communities Together (ACT)

Constitution

1. Abram Communities Together

- a). The Neighbourhood Forum shall be known as Abram Communities Together.
- b). Abram Communities Together is affiliated to Abram Ward Community Cooperative
- c). Abram Communities Together shall not be affiliated to any political organisation.
- d). The duration of Abram Communities Together is five years from the official date of designation by Wigan Council.
- e). The Forum was designated on 6 Aug 2015 as Abram Ward Neighbourhood Forum but shall be acting under the new name of Abram Communities Together from 13 April 2018.

2. Area of Concern

- a). Abram Communities Together will pursue its objectives in the area known as the Abram Ward (The Area), a geographic area designated by Wigan Council, for the benefit of the inhabitants of the area including residents, business operators, traders and community and voluntary groups.
- b). The Area includes the villages of Abram, Platt Bridge, Bickershaw, Bamfurlong and Spring View (not including Chatsworth Fold estate as part of this falls into Ince Ward)
- c). The Area can only be altered by a General Meeting of Abram Communities Together prior to approval by Wigan Council.

3. Objectives

- a). To prepare, in partnership with Wigan Council, a Neighbourhood Plan (The Plan) for the Area.
- b). To encourage the involvement of the community of the Area in the preparation, production and implementation of the Plan.
- c). To promote and improve the social, economic and environmental well-being of the Area.
- d). To be a voice for the Area's community and highlight issues pertinent to the Area.
- e). To lobby for funds to carry out the work of Abram Communities Together and to enhance the social, economic and environmental well-being of the Area.
- f). To engender social cohesion in the Area between existing and future residents and heighten the feeling of 'community spirit' in the Area.
- g). To continue building an inclusive and supportive community; where people feel a sense of ownership and pride in the Area.
- h) To be 'Good Neighbours' and look out for each other, reporting issues such as crime etc.
- i). To promote Abram Ward as a safe and pleasant place to live, work, shop, and spend leisure time.
- j). To promote and develop Community Enterprise and support individuals in developing their own Micro Providers
- k). To empower local people to volunteer to support the social, economic and environmental needs of the Area

l) To embrace new organisational partnerships that improves local people's lives and improves the Greenheart land and Green Open spaces across the Area

4. Mission Statement

a. Inspiring Abram Ward Residents to take greater ownership of their community, and create an Area where everyone is welcomed.

5. Management Committee

a). Abram Communities Together shall be administered by a Management Committee of no less than 7 people and no more than 15, who must be at least 18 years of age and / or contribute to the Social Value of Abram Ward, be it to live or work

b). The Management Committee is responsible for the good governance of Abram Communities Together. Management Committee Members must at all times adhere to the principles set out in the Good Governance Code for voluntary organizations: (<http://www.goodgovernancecode.org.uk/good-governance-code/>).

c). Decisions of the Management Committee will be decided by a majority on a show of hands.

d). A quorum for the Committee will be 7 members.

e). The initial Management Committee was elected at the inaugural Steering Group meeting of Abram Communities Together.

f). Members of the Management Committee must stand for re-election at the Annual General Meeting.

g). The Management Committee will elect officers consisting of Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Membership Secretary and Minutes Secretary.

h). Members of the Management Committee must declare any membership of a political organisation to the Chair or his/her deputy.

i). Members of the Management Committee can constitute sub-committees to further the objectives of Abram Communities Together. Members of the sub-committees must be part of the general membership and be approved by the Management Committee.

6. Officers

a). **Chair:** It shall be the responsibility of the Chair to chair all meetings, or a designated deputy in his/her absence, and to ensure that meetings are held in accordance with the provisions of the constitution.

b). **Vice Chair:** It shall be the responsibility of the Vice Chair to aid and deputise for the Chair.

c). **Treasurer:** It shall be the responsibility of the Treasurer to ensure the sound and lawful financial management of Abram Communities Together.

d). **Secretary:** It shall be the responsibility of the Secretary to keep an up-to-date register of Abram Communities Together members and to ensure that minutes are taken of all Management Committee, General and Annual General Meetings, circulate them to the Management Committee and/or the wider membership, and ensure they are publicised on the Abram Communities Together website. A link to the website will also be included within the Abram Ward Community Cooperative website

7. Membership

a). Membership of Abram Communities Together is open to all people over the age of 16 who live or have their main place of work or study in the Area.

- b). Membership is open to elected Wigan Council members and Wigan Council officers who represent any part of the Area.
- c). Membership shall be drawn from all parts of the Area and all villages within the Area's community.
- d). Abram Communities Together shall have a minimum of 21 member votes
- e). The Secretary shall maintain a list of members and will have to power to accept new members.
- f). Any member may resign his/her membership by providing the Membership Secretary with written notice.
- g). The Management Committee may refuse membership, or may terminate or suspend the membership of any member by resolution passed at a Management Committee meeting where it is considered membership would be detrimental to the objectives and activities of Abram Communities Together.

