

**EMSWORTH RESIDENTS FORUM
CONSTITUTION
17 MARCH 2023**

1. Preamble

The Emsworth Residents Association and the Emsworth Neighbourhood Forum have decided to merge, to form the Emsworth Residents Forum, hereinafter called the ERF.

Any assets belonging to either organisation shall become part of the combined assets of the ERF.

2. Aims and Objects

The Association shall have no political or religious affiliations and will work in partnership with local people, the local planning authority, statutory and voluntary bodies to:

- a. promote the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of Emsworth by any means, including the continued publication of a local newspaper
- b. improve Emsworth for the benefits of its residents and protect the character of the area
- c. Continue to fulfil the previous role of the Emsworth Neighbourhood Forum, as designated under the 2011 Localism Act for the development, monitoring and amendment, as appropriate, of a Neighbourhood Plan
- d. Continue to fulfil the previous role of the Emsworth Neighbourhood Forum of advising the local authority on community priorities for the allocation of neighbourhood portion Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and similar funds, provided an adopted Neighbourhood Plan is in place.

For purposes c and d only the area of benefit is the area of Emsworth Ward shown edged red in the annexed map, as designated by the Planning Authority.

3. Powers

The powers and entitlements of a designated Neighbourhood Forum are set out in the 2011 Localism Act and associated regulations and guidance. The ERF will have these powers in relation to neighbourhood planning and within the designated area but may also engage in any other activities to support the objectives in Emsworth or the wider local area, in conjunction as appropriate with other statutory or community organisations or authorities.

4. Membership

Membership is open to

- a. People over the age of 16 who live or work in the Emsworth designated area, either as individuals or as representatives of businesses or organisations active in the area
- b. elected Council members with electoral areas in Emsworth, and
- c. Individuals or representatives of businesses or organisations who are active in Emsworth and support the aims of the ERF but do not live or work in the area.

Members in this category will not be eligible to vote on decisions specifically related to the powers of a Neighbourhood Forum under the 2011 Localism Act.

All members will pay the same subscription which will be determined by a General Meeting [in the first instance £5].

Subscriptions shall be paid every 12 months. Members who have not paid their subscription will receive one reminder, and if they have not paid for 18 months shall cease to be a member.

Members may resign their membership by sending an email to the Forum. The Committee shall maintain a list of names and addresses of Members. Communication will generally be by email.

5. Governance

Decisions on overall policy and direction shall be made by members at a General Meeting.

- a. The development of policy proposals to put to General Meetings and implementing decisions on a day to day basis will be delegated to a Committee of at least six members, elected at an AGM. Committee members will be elected for three years, with a temporary arrangement at the outset to ensure that all terms do not end at the same time. Additional members may be co-opted by the Committee, until the following AGM.
- b. The Committee shall have all the powers necessary to pursue the agreed aims and policies of the ERF and will meet at least quarterly for this purpose.
- c. The quorum for meetings of the Committee will be half the membership of the committee, including co-opted members.
- d. The Committee will elect the officers of the ERF from its number. These may include the traditional Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Membership Secretary and Treasurer, but the Committee might decide to vary the list, and perhaps to share jobs, from time to time. The member acting as Chair of any meeting will have a casting vote if appropriate. All posts shall be Honorary, but members shall be able to claim reasonable expenses for work undertaken on behalf of the Association. Minutes recording Committee decisions shall be made available to all Members.
- e. The Committee will set up a Neighbourhood Planning Working Group to coordinate tasks related to the Forum functions under the Localism Act
- f. Committee decisions will be made by consensus where possible but should a vote be required a simple majority vote of elected members present at a quorate meeting is sufficient, with the Chair nominated for that meeting having a casting vote if there is an equality of votes.
- g. Any Management Committee member having a financial or other interest in any matter to be discussed at a Management Committee meeting, must declare such an interest and abstain from voting. Such declarations shall be made at the start of every Management Committee meeting.

6. Finance

The financial year for the Association shall end on the 31 December and an inspected Statement of Accounts shall be presented by the Treasurer to the AGM for approval. The Inspector shall be appointed by the AGM on the recommendation of the Committee and shall not be a member of such Committee.

The Committee must agree a process for sound financial management. This should include a budget approved annually by the AGM with delegated expenditure limits for the Committee. These arrangements must be detailed in Committee minutes and made available to members.

7. General Meetings

- a. General Meetings shall be open to all Members, and at least one General Meetings (an Annual General Meeting) shall be held each year. A quorum for GMs will be 21 Members. If 15 minutes after the time fixed for a GM of the Association no quorum is present a further meeting will be arranged, subject to the same notice, at which the quorum shall be the number of members present.
- b. At least 21 days written or emailed notice shall be given for all GMs, with notice of all resolutions for voting.
- c. A Special GM shall be held at the request of the Committee or at the request of at least 21 members. Three weeks' notice of such meetings, specifying the purpose of the meeting, shall be given to members.
- d. At the discretion of the Committee both Committee and General Meetings may consist entirely of people physically present in the meeting place, or entirely of people taking part through an online meeting platform, or a combination of both.
- e. At all meetings resolutions shall be carried by a majority vote of members attending, with a Chair having a casting vote if there is an equality of votes. Votes will be taken by a show of hands unless a secret ballot is asked for by a minimum of 25% of members present.
- f. Where a secret ballot is agreed it might be necessary to postpone the decision to a later meeting, to give the Committee time to make the necessary arrangements.
- g. Motions for decision must be proposed and seconded by a paid-up Member of the Forum and notified to the Committee in advance, in time for notice to be given to Members. Items for discussion notified after the agenda has been published may be considered under Any Other Business at the discretion of the Chair.

