

CONSTITUTION OF SAVE OUR GREEN BELT – CHAPELTOWN, ECCLESFIELD & GRENOSIDE COMMUNITY ACTION GROUP

1. Name

The name of the group shall be **Save Our Green Belt – Chapelton, Ecclesfield & Grenoside Community Action Group**, hereafter referred to as “the Campaign”.

The Campaign is an independent, community-led and non-party-political organisation.

2. Area of Operation

The Campaign’s primary area of operation shall be Chapelton, Ecclesfield and Grenoside.

The Campaign may also engage in wider Sheffield matters where these relate to its aims or have implications for the communities it represents, including working collaboratively with other community groups and city-wide organisations.

3. Aim

The Campaign is established to protect and preserve the Green Belt and the communities of Chapelton, Ecclesfield and Grenoside from inappropriate or unsustainable development.

We seek to ensure that planning and development proposals reflect the long-term interests of residents, the environment and local infrastructure, including transport, education, health and social services, water and flood management.

The Campaign supports a brownfield-first approach to development and sustainable housing and employment solutions which make appropriate use of previously developed land before Green Belt land is considered for development.

We believe that development should be appropriately located, sustainable and supported by the infrastructure and services necessary to meet the needs of both existing and future communities.

The Campaign will work collaboratively with residents, community organisations, elected representatives, public bodies and other relevant organisations to promote sustainable planning and protect the environment, character and quality of life of our communities.

4. Objectives

The Campaign will:

- a. Raise awareness and provide clear, accessible and evidence-based information to residents.
- b. Research, gather and commission evidence relating to planning and development proposals, including their potential impact on the Green Belt, environment, biodiversity, agriculture, transport, infrastructure, flooding and local services.
- c. Coordinate and support community responses to consultations, planning proposals, Local Plan matters and other relevant decisions.
- d. Represent the interests and concerns of local communities in discussions with Sheffield City Council, elected representatives, public bodies and other relevant organisations.
- e. Organise and support local events, petitions, campaigns and lawful demonstrations.
- f. Work collaboratively with aligned community groups, organisations and city-wide networks to strengthen efforts to protect Sheffield’s Green Belt and promote sustainable development.
- g. Raise and manage funds transparently to support the Campaign’s activities.
- h. Engage constructively with local authorities, elected representatives, organisations, landowners and developers where appropriate to advocate for sustainable planning practices.

- i. Monitor relevant planning proposals, policies and decisions and, where appropriate, formally challenge decisions which the Campaign considers contrary to the interests of the communities it represents or its stated aims.
- j. Promote meaningful community involvement in decisions which may affect the future of Chapeltown, Ecclesfield and Grenoside.

5. Supporters, Volunteers and Membership

5.1 Supporters and Volunteers

The Campaign welcomes the involvement of residents and others who support its aims and objectives.

Supporters and volunteers may contribute to the Campaign in a variety of ways, including helping with events, fundraising, promotion, petitions, distribution of information, community engagement and other Campaign activities.

The Campaign may maintain a wider network of supporters and volunteers who can be contacted from time to time when assistance or participation is required.

Being part of this wider network does not automatically constitute membership of the Campaign or confer voting or decision-making rights.

5.2 Membership

The Campaign is an active, volunteer-led organisation. Membership is intended for individuals who wish to take an active and ongoing role in its work and who are prepared to contribute their time, skills, knowledge, experience or expertise.

Individuals may:

- be invited to become a member by the Leadership Group; or
- approach a member of the Leadership Group to express an interest in becoming a member.

Membership shall be confirmed by the Leadership Group, having regard to the needs of the Campaign, the contribution the individual is able and willing to make, and their commitment to its aims and values.

Membership is not automatic by virtue of supporting the Campaign, attending meetings or events, being included on mailing lists or social media groups, or participating occasionally in Campaign activities.

