



## **1. General**

1.1 The name of the organisation shall be the “Empty Homes Network”, (hereinafter called “the Network”). The model of the organisation shall be that of an unincorporated association.

### **Definitions**

1.2 For the purpose of this Constitution

- a) ‘Appointed Executive Member’ means any Member of the Executive including Officers who has been elected by General Meeting of the Members or co-opted by the Executive and who is not attending Executive as a Forum Representative.
- b) ‘Empty Property Practitioner’ means an individual who as part of their paid employment or as a regular and authorised volunteer
  - (i) bears a measure of responsibility for helping bring empty property into residential use; or
  - (ii) provides practical support or relevant services to those who do so;
- c) ‘Forum’ means a collective of Empty Homes Practitioners meeting or intending to meet regularly and including representatives from at least five contiguous local authority areas;
- d) ‘Online Forum’ means a part of the Network’s website where Members are able to log in and publish material that can be accessed and commented on by other Members;
- e) ‘Teller’ means the persons responsible for recording, calculating, assessing and reporting to the Executive the votes and attendance in any voting procedures of the Network;

## **2. Aims**

2.1 The Aims of the Network are

- a) to foster mutual support and understanding amongst Empty Property Practitioners;
- b) to raise the status and profile of Empty Property Practitioners
- c) to promote the value of the dedicated Empty Property Practitioner;
- d) to promote, support and facilitate the development of professional standards and skills amongst Empty Property Practitioners;

- e) to promote policies and practices which offer effective responses to the challenges presented by empty property;

### **3. Powers**

3.1 In furtherance of these aims, but not otherwise, the Network may:

- a) commission publish or distribute relevant material
- b) promote or carry out research
- c) raise and distribute funds
- d) arrange and promote training, conferences and other events
- e) seek to influence the actions and policies of others.
- f) share information, skills and experience with and support the activities of other organisations and individuals.

### **4. Membership**

#### **General**

4.1 The following types of Member are recognised:

- a) Full Members who may be:
  - Corporate Members
  - Collective Members
  - Individual Members
  - Honorary Members

b) Associates

c) Student Members

4.2 Membership is only available to natural persons. The normal minimum eligibility criterion for Membership of the Network is that they should be an Empty Homes Practitioner. Specific eligibility criteria also apply to the various categories of Membership as described further below. The Executive may establish and publish separately further criteria; or agree exceptions either on an individual or general basis.

4.3 Members of the Network shall subscribe to its aims.

4.4 Full Membership is subject to the payment of the appropriate fee. Membership may be lapsed or be downgraded to Associate status if fees are more than one month overdue.

- 4.5 Membership shall be open to all eligible individuals, regardless of nationality, political party or belief, race, disability, religious opinion or sexuality or any other personal characteristic.
- 4.6 The Executive may refuse the application of or terminate the Membership of any individual whose Membership would, in the view of the Executive, be incompatible with the Aims of the Network, or would bring the Network into disrepute, or would not meet the eligibility criteria for Membership. The Member or applicant concerned shall be notified in writing.
- 4.7 Unless otherwise stated, an existing Full Member (but not other categories of Member or applicants) affected by the exercise of powers under 4.6 may appeal in writing within 28 days of the decision. Any such appeal shall be considered by the Executive which shall make a final decision.
- 4.8 All Members shall be required to confirm, on application for Membership, their agreement to be bound by this Constitution.
- 4.9 A register of Members including names and email addresses shall be maintained by the Secretary.
- 4.10 The Membership fees shall be set by the Executive.

#### **Corporate Entities**

- 4.11 For the purposes of this Constitution a “Corporate Entity” is any organisation other than
- a) a natural person; or
  - b) a business in sole proprietorship.
- 4.12 Employees, principals or partners of (“belonging to”) any Corporate Entity may apply for Full Membership of the Network. Provided the appropriate fee is paid by the Corporate Entity any number of its employees, principals or partners may become Full Members and may enjoy the rights of Full Membership (subject to any limitations on Voting Rights set out elsewhere) PROVIDED that the Executive at its sole discretion may for all purposes treat separate regional or other divisions of a large Corporate Entity as separate Corporate Entities.

