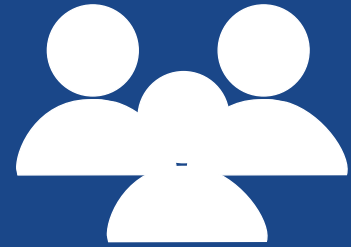


A Guide to Forming a Flood Group



Last reviewed: September 2024

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Introduction

The number of flood groups across the country is growing as communities become more aware of flooding and flood risk. Flood groups can achieve great things within their communities and help to build community cohesion.

If you are thinking of starting a flood group in your local area, this guide is for you! It looks at some of the key elements around what a flood group is and how they form and operate, together with some points for consideration which you may find useful.



Image: The Flood Hub

What is a flood group?

A flood group consists of local residents working on behalf of the wider community to address flooding and flood risk issues in partnership with Risk Management Authorities (RMAs) and other organisations.

In much the same way that Neighbourhood Watch Groups work with the Police and Local Authorities to pro-actively address local crime related issues, a flood group is a resident-led group which works to address flooding and flood risk issues within their community.



Image: The Flood Hub

What do flood groups do?

Flood groups are made up of local residents who meet on a regular basis to discuss flooding and address flood risk issues. Successful flood groups are resident-led and set their own agenda, aims and objectives, agree upon roles and collectively provide a stronger voice for their community.

Flood groups may choose to focus on:

- Working positively alongside RMAs to address flood risk issues.
- Raising awareness of flood risk within their community.
- Documenting any flood events and collating local knowledge and experiences around flood risk in the community.
- Providing a point of contact and avenue of support and information for local residents to become more informed and resilient to future flooding.
- Developing a community flood plan to pro-actively respond when flooding is expected to help those most vulnerable within the community.

Building relationships with RMAs and engaging in close partnership work, helps to raise awareness of the different responsibilities each organisation has towards flooding and flood risk management and the frameworks which they must operate within.

In addition, flood group members can:

- Monitor local conditions and flood risk assets.
- Report issues which may present an increase in flood risk, such as watercourse blockages, blocked culverts, fallen trees in rivers and blocked drains.
- Help to raise awareness of issues within their community which can lead to an increase in flood risk, such as:
 - The disposal of cooking fats, oils and grease down kitchen sinks.
 - The flushing of wet wipes down toilets.
 - The disposal of cement / plaster wash waste into drainage gullies by tradesmen.
 - The responsible disposal of grass cuttings, and garden or household waste.

Step 1 - Getting started

If you are thinking of starting a flood group for your local area, it helps if you know some like-minded people who can help. Speaking to your neighbours will help to gauge interest and discover if they have the time and commitment required. Most local authorities have Community Support Officers in post who can engage and support community groups of all descriptions. Organisations such as Newground and the Environment Agency can provide flood specific support and experience when helping flood groups to form, organise and achieve their goals.

Whilst organisations and agencies can help in offering support and guidance to flood groups in the early stages, they cannot lead and run flood groups. As with any community group, the success and longevity of flood groups rely on the time, commitment and input provided from its members.

What's important to know is that because flood groups are resident-led, successful groups really need a small number of committed individuals from the outset, who want to see the group grow and thrive and are prepared to devote some time and energy towards achieving this.

It helps to consider the following:

- Why form the group?
- What do we want to achieve?
- Will we require funding and a bank account to achieve what we want?
- Will we need a committee or a group constitution?



Step 2 - Naming your group

Naming your group may seem like a trivial thing, but it really helps to give a firm identity, purpose and belonging to members, so it's a good idea to name your group fairly early on when the time is right. It's good to get name suggestions and thoughts from all involved.

A community group can be called whatever its members wish – there are no rules, however most groups choose names which reflect the group's ethos. For example, the group name can include the name of the geographic area, town or neighbourhood which the group will represent, followed by the words *Flood Group*, *Flood Action Group* or *Flood Resilience Group*, or even *Emergency Planning Group* should that be the focus – whatever suits the group and its objectives best.

For example:

Water Gate Town Flood Action Group

Step 3 - Setting aims and objectives

Setting aims and objectives helps to clarify the reason your group is forming. Is it following a recent flood event? Is it because residents want to provide a more pro-active response to addressing flood risk issues? Is it because the community want to plan and be better prepared for a future event? Or something else?

The difference between aims and objectives are:

- Aims – What your group wants to achieve.
- Objectives – How your group go will about achieving its aims.

Start by asking, 'what does this group want to achieve?' Common focuses for flood groups include:

1. Raising awareness

Around two-thirds of those living in flood risk areas are unaware of their risk and in flooded communities, where flood risk awareness is already quite high, many residents may still be unaware of local flood risk assets or riparian ownership responsibilities as part of watercourse ownership. Water companies are fighting a constant battle to reduce sewer flooding as a result of the items placed down toilets and kitchen sinks. Flood groups are ideally placed to:

- Help raise awareness of flood risk issues.
- Help raise awareness of the responsibilities and remits of different flood RMAs.
- Encourage the wider community to report instances of flooding.

For example:

Aim - To raise awareness of flood risk in Water Gate town.

Aim - To work with RMAs involved in flood risk management to reduce the risk of flooding in Water Gate town.

Objective - To engage with the community and promote general flood resilience awareness.

Objective - Ensure responding personnel are adequately trained and informed.

2. Addressing flood risk issues

Flood groups can give a stronger voice to their community and help to develop positive working relationships by building improved communication lines with RMAs. By working alongside RMAs, flood group members can increase their knowledge and awareness of flood risk assets and play an active role in monitoring and reporting issues with culverts, blocked highway gullies and incidents or issues with watercourses which could lead to an increase in flood risk.

Groups may wish to adopt an 'Issues and Actions Log' to record flood risk issues or enquiries which can be raised to the relevant RMA, together with the dates and any responses and progress made in working towards solutions. Issues and actions logs are generally created and owned by the flood group and shared with RMAs.

You can find an Issues and Actions Log template in Appendix A on page 24.

In addition to the above, having a collective voice can help groups to lobby decision makers, comment on government consultations and local planning decisions, as well as influence the development of future flood schemes and opportunities for managing flood risk.

3. Community resilience

Flooding can occur quickly and with little notice. Response times from emergency services and agencies can vary, especially for more remote communities or when responses must be prioritised. Flooding is the foremost natural disaster facing the UK and building flood resilient communities will play an increasing role in how we live and adapt to climate change.

