



St Albans District Neighbourhood Watch Association Constitution

1 Name

The Association will be called St Albans District Neighbourhood Watch Association. (hereafter named the Association)

2 Aims and Objectives

- a) The Association is responsible at District level, equally with the Police, for the development of policy and good practice for Watch schemes in St Albans District and will abide by the guidelines contained in and the spirit of the HertsWatch Charter.
- b) The Association shall act as a link between Watch schemes in St Albans District and the local Police.
- c) The Association shall actively encourage the creation of Watches within St Albans District and formulate best practice for reaching priority areas/groups.
- d) The Association shall contact and liaise with other Neighbourhood Watch Associations, both within and outside Hertfordshire, with the aim of sharing information of mutual interest.
- e) The Association shall contact and liaise with other organisations which are concerned with reducing crime and the fear of crime and/or promoting community safety/community spirit with the aim of sharing information of mutual interest.
- f) The Association shall work in partnership with Hertswatch.

3 Powers

In furtherance of these aims the Association may,

- a) Nominate individuals to represent St Albans District at County level on the HertsWatch committee. These shall be the Chair and/or nominated deputies.
- b) Raise funds from any person, organisation or corporate bodies provided that the Association will not undertake any permanent trading activities in raising funds for its objectives.
- c) Do such other lawful things as are necessary to promote the above aims.
- d) The Association will be non-partisan in politics, non-sectarian in religion, non-discriminatory in race, gender or ability and will embrace diversity. Any cases of behaviour by members within the Association deemed to be offensive for the above or for other reasons will be referred to the Association as outlined para 11 and Standing Orders.

4 Membership

Membership of the Association shall comprise of the following:-

- a) Ward Co-ordinators in the District of St Albans – When new Ward Co-ordinators are required, any person may recommend a prospective volunteer and their appointment will be confirmed at the next Ward Co-ordinators meeting and officially welcomed in writing by the chair.

- b) Representatives from Hertfordshire Constabulary (non-voting)
- c) If desired, representatives from Hertfordshire Police Authority (non-voting)
- d) Appointed Neighbourhood Watch District Advisors (non-voting).
- e) Representatives from HertsWatch (non-voting)
- f) Membership criteria will be reviewed should District or Constabulary structure change.
- g) Additional membership or invitation to guests may be implemented if agreed by the Association.

5 Officers of St Albans District Neighbourhood Watch Association

- a) The following officers will be elected to serve in the Association as the Executive Committee to uphold all its roles, responsibilities and actions required within this Constitution and prevailing Standing Orders.

b)

Chair
Deputy Chair
Secretary
Treasurer

The Committee shall, in the general interest of the Association, have the authority to determine the activities and organisation of the Association and the spending of its finance by majority vote.

In the event that the Chairperson is unavailable, the Deputy Chair will take on the duties of Chairperson.

- c) These officers will be voted into office at an Annual General Meeting.
- d) The following additional officers may be elected as and when deemed appropriate by the Association
 - Project Co-ordinator(s)
 - Publicity Co-ordinator
- e) These additional officers may be voted into office at an Annual General Meeting or co-opted at a suitable time during the year.
- f) *The following officers may be co-opted at any time*
 - Deputy Secretary*
 - Deputy Treasurer*

6 Nominations and Election of Officers

- a) Officers of the Association will be voted in at the Annual General Meeting by Ward Co-ordinators. In the case where a Ward Co-ordinator cannot be present at that meeting, a postal vote will be accepted three days in advance.
- b) Only Association Ward Co-ordinators can nominate or be nominated for election to office, and vote for, officers of the Association.
- c) Nominations for Officers should be received at least three days before the Annual General Meeting.
- d) Election of Officers will be decided by simple majority of those entitled to vote. Each Ward Co-ordinator will have a single vote.
- e) In the case of equality of votes, the existing/outgoing Chair will have the casting vote.
- f) In the event of only one person being nominated for a post, then that person will be declared elected.
- g) Existing officers may stand for re-election.
- h) An inadvertent failure to elect someone to an office or an inadvertent defect in election, appointment, co-option or qualification of any anyone elected to an office, will not invalidate the work of the Association.
- i) In the event of a resignation or death of an elected officer with no deputy, the Association has the right to co-opt an additional person to take over the responsibilities of the named officer on a temporary basis, until the next appropriate full election.