#### **Collectivities**

- 4.13 The Executive may agree arrangements whereby a group of Corporate Entities (“Collectivity”), numbering at least five, may purchase Membership for a discounted fee. Each individual Corporate Entity within the Collectivity shall retain its own rights and identity under this arrangement.

### **Corporate and Collective Members**

- 4.14 Full Members belonging to Corporate Entities that in turn belong to Collectivities shall be known as 'Collective Members'; all other Full Members belonging to Corporate Entities shall be known as 'Corporate Members'.
- 4.15 All Corporate and Collective Members shall apply to the Network individually for their Membership in the normal way and shall be subject to the normal obligations and requirements of Membership.
- 4.16 Corporate and Collective Membership shall cease in the event that the Member concerned ceases to be an employee, principal or partner of his or her Corporate Entity.

### **Individual Members**

- 4.17 A sole trader may apply to become an Individual Member of the Network. Applications for Individual Membership shall not normally be accepted as alternatives to Corporate or Collective Membership. This criterion shall normally exclude from Individual Membership any employee, partner or principal of a Corporate Entity if empty homes activities form a part of the normal activity of that Entity.

### **Honorary Members**

- 4.18 The Executive may bestow Honorary Membership on any individual deemed to have made an exceptional contribution to furthering the aims of the Network. Honorary Members shall receive the benefits of Full Membership without being required to pay a Membership fee.
- 4.19 Honorary Membership shall last for a time specified by the Executive or indefinitely, subject to the right of the Executive to withdraw Honorary Membership at its discretion at any time.
- 4.20 In the event that Honorary Membership is withdrawn, the decision of the Executive shall be final and no appeal under clause 4.7 shall be accepted.
- 4.21 For the purposes of voting, an Honorary Member shall be treated as a paid-up Individual Member, holding a vote in their own right separately from any voting right vested in any Corporate Entity to which they belong.

### **Associates**

- 4.22 The Executive may make rules governing eligibility for Associate Membership. Associate Members shall not be required to pay a Membership fee but shall have no voting rights. The Executive may at its sole discretion limit in other ways the benefits and rights of participation of Associate Members.

## **Student Members**

- 4.23 Any student whose study involves a special focus on the issue of empty homes may apply for Student Membership of the Network. The rights of Student Members shall be determined by the Executive.

## **Rights of Corporate Entities**

- 4.24 A Corporate Entity shall have the unconditional right to require that the Corporate or Collective Membership of one its employees shall be terminated in which case the affected Member shall have no right of appeal under Section 4.7. This shall not prevent the individual concerned taking up another form of Membership at the discretion of the Executive.

## **5. Voting Rights**

- 5.1 In all democratic processes of the Network, only Full Members may vote.
- 5.2 Each paid-up Individual Member, Honorary Member or Corporate Entity shall hold one vote.
- 5.3 Any Full Member belonging to a Corporate Entity may exercise the voting right held by the Corporate Entity.
- 5.4 If more than one vote is cast by Full Members from a single Corporate Entity the votes from that Corporate Entity shall be totalled and the majority view shall be expressed as one vote. Should votes for and against cancel one another out, then this shall be treated as an abstention.
- 5.5 Votes may be cast by registering votes on the Network's website (if available), or by letter, email, facsimile or ballot paper sent to the Teller. These methods of voting shall be termed 'Remote Voting'.
- 5.6 The procedures for Remote Voting shall be determined by the Executive and clearly notified to the Membership.
- 5.7 Evidence of votes cast via Remote Voting shall be retained for at least one year.
- 5.8 Voting at General Meetings shall be by secret ballot.
- 5.9 Decisions shall be made by simple majority of the votes cast.
- 5.10 Unless otherwise decided by the Executive, the Secretary shall perform the role of Teller for all voting processes.