Flood groups can play an important part in promoting flood resilient practices within their communities, often using social media and community events to raise awareness of how neighbours can protect their properties against flooding, develop home or business flood plans, sign up for flood warnings and raise awareness of other flood warning triggers.





4. Planning and preparing for flood events

Unfortunately, it often takes a flood event to mobilise a community. While there is often no shortage of support from residents stepping forward to assist with the clean-up process and help their neighbours, the formal coordination of these efforts by the community can be inefficient and disorganised.

Many flood groups work towards creating a community flood response plan to provide a coordinated response when flooding is expected, to help the community prepare before the event occurs, thus reducing the impact of the flood, and coordinate response and clean-up efforts more effectively afterwards. This can include:

- Identifying vulnerable residents who may need assistance and support.
- Identifying key people and resources within the community who can be called upon when required.
- Building vital links with RMAs and first responders.

Residents or groups who are wishing to plan and prepare for future flooding can download a free 'Community Flood Development Guidance Notes Template' booklet [here](#).

Community Flood Plan			Pre-populated Plan
<p>Trigger 1</p>  <p>What to do at this stage</p> <p>Flooding is possible. Stay vigilant and make early preparations for a potential flood.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the situation through forecasts, local radio stations and monitoring stations. • Send a communication out that a flood alert/Met Office Yellow Warning has been issued. <p>Community flood group actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the situation through forecasts, local radio stations and monitoring stations. • Check that any community level defences are ready to go and available to deploy if required. • Contact all flood wardens and the flood group to be on standby. 	<p>Trigger 2</p>  <p>What to do at this stage</p> <p>Flooding is expected. Immediate action is required to protect yourself and your property.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to monitor the situation. • Warn and inform the community that flooding is expected and to deploy any PFR. • Activate community flood plan. <p>Community flood group actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the community to notify them that a warning has been issued. • Deploy flood wardens and community flood defences. • Wardens should help the vulnerable to deploy their PFR and prepare for a flood. 	<p>Trigger 3</p>  <p>What to do at this stage</p> <p>Severe flooding is expected and is likely to cause significant risk to life and destruction of property.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send out a communication that evacuations are taking place and provide the address of the evacuation centre. • Prepare to evacuate and cooperate with the emergency services. <p>Community flood group actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure residents are safe • Help vulnerable residents to evacuate. • Complete evacuation checklist and give to emergency services. 	
<p>newground Your community is our business. This resource has been produced by newground who work in partnership with the Environment Agency. For further information on being prepared, please visit The Flood Hub website www.thefloodhub.co.uk. To sign up for flood warnings visit www.thefloodhub.co.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings. Last reviewed: May 2021. For more information visit www.thefloodhub.co.uk @TheFloodHub</p>			

Step 4 - A place to meet

Flood groups need a suitable meeting place to discuss issues and engage with representatives from RMAs who may attend meetings to help and offer support.

A room within a local community centre, church hall or parish council building can provide a great place to meet, and possibly free of charge. Additionally, there are now a number of digital and online platforms available to enable groups to meet virtually, such as Zoom and Microsoft (MS) Teams.

You can also download the Digital Toolkit Guide [here](#).

Step 5 - Member roles

Groups can progress at their own pace and with different roles requiring different levels of time and commitment, there is usually a role for everyone! However, a group lead is required early on to take a steer in communicating and organising to get things moving.

Look to the strengths, skill sets and resources available through those involved. Sharing duties is a good way to start and many groups like to elect a committee to formalise roles.

Chairperson

The group Chairperson, or 'Chair', takes the steer in leading meetings, ensuring they keep to time and run efficiently, making sure that every one has the opportunity to talk. They also plan and prepare meeting agendas, ensure discussions remain on topic and that key decisions, outcomes and actions are noted within meetings minutes by the Secretary.

The Chair will also have a strategic overview of the group in supporting committee members and ensuring everyone works well together. Although not all groups have a formal chairperson, meetings often require a steer in direction and organisation. Some groups decide to rotate the role of Chair between meetings, actively involving everyone in the running of the group and to share the workload.

Secretary

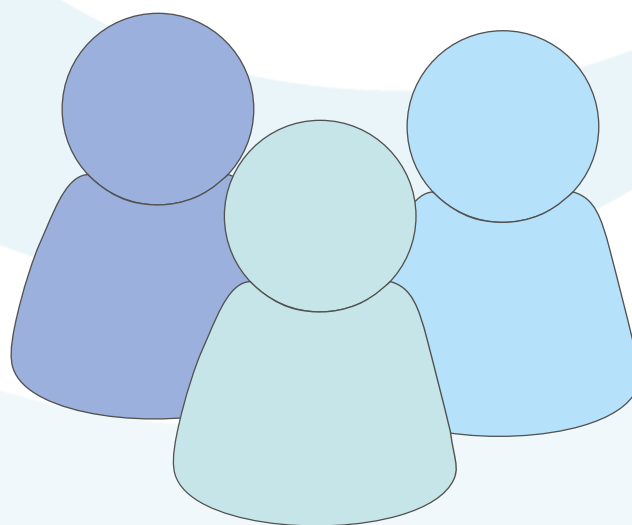
The Secretary takes the minutes of the group's meetings, noting the decisions which were made, actions arising during the meeting, who will carry them out and by when.

In addition to dealing with correspondence and replying to letters and emails, the Secretary will also keep members informed of the dates, times, location and agenda of upcoming meetings and may also take a lead in managing any social media pages the group may have.

Treasurer

The role of Treasurer is only required for groups who choose to adopt a constitution. For further information on constitutions and why your group may wish to adopt one, please see the section on Legal Structure on page 17 below.

The Treasurer keeps financial records, recording monies going in and out of the group's accounts, keeping receipts and bank statements, deals with petty cash and expenses, as well as any paperwork relating to applications for grant funding (see page 22). It is also the job of the Treasurer to provide updates to the committee of the group's financial situation, recent spending and upcoming expenses such as room hire costs, upcoming insurance premiums or equipment expenses.



Step 6 - Meetings

There are no set rules as to how often a group should meet, or how long meetings should be. However, to get things moving quicker in the early stages, some groups may choose to meet every few weeks for an hour or two, and as the group becomes established and operational, they may reduce the frequency of meetings to every few months.

Agendas

An agenda is a list of things you want to discuss at the meeting. A well-planned agenda with time assigned for each topic helps to ensure you cover everything you need to discuss and nothing is missed or forgotten. Agendas are usually prepared by the Chairperson before the meeting and copies sent to members and guests by the Secretary ahead of the meeting. This allows those attending time to think about the topics to be discussed ahead of the meeting, gather thoughts and information and prepare in advance any contributions they may wish to make.

