

Burton Conservation Volunteers Constitution

1. Name

The name of the organisation is Burton Conservation Volunteers, hereafter referred to as "The Group".

2. Aims & Objectives

Aims

- To promote and provide access to environmental and nature conservation and horticulture, its theory, practice, research, education, and local and global issues.
- To promote partner organisations and partnerships
- To promote values and beliefs which support environmental and nature conservation as well as individual, group and community inclusion, participation and citizenship.
- To promote practical green values and lifestyle.
- To promote Fairtrade products, trade and consumer awareness.
- To promote and adhere to Equal Opportunities, Diversity and other related inclusive policies and best practice.
- To promote volunteering and community support.

Objectives

- The provision of a volunteer-based conservation group which supports the volunteering ethos but strives to attain professional standards of efficiency and effectiveness, and which is business-orientated.
- The provision of volunteer support, individual and group development, through conservation and horticultural-based activity.
- The provision of appropriate training for members as and when required and as funds permit.
- The provision of education-based activities which support conservation or horticultural objectives.
- Social and cultural activities which foster the aims and objectives of the Group or support the local community and social issues.
- To raise Group income through the provision of conservation and horticultural work, related activities and social enterprise e.g. services and goods, including consultation fees. In addition, funds will be raised via donations, fundraising, grant applications, sponsorship or loans.

3. Volunteer Membership

The Group may admit as volunteers any persons sympathetic to the aims and objectives of the Group. Candidates for voluntary membership are non-elected and are admitted at the discretion of the Committee or a committee member who is leading an activity, this in accordance with Equal Opportunities and Diversity policy best practice.

No fees are payable by voluntary members, participation is voluntary and free of charge excluding attendance at social events, training, etc.

Notice of termination of voluntary members is not required unless by an elected committee member who must give due notice as outlined in Section 5.

The Committee shall have the power to expel any member who shall offend against the rules of the Group, Health & Safety best practice or whose conduct shall, in the opinion of the Committee, render him or her unfit for voluntary membership of the Group. Before any such member is expelled, the Secretary shall give the stated person seven days' notice to attend a meeting of the Committee, and shall give them the opportunity to respond formally to the stated complaints made against him or her. No voluntary member shall be expelled without first having an opportunity of appearing before the Committee, and answering complaints made against him or her, and unless 30% of the Committee attend the committee meeting at which the expulsion is decided and vote in favour of, by a simple majority of those attending, his or her expulsion.

4. General Meetings

The Annual General Meeting of the Group shall be held not later than July each year. At this meeting, business to be transacted shall include the adoption of a report and financial statement, and the election of the Committee.

Other General Meetings shall be convened on the first Thursday of every month or as otherwise arranged by the Committee. Members will be duly notified verbally and written confirmation will be available on the website. Members are encouraged to raise any issues arising at the earliest convenience prior to the meeting, with a minimum of 24 hours' notice. All members can attend and submit their own matters or authorise any other committee member to be their representative.

Extraordinary General Meetings shall take place as required and will adhere to stricter formalised procedures. The Secretary shall, on receipt of a written notice, convene an Extraordinary General Meeting of members within five days of the notice. No business other than that specified in the notice shall be dealt with at an Extraordinary General Meeting.

The quorum for any General Meeting will be five active members.

All Meetings shall take place in premises which are accessible.

5. Management Committee

The management of the Group shall be vested in a management committee, referred to herein as the Committee, which will comprise a Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, and such other posts as are required, and elected at the Annual General Meeting.

Each elected member will retire annually; on retiring, members shall be eligible for re-election.

The Committee may fill any vacancy that occurs between Annual General Meetings. Such a member will retire at the next Annual General Meeting, and be eligible for re-election. The Committee may co-opt additional members as required, to serve on the Committee until the next Annual General Meeting.

Any Committee member who wishes to retire in the interim period between Annual General Meetings must give 21 days' notice in writing. The remaining Committee members may then if required co-opt a replacement.

Any vacancy on the Committee will not affect the ability of the Committee to manage the Group, provided that a quorum is present at the meeting. The Quorum for any Committee meeting shall be 3 Committee members.

6. Finance

Any money raised by or on behalf of the Group shall be applied to further the aims of the Group and not otherwise, except for payment in good faith of reasonable and proper remuneration to any volunteer of the Group, or the repayment of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses.

Any money received shall be paid into the account of the Group at the bank or building society to be decided by the Committee.

Any money paid out in the name of the Group shall be made only by cheque or the official group debit card from the group bank account. Signatories to the account will be decided by the Committee and all cheques shall be signed as per the agreed financial standing orders.

Any Committee member who carries out an agreed activity on behalf of the group will not be personally liable for debts, and will be entitled to be indemnified from the Group's funds, provided that no payments shall be made, or obligations entered into, which cannot be met from the balance of funds held by the Group.

The Group's accounting year shall run in line with the calendar year, or otherwise at the discretion of the Treasurer.

A copy of the most recent annual statement of accounts shall be made available to any member on request, and shall be presented to each Annual General Meeting.

7. Changes to the Constitution

Any changes to this Constitution can only be made at a General Meeting, including an Annual General Meeting, and notices giving full details of the proposed changes shall be posted to all members not less than 21 days before the meeting.

Any members of the Group can propose and second a change to the constitution by writing to the Secretary not less than 21 days before the General Meeting.

8. Winding Up

The Group can only be wound up by a vote at a General Meeting, provided that notices giving full details have been posted to all members not less than 21 days before the meeting.

If the Group is wound up and after settling all proper debts and obligations there is any money or property remaining, these shall not be given to any members. Instead, these shall be transferred to an organisation with similar aims and objects, e.g. The Conservation Volunteers or Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, as decided by the Committee.

February 2014