## **6. Power to Conduct Business Remotely**

- 6.1 Any business of the Network, including the business of the Executive and of General Meetings, may at the discretion of the Executive be conducted 'Remotely' using the procedures outlined below and employing the methods defined for Remote Voting (see 5.5 above).
- 6.2 Where business is conducted Remotely, the Executive shall make reasonable endeavours to ensure:
- that the procedures to be used throughout, including time-scales, are clearly defined
  - that at least 90% of the Membership is able to participate in any debate either by automatic distribution of emails or by access to an on-line forum
  - that the issues are clearly presented.
- 6.3 Where business is conducted Remotely, the number of voting rights exercised shall be counted and this number shall be treated as the number attending the meeting for the purposes of establishing whether the required quorum has been achieved. This procedure shall apply to each individual motion that is subject to a vote.
- 6.4 For the purposes of paragraph 6.3, the intention to abstain by persons able to exercise voting rights, if expressed in writing, shall be counted as the exercise of a voting right.

## **7. Communicatins**

- 7.1 The business of the Network shall be conducted on the basis that all Members are
- a) contactable by email
  - b) have access to any website run by the Network
  - c) are capable of logging into the Member area of the Network's website
  - d) are able to publish text in any online forum provided by the Network.
- 7.2 It is incumbent upon Members to provide a valid email address to the Executive and to maintain their ability to log into the Member area of the website.
- 7.3 For the purposes of this Constitution,
- a) communication to the Members 'in writing' by the Executive or Officers may include any of the following:
    - (i) by letter sent physically by surface mail (Royal Mail postal services or similar) to the Network's published address
    - (ii) by email
    - (iii) by posting text in an online forum provided by the Network

- (iv) by storing a file in Adobe Portable Document Format or Microsoft Office format or other format in common use on the Network's website in such a way that it may be readily downloaded by any Member who is logged into the website.
- b) communication 'in writing' by Members to the Executive or Officers shall be deemed to have been received if
  - (i) validly emailed to [secretary@ehnetwork.org.uk](mailto:secretary@ehnetwork.org.uk) or [admin@ehnetwork.org.uk](mailto:admin@ehnetwork.org.uk) or
  - (ii) sent to the Network's postal address.
- 7.4 Communications in writing will be deemed to have been received by the intended recipient
  - a) within three days if sent by surface mail
  - b) within twenty-four hours if sent by email
  - c) within forty-eight hours if posted as text or downloadable file on the Network's website.
- 7.5 For the purposes of this Constitution 'published' and 'submitted' mean communicated in writing.
- 7.6 The postal address of the Network shall be published on the Network website.
- 7.7 Communications to the Executive or to any Officers shall be deemed to have been received if validly emailed to [secretary@ehnetwork.org.uk](mailto:secretary@ehnetwork.org.uk) or [admin@ehnetwork.org.uk](mailto:admin@ehnetwork.org.uk) or sent to the Network's postal address.
- 7.8 The Network shall provide an online forum where Members may express their opinions and respond to the opinions of others.
- 7.9 Any material posted on the Network's website or forum shall be subject to the normal terms and conditions applicable to that website or forum.

## **8. General Meetings**

- 8.1 There shall be no requirement for regular General Meetings.
- 8.2 A General Meeting, however called, shall be organised by the Executive or its appointed representatives.
- 8.3 The business of General Meetings shall be conducted in conformance with the Standard Processes for Organising Meetings specified in Section 10 of this Constitution along with any further guidelines provided by the Executive.