When it comes to ordering the items on a meeting agenda, it can help to put the smaller points for discussion to the top of the agenda to get them out of the way first, leaving the remainder of time for the deliberation of more important matters.

Meeting agendas also consist of 'standing items', which are the formalities and points of business which occur at every meeting.

Examples include:

- **Introductions:** If the meeting is consisting of group members who already know each other, introductions can be skipped. However, they are particularly useful if new members or guests are in attendance, such as representatives from RMAs. Having each member state their name and stake in the meeting, for example, their job role or whether they are a resident, also helps to provide an accurate record for the minutes.
- **Minutes of the last meeting:** At the start of each meeting, it's usually a good idea for members to agree that the minutes of the previous meeting reflect a true record of what was discussed. If there are any discrepancies or misunderstandings, this is the time to make them known so that the record can be amended.

- **Treasures report/ financial standings:** If the group has a bank account or petty cash float, it is good practice for the committee to receive an update as to the group's financial position, such the balance of the group's account, what, if any, outgoings are due before the following meeting and whether any cheques need signing or receipts need to be submitted.
- **Any other business (AOB):** This is generally the last item on the agenda and provides an opportunity for members or guests to raise any relevant or associated points not directly covered during the meeting. Where possible, all items for discussion should be raised before the meeting and listed on the agenda, however items raised as any other business may be quickly resolved at the end of the meeting, or the chair may wish to carry it over as an agenda item for the next meeting. The AOB item on the agenda should not be taking up too much time or preventing the meeting from closing on time.

There is a Flood Group Meeting Agenda template in Appendix B on page 25.

Insert Name of Flood Group
Agenda
 1st Meeting on **Insert Date and Time**
Insert Address and Postcode

- 1) Introductions
- 2) Apologies
- 3) Previous minutes - N/A
- 4) Group aims and objectives - discussion
- 5) Group name - discussion
- 6) Group member and organisation, operational area and comms - discussion
- 7) Use of group social media platforms - discussion
- 8) Group activities
- 9) AOB (any other business)

Minute taking

Minutes are effectively notes which provide a written record of meetings. They help to keep group members and those who are unable to attend, informed and up to date on what was discussed and agreed. The Secretary is usually responsible for taking the minutes, typing them up afterwards, filing a copy and distributing copies to attendees / absentees.

Minutes do not need to be long or complicated. It is impossible to write down and record everything that is said during a meeting, so only pick out and make rough notes regarding key points. Remember to keep the minutes objective and only record what happened at the meeting as opposed to including information received afterwards. Though it's not required to make reference to everyone who spoke, key points need to be understood by those not in attendance, so remember to give a little background information or context where required. It can be helpful to summarise points raised and discussions rather than all the ins and outs of how decisions were reached. Have a copy of the agenda and make notes around each item.

At each meeting the following information is usually recorded for the minutes:

1. The name of the group and the date, time and location of the meeting.
2. The names of those present, which organisation they are from and any apologies received in advance from those unable to attend. For larger meetings, it can help to make up an attendance sheet for people to fill in the names, organisation and job role etc to make this easier.
3. For each item on the agenda, recording the key points of any information raised and by whom, as well as any outcomes and decisions is important.

You can find The Flood Hub First Flood Group Meeting Minutes template in Appendix C on page 26.

There is a Basic Minutes template in Appendix D on page 29.

Legal structure

While having a formally agreed or legal structure for your group is by no means a requirement, some groups wish to take advantage of the benefits it can bring, such as the eligibility to apply for grant funding or take a steer in the development of group-led flood schemes. Churchtown Flood Action Group in Lancashire did exactly this. You can read more about their successes in the case study [here](#).

When considering and choosing a legal structure for a community group, it is worth thinking about how formal its members wish the group to be, how the group will operate and how decisions will be made.

While some community groups or not-for-profit organisations choose to register themselves as charities or limited companies, which require the group to become 'incorporated', smaller, volunteer community groups (including flood groups) prefer to avoid the legal and regulatory frameworks involved with this type of structure and prefer to keep things as simple as possible.

Unincorporated, independent groups provide a simple structure which anyone can set up without the need for registering with external organisations or bodies and having to abide by any associated regulatory frameworks, such as registering with Companies House or the Charities Commission and the production and submission of accounts etc.

To keep things as simple as possible, all that is required is for group members to agree and adopt a constituting document. When adopting a group constitution, members will be required appoint a Treasurer in addition to a Chair and Secretary and will be required to hold an Annual General Meeting.

Annual general meetings

Annual General Meetings, or AGMs, are held once a year around the anniversary of the group's formation. AGMs present an opportunity to review the previous 12 months and look back on progress made and any successes. They also provide the opportunity to thank committee members for their work, elect new members or reinstate current ones, present the annual accounts, make any changes to the group's constitution, should one have been adopted.

Constitutions

A constitution is a formal governing document which sets out the process around how the group is organised and run. Group constitutions can be simple, although it can be beneficial to give them a little thought to ensure the constitution adopted is tailored to meet all of the needs and requirements of the group. Constitutions help to demonstrate to others that your group is organised and run democratically and that any grant funding or donations will be used properly. The constitution as governing document in setting out the rules for how the group is run can also help to avoid disputes amongst members.

There are a number of key sections which should be considered to ensure a constitution reflects the group and how its members wish to operate:

Group name:

This section sets out the full and correct name of the group (and any abbreviation) to be used on official documents, such as insurance, policies, bank accounts and applications for funding etc.

Aims and objectives:

This section formally records the aims of the group and what it seeks to achieve. This is useful as it helps to give the group a defined focus and can prevent the work of the group being directed off-course into other matters.

Membership:

This section defines who is eligible to join the group and what is expected or required of members in terms of their responsibilities and behaviour towards other members and non-members. Having rules of membership clarifies who is and isn't eligible to join and enables the committee to take formal and objective disciplinary action against members who break rules.

Committee and officers:

This section stipulates who is appointed to what role within the group, together with how and when committee members and officers are appointed.

Meetings

This section contains details of general meetings and annual general meetings, specifying how often they will be held, how members will be informed of upcoming meetings, how apologies must be submitted and the process for dealing with committee members who fail to attend meetings.

Policies:

This section can provide details and signposting to any policies which the group wishes to adopt and abide by, such as a Safeguarding Policy, a Data Protection Policy and an Equality Statement. Though not a requirement for all community funds, some may require applicant groups to have certain policies in place to meet eligibility requirements.

