

BEDFORDSHIRE CLIMATE CHANGE FORUM

Constitution

1. NAME AND STATUS

The name of the group is Bedfordshire Climate Change Forum (hereafter referred to as BCCF). BCCF has no legal status, is non-party political, and originated from the work of Local Agenda 21.

The geographical area represented by BCCF is the historical county of Bedfordshire, including Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Luton Borough.

BCCF is an independent voluntary organisation, which seeks to work closely with all the Bedfordshire local authorities, relevant local organisations and the wider public.

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

BCCF is formed by a group of people who share a deep concern about the threat and effects of climate change on us locally and on the peoples and biodiversity of the planet. We aim to promote awareness of the pressing need to keep global temperature rises to below 2 degrees and ideally below 1.5 degrees (above pre-industrial levels) as agreed by 195 countries in Paris 2015, and to uphold the Climate Change Act 2008.

We pursue these goals through the following:

- Engaging in campaigns that communicate the seriousness of the risks of man-made climate change and the need for urgent action on a massive scale, using local media and networking options with similar groups.
- Helping to promote the building of low carbon and sustainable communities in Bedfordshire and beyond through life-transforming action.
- Promoting renewables and rapidly ending dependency on fossil fuels, with ambitious and binding targets for lowering carbon emissions to ensure that at least 80% of fossil fuel reserves are left in the ground.
- Identifying positive actions leading to climate justice, 'climate jobs', and energy democracy (including community or public ownership of renewable energy options).
- Lobbying politicians, collaborating with local authorities, and engaging in active dialogue with fuel companies, business, educational organisations, public bodies, including the NHS, community groups and local people, about climate issues and pursuing necessary action.
- Sharing clear, up-to-date information on climate change and offering an educational forum for local people to learn more about behaviour and lifestyle changes which reduce any emissions, particularly carbon, known to cause climate change.

3. MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Forum is open to individuals and organisations that support the aims and

objectives outlined above. Organisations may apply to become affiliated members of the Forum. BCCF membership requires that a membership form be completed and signed to indicate agreement with our aims and objectives.

We will hold members' information in accordance with the Data Protection of 1988. The information provided will only be used for mailing newsletters and other communications for the purposes of BCCF. It will not be passed to any other organization without the permission of members.

4. PARTICIPATION

People wishing to be kept informed of BCCF activities and events may do so by entering their email address on the circulation list, held by a specified member or members of the Committee of BCCF.

A formal Equal and Diversity Policy, attached to the end of this constitution, aims to ensure that anyone is able to participate regardless of their sex, gender, colour, ethnic origin, race, age, disability, religion, social class, sexual orientation and/or marital status.

As well as news mailings, the BCCF Facebook page and website are also freely available for accessing up-to-date information about BCCF and climate change developments.

5. MEETINGS

BCCF public meetings and events are open to all, and seek to widen participation and strengthen networking with groups elsewhere which share similar objectives.

Committee meetings are usually held monthly.

Notice of Committee meetings and the agenda decided by the chair(s) and secretary, will be sent out a week in advance. Minutes from the meeting are to be circulated to the Committee as soon as possible after the meeting.

An Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held at the end of the financial year, when election of the following year's Committee takes place, and a Chair's report and a Treasurer's report are presented.

An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) can also be called as needed.

Decision making will be by consensus, or if necessary by simple majority voting, with a minuted record of any decisions made.

6. COMMITTEE

All Committee members, including any co-opted members, must be members of BCCF.

The Committee shall consist of:

- the Officers: Chair(s) and Vice-Chair (2 in total), Secretary, and Treasurer
- up to 8 additional Committee members.

Elections will be held annually at the AGM to appoint Officers and additional Committee members. Officers must have already served on the Committee for at least six months before appointment to

these posts.

Further Committee members can be co-opted for special purposes. The terms of reference of special sub groups are to be agreed in advance by the Committee.

The quorum for a Committee meeting shall be 5 elected members, two of whom must be officers (Chair, Vice-chair, Secretary and Treasurer).

Decision making will be by consensus, or if necessary by simple majority voting with a minuted record.

7. DISSOLUTION

The forum may be terminated by an AGM or EGM after appropriate consultation between all parties and funds distributed to a like-minded organization.

8. ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

These can only happen at an AGM or EGM.

The Chair Person(s) shall notify each member in writing of any proposed alterations to the constitution 14 days prior to any meeting. Should a vote be taken on any alteration to the constitution, then a 2/3 majority of all members present at the AGM or EGM is required to agree any alterations to the constitution.

9. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

1. General Statement

1.1. BCCF is committed to achieving equal opportunities in the activities it organizes or facilitates. No member, participant or volunteer should receive less favourable treatment because of sex, gender, colour, ethnic origin, race, age, disability, religion, social class, sexual orientation and/or marital status.

1.2. This document sets out the action to be taken by BCCF to achieve equal opportunities as a consequence of its commitment to promote equal opportunities and challenge discrimination wherever it occurs.

1.3. If anyone says or does things which are unacceptable in terms of the Equal Opportunities Policy and incompatible with it, BCCF will challenge such behaviour.

1.4. The BCCF Committee will review this policy every three years.

2. Responsibility

2.1. While the Committee of BCCF is responsible for the effective operation of this policy, participants and volunteers in BCCF activities have a duty to ensure that the policy works in practice.

2.2. Efforts will be made to ensure that the activities organized by BCCF incorporate the wider community.

2.3. If any participant or volunteer feels that they have been, or are being discriminated against, in any way, they are entitled to pursue the matter with the Committee.

2.4. All instances or complaints of discriminatory behaviour will be treated seriously and in confidence.

3. Disabled Access

3.1. BCCF will endeavour to ensure, as far as is practicable, that the premises it uses have disabled access.

4. Use of Language

4.1. Materials used or developed by BCCF will be designed in consideration of equal opportunities and will not include any of discriminatory nature.

4.2. In all events, BCCF will ensure that where language used has a negative personal impact on others, it will be made clear that use of such language is unwelcome and/or offensive.

5. Sexual Harassment

5.1. No one involved in BCCF activities should be subject to sexual harassment, which is understood to mean unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature, including physical contact, verbal sexual abuse, or repeated remarks which an individual finds offensive.

6. Equal Opportunities Monitoring

6.1. The Committee will monitor and evaluate BCCF progress and practice as regards equal opportunities annually.

Adopted on: _____

Reviewed date: _____