- 8.4 A General Meeting may transact any of the following business:
- elect or remove Officers
  - elect or remove Elected or Co-opted Executive Committee Members
  - such other business as may be put forward by at least 10 Full Members of the Network or by the Executive.
- 8.5 The only business transacted at a General Meeting shall be the business previously notified to Members in conformance with Section 10 of this Constitution.
- 8.6 A General Meeting shall be held
- a) if requested by the Chairperson or Secretary; or
  - b) if requested by a majority of the Officers; or
  - c) if requested by a majority of the Executive Members with Voting Rights
  - d) if requested by any four Executive Members with Voting Rights;
  - e) if requested by not less than 5% of the Full Members of the Network.
- 8.7 Any request for a General Meeting shall be made known in writing. The Secretary shall determine the validity of any such request and advise the Executive accordingly.
- 8.8 Any request for a General Meeting shall state the nature of the business to be transacted at the General Meeting. Where there is more than one such request outstanding and these indicate differing natures of business to be transacted they shall be treated as requests for different General Meetings and shall not be aggregated when determining if the thresholds specified at 8.6 have been reached.
- 8.9 Where requests for a General Meeting to transact a given nature of business are submitted by more than one person such requests shall be aggregated provided they are made known to the Secretary in writing within a period of 14 consecutive days.
- 8.10 Where requests for a General Meeting meet the criteria and thresholds set out above, the Secretary or in the absence of the Secretary such other person as the Executive shall appoint shall organise a General Meeting within 42 days.
- 8.11 The business to be transacted at a General Meeting shall be determined by whoever requested the meeting PROVIDED that no business shall be transacted that the Executive shall determine would be frivolous or vexatious or might be expected to expose the Network to legal proceedings.

## 9. Executive Committee

### Functions

- 9.1 An Executive Committee (“the Executive”) shall exist to ensure the Network works towards its aims and to carry out the business of the Network.
- 9.2 The Executive may exercise any power of the Network to decide or undertake any thing PROVIDED such exercise of power would not conflict with the provisions of this Constitution or with any previous decision of a General Meeting.
- 9.3 The Executive shall be bound to exercise its power in conformance with any decision of a General Meeting.

### Composition

- 9.4 The Executive shall consist of the following (“Executive Members”):

*Belonging by right (ex officio)*

- a) subject to paragraphs 9.10 to 9.14, representatives (“Forum Representatives”) of Forums;
- b) the Past Chair (meaning the last person to be Chairperson before the current Chairperson);
- c) the Previous Past Chair (meaning the last person to be Past Chair before the current Past Chair);

*Appointed Executive Members*

- d) up to nine individuals, whether Officers or Ordinary Executive Members, either
    - (i) elected by General Meeting; or
    - (ii) appointed by the Executive.
- 9.5 Only Full Members of the Network may
- a) vote on business coming before the Executive
  - b) be appointed or elected as Officers
  - c) be elected as Ordinary Executive Members.
- 9.6 Members of the Executive who are also Full Members of the Network shall be known as ‘Executive Members with Voting Rights’.

## **Officers**

- 9.7 The Officers of the Network shall be the Chairperson, the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Vice-Chairperson, the Past Chair and Previous Past Chair and optionally a Deputy Secretary and a Deputy Treasurer.
- 9.8 The Executive shall endeavour to ensure that the posts of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer are filled at all times.
- 9.9 Other than the Past Chair and the Previous Past Chair the Officers shall be appointed by the Executive or elected by General Meeting.

## **Forum Representatives**

- 9.10 Depending on the size of a Forum, the number of Forum Representatives for that Forum may be one or two as determined by the Executive.
- 9.11 Each Forum shall select its own Forum Representative(s) and notify the Secretary accordingly. If no such notification has been received, the Secretary shall invite and accept a nomination by the recognised Chairperson of the Forum. Failing that, the Secretary in discussion with the Officers of the Network may on behalf of the Executive appoint any member of the Forum as the Forum Representative. As and when the Forum or Chairperson of the Forum notifies the Executive of their preferred Forum Representative(s), any Forum Representative(s) appointed by the Executive shall automatically step down.
- 9.12 Where a Forum Representative is not, in the reasonable view of the Officers of EHN, participating in the affairs of the Executive, the Secretary or Chairperson shall liaise with the Forum Chair to seek an alternative Forum Representative. The Officers may as a last resort appoint an additional Forum Representative for that Forum and notify the Forum accordingly. The Executive may not unilaterally dismiss any Forum Representative from the Executive.
- 9.13 A Forum may at any time by notice in writing change its Forum Representative(s).
- 9.14 A list of a list of the Forums recognised by the Executive shall be published on the Network's website

## **Officers and Appointed Executive Members**

- 9.15 Appointed Executive Members shall normally be appointed by the Executive but may also be elected by a General Meeting.
- 9.16 Where an Appointed Executive Member is elected or dismissed by a General Meeting the Executive shall not overturn the decision of the General Meeting except that the Executive may by a two-thirds majority dismiss an Appointed Executive Member elected by a General Meeting should such elected person fail to meet the requirements of the Job Description.