8. Conflict Resolution

Any conflicts should be brought to the attention of the Committee which will attempt in the first instance to resolve them by discussion and compromise. Any member of the Committee who cannot accept a minuted majority decision should resign from the Committee.

A Member whose behaviour is deemed injurious to the ERF will be considered in the first instance by the Committee. The Committee may decide to suspend the Member concerned but this decision must be confirmed by a majority vote of members at a General Meeting within 10 weeks.

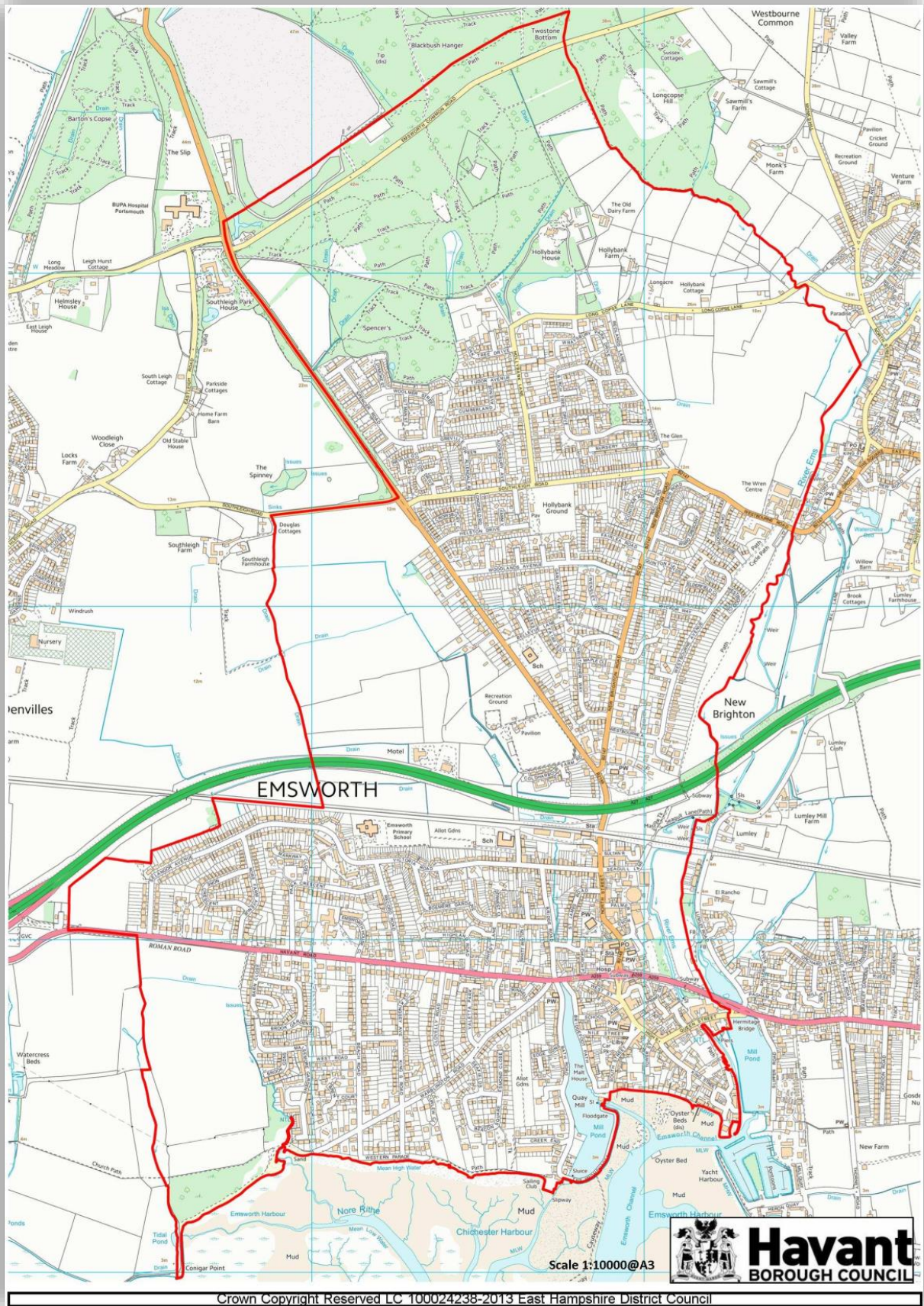
9. Amendments to this Constitution

The Constitution may be amended by a majority vote of Members at a General Meeting of which at least 3 weeks notice has been given.

10. Dissolution

- a. The Forum may be dissolved at a Special General Meeting called for that purpose of which at least 3 weeks notice has been given.
- b. Surplus funds from the Forum, if it is dissolved, shall be given or transferred to such other charitable institution or voluntary organisation having similar objects, as the Members of the Forum shall determine, or failing that shall be applied for some other charitable purpose.

Annex: Designated Neighbourhood Area for the Purposes of Neighbourhood Planning



Emsworth Residents Forum (ERF) Constitution – approved by ERF membership on 17 March 2023