

**CONSTITUTION OF THE  
FRIENDS OF HIGHCLIFFE BEACHES AND CLIFFS  
INTEREST GROUP**

**1. NAME**

1.1 The name of the Interest Group is the Friends of Highcliffe Beaches and Cliffs [hereinafter referred to as FOHBAC].

**2. AREA OF INTEREST**

2.1 Part of the area of coastline and cliffs designated units 1 and 2 of the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) by Natural England known as 'Highcliffe to Milford Cliffs' and the area known as Chewton Bunny within the county of Dorset [hereinafter referred to as the Area].

**3. SCOPE OF MEMBERSHIP**

3.1 Membership of FOHBAC is open to residents of the Highcliffe constituency wards, being part of the Borough of Christchurch, Christchurch, Dorset and from across Great Britain.

**4. OBJECTIVES**

4.1 The FOHBAC is a non-profit making unincorporated association.

4.2 The objectives of the FOHBAC are –

- Encourage an interest in all matters relating to the Area.
- To protect the Area from adverse development.
- To better understand –
  - The geological significance of the cliffs and the SSSI classification
  - The diverse flora and vegetation
  - The diverse wildlife
  - The shoreline and coastal defences
- Regularly consult with and inform Members on relevant matters in relation to the Area.
- To maintain a dialogue with –
  - The Area owners, Christchurch Borough Council
  - Natural England who administer the SSSI classification
  - All interested parties who have an involvement with the Area.
- Operate as a non-political, non-racial and equal opportunities Interest Group that works towards fostering good relations amongst all Members without discrimination.

**5. MEMBERSHIP**

5.1 Membership shall be open to all residents residing in the Highcliffe constituency wards, Christchurch and Great Britain irrespective of ownership and tenure of properties. One voting FOHBAC Member shall be permitted from each household.

5.2 All voting Members must be at least 18 years of age.

5.3 The FOHBAC may agree to the collection of an annual subscription from FOHBAC Members at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) for the following calendar year. A decision

to collect an annual subscription and its amount will be based on a majority vote of the FOHBAC Members attending the AGM.

## **6. THE COMMITTEE**

6.1 A Committee shall be elected at the AGM of the FOHBAC and shall serve for 12 months.

6.2 The Committee shall consist of at least four FOHBAC Members (Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Liaison Officer), who shall have the power to invite other FOHBAC Members on to the Committee during the course of the year. All Committee Members will have voting rights within Committee meetings.

6.3 The Committee shall elect from within their number a Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Liaison Officer taking into consideration personal wishes and suitability. No Committee Member shall fill more than one position.

6.4 The Committee and Office bearers shall undertake their responsibilities and make and carryout decisions in accordance with the Objectives of the FOHBAC.

6.5 There must be at least four of the Committee Members present for any decisions to be made at a Committee meeting. The FOHBAC Chairman shall preside at every meeting or in the absence of the Chairman the Committee will elect a Chairman for the conduct of the meeting.

6.6 The Committee will endeavour to encourage new Members to join the FOHBAC.

6.7 Representatives from Christchurch Borough Council, Natural England and other interested parties who have an involvement with the Area may be invited to attend the AGM and Committee meetings when invited by the Committee.

6.8 Committee Members can be voted off if they have not attended three consecutive Committee meetings (including an AGM) without good reason and/or they have not submitted their apologies to the Secretary.

6.9 Committee Members must declare any interests they may have in a topic under discussion and the Committee will decide if they need to forfeit their right to vote on that occasion.

## **7. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS OR STANDING ORDERS**

7.1 Members may speak only through the Chair at Committee meetings, AGM's, Extraordinary General Meetings (EGM's) and Special General Meeting's (SGM's).

7.2 Decisions will be agreed by a simple majority vote of a show of hands, or a secret ballot. The Chairman has the casting vote to decide a decision.

7.3 Meetings will end at the time agreed by the Committee unless all those present agree to extend the meeting.

7.4 Members are to conduct themselves in a manner that supports the Objectives of the FOHBAC. The Chairman will be arbiter of any inappropriate behaviour or remarks.

7.5 Any Member who brings the FOHBAC into disrepute or refuses to comply with the Constitution may be expelled on a majority vote of the full Committee. Any such Member will have the right of appeal within 28 days of the expulsion to the Secretary. The appeal shall be heard by the Membership at a SGM called for that purpose.