A Data Protection Policy template can be found in Appendix E on page 30.

An Equality and Diversity Statement template can be found in Appendix F on page 31.

You can find more information on General Data Protection Regulations and how community groups should collect, store, and use personal data.

Financial arrangements:

This section sets forth how the monies of the group will be managed, details of required signatories for the group bank account and petty cash floats etc.

Amendments:

This section sets forth the democratic process required to make changes or amendments to the constitution, such as when and how amendments must be proposed and deliberated over, as well as how the committee decides whether to implement changes or not. For example, for voting purposes, is 51% 'simple majority' vote required amongst members? Or is 2/3rds majority required to change or amend the constitution? Usually, the chair of the meeting abstains from voting in all decisions unless a tie is reached, in which case the chair may have the deciding vote

Disciplinary and appeals procedure:

This section provides written details of the disciplinary procedures for members breaking groups rules, falling short of the standards expected of a group member during meetings or failing to abide by the constitution.

Dissolution:

This section provides details of the process which must be followed and how any of the group's assets, such as money in the bank and any equipment, would be redistributed in the event the group needed to disband and cease operations.

Declaration:

The declaration page contains the name, address, and signature of all group's members. The declaration must be signed in order to become a member of the group, and the signing of the declaration by a member expresses their acceptance of the group's constitution, rules, policies and procedures, and their agreement to be bound by them whilst a member of the group.

You can find copies of constitution templates and downloadable digital versions on the pages below. These can be adapted to suit the needs and requirements of your group.

The Scottish Flood Forum Basic Constitution template can be found in Appendix G on page 32.

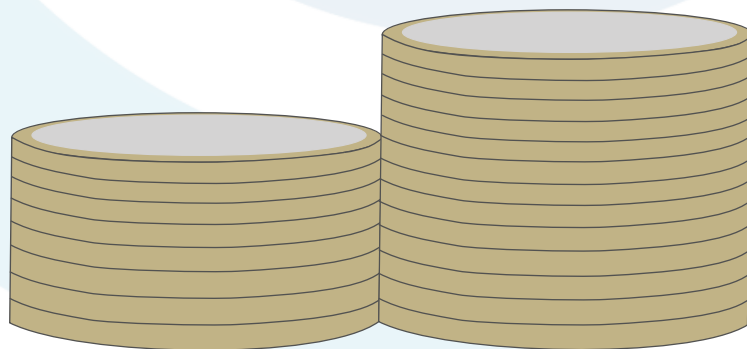
Scottish Flood Forum Advanced Constitution template can be found in Appendix H on page 34.

The Flood Hub Detailed Constitution template can be found in Appendix I on page 37.

Bank accounts

Most high street banks, including Lloyds, NatWest, Royal Bank of Scotland and Metrobank, offer community group bank accounts, however some may require at least one of the signatories to be an existing member. Before filling in the application form for the account, check the account is suitable for community groups and is not a personal or business account, and that the account offers 'free banking' in order to avoid any monthly charges or fee's for having the account.

When opening an account, the bank will likely request a copy of the group's constitution. Ensure that the account has at least three signatories, all of whom live at different households, and any two of which are required to move money to and from the account and pay bills etc. Like with personal accounts, proof of identification and address will be required. The group should also set up a process for the groups bank account to be checked regularly by non-signatories.



Funding

Flood groups may require money in order to help them to achieve their aims and objectives, and there are a number of ways in which they can seek to raise money.

Fundraising events:

Flood groups may wish to host raffles or small social events within the community to help raise money. Social events also provide a good opportunity for the group to engage with the local community to discuss flooding and attract new volunteer members to the group.

Donations:

Some flood groups may wish to approach local businesses with an appeal for donations. Again, this provides a good opportunity to engage with local businesses at flood risk and could help secure small financial donations or even the use of resources.

Grant funding:

There are often a number of local sources of grant funding, such as smaller start-up grants of a few hundred pounds, which may be available through the local authority. Very often, local councils employ Communities Officers who work with a range of community groups, helping them to organise and form and they can usually provide some insight into what local grants may be available, either through the council or other third sector organisations, such as community foundations.

Cumbria Community Foundation: www.cumbriafoundation.org/apply-for-a-grant/

Community Foundation for Lancashire:
www.lancsfoundation.org.uk/apply

Community Foundation for Merseyside:
www.cfmerseyside.org.uk/Funds.aspx

Cheshire Community Foundation:
www.cheshirecommunityfoundation.org.uk/apply-for-funding/

Forever Manchester: www.forevermanchester.com/funding/

There are also a number of community grant funding opportunities available at national level via the National Lottery Community Fund and community programmes run by large organisations such as insurance companies and supermarkets.

The National Lottery Community Fund:

www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding

ASDA Foundation: www.asdafoundation.org/our-grants/

TESCO Community Grants: www.tescostrongerstarts.org.uk/

CO-OP Local Community Fund: www.causes.coop.co.uk/

Many community group grants have very specific eligibility criteria or requirements, so it is worth reading through grant application packs carefully before applying.

Flood group insurance

From dog bites when posting newsletters, to slips, trips and falls when deploying group equipment and resources, insurance cover protects the group against liability in the event of injury to its members or the public and any other risks associated with the group's activities.

There are different levels of cover available depending upon the group's activities and requirements; for example, groups with a community flood resilience plan in place who are deploying flood wardens to help residents with 'dry' evacuation, move furniture or deploy equipment when flooding is expected.

While entry into floodwater is never advised for groups without specific training, activities such as this can increase the cost of insurance. Because insurance cover is very bespoke, discussing the group's activities and requirements directly with the insurer over the phone is advised. Most big insurers are able to offer cover to groups with policies often in the range £100 - £250 subject to cover requirements. Additional Information for community groups can be found at: www.resourcecentre.org.uk

Appendix A - Issues and Actions Template log

Insert Name of Flood Group
Issues and Actions Log

Action point	Discussion Point	Authority	Authority Photographs / supporting documents / information	Update from previous meetings	Date Issue Resolved / Closed
	<i>Surface Water</i>				
1.					
2.					
3.					
	<i>Sewer</i>				
4.					
5.					
6.					
	<i>Main River</i>				
7.					
8.					
9.					
	<i>Culverts/Ordinary Watercourse</i>				
10.					
11.					
12.					
	<i>Resilience</i>				
13.					
14.					
15.					
	<i>Flood arming Telemetry</i>				
16.					
17.					
18.					
	<i>Natural Flood Management</i>				
19.					
20.					
21.					