7 The Authority of the St Albans District Neighbourhood Watch Association

- a) The Chair and/or Deputy Chair have the authority to enter into contracts on behalf of the Association. These contracts are restricted to those deemed necessary for the pursuit of the aims and objectives of the Association as agreed by the Association. No individual member is permitted to enter into any binding formal or informal agreements.
- b) The Association may form Sub-Committees to enable it to conduct its affairs more effectively.
- c) A Sub-Committee can only be formed at a meeting of the Association, will comprise of at least three people and is totally responsible to the Association for its actions.

8 Patrons

The Association may elect any person as a patron of the Association for such a period as they think fit and such a person will be entitled to all privileges of membership except that they will not be entitled to vote at meetings nor serve as officers of the Association.

9 Meetings

- a) General meetings will be held a minimum of four times a year.
- b) An Annual General Meeting will normally be held in April.
- c) The business of the Annual General Meeting will include: -
 - Ratification of election of officers.
 - The consideration of an annual report of the work done during the year and of the accounts, if any.
 - The agreement on work priorities for the coming year
 - Where considered necessary, consideration of and voting on proposals to alter this constitution.
- d) The Chair of the Association may at any time at his/her discretion call an Extraordinary General Meeting of the members of the Association.
- e) The Chair shall, within 28 days of receiving a written request to do so (signed by no fewer than six Ward Co-ordinators and a given reason for the request), call an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Association.

10 Conduct of Meetings

a) Quorum

A quorum for the commencement of the Association Meetings and for voting on any proposals in those meetings, are as follows:

- Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting, five voting members or their designated Deputies
- General Meeting, five voting members or their designated Deputies

b) Voting

Meetings will be chaired and all voting will be carried out by a simple show of hands. A “one person – one vote” will apply, except in the case of an equality of votes, the Chair will have a second casting vote.

c) Minutes

All meetings will be minuted by the secretary or a minute-taker and current and past minutes will be made available to members where available and no more than five years old.

d) Standing Orders

The Association may make such rules for the conduct of its business and that of the Association as it may deem necessary, and will have the power to repeal and amend such rules, as it considers necessary. All such rules shall be ratified at the Annual General Meeting or at an Extraordinary General Meeting called for that purpose.

e) Conduct of Association Members

Should the language or behaviour of an Association member be deemed by the Chair or acting Chair to be inappropriate or offensive, the member in question may be asked to leave the meeting. In certain cases, it may be considered appropriate for the misconduct to be referred to the District Steering Group.

11 General Conduct of Members

Any member who causes offence or distress to another member by actions or comments in writing or verbally will be subject to disciplinary proceedings as outlined below.

12 Finance

- a) The Treasurer or a nominated Association member will be responsible for producing proper accounts for the Association.
- b) The accounts will also be made available to any member of the Association, or other person having good reason to inspect them provided such notice is given in writing to the Chair with 7 days notice.
- c) Expenditure of Association funds (self-raised) will be agreed at Association meetings.
- d) The Steering Group would normally be asked for advice and guidance on income and expenditures.

13 Charity

If the Association becomes a Charity, the Association shall comply with their obligations under the Charities act 1992 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that Act) with regard to the following: -

- The keeping of accounting records for the Charity
- The preparation of annual statements of accounts for the Charity
- The auditing or independent examination of the statement of accounts for the Charity
- The transmission of the statement of account of the charity to the Commissioners.

