

MDFG Constitution December 2023

1. The Group is officially called The Meopham & District Footpaths Group, hereafter referred to as the Group, but commonly known as Meopham Walkers.
2. The aims of the Group are:
 - 2.1. To organise walks and to encourage the use of public rights of way.
 - 2.2. To endeavour to protect rights of way for access and enjoyment by the public.
3. There is one class of membership from 12 November 2021. Honorary and Life Members at that date will remain. Membership will lapse if the subscription is not paid within 2 months of the due date, when all membership details will be deleted from our records to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation. As far as possible, business of the Group will be conducted electronically.
4. The annual subscriptions shall be determined by a simple majority at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Annual subscriptions for the Group's financial year (September to August) are due for payment on the 1st January in that financial year. If considered necessary by the Executive Committee, an increase in the annual subscription must be proposed and agreed at an AGM for collection from the following 1st January. Should the financial circumstances of the Group allow, a decision may be taken by the Executive Committee to suspend collection of annual subscriptions for a particular year. New members who join the Group during a particular year will pay a joining fee equivalent to the annual subscription. They will not pay an additional annual subscription for that year, however, they will be liable to pay the annual subscription from the beginning of the following year in the same way as other existing members.
5. All members are entitled to attend and vote at General Meetings of the Group. Members must be given three weeks' notice of a General Meeting. The Agenda for any General Meeting must be sent to all members not less than one week in advance. Members will be encouraged to participate in discussion of any agenda item. At least ten members must be present at a General Meeting to constitute a quorum.
6. An AGM must be held each year as soon as possible after 1st November, when reports from the Committee on the activities of the previous year shall be presented for discussion. The accounts presented by the Treasurer shall be approved at the AGM having been independently certified. The certifier of accounts may be a member who is not on the Executive Committee or a non-member of the Group by preference.
7. Other General Meetings may be called at the discretion of the Executive Committee or at the request of at least fifteen members of the Group in writing to the Executive Committee.

8. The Constitution may be amended at any General Meeting if approved by two-thirds of the members voting at the meeting. Written notice, which must include the proposed amendment or amendments, must be sent to all members, to arrive not less than one week in advance of the General Meeting concerned.
9. The general administration of the Group's affairs shall be by an Executive Committee elected at the AGM and comprising Chair, Treasurer, Walks Co-ordinator, Administrator, Membership Secretary, and optional Publicity Officer. Committee members shall be elected for a period of two years and may be nominated to stand for further terms thereafter. Nominations for election must be proposed and seconded by two members and the nominee must signify willingness to stand. Nominations must be given to the Chair in writing prior to the AGM.
10. The Executive Committee shall have power to:
 - 10.1. co-opt additional members or request volunteers from the Group membership at any time for a specific purpose or function;
 - 10.2. fill any vacancy occurring between AGMs; existing members of the Committee will do all they can to cover the vacant position(s).
 - 10.3. form sub-committees to facilitate the activities of the Executive Committee. At least one member of the Executive Committee must serve on any such sub-committee;
 - 10.4. take executive action on behalf of the Group where shortage of time precludes consultation of members at a General Meeting; such action to be reported to members as soon as possible.

At least three members of the Executive Committee must be present to constitute a quorum and at least four meetings must be held each year.

All committee members must be prepared to chair a meeting if the Chair is absent.

All committee decisions will be made by consensus wherever possible and by simple majority of those present if a consensus cannot be reached. In the event of a tie, the Chair of the meeting will have the casting vote.

Members are welcome to attend any meeting of the Executive Committee to air any concerns and put forward suggestions, provided at least one week's notice is given to the Administrator or Chair.

11. Members shall be entitled to elect a single Honorary President at a General Meeting. This exceptional appointment will be conferred by way of honour and in a non-executive capacity for a lifetime or until such time as the person elected wishes to stand down.
12. The Committee has the sole authority on the admittance or refusal to membership. Should the Committee decide that any person is unacceptable for membership or, in the case of an existing member, has become unacceptable, the Committee is

authorised to refuse or terminate that person's membership. The existing member must be informed of the issues which have arisen and must be given the opportunity to respond. The Committee must then vote for or against membership being terminated.

13. If at any time there should be insufficient support by Group members to elect an Executive Committee capable of holding quorate meetings, existing members of the committee will do all they can to keep the Group running on a temporary basis, while seeking a long-term solution in consultation with members. If no solution can be found, the Group will be dissolved as in (14) below.
14. The Group can be dissolved at a General Meeting of all members. Members must be given not less than four weeks' notice of the meeting, explaining the issues and options and stating that if, after discussion at the meeting, no other solution can be found, the Group will be dissolved if approved by two-thirds of the members voting at the meeting. Any Group assets to be disposed of in accordance with the majority wishes of members attending the General Meeting. Dissolution procedures shall be undertaken by the retiring Committee. Once all assets have been disposed of, this will constitute the Group's final discharge of responsibility.