Appendix B - Flood Group Meeting Agenda template

****Insert Name of Flood Group****
Agenda
1st Meeting on **Insert Date and Time**
****Insert Address and Postcode****

- 1) Introductions

- 2) Apologies

- 3) Previous minutes - N/A

- 4) Group aims and objectives - discussion

- 5) Group name - discussion

- 6) Group member and organisation, operational area and comms - discussion

- 7) Use of group social media platforms - discussion

- 8) Group activities

- 9) AOB (any other business)

- 10) Items to be carried over

- 11) Date and time of next meeting

Discussion notes for a first flood group meeting

Discuss and consider some of the following points to help you get the group started...

Aims and Objectives

Aims = What is/ are the overall goal/ s? What is it you want to do and achieve as a group?

Objectives = The actions needed. How will you go about achieving your aims?

Example aims:

- Raise awareness of flood risk in **insert name of location/ area**
- Warning and informing residents during periods of inclement weather and increased flood risk
- Develop a local community flood action plan to ensure a coordinated response at times of flooding
- Aid individuals, residents, business owners, and the community during floods, ensuring effective support for recovery
- To tackle flood risk issues and reduce flood risk within the community
- Promote equal opportunities and good community relations, preventing discrimination based on race, religion, disability, age, political beliefs, gender, or sexual orientation

Example objectives:

- Engage with the community to increase flood resilience awareness
- Create and maintain a robust Community Flood Resilience Action Plan for coordinated responses and enhanced preparedness in **insert name of location / area**
- Ensure adequate training and information and guidance is available for flood wardens and group members, and the regular testing, review, and amending of flood plans
- Build constructive relationships with flood risk management agencies to and work in partnership to help reduce flood risk in **insert name of location / area**
- Monitor and report flood risk issues and assets which may need maintenance or repair to the appropriate agency, such as blocked gullies, or trash screens etc
- Serve as a point of contact for The Environment Agency, Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), **insert local authority name**, Risk Management Authorities and other relevant agencies
- Undertake risk assessments for the group's activities, maintain appropriate insurance, and limit liability for the group, its members, and volunteers

Group name

Consider a name that reflects the area and group's objectives, such as

- **insert name of location / area** Flood Resilience Group
- **insert name of location / area** Flood Action Group
- **insert name of location / area** Flood Group

Group activities

Considering the group's Aims and Objectives. What activities might the group wish to undertake in working towards achieving its goals?

Example activities:

- Leaflet or newsletter posting to raise awareness of flood risk and related issues
- Share flood resilience information with the wider community through various channels of communication
- Mapping and monitoring flood risk assets such as culvert trash screens and highway gullies for blockages ensuring safe practice at all times
- Utilising social media to engage with the community on flooding issues and flood resilience
- Develop an Issues and Actions log and invite flood risk management authorities to attend meetings to discuss flood risk issues and partnership work to reduce flood risk
- Hosting 'drop-in' community flood resilience events for community members to meet the flood group, representatives from risk management agencies, and receive help completing home flood plans together with signposting to further resources, information, and guidance
- Develop a community response plan, including:
 - Warning and informing the community e.g., social media posts, door knocking, or phone calls when a flood alert and warning is in place
 - Relaying key messages such as evacuation centres and the points of contacts
 - Assisting vulnerable individuals practically e.g., moving items and assistance for those who need it, deploying property flood resilience measures etc.
 - Recording and documenting flood events, include photographs and time stamps while maintaining safe practice and not putting anyone at risk. This can be really useful for authorities when undertaking flood investigations

Social media platforms

Consider whether flood group social media account(s) may be advantageous for engaging with the community. Facebook and WhatsApp are often good tools for this.

- Discuss who will post and respond to any messages
- Consider regular, scheduled posts to keep the page fresh and active. The group can inform and engage around topics such as:
 - Sharing flood resilience information, informative community updates
 - Risk management agency initiatives such as the impacts of fats, oils and grease in sewer systems
 - Encouraging the clearing of leaves from gullies during Autumn
 - Encouraging residents to be mindful of blocked gutters and onsite drainage
 - Flood focussed social media campaigns
 - Useful flood and weather updates from agencies
 - Flood related news stories

Members, organisation and communications

Group roles

Considering the aims, objectives, and activities, what roles may be required in the group and who might do what? Try to identify and build on the existing skills and experience which members may already have, such as computer typing, administration skills, organisation skills, and social media skills etc. Consider roles such as, Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, social media Officer etc. to carry out key tasks like arranging meetings, produce agendas, take minutes and dealing with enquiries and messages.

Group structure

Consider whether to adopt a formal or informal structure, including the possibility of adopting a constitution. A flood group can be as formal or informal as its members wish. A constitution can keep things simple and informal enough, but still provide some level of structure to help guide and provide a direct steer for the group.

Funding

Will the group require funding to achieve its aims and objectives? In order to apply for grant and community group funding, the group will need to be constituted in order to have its own bank account.

Group meetings

Establish a meeting schedule. Regular meetings early on help to build and keep momentum.

Communication

Consider appropriate communication methods, both internally within the group (e.g., WhatsApp, email for arranging meetings), and externally to engage with the community (e.g., Facebook, messenger, quarterly newsletter, setting up a flood group email address etc)

Appendix D - Basic Minutes template

****Insert Name of Flood Group****
Meeting #
****Insert Date and Time****
****Insert Address and Postcode****

In attendance:

Apologies:

Previous minutes:

1. **insert agenda item**

insert details

Action:

By when:

2. **insert agenda item**

insert details

Action:

By when:

3. **insert agenda item**

insert details

Action:

By when:

4. AOB

5. Items to be carried over to next meeting

6. Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on **insert date** at **insert time** at **insert location**.