14 Alterations to the Constitution

The constitution shall be reviewed at least every three years. Any changes to the Constitution shall be approved by a majority decision at the Annual General Meeting or at an Extraordinary General Meeting.

15 Dissolution of the Association

If the Association as a whole, by a simple majority, decide at any time that on the grounds of expense or otherwise, it is necessary to dissolve the Association, members will call an Extraordinary Meetings of their Street Co-ordinators to ensure they have a mandate to vote for dissolution.

If such a decision is confirmed by two-thirds majority of those present and voting at the meeting, the Association will have the power to dispose of any assets held by or on behalf of the Association.

Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debt and liabilities (which shall include any unspent official budget) shall be given or transferred to other local Neighbourhood Watch Associations and/or to HertsWatch in Trust at the discretion of the Association.

** The District Steering Group is a partnership consisting of the Chair and Deputy Chair of the District Association, the Neighbourhood Police Inspector, a Neighbourhood and/or Community Safety Sergeant, the Watch Liaison Officer, a representative from the CDRP (Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership), a representative from the Herts Constabulary NHW project team and other executive officers of the Association..*

Standing Orders

Resignation and Termination of Membership

An Executive Committee member, General Committee member or Ward Co-ordinator may resign by giving written notice to the Executive Committee.

A resignation or termination of membership is final and binding and cannot be rescinded, changed or altered by the person resigning or any group they are part of or represent without Executive Committee approval. Furthermore, if after resignation a person wishes to remain as a Street Co-ordinator they may do so with the approval of their new Ward Co-ordinator or Chair Person.

Any Ward Co-ordinator who resigns from their membership of the Executive Committee will automatically be deemed to have resigned from their Ward Co-ordinator post at the same time unless confirmed in writing by the Executive.

Any Ward Co-ordinator who resigns from their role as Ward Co-ordinator will automatically be deemed to have resigned from the Executive Committee post at the same time unless confirmed in writing by the Executive.

The interface between the Ward Co-ordinator and Executive Committee is vital and neither role can exist without the other for the effective functioning of the Association.

If a Ward Co-ordinator resigns from their role, or subsequently moves to another St.Albans District Neighbourhood Watch Area, and wishes to become a Ward Co-ordinator in their new area their post will be strictly subject to Executive Committee approval. This also applies to any person or persons who have had their role terminated by the Executive Committee.

A replacement Ward Co-ordinator must be found by the Association within the designated area who has been subject to the votes of all the existing committee members. If this is not possible the Executive Committee may authorise the appointment of a temporary ward co-ordinator from outside of the immediate group pending the appointment of a permanent replacement.

The Executive Committee may propose a vote of no confidence in any member or members of St.Albans District Neighbourhood Watch Executive Committee, General Committee, Ward Co-

ordinator or Co-ordinator where their behaviour, and or, conduct reflects negatively, impedes upon the role and function of St.Albans District Neighbourhood Watch or brings the organisation into disrepute. Equally any member that causes offence or distress to another member by actions or comments in writing or verbally will be subject to disciplinary proceedings as outlined below.

In the event of the above, a vote can be held by the Executive Committee to suspend that member or members and further investigate their behaviour or conduct.

Two Executive Committee members will undertake the investigation but will not be allowed to vote on the decisions reached by the remainder of the executive committee. All such information will be confidential to the committee. Subsequent to this process the person or persons may whole or in part:

- a) Be given a written warning with an effective time scale decided by the Executive Committee.
- b) Temporary suspension with an effective time scale decided by the Executive Committee.
- c) Advice, support or training.
- d) Have their membership cancelled with immediate effect.

The person or persons will be notified in writing with the reasons for 12.10 above within 7 (seven) days of the Executive Committee decision(s) or action(s)

The person or persons may put in writing within 7 (seven) days an appeal together with their reasons against the decision(s) or action(s) as recommended by the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee will consider such an appeal and vote to alter or confirm the original decision(s) or action(s) if appropriate. This binding decision will be confirmed in writing to the person or persons involved.