5.3 Expectations of Members

Members are expected to:

- a. Support the aims and objectives of the Campaign.
- b. Make a reasonable and active contribution to the work of the Campaign according to their skills, experience, interests and availability.
- c. Take responsibility, where agreed, for activities or tasks and work collaboratively with other members to deliver them.
- d. Act respectfully and constructively towards other members, volunteers, supporters and those with whom the Campaign engages.
- e. Respect the confidentiality of legal, strategic or other sensitive Campaign information.
- f. Respect decisions and positions agreed collectively by the Campaign, while retaining the right to express their own views internally.
- g. Not represent personal views as being the agreed position of the Campaign.
- h. Declare any relevant conflict of interest.

Membership is based upon active participation rather than attendance alone. The Campaign recognises that the nature and level of contribution will vary according to an individual's circumstances and the skills or expertise they bring.

5.4 Ending Membership

A member may resign at any time.

The Leadership Group may also end a person's membership where they have ceased to participate actively in the Campaign over a reasonable period, or where their conduct is seriously or repeatedly contrary to the Campaign's aims, values or interests.

Membership may also be ended following a serious or repeated breach of confidentiality or conduct which materially undermines the work of the Campaign.

Except in exceptional circumstances, the individual concerned shall be given an opportunity to discuss the matter with the Leadership Group before a final decision is made.

A decision to end membership shall require the agreement of a majority of the Leadership Group.

5.5 Independence

The Campaign shall remain independent and non-party-political.

Members may hold their own political views and affiliations. However, participation in the Campaign must be undertaken independently of party-political interests, and no member shall represent a personal or party-political position as being the position of the Campaign unless that position has been formally agreed by the Campaign.

5.6 Voting Rights

Members shall be entitled to attend and vote at Annual General Meetings and General Meetings.

Supporters and volunteers who are not members do not have voting or decision-making rights but may be invited to attend meetings or participate in Campaign activities as appropriate.

6. Leadership Group

6.1 Composition

The Campaign shall be managed by a **Leadership Group**.

The Officers of the Campaign shall comprise, as a minimum:

- Chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer

The Leadership Group may also include Lead roles responsible for particular areas of the Campaign's activities. These may include:

- Legal Lead
- Fundraising Lead
- Political Engagement & Influencing Lead
- Social Media & Communications Lead
- Sheffield Green Belt Alliance Lead
- Site Champions
- and such other Lead roles as may be required.

All Officers and appointed Leads shall be members of the Leadership Group and shall participate in its discussions and decisions.

6.2 Officers and Leads

Officers shall be elected by members at the Annual General Meeting and shall serve until the following AGM. Existing Officers may stand for re-election.

Lead roles may be elected at the AGM or appointed by the Leadership Group during the year where a need arises.

The Leadership Group may appoint an appropriate member to fill an Officer or Lead vacancy arising between AGMs. Any such appointment shall continue until the following AGM.

The Leadership Group may establish working groups and appoint volunteers to support particular areas of activity without those individuals necessarily becoming members of the Leadership Group.

6.3 Responsibilities and Decision-Making

The Leadership Group shall be responsible for coordinating and managing the day-to-day activities of the Campaign and ensuring that its activities remain consistent with this Constitution and decisions agreed by members.

Individual Officers and Leads may be given responsibility for particular areas of work and may make routine decisions within their agreed area of responsibility.

The Campaign shall continue to operate on a collaborative basis. Significant decisions concerning the Campaign's strategy, policy, public position or future direction shall, wherever reasonably practicable, be discussed with the wider membership.

Decisions shall be reached by consensus wherever possible.

Where consensus cannot be reached and a formal decision is required, the matter shall be decided by a simple majority vote of members participating in the decision.

The Leadership Group shall not override a decision made by the membership.

Where a matter is urgent and it is not reasonably practicable to consult the wider membership, the Leadership Group may make a decision on behalf of the Campaign. Any significant decision made in this way shall be reported to members as soon as reasonably practicable.

6.4 Leadership Group Meetings

The Leadership Group shall meet as required to coordinate Campaign activities, consider operational matters and support the work of individual Officers and Leads.

