

Brighton Cohousing Constitution

1 Name

The name of the organisation is Brighton Cohousing

2 Structure and aims

2.1 Brighton Cohousing is an unincorporated association of members with an executive management committee elected by members.

2.2 The aims of Brighton Cohousing are to:

2.2.1 gather and disseminate information about cohousing

2.2.2 promote awareness of cohousing

2.2.3 link people who are interested in cohousing

2.2.4 encourage affordable accommodation within cohousing.

2.3 It is not the aim of Brighton Cohousing to own property.

3 Powers

The management committee of Brighton Cohousing shall have the power to do all such lawful things as are necessary for the achievement of the aims.

4 Membership

4.1 Membership is open to anyone over the age of 18 who supports the aims of Brighton Cohousing and who pays the annual subscription fee.

4.2 Members can vote at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and at Extraordinary General Meetings (EGMs). Other benefits of membership will be determined by the management committee.

4.3 The annual subscription fee will be laid down by the management committee and will be payable by all members within a month of the AGM.

4.4 Membership starts on 1 April each year. Members who join during the year will pay pro-rata for the months until the next start date.

4.5 Members may resign at any time in writing to the membership secretary, or verbally at a meeting.

4.6 Any member not having paid their annual subscription within one month of it falling due will be deemed to have resigned.

4.7 The management committee may by majority vote and for good reason terminate the membership of any individual (including committee members). The individual concerned shall have the right to be heard by the management committee, accompanied by a friend, before a final decision is made.

5 The management committee

5.1 The management committee of Brighton Cohousing shall include a Chair, a Secretary and a Treasurer, who will all be members of Brighton Cohousing.

5.2 Members of the management committee are elected by members annually at

the AGM.

- 5.3 The management committee may co-opt other committee members. Only a third of the committee members at any one time may be co-opted members. Co-opted members do not need to be members of Brighton Cohousing.
- 5.4 All members of the committee must stand down at the following AGM, but may be nominated and re-elected for a further term.
- 5.5 In the event of a committee member standing down during the year a replacement may be co-opted by the remaining committee members.
- 5.6 Any committee member not attending a committee meeting without apology for three months will be deemed to have resigned.

6 Meetings

- 6.1 An AGM will be held within 15 months of the previous AGM.
- 6.2 All members will be notified of its date, time and place at least four weeks before the AGM.
- 6.3 Items for the agenda, nominations for the committee or motions to the meeting must be given in writing to the chair no less than five days before the AGM.
- 6.4 The quorum for the AGM or an EGM will normally be 10% of members but not less than three.
- 6.5 Management committee meetings will be held at least four times a year.
- 6.6 A quorum for the committee meeting will be three committee members.
- 6.7 In the event of a meeting failing to achieve a quorum, business may be discussed and proposals put to the next meeting for ratification. In the event of two consecutive meetings being inquorate the second meeting may call an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM). Such an EGM will be deemed to be quorate.
- 6.8 A public meeting open to all members and others who are interested will be held at least four times a year. No management decisions will be made at this meeting.

7 Rules of procedure

- 7.1 With the exception of changes to the constitution all questions that arise at any General Meeting will be decided by consensus of those present and entitled to a vote. In the event of a failure to reach a decision, questions will be carried forward to the next meeting where they may be decided by a simple majority.
- 7.2 If the number of votes cast on each side are equal the chair of the meeting shall have the additional casting vote.
- 7.3 Any motion or nomination for committee at an AGM or SGM must have a proposer and seconder before it is discussed or voted on.

8 Finances

- 8.1 An account will be maintained on behalf of Brighton Cohousing at a bank agreed by the committee. Signatories to the account will be members of the committee. Each cheque will require two signatures.
- 8.2 Records of income and expenditure will be maintained by the Treasurer. A financial statement given to the management committee meeting at least quarterly and will be made available for inspection by the committee on request with reasonable notice.
- 8.3 All money raised by Brighton Cohousing will be spent solely on the Aims.

9 Amendments to the constitution

- 9.1 Amendments to the constitution can only be made at an AGM or EGM.
- 9.2 Any proposal to amend the constitution must be given to the Secretary in writing at least a week before the notice of the meeting at which it is to be discussed is due to be circulated. The proposal must then be circulated with the notice of meeting.
- 9.3 Any proposal to amend the constitution will require a two thirds majority of those present and entitled to vote.

10 Dissolution

- 10.1 If a committee meeting, by simple majority, decides that it is necessary to close down Brighton Cohousing it may call an Extraordinary General Meeting to do so. The sole business of this meeting will be to dissolve Brighton Cohousing. At least 21 days notice will be given to members
- 10.2 If it is agreed to dissolve Brighton Cohousing all remaining money, once outstanding debts have been paid, will be donated to a sustainable housing charity; the organisation to be agreed at the meeting which agrees the dissolution.