7.6 The Secretary shall deal with all correspondence other than finance matters or by agreement by the Committee on a case by case basis.

7.7 A notice of the AGM and its Agenda will be distributed to the Membership at least three weeks before a meeting, where possible. Items for inclusion in the Agenda should be forwarded to the Secretary at least seven days before the meeting.

7.8 AGM Minutes will be distributed to the Membership one month after a meeting, where possible.

## **8. FINANCES**

8.1 All funds shall be kept in a bank account that shall be opened in the name of Friends of Highcliffe Beaches and Cliffs. Petty cash may also be kept by the Treasurer and its expenditure recorded appropriately.

8.2 The Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer shall be signatories on the account and any withdrawals from the bank account shall require one of those signatories.

8.3 Accounts shall be kept by the Treasurer, and following a request from the Committee they may be inspected by the Committee Members.

8.4 All expenditure shall be agreed and controlled by the Committee. Receipts should be acquired for all expenditure over five pounds. Exceptions to be agreed with the Treasurer if a receipt is not possible.

8.5 All payments shall be made by cash unless the Committee should decide payments over ten pounds may be made by cheque, issued by the bank account for the FOHBAC. Any exceptions to this rule shall be discussed and agreed by the Committee.

8.6 All finance correspondence of the FOHBAC (including bank statements, if applicable) shall be addressed to the Treasurer. The bank account pass book will be updated at least once a year to record any interest earned on the monies deposited.

## **9. EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING (EGM)**

9.1 EGM's can be convened by the FOHBAC Committee to discuss matters of importance and to keep the Members fully informed of the FOHBAC's activities.

9.2 Members shall be given 14 days' notice of an EGM, where possible.

## **10. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)**

10.1 An AGM shall be held every year to discuss the activities of the FOHBAC, to receive the accounts and to elect the Committee for the following year. The AGM shall be held at a suitable venue to accommodate as many Members as possible.

10.2 A quorum at an AGM shall be 10 FOHBAC Members present. The voting shall be by a simple majority of those present.

10.3 At least 21 days' notice needs to be given to FOHBAC Members of an AGM.

10.4 At the AGM the resignation of any Committee Members will be accepted. The current Committee membership may be proposed and elected for continuation for the following year and new Committee Members may also be proposed and elected.

## **11. COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

11.1 The Committee shall meet at least three times during the year between AGM's and additional or fewer meetings of Committee meetings are to be recorded and retained by the Secretary.

11.2 An agenda and minutes of Committee meetings are to be recorded and retained by the Secretary.

## **12. CHANGES TO CONSTITUTION**

12.1 This constitution shall only be changed and approved at the AGM or an EGM when called specifically for this purpose. The requirement of a quorum for an EGM shall be the same as for an AGM.

12.2 All Members shall be given 21 days' notice of the meeting and proposed changes.

12.3 Proposed changes must be submitted to the Secretary in writing not less than 35 days before the AGM. The Secretary must notify FOHBAC Members of any proposed changes at least 21 days prior to the meeting.

### **13. CHILD PROTECTION**

13.1 The FOHBAC will ensure that any activities they are involved with will be a safe environment for children.

13.2 If FOHBAC activities are to involve children, a Child Protection Policy will be adopted and a Committee Member will be appointed to take responsibility for its implementation.

### **14. DISSOLUTION OF THE FOHBAC**

14.1 The FOHBAC may only be dissolved by an EGM called for that purpose. Such a meeting shall come about following a proposal in writing signed by a simple majority of those remaining on the Committee being submitted to the Secretary.

14.2 All Members shall be informed of such a meeting at least 21 days before the date of the meeting.

14.3 Dissolution of the FOHBAC shall only take effect if agreed by a majority of the eligible voting Members present at that meeting.

14.4 Any assets remaining after meeting debts and liabilities due must be distributed among local charities or other community groups with similar aims of the FOHBAC as nominated by the Committee at that meeting.

14.5 On dissolution, any documents belonging to the FOHBAC shall be held or disposed of in a manner agreed at that meeting.

**This Constitution was adopted by the founding Steering Group Members of Friends of Highcliffe Beaches and Cliffs on 22 August 2016.**

<b>Signed</b>	<b>Print Name</b>
Chairman	Nigel Brooks
Secretary	Josephine Pollen
Treasurer	Richard Chatterton