8. Powers

To further its objectives, Abram Communities Together Management Committee may exercise the power to:

- a). Open a bank account to manage the funds of Abram Communities Together.
- b). Invite and receive contributions and raise funds to finance the work of Abram Communities Together.
- d). Publicise and promote the work of Abram Communities Together.
- d). Work with community organisations within the Area and exchange information, advice and knowledge with them.
- e). Liaise with businesses and commercial organisations, including housing developers, with a direct interest in the future of the Area.

9. Meetings

a). Management Committee Meetings

- 1. The meetings and sub-committees can be arranged, publicised and undertaken on an ad hoc basis.
- 2. Voting shall be made by a show of hands on a majority basis. In the case of a tied vote, the Chair or an appointed deputy shall have the casting vote.
- 3. Minutes of previous meetings should be circulated to the Management Committee 7 days before the meeting at which they are due to be ratified.
- 4. Declarations of interest must be recorded at the start of any meeting. Any Management Committee member declaring an interest will be ineligible to vote on the issue concerned.
- 5. Comments to the press by any Management Committee member should be approved by a majority of the Management Committee at a meeting or via email/telephone.

b). Membership Meetings

- 1. For Membership Meeting business to be conducted, a quorum of 10 members must be present at the meeting.
- 2. The whole membership should be informed at least 14 days prior to a Membership Meeting.
- 3. All members of Abram Communities Together are eligible to vote at Membership Meetings and voting shall be made by a show of hands on a majority basis. In the case of a tied vote, the Chair or an appointed deputy shall have the casting vote.
- 4. Membership Meetings shall be announced as the Management Committee sees fit.
- 5. An Annual General Meeting (AGM) should be held within six months of the formal

designation of Abram Communities Together as a Neighbourhood Forum (by Wigan Council). Subsequent AGMs must be held within 12 months of the previous one. AGMs are Membership Meetings.

6. At the AGM, the Management Committee will be elected and a report of activities should be given by the Chair and/or Vice Chair and the Treasurer.

7. Minutes of previous meetings should be circulated to the Membership 7 days before the meeting at which they are due to be ratified.

8. An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) can be requested by any member of Abram Communities Together. This request must be made in writing to the Chair. The Management Committee will discuss the request and decide if it should proceed. An EGM is a Membership Meeting.

9. Declarations of interest must be recorded at the start of any meeting. Any Member declaring an interest will be ineligible to vote on the issue concerned.

10. Finances

a). Abram Communities Together, being affiliated to Abram Ward Community Cooperative, will use the same bank account and accounting year shall run from April 1 to March 31 each year.

b). Anymoney acquired by Abram Communities Together, including donations and contributions, shall be paid into the bank account.

c). All funds must be used to further the objectives of Abram Communities Together

d). Any cheques / funds paid from the account must be signed by at least two Officers.

e). Recording of any income/expenditure shall be the responsibility of the Treasurer, who will ensure funds are utilised effectively and that finances stay within budget.

f). An annual financial report shall be presented at the AGM by the Treasurer.

11. Neighbourhood Plan

a). Any decision to submit to Wigan Council for approval a Neighbourhood Plan shall be subject to a vote at a Membership Meeting of Abram Communities Together.

b). Abram Communities Together will strive to consult at all stages of the creation of a Neighbourhood Plan with all residents and businesses in the Area, whether members of Abram Communities Together or not. It shall then maintain the plan, if approved.

c). Abram Communities Together will use the Abram Ward Community Cooperative website and use social media tools and traditional means (leaflets, newsletters, posters etc) to publicise the neighbourhood planning process, record it and seek views from the public.

d). The Management Committee, or sub-committees, shall be delegated to work with the local planning authority and any independent experts, consultants and advisors on the Neighbourhood Plan as they see fit.

e). The Neighbourhood Plan shall comply with national and local planning policies.

12. The Constitution

a). The initial constitution shall be adopted by a quorate Management Committee in a majority vote.

b). Any changes to this constitution must be agreed by a majority vote at a Membership Meeting under the rules outlined earlier.

c). Proposed amendments to this Constitution or must be conveyed to the Chair formally in writing by any Member. The Management Committee shall then decide whether to put the proposed amendments to a Membership Meeting.

13. Dissolution

- a). Abram Communities Together can be dissolved if deemed necessary by the members in a majority vote of 50% of the membership at a Membership Meeting.
- b). Funds upon dissolution will go to Abram Ward Community Cooperative and be used to distribute to community groups across the Area

This constitution was adopted at a meeting of the Management Committee held at Platt Bridge Community Zone on Tuesday 5th May 2015 by the following members of the Management Committee:

Barry Hampson
Ricky Parkinson
Julie Davies
David Baxter
Bryan Atkinson
Tracey Williams
Alan Derbyshire
Denise McCarthy
Sue Hughes
Gladys Jameson
Angela Brunt
Amanda Robinson
Carl Sweeney
Lynn Hankey
Carl Davies
Elliot Brookes
Ed Ellis
Donna Longhurst
Sue Hall
Ann Stein
Andrew Meadows
Marie Philpott
Wayne Simm
Josie Maguire