



Wolverhampton Green Party

Local Party Constitution

1. TITLE AND STATUS

1.1 The name