The Leadership Group shall seek to reach decisions by consensus.

Where a Leadership Group decision is required on an operational matter and consensus cannot be reached, the decision may be made by a simple majority of Leadership Group members present.

A quorum shall be one third of the current membership of the Leadership Group, rounded up to the nearest whole number, and must include at least one Officer.

7. Finance

a. The Campaign shall maintain a bank account in its name.

b. All funds shall be used solely to support the Campaign's aims and objectives.

c. The Treasurer shall maintain appropriate records of all income and expenditure and provide regular financial updates to the Leadership Group.

d. Payments shall be initiated by the Treasurer and must be independently authorised by either the Chair or Secretary, in accordance with the banking arrangements in place. No individual shall both initiate and authorise the same payment. Where the Treasurer is

unavailable, an alternative arrangement may be agreed by the Leadership Group, provided that responsibility for initiating and authorising the payment remains with two separate authorised individuals.

e. A record of income and expenditure shall be available to members upon reasonable request.

f. A financial statement shall be presented to members at each Annual General Meeting.

g. The Leadership Group shall ensure that funds are managed responsibly and transparently.

8. Annual General Meeting

An Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held once each year.

Members shall be given reasonable notice of the AGM and provided with details of the matters to be considered.

The AGM shall:

a. Receive a report on the Campaign's activities during the preceding year.

b. Receive the Campaign's annual financial statement.

c. Elect the Officers of the Campaign.

d. Elect or confirm Lead roles where appropriate.

e. Consider proposed amendments to the Constitution.

f. Consider other matters relevant to the future direction and activities of the Campaign.

Decisions at the AGM shall normally be made by a simple majority of members present and voting, except where this Constitution specifies otherwise.

9. General Meetings

The Leadership Group may call a General Meeting where an important matter requires wider consideration or approval by members.

Members shall be given reasonable notice of a General Meeting and the purpose for which it has been called.

Decisions shall be made by a simple majority of members present and voting unless otherwise specified in this Constitution.

10. Conflicts of Interest

Members of the Leadership Group shall declare any personal, financial, political or other interest which could reasonably be considered to influence their involvement in a particular decision.

Where appropriate, the individual concerned may be asked to withdraw from discussion or voting on that matter.

The existence and management of any significant conflict of interest shall be recorded.

11. Public Statements and Representation

Members speaking formally on behalf of the Campaign shall represent agreed Campaign positions.

The Chair, relevant Lead or another person authorised by the Leadership Group may represent the Campaign publicly, including in meetings with elected representatives, public bodies, the media and other organisations.

Nothing in this section prevents members from expressing their own personal views, provided that these are not represented as the agreed position of the Campaign.

12. Amendments to the Constitution

Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by the Leadership Group or by members.

Proposed amendments shall be considered at an Annual General Meeting or properly convened General Meeting.

An amendment shall require the approval of at least two-thirds of members present and voting.

Any approved amendments shall be recorded and the revised Constitution made available to members.

13. Dissolution

The Campaign may be dissolved only by a resolution supported by at least two-thirds of members participating in the decision.

Following payment of any outstanding liabilities, the Campaign shall consider whether any remaining funds are subject to specific conditions, restrictions or agreements associated with the purpose for which they were donated or provided.

Where appropriate, and particularly in the case of a substantial donation made for a specific purpose, the Campaign may return some or all of the unused funds to the original donor where this is consistent with any agreement or understanding under which the funds were provided.

Any remaining unrestricted funds or assets shall not be distributed amongst members. They shall instead be donated to one or more local environmental or community organisations whose aims are consistent with those of the Campaign, as agreed by members.

A final financial statement shall be produced and retained on record.

14. Adoption

This Constitution was approved and adopted by the members of **Save Our Green Belt – Chapeltown, Ecclesfield & Grenoside Community Action Group** at the Annual General Meeting held on:

Date: _____

Chair: _____

Secretary: _____

Treasurer: _____