9.17 The Executive shall make reasonable endeavours to ensure that it includes five Appointed Executive Members (i.e. those not attending as of right), so as to provide the opportunity for Members to take an active role in the development of the Network and to contribute to succession planning of the Executive.

### **Sub-committees**

9.18 The Executive may delegate any of its functions to sub-committees. Such sub-committees may include people who are not Executive Members but where a sub-committee holds delegated powers to make decisions any such decision shall be endorsed by a two-thirds majority of the Executive Members with Voting Rights on the sub-committee. Where no such majority is forthcoming, issues shall be referred back to the Executive.

### **Meetings**

9.19 The Executive may invite to attend its meetings such persons as it sees fit. Such invitees shall not exercise votes at Committee Meetings.

9.20 The Executive shall meet in a Face-to-face Meeting at least once a year and otherwise as deemed appropriate by the Executive.

9.21 The quorum for votes on Executive business shall be five Executive Members with Voting Rights or three Officers.

### **Requirements for Officers and Ordinary Executive Members**

9.22 Each Appointed Executive Member and Officer shall fulfil the requirements of any Job Description that the Executive may from time to time agree. For the avoidance of doubt, all Forum Representatives and the Past and Previous Chair hold their positions by right and no Job Description shall apply to them.

### **The Executive and the wider Membership**

9.23 Minutes of Executive Meetings shall be made available to Members via email or via the Network's website.

9.24 Full Members of the Network wishing to become Executive Members of the Executive and committing to meeting the terms of any Job Description for Ordinary Executive Members are encouraged to come forward and shall normally be co-opted onto the Executive if the number of Ordinary Executive Members is less than specified at clause 9.4(d).

9.25 The Members may by General Meeting:

- a) require that all Appointed Executive Member should stand down from the Executive;
- b) require that any Officer should stand down from their Officer position (regardless of whether they might remain on the Executive);
- c) elect Executive Members (subject to a maximum of nine such elected Members)

- d) elect Officers.

## **10. Processes for Organising Meetings and Transacting Business**

### **General**

- 10.1 Except where otherwise stated, this Section 10 applies equally to General Meetings and to Executive Meetings.
- 10.2 Meetings may be held at a specified time and place, where those eligible to attend have the opportunity to attend in person (“Face-to-face Meeting”), or business may be conducted Remotely (“Virtual Meeting”).

### **General Meetings that are Face-to-face Meetings**

- 10.3 The following rules apply to General Meetings that are Face-to-face Meetings:
  - a) Those eligible to attend shall be given at least 42 days’ notice in writing of the date, time, place and purpose of the Meeting.
  - b) A draft Agenda for the meeting and any proposed resolutions shall be published at least 28 days before the Meeting.
  - c) Subsequent amendments to resolutions or counter-resolutions shall be published at least 14 days before the Meeting.
  - d) Nominations for elections shall be invited at least 35 days before the Meeting and the period for submitting nominations shall last at least 14 days.
  - e) The final papers for the meeting including resolutions, agenda and nominations shall be published at least 10 days before the meeting.
  - f) All Full Members shall be given the opportunity to vote in advance on any motions to be considered by the Meetings. Such votes may be cast at any time from the publication of the final resolutions until the end of the day before the meeting.
  - g) No other business shall be transacted at the Meeting beyond that published in the final papers.

### **Virtual Meetings**

- 10.4 The following rules apply to the transaction of business at Virtual Meetings (other than elections):
  - a) The nature of the business of the meeting shall be notified to those eligible to participate. This may take the form of the publication of a draft resolution or of a draft agenda of business to be transacted.