****Insert Name of Flood Group** Data Protection Policy****Definitions**

Personal data is information about a person which is identifiable as being about them. It can be stored electronically or on paper and includes images and audio recordings as well as written information. Data protection is about how we, as an organisation, ensure we protect the rights and privacy of individuals, and comply with the law, when collection, storing, using, amending, sharing, destroying, or deleting personal data

Responsibility

Overall and final responsibility for data protection lie with the management committee, who are responsible for overseeing activities and ensuring this policy is upheld. All volunteers are responsible for observing this policy, and related procedures, in all areas of their work for the group

Overall policy statement

1. **Insert Name of Flood Group** needs to keep personal data about its committee, members, volunteers and supporters in order to carry out group activities.
2. We will collect, store, use, amend, share, destroy or delete personal data only in ways which protect people's privacy and comply with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and other relevant legislation.
3. We will only collect, store and use the minimum amount of data that we need for clear purposes, and will not collect, store or use data we do not need.
4. We will collect, store and use data for:
 - a. purposes for which the individual has given explicit consent, or
 - b. purposes that are in our group's legitimate interests, or
 - c. contracts with the individual whose data it is, or
 - d. to comply with legal obligations, or
 - e. to protect someone's life, or
 - f. to perform public tasks.
5. We will provide individuals with details of the data we have about them when requested by the relevant individual.
6. We will delete data if requested by the relevant individual, unless we need to keep it for legal reasons.
7. We will endeavour to keep personal data up-to-date and accurate.
8. We will store personal data securely.
9. We will keep clear records of the purposes of collecting and holding specific data, to ensure it is only used for these purposes.
10. We will not share personal data with third parties without the explicit consent of the relevant individual, unless legally required to do so.
11. We will endeavour not to have data breaches. In the event of a data breach, we will endeavour to rectify the breach by getting any lost or shared data back. We will evaluate our processes and understand how to avoid to happening again. Serious data breaches which may risk someone's personal rights or freedoms will be reported to the Information Commissioner's Office within 72 hours, and to the individual concerned.
12. To uphold this policy, we will maintain a set of data protection procedures for our committee and volunteers to follow. This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Date..... Signature (Chair)..... Signature (Secretary).....

****Insert Name of Flood Group** Equality and Diversity Statement**

Insert Name of Flood Group is open to anyone on the **location of flood group** at risk of flooding.

Insert Name of Flood Group is committed to treating all people equally and with respect irrespective of their age, disability, gender assignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, nationality, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

We are committed to ensuring any resident of **location of flood group** can attend our activities, so we will assess our access requirements to meet the needs of those wishing to attend.

Sexist, racist, homophobic, transphobic, or otherwise offensive and inflammatory remarks and behaviour are not acceptable. These constitute harassment and have no place in the Group.

If anyone feels they have been discriminated against by the Group or harassed at a Group event they should raise this with the committee.

The committee will investigate the complaint, listening to all members involved (if the complaint is against a committee member, that member will not be part of conducting the investigation).

If the complaint is against a particular individual, the person will have the opportunity to express their point of view, accompanied by a friend. The person making the complaint will also have this opportunity.

If the complaint is against the Group as a whole, the Committee must work to ensure that such discrimination is not repeated in the future and must inform the members of how they propose to do this.

Any decision to exclude a person from the organisation due to discriminatory or harassing behaviour will be made with reference to the Group's constitution. The Group will support people who feel they have been harassed or discriminated against, and will not victimise or treat them less well because they have raised this.

Group Constitution Template (Basic)

This is a basic constitution template provided by the Scottish Flood Forum and should be used by groups who wish to formalise their structure and get going reasonably quickly. It is only intended as a guidance document and should be reviewed and amended as necessary to suit your local circumstances.

The SFF can provide further advice and guidance on developing your constitution on request and we do recommend that a 3rd party or independent body reviews your constitution before it's adopted.

1. Name

The Group shall be called the (NAME) GROUP.

2. Aims (Amend as appropriate)

The aims of the (NAME) Group shall be: (these are suggestions)

- To establish awareness of factors contributing to flood risks.
- To develop local community flood actions
- To minimize the risks of flooding within the area of (TOWN).
- To assist at times of flooding and to support people who have experienced flooding to ensure effective support is available to assist recovery.
- To uphold equal opportunities and to work for good relations among all members of the community.

3. Objectives (What you are doing to do]

The objectives and activities of the (NAME) Group shall be.

- To meet regularly to ensure that flood preventive methods are being maintained and monitored.
- To monitor and report to the appropriate agencies those areas which are at risk of flooding through lack of maintenance or repair
- To raise the awareness of personal and collective actions to limit the occurrences of flooding.
- As a group to engage with responsible authorities and other organisations to reduce the risk of flooding.
- To agree and implement a programme of activities of interest to all members;
- To develop a local community flood awareness training programme
- To promote flood protection equipment and materials to prevent further flooding to property

4. Members

The first members of the (NAME) Group are those people named below, who have agreed to become members. Subject to approval by a simple majority of those attending the meeting at which the application is made.

5. Annual Meeting

- (a) There shall be an annual meeting in each calendar year. A minimum of one month's notice shall be given for the annual meeting.
- (b) The annual meeting shall:
- approve the annual verified accounts, or statement of income and expenditure;
 - appoint a person independent of the committee and (group name) to independently examine the accounts
 - approve the signatories for the bank account;
 - elect a Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary for the year and any other officers as is considered appropriate.
 - elect a committee and/or working groups to manage the affairs of the Group between annual meetings;
 - set the annual subscription (if appropriate) or meeting fee for the coming year;
 - receive a report on the year's activities; and
 - decide any other business.
- (c) The meeting will proceed if one-third of the members attend the annual meeting

Decisions shall be made by a simple majority of those attending and in the event of a tie the Chair shall have the casting vote.

6. Finance

- (a) The (NAME) Group may raise funds as necessary to fulfil its aims.
- (b) The group shall open a bank account in the name of "The (NAME) Group"
- (c) The (NAME) Group shall decide at the annual meeting who shall be the approved signatories and a minimum of two approved signatures shall be required for any withdrawal.

7. Dissolution

The (NAME) Group shall be dissolved if a simple majority of the members agree to do so. Any surplus of funds at the time of dissolution shall be distributed to other properly constituted groups or organisations in the local area with similar aims.

8. Date

This Constitution was adopted by the first members on (Date)

Signed on behalf of the members by:

_____ Date _____

Chairman

_____ Date _____

Secretary

List of First Members:

Group Constitution Template (Advanced)

This is an advanced constitution template provided by the Scottish Flood Forum and should be used by groups who wish to develop their structure and processes as a flood risk community organisation. It is only intended as a guidance document and should be reviewed and amended as necessary to suit your local circumstances.

All **text in red** are points for discussion and agreement by a flood risk community organisation and can be changed or deleted as required. This constitution is for a flood risk community organisation that wishes to develop enhanced representation, democratic accountability and partnership working with responsible authorities.

The SFF can provide further advice and guidance on developing your constitution on request and we do recommend that a 3rd party or independent body reviews your constitution before it's adopted.

