

Constitution for The BISTO Tenants Organisation

Name: The organisation shall be known as the Bournville in Shropshire Tenants Organisation (BISTO)

Area: The area covered by this Organisation is the County of Shropshire

Aims: The Aims of the Organisation shall be:

- To promote the interests of all Bournville tenants in Shropshire, and to assist in maintaining good relations between all members of the community
- To protect and promote the green spaces, amenities and the environment
- To promote all residents rights and the maintenance of and improvement of the Bournville Shropshire Properties
- To promote Social activities for all members of the community
- To work towards the elimination of all forms of discrimination in the community by encouraging whole community membership, especially for those who would usually be excluded for any reason.
- To work with Bournville Village Trust and any other organisations professional or voluntary for the benefit of all residents
- To promote recreational facilities and encourage a community spirit
- To promote equal opportunities within the community and especially to engage with younger people. The organisation agrees to formally adopt and abide by Bournville Village Trusts policy on Equal Opportunities
- The Organisation shall be non political
- To provide information to all members and regularly consult with them.
- In partnership and with the support of the Resident Involvement Officer set up procedures to monitor the Organisation, its work, finances and membership

Membership

- Membership shall be open to all Bournville Shropshire Tenants.
- All eligible members shall have the right to vote
- There will be no joining or subscription fee charged

The Committee

- A committee shall be elected to carry out the business of the Organisation
- The Committee shall be made up of a secretary, chair, vice chair and treasurer.
- The Committee shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting on two year tenure.
- Officers shall carry out the duties given to them at General meetings
- The committee shall meet at least two times a year plus the AGM
- Minutes of committee meetings shall be made available to all members
- The committee may temporarily fill any vacancy arising amongst the officers of the Organisation from its committee members until the next General meeting of members when an election should take place.
- It is not desirable that two executive post holders i.e. Chair and Vice Chair be members of the same household (please also note finance arrangements). Other committee posts can be filled from the same household by agreement with the general membership.

Finance

- All monies raised by or on behalf of the Organisation is to be used only to further the aims of the Organisation and for the general good
- The Treasurer shall open a bank account in the name of the Organisation
- The treasurer shall report the balance of the account to the committee at each committee meeting.

- Cheque signatories shall be nominated by the committee (one must be treasurer). There should be a minimum of three signatories. These **must** not be from the same household or family.
- All cheques and or instructions to the Organisations bankers shall require two of the agreed signatories.
- The treasurer will work within the financial procedures laid down and agreed between the Bournville Village Trust and the Organisation.
- The treasurer shall have the accounts checked by an independent person with adequate financial experience, for example, a representative of a community organisation, law centre or council for voluntary service, at the end of each financial year (Dec) which is one month before the AGM (January year following)
- The accounts shall be made available to members at the AGM and a copy must be forwarded to Bournville Village Trust. N.B. The Resident Involvement officer should be invited to attend the AGM.

The Annual General Meeting.

- This is an important meeting as it is the meeting when the committee reports on the activities of the Organisation over the previous year. It has been agreed that for continuity all officer appointments shall be 2 year tenure and therefore elections will take place on a bi annual basis. However there must still be an AGM for the purposes listed below.
- There shall be an Annual General Meeting held every January at which the committee will report on its work, and present a statement of accounts. Every second year an election will be held.
- The AGM shall elect the officers and committee for a two year period
- The AGM shall vote on recommendations and any amendments to the constitution which must be approved by Bournville Village Trust
- The Secretary will notify all members of the date of the meeting not less than twenty one days prior to the AGM
- The names of all committee members elected at the AGM must be forwarded to and recorded by Bournville Village Trust

Other General meetings

- There will be a general meeting open to all members at least twice a year (plus the AGM)
- A special meeting can be called if three or more members submit a request to the secretary. The secretary shall arrange for the meeting to take place within 21 days.
- The Secretary shall publicise all general meetings at least ten days in advance using the agreed methods.

Quorum

- No General meeting or Annual General meeting shall take place if less than 3 committee members are present.
- No committee meetings shall take place if less than two thirds of the committee are present

Changes to the Constitution

- The constitution can only be altered at an AGM or at a Special General Meeting called for that purpose.
- Any suggested changes to the constitution must be handed to the secretary 21 days before the AGM
- Changes to the constitution must be agreed and voted by at least two thirds of those present at the meeting.
- All minutes shall be available for inspection by members of the organisation and a copy should be retained by BVT as part of its monitoring role.

Voting

- Any member may make a proposal. In order for it to be voted on by other members it must be seconded by someone else.
- Only members present at the meeting may vote
- Before voting any member may propose an amendment which must also be seconded.
- No member may exercise more than one vote
- In the event of an equal vote the Chair shall have the casting vote.

- It is always hoped to achieve consensus, but where a vote is needed it shall be recorded with a simple show of hands.

Misconduct and the Code of Conduct for BISTO

A code of conduct for BISTO has been agreed and members should make themselves familiar with the document which can be posted out on request from the Resident Involvement Officer. Committee members must make themselves familiar with the code which gives specific instructions on breaches. One of the main reasons for the failure of Organisations is that when individuals behave unsuitably there is no redress for curtailing their behaviour. It should also be noted that a pre requisite to recognition by Bournville Village Trust is that the Code of Conduct be adopted in full.

Dissolution

The Organisation may only be dissolved at a Special General Meeting called expressly for that purpose, which must be advertised fourteen days before the meeting.

A proposal for dissolution shall take effect only if agreed by two thirds of the members present at the meeting.

Any assets remaining after all debts and liabilities have been settled shall be applied towards charitable purposes as decided by the committee at the dissolution meeting.

Duties of Officers

- The Chairman or in his/her absence a vice chairman or other committee member shall conduct the meeting of the organisation.
- The Secretary (in close consultation with the Chairman) shall be responsible for the convening of all meetings and the giving out of notices to members. She/He shall ensure that a proper record is kept of all meetings in the form of minutes and that an attendance record is kept. She/He shall provide copies of those minutes on request to any member and the Bournville Village Trust.

- Any member or officer delegated to represent the Organisation shall act on the instructions of the Organisation and shall report back to the Committee or next General Meeting whichever is the sooner.
- The Treasurer shall be responsible for the payment and recording of legitimate expenses and the keeping of records. The Treasurer shall work within the defined finance procedures agree between BVT and the Organisation. The Treasurer will receive training and full support from the Resident Involvement Officer.

This Constitution was adopted at on

Signed by the Chairman Secretary and Treasurer

Chairman

Vice Chair

Secretary

Treasurer

Confidentiality Clause

It is a requirement that a confidentiality clause be signed by all members of Bournville in Shropshire Tenants Organisation (BISTO).

I (please insert your name) will not at any time during my role as a member of Bournville in Shropshire Tenants Organisation, divulge or allow to be divulged, to any person, any confidential information relating to Bournville Village Trust, its residents, or officers.

I hereby agree to all of the above conditions and will endorse and promote Bournville Village Trust’s policies.

I understand that if I fail to comply with these requirements I may be removed from Bournville in Shropshire Tenants Organisation.

Signed.....

Name: (please print) Dated

Appendix 1.

The Big Lottery Fund

As a group you can apply to the Big Lottery Fund only if you meet the following requirements

- You have a constitution that sets out the rules and aims of your organisation
- Your organisation is set up for charitable, benevolent, philanthropic purposes or to benefit the community at large.
- Your committee has at least three members
- You have a bank or building society account in your Organisations name which needs at least two signatures on each cheque or withdrawal
- You can supply the Big Lottery Fund with a copy of your most recent approved accounts signed and dated by both your Chair, Secretary or Treasurer and where appropriate by your accountant/auditor or examiner.

The Big Lottery Fund and your Constitution

Aims

If the aims of your group explain clearly and precisely what you do and are not incompatible with “charitable, benevolent and philanthropic” purposes then you should fit the Big Lottery Fund criteria.

Membership

Some groups have had their grant applications turned down because their membership is too limited and “exclusive” and therefore excludes some people from becoming members. This can be seen as intentional and therefore discriminatory or unintentional albeit accidental but will still be viewed as a barrier to funding. It is wise to therefore have a strongly worded commitment to equal opportunities. If there are residents in the area who are not allowed to join (either deliberately or not) then the group is unlikely to be seen as having charitable or community objectives.

Check List

Make sure you have more than three committee members

Finance

Make sure your bank account is in the name of your group and make sure that you have at least two signatories.

The Big Lottery fund is happy to accept an independent person who is not an auditor, checking the accounts each year. This benefits some groups who have limited funds and who would not be able to engage a professional accountant.

Dissolution

To show charitable purposes a group must state that any assets remaining after the group has disbanded are given to another charitable cause. If the constitution states that any remaining assets are shared between its members (or it is ambiguous), then the group will be refused funding. This rule is common to The Big Lottery Fund and other funding sources including trusts' and charitable givers.

Recognition by Bournville Village Trust

Recognition by Bournville Village Trust confers clear benefits on any group for instance:

- The services of the Resident Involvement Officer
- A start up grant
- Annual maintenance grant
- Professional help with your funding applications
- Free training and skills programme
- Close contact with the Shropshire Management team and the Trust

- A chance to make a real difference where you live
- Services of Mediation and Dispute resolution
- Family liaison service