- b) No other business shall be transacted at the Virtual Meeting beyond that first notified to those eligible to participate, but more than one Virtual Meeting may be conducted at the same time.
- c) A period of 10 days shall be allowed for the discussion of any individual motion and for the submission of any amendments to any motion or counter-motion.
- d) If at the end of the period specified at 10.4.(c) there remain competing or incompatible motions; or if in the interests of transparency the Secretary and Chairperson shall so decide then a further period of 10 days shall be allowed to discuss the business in hand.
- e) At the end of the period of discussion whether occurring under 10.4(c) or 10.4(d) a final period of 10 days shall be allowed for voting on the resolutions except in cases where no opinions have been expressed opposing the subject motion, in which case the Secretary and Chair may by agreement reduce the time for voting to 5 days.
- f) The Chair may extend the period of time allowed for voting by a further 10 days.

10.5 Where the Virtual Meeting is of the nature of an election:

- a) 10 days shall be allowed for the receipt of nominations;
- b) 10 days shall be allowed for voting if there is contention for positions.

### **Quorum**

10.6 The quorum for a General Meeting shall be 10% of the voting rights held (i.e. 10% of the total number of Corporate Entities, Honorary Members and Individual Members belonging to the Network).

10.7 At a Virtual Meeting the number of those participating shall be calculated at the end of the meeting and used for the purpose of establishing whether the Meeting was quorate. If it transpires that there was no quorum, then none of the business of that Meeting shall be deemed to have been validly transacted and no decisions of that Meeting shall be implemented.

10.8 In calculating the attendance at a Face-to-face Meeting, votes cast in advance shall be treated as though the person casting the vote was present in person at the Meeting. Attendance shall be calculated for each motion voted on.

10.9 In calculating the attendance at any Meeting, an active expression by a Member that they are abstaining if communicated in writing shall be treated as participation in the Meeting.

### **Elections**

10.10 Where an election to the Executive is held

- a) subject to the agreement of the Chairperson
  - (i) if only one nomination is received for an Officer position then no vote shall be held and the nominated person shall be declared to be returned unopposed;
  - (ii) if the total number of nominations could not bring the total of Appointed Executive Members above nine then no vote need be held and the nominated individuals shall be declared to be returned unopposed.
- b) each candidate shall have the opportunity to supply a personal statement of a length to be determined by the Executive and any such statements received shall be published (if available) before any voting commences.

### **Executive Meetings that are Face-to-face Meetings**

10.11 The following rules apply to Face-to-face Meetings of the Executive:

- a) Those eligible to attend shall be given at least 42 days' notice in writing of the date, time, place and purpose of the Meeting.
- b) A draft Agenda for the meeting and shall be published at least 21 days before the Meeting.
- c) The final papers for the Meeting including resolutions, agenda and nominations shall be published at least 7 days before the meeting.

### **Power to waive the rules**

10.12 The Members participating in a General Meeting or the Executive Members attending an Executive Meeting may by a two thirds majority vote resolve to waive or alter the rules in Section 10 in respect of that particular meeting ['Procedural Resolution']

10.13 The time allowed for discussion of a Procedural Resolution shall be determined by the Chair but in any case shall not be less than one working day. The time allowed for voting on a Procedural Resolution shall be determined by the Chair but in any case shall not be less than two working days.

## **11. Finance**

11.1 Membership fees and the charging basis for part-years shall be set by the Executive and shall be payable annually in advance.

11.2 All monies raised by or on behalf of the Network shall be used to further the aims of the Network and for no other purpose.

11.3 A proper record of the finances of the Network shall be kept.

11.4 A report of income and expenditure shall be made available to Full Members within 6 months of the end of each Financial year.

## **12. Alterations to the Constitution**

- 12.1 This Constitution shall only be changed by a General Meeting except as stipulated in the following paragraph 12.2.
- 12.2 The Executive shall be empowered to make such changes to the Constitution as
- a) do not diminish the voting rights of Full Members and
  - b) do not adversely affect the ability of Full Members to call and participate in General Meetings and
  - c) do not limit the powers vested in General Meetings and
  - d) do not alter the Powers or Aims of the Network.