1. Name

The name of the Group shall be:

2. Aims of the Group

The aims of the Group shall be:

- a) To promote the interests of all residents in all matters relating to flood risk preparation, response, recovery and resilience
- b) To uphold equal opportunities and to work for good relations among all members of the community, specifically prohibiting any conduct that discriminates or harasses on the grounds of race, religion, disability, age, political beliefs, gender or sexual orientation
- c) To promote community spirit, participation and enterprise
- d) To work with all responsible authorities and all other agencies involved in flood risk management.

3. Membership of the group

- a) Membership is open to all residents in the defined area. The defined areas will be:
- b) There shall be **YES/NO** subscription associated with membership.
- c) All voting members shall be over the age of **?**
- d) Membership shall cease immediately upon a person leaving the area defined in paragraph 3 (a).

5. The Committee

- a) A committee will be elected to carry out the business of the group
- b) The committee will be made up of the chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary, and treasurer and up to ? general members. A treasurer must be appointed if the group decides to apply for grant funding or undertakes fund raising.
- c) The office bearers and the committee will be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the group.
- d) The committee has the right to co-opt additional committee members to fill vacancies. These appointments will stand to the next Annual General Meeting.
- e) New members may be co-opted, between AGMs, at a general meeting, to fill any vacancy on the committee.
- f) The committee will meet up to 6 times per year, in addition to the AGM and organise additional meetings as necessary.
- g) The quorum at any meetings of the committee will be 50% including at least 2 office bearers.
- h) The Chair of the meeting can exercise a casting vote only.
- i) Minutes or a record of actions and decisions including the names of all those in attendance shall be taken of all committee meetings.
- j) Councillors may attend committee meetings as and when invited by the committee.
- k) The committee can co-opt additional guest members who have relevant skills and experience. If they work in the local area they will have full voting rights through the committee.

6. Representing the Interests of Members

- a) To ensure the committee is representing the views of the group's membership, the committee shall seek to gather and represent local views by whatever means is most effective.
- b) The group shall hold two general meetings per annum, which shall be open to all members of the group. One of these can be the annual general meeting. These must be advertised using whatever means is most effective.

7. Annual General Meeting

- a) There shall be an Annual General Meeting within fifteen months of the group's inaugural meeting or last annual general meeting.

b) **Notice of the AGM must be issued to members at least fourteen days before the meeting date.**

c) The purpose of the Annual General Meeting shall be:

To receive a report from the committee of its activities over the preceding year.

- I. To receive the group's independently examined accounts for the preceding financial year if the group has received grant funding or has undertaken fundraising.
- II. **To require all office bearers and committee members to vacate their positions and elect new office bearers and committee members to serve for the ensuing year. The Chairperson will stand down at each AGM but may be re-elected without time limit.**

d) Nominations for office bearers and committee members will be made and seconded by the floor:

(i) Office Bearers shall be Chairperson, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

(e) Amendments to the Constitution for consideration at the AGM must be submitted to the Secretary in writing, **at least seven days** before the meeting date. Amendments to the constitution are decided by a **two-thirds majority** of those present and entitled to vote.

(f) Other proposals for consideration at the AGM must be notified to the Secretary, in writing, at least **seven days** before the meeting date. Amendments to these proposals may be taken at the meeting.

(g) Minutes of the AGM, including the names of all those attending, shall be taken.

(h) The quorum of annual general meetings shall be **6 members OR an agreed percentage of members.**

8. Other General Meetings

a) **Special general meetings may be called either by the Committee, or at the request of not less than three members,** submitting such a request in writing to the Secretary. A special general meeting must be called within one calendar month of the date of receipt of such a request. Notice of a special general meeting must be issued to all members at least 14 days before the meeting date, indicating the subject matter. No business can be conducted at a special general meeting unless indicated in this notice.

The Constitution of the **Insert Name of Flood Group**

1. Title:

The name of the group is **insert group name** and abbreviated as **insert abbreviation**.

2. Definitions:

The Group: **insert group name** (**insert abbreviation**).

The Committee: Persons who hold the role of committee member as outlined in clause 7.

The Officers: Persons who hold the role of Officer as outlined in clause 7.

The Members: Persons who hold the role of member as outlined in clause 5.

The Community: Individuals, residents, businesses as well as private, public and voluntary sector organisations within **insert location of flood group/ area**.

The Year: A twelve month period ending 31st March.

3. Administration:

The group, its property and assets shall be managed by the members of the Committee, as described in clause 7. In all that it does the group and those volunteering in its name shall remain lawful at all times.

4. Aims and objectives:

The aims of the group are as follows:

- a. To raise awareness of flood risk in **insert location of flood group/ area**.
- b. To develop a local community flood resilience plan to help reduce the impact of flooding.
- c. To assist the individuals, residents, business owners and community of **insert location of flood group/ area** at times of flooding and support those who have experienced flooding to ensure effective support is available to assist with recovery.
- d. To work with authorities and agencies involved in flood risk management and seek to build good, constructive and cooperative relationships to work towards reducing the risk of flooding in **insert location of flood group/ area**.
- e. To uphold equal opportunities and to work for good relations among all members of the community, specifically prohibiting any conduct that discriminates or harasses on the grounds of race, religion, disability, age, political beliefs, gender or sexual orientation.

The objectives of the group are as follows:

- a. To engage with the community and promote general flood resilience awareness.
- b. To develop and maintain a robust Community Flood Resilience Action Plan in order to achieve a coordinated response and better prepare **insert location of flood group/ area** for a flood event.
- c. Ensure responding personnel are adequately trained and informed, ensuring that plans are regularly tested, reviewed and amended.
- d. To monitor and report to the appropriate agency flood risk issues and assets which may be in need of maintenance or repair.
- e. To act as a point of contact for The Environment Agency, **insert local authority name** and other agencies.
- f. To ensure that the risks associated with the group's activities are assessed and that appropriate insurance cover is maintained and that the liability of the group, its members and any appointed volunteers are limited accordingly.

5.Membership:

Membership of the group shall be open to all residents and business owners of **insert location of flood group/ area** who are interested in furthering the work of the group and subject to the following;

- a. The prospective member is of the age of 18 years or above.
- b. The prospective member either resides or owns a business property within **insert location of flood group/ area**.

Membership as a general group member will begin as soon as;

- a. The prospective member is approved for membership by a simple majority vote at the next general meeting and;
- b. The prospective member signs, adopts and agrees to be bound the constitution of the group.

A list of all members and their contact details will be kept by the secretary of the group. Members of the group may wish to attend meetings for information and discussions, vote on matters arising, volunteer for group activities and to help the group to achieve its aims and objectives.

6.Ceasing to be a member:

Members may resign at any time. Such resignation shall be made in writing and shall take effect at the time specified therein, or, if no time be specified, at the time of its receipt by the Secretary. Membership shall also cease immediately upon the individual no longer being a resident of **insert location of flood group/ area** or owning business premises within **insert location of flood group/ area**.

Any offensive behaviour, including racist, sexist or inflammatory remarks, will not be permitted. Anyone behaving in an offensive way may be asked not to attend further meetings or to resign from the group if an apology is not given or the behaviour is repeated. In such cases, membership can be revoked by the committee if it is deemed that the member's behaviour has been in breach of the group's constitution, subject to a simple majority vote.

7.Committee and Officers:

The business of the group will be carried out by a Committee elected at the group's Annual General Meeting.

The Committee will meet as necessary and not less than X times a year. The Committee shall consist of no greater than **insert no** members and must be composed of 3 officers and **insert no** committee members. Up to 2 additional members may be co-opted onto the committee at the discretion of the committee.

Committee members shall be elected at Annual General Meetings by members of the group and serve for a period of 12 months but may be re-elected to the same office or another office the following year. The committee shall appoint a chair, a treasurer and a secretary. It may also appoint a vice-chair should it wish to do so.

The officers' roles are as follows:

- a. The Chair, who shall chair and cast a deciding vote if required, in both general and committee meetings.
- b. The Vice-Chair, who in the absence of The Chair, shall assume all duties and responsibilities of the chair.
- c. The Secretary, who shall ensure that the business conducted at any meetings is properly recorded in the form of minutes and be made readily available to all interested parties and members. The secretary shall also be responsible for the distribution of all papers and keeping records of all members.
- d. The Treasurer, who shall be responsible for managing and maintaining the group's accounts and reporting on such matters.

In the event of an officer standing down during the year a replacement will be elected at the next general meeting of members.

Any committee member not attending general or committee meetings without apology for three months will be contacted by the committee and asked if they wish to resign.

Any committee member or office bearer may resign at any time. Such resignation shall be made in writing and shall take effect at the time specified therein, or, if no time be specified, at the time of its receipt by the Secretary.

8. No personal interest:

No committee member shall be paid for serving the committee, except in the case of professional work undertaken for the group, with the unanimous consent of a meeting of the committee. No committee member shall have any interest in the property or funds of the group other than a trustee on behalf of the group.

9. Conflicts of interest:

No officer or member of the committee shall hold any conflict of interest in regard to the group's aims and objectives. Any such conflict of interest for any member should be openly declared prior to any vote, appointment or commencement of membership. Should a conflict of interest arise during service or appointment, it must be declared to the committee immediately in writing via the secretary.

The failure to declare a conflict of interest may result in the revocation of membership subject to a simple majority vote by the committee.

10. Special General Meetings and notice:

Special General Meetings are to be used to discuss important matters which need to be put before the whole membership and which cannot wait until an Annual General Meeting, and can be called by the committee and requested by members.

Where possible all members will be given 14 days notice of such a meeting, giving the date, time, venue and the reason for which the meeting has been called. Notice of the meeting must be given in writing by email or post.

Matters arising at a special general meeting will be discussed openly and resolved via a simple majority vote. If the number of votes cast on each side is equal, the chair of the meeting shall have an additional casting vote

11. Special General Meetings and notice:

Special General Meetings are to be used to discuss important matters which need to be put before the whole membership and which cannot wait until an Annual General Meeting, and can be called by the committee and requested by members.

Where possible all members will be given 14 days notice of such a meeting, giving the date, time, venue and the reason for which the meeting has been called. Notice of the meeting must be given in writing by email or post.

Matters arising at a special general meeting will be discussed openly and resolved via a simple majority vote. If the number of votes cast on each side is equal, the chair of the meeting shall have an additional casting vote.

12. Annual General Meeting:

- a. There shall be an annual meeting in each calendar year. All members will be given minimum of 30 days notice for the annual general meeting. Notice of the meeting must be given in writing via email or post.
- b. The annual meeting shall:
 - i. receive a report on the year's activities;
 - ii. approve the annual accounts, or statement of income and expenditure;
 - iii. elect a committee and/or working groups to manage the affairs of the group between annual meetings;
 - iv. elect a Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary for the year and any other officers as is considered appropriate by the committee;
 - v. approve the signatories for the bank account; and,
 - vi. decide any other business.
- c. Nominations for office bearers and committee members will be proposed and seconded by the floor: Office bearers shall be Chairperson, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.
- d. The meeting will proceed if one-third of the members attend the annual meeting.

Decisions shall be made by a simple majority of those attending and in the event of a tie the Chair shall have the casting vote.

13. Equality and diversity:

The group and its members shall not knowingly discriminate against any individual or group on the grounds of race, colour, religion, disability, age, political beliefs, gender, marital status or sexual orientation.

14. Safeguarding:

The group and its members shall remain aware of and committed to safeguarding principles in promoting the welfare of its members, children and vulnerable adults within the community with whom it may come into contact with during the course of its activities.

15. Data protection:

The group shall remain committed to managing and handling of the information and data it collects in the course of its activities in accordance with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018.

16. Financial arrangements:

The group shall open a bank account in the name of the **insert location of flood group/ area**.

The Group may raise funds as necessary to fulfil its aims and objectives. All money raised by or on behalf of the group shall be applied to further the aims of the group, and for no other purpose.

The Treasurer shall keep proper accounts of the finances of the group and make a report available at every committee meeting.

The funds of the group shall be managed through a bank account. All cheques written on behalf of the group must bear the signature of two persons each holding the role of either Officer OR Committee Member.

No two-cheque signatories shall be from the same household or family

17. Amendments to the Constitution:

Amendments to the constitution may only be made at the Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting called for such purpose.

Any proposal to amend the constitution must be given to the Secretary in writing. The proposal must then be circulated with the notice of the meeting.

Any proposal to amend the constitution will require a simple majority of those members present and must include at least 1 committee member and 1 officer.

18. Dissolution:

If the committee decides that it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the group it shall call a meeting of all members of the group giving 21 days notice of the meeting and of the meetings intention. If the proposal is confirmed by a simple majority of those present and voting, the association shall then be dissolved.

In the event of dissolution, remaining assets after outstanding liabilities are met shall be disbursed in a manner agreed by the committee, who shall have power to release any assets held by or on behalf of the group and to disperse them to other properly constituted groups, not-for-profit or charitable organisations in the local area.

19. Adoption of the Constitution:

This constitution was adopted at a meeting of the group on

Those members unable to attend that meeting have signed their agreement to the constitution and consent to be bound by it