## **13. Dissolution**

- 13.1 The Network may be dissolved by majority vote at a General Meeting called for that purpose. Notification shall be given to Members at least two months prior to the date for that meeting.
- 13.2 A quorum of 20% of the Full Members is required at the General Meeting to dissolve the Network.
- 13.3 A proposal to dissolve the Network shall take effect only if agreed by two thirds of those Members voting.
- 13.4 Any assets remaining after the payment of proper debts [=Net Assets] shall be returned to current and previous Full Members of the Network in accordance with the following rules which are intended to return the accumulated surplus of the Network in proportion to the contributions made:
- a) The total contributions of Full Members over the five years preceding the date of the decision to dissolve the Network shall be calculated [=Amount A].
  - b) For each individual Full Member (whether current or past) that has made a contribution over the previous five years preceding the date of the decision to dissolve the Network the sum total of contributions made whilst a Full Member shall be calculated [=Amounts B].
  - c) Each Amount B shall each be calculated as a percentage of Amount A [=Percentage C].
  - d) For each Amount B, an Amount D shall be calculated by applying Percentage C to the Net Assets.
  - e) Each Amount D shall be remitted to the contributing Full Member less an appropriate fixed amount per transaction to cover the reasonable administration costs involved, the latter amount to be determined by the Executive.

- f) For the purpose of this clause 13.4, a 'contribution' shall be any payment to the Network of a Membership Fee or a payment for attending a Conference or Training Event organised by the Network primarily to serve its Members.
- g) In the event that a Full Member cannot be located, the amount due to them under 13.4(e) shall be paid to the Empty Homes Agency Ltd or failing that any charity or not-for-profit organisation with similar aims.

## **14. Distribution of Portions of Surplus**

14.1 The Executive may at its discretion distribute a portion of the accumulated surplus above £10,000 [=Portion of Surplus] to the Full Members in which case the distribution shall be effected as described at 13.4 save that in the calculations

- a) Portion of Surplus shall be substituted for Net Assets
- b) No administration costs shall be deducted from the amounts calculated.

## Address and Contact Details

For further information or queries about the Constitution contact the Secretary:

Empty Homes Network

PO Box 703

Exeter

EX1 9PX

Tel: 0303 04 01 008 (leave message)

secretary@ehnetwork.org.uk

## Notes on Revisions

### May 2010 version

1. A number of typographical errors have been corrected.
2. More consistent use is made of capitals, with capitalisation used to indicate all defined terms.
3. Sections have been re-arranged - old Section 14 "Power to Conduct Business at a Distance" become new Section 6 "Power to Conduct Business Remotely". Other sections renumbered accordingly.
4. Membership definitions have been amended to include "Collective Membership".
5. Arrangements for conducting business Remotely have been expanded and clarified. And distinguished from Face-to-face Meetings.
6. The structure, role, arrangements for voting etc. associated with the Executive have been clarified, including arrangements for sub-committees.
7. Some text has been simplified or wording changed for clarification.

### August 2010 version

8. The name has been changed from National Association of Empty Property Practitioners to Empty Homes Network. References to "Association" are replaced by "Network" throughout.

### July 2011 version

9. Provision is made for biennial Regular General Meetings to replace Annual General Meetings
10. The Executive is given authority to change aspects of the Constitution provided the changes do not impair the democratic processes of the Network (see section 14).
11. Specific encouragement is given to people to apply to join the Executive as Ordinary Executive Members if there are fewer than five such Ordinary Members.
12. A new section 12 is added to describe more coherently and in more detail the process for organising meetings and transacting business. Various individual provision scattered around the document have been deleted and all the relevant provisions concentrated in this section.
13. The Executive is to meet twice a year instead of three times a year.

### July 2012 version

14. Minor changes of wording to remove redundancy, improve clarity etc. Corrections to spelling mistakes, punctuation and other typographical errors.
15. EHN may publish "relevant material" not just "information"

16. Allow Members to be lapsed or downgraded to Associate status within one month of non-payment of subscriptions rather than 3 months; but removed requirement that this should be done in all cases.
17. Replace reference to Regular General Meeting with reference to Biennial General Meeting.
18. Make it clear that all existing Officers and elected Executive Members stand down after the election of replacements at a General Meeting.
19. Add the post of Past Chair to the list of Officers, to be filled by right by the outgoing Chair.
20. Clarify that requests for Special General Meeting must be received within a single 2-week period.
21. Increases the period of time given to organise a Special General Meeting to 28 days from 21 days.
22. Clarifies that Forum Representatives can be invited by the Executive as well as nominated by the Forum; and indicates that Forums may have 1 or 2 representatives as determined by the Executive.
23. Only Full Members can stand for election to the Executive.
24. Frequency of Executive Meetings to be determined by the Executive, not the Officers.
25. Establishes a quorum for General Meetings of 10% of the Members.
26. Establishes that a quorum at a Virtual Meeting is calculated at the end of the meeting according to the number of votes cast and clarifies that if there is no quorum then no decisions of the meeting should be implemented.
27. Gives Members the right to recall elected Executive Members and to call for the election of new Executive Members, whether to replace those recalled or otherwise.

## July 2014

28. Corrections made to references to paragraph numbers in Section 12 by David Gibbens as Secretary.
29. NAEPP green changed to EHN blue in footer line.

## July 2016

30. Remove capitalisation for terms that are not defined.
31. Refined wording throughout for greater clarity, precision or economy. Change 'will', 'must', 'should' etc. to 'shall'.
32. Update the aims and shift one aim to become a power.
33. Changed "Sponsoring Organisation" to "Corporate Entity".
34. Gives Executive the right to treat major divisions (e.g. regional) of a large Corporate Entity as separate Corporate Entities.
35. Re-organise and rephrase paragraphs describing Collective and Corporate Memberships in order to bring out their essential similarity.
36. Remove right of appeal where a Corporate Entity requires a Membership to be terminated.
37. Honorary Membership restricted to individuals, not "representatives of organisations".
38. Built into the Constitution that Associates do not pay Membership fees, do not have voting rights and that any other rights are at the discretion of the Executive.

39. Introduce definitions and timescales in regard to methods of communication such as 'in writing'.
40. Stipulate that all Full Members can cast votes in advance for business transacted at a Face-to-Face meeting.
41. Remove right to appoint a proxy as all votes may be cast in advance by email or similar means.
42. Clarify the status and rights of Forum Representatives and specify the processes whereby they can be appointed.
43. Ensure that Officers and Ordinary Members elected by General Meetings cannot be removed by the Executive except where they are not fulfilling their job descriptions.
44. Require the Officers to encourage the participation in the Executive of at least five people who are not Forum Representatives.
45. Introduce role of Previous Past Chair to improve continuity of Officer Group.
46. Increase the time allowed for the stages of holding face-to-face meetings.
47. Introduce procedures around candidates' supporting statements at elections.
48. Reduce the percentage of Full Members needed to demand a General Meeting from 15% to 5%.
49. Remove the requirement to hold Biennial General Meetings. General Meetings would now be held as and when required.
50. Stipulate that the business of any General Meeting shall be determined by the person(s) who call it.
51. Introduce clauses that would prevent vexatious or frivolous business being transacted.
52. Introduce separate clauses governing the holding of Face-to-Face Executive Meetings (different from rules for General Meetings).
53. Executive cannot change the Aims and Powers of the Network.

## July 2016 – 2

54. New clause requiring the Network to ensure there is an online forum for expression of opinion; phrasing changed so that it is not assumed that the forum is part of the website as currently.
55. New clause noting that material published on the website is subject to the relevant t&c.
56. Contact details including address added.

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57. Procedures introduced specifying the return of any surplus on dissolution of the Network to the Members who contributed to the Network.
58. Similar procedures specified for discretionary distribution of accumulated surplus by the Executive.

## August 2016 – 2

59. The times allowed for voting at Virtual Meetings may be reduced from 10 to 5 days, by agreement between the Chair and Secretary where there is no expressed opposition to a draft motion.

60. The time allowed for voting at Virtual Meetings may be extended by up to a further 10 days by the Chair (e.g. where no quorum has been achieved).
61. Resolutions to waive the rules applying to a meeting are defined as Procedural Resolutions and at the Chair's discretion these may attract reduced times for debate and voting, down to a minimum of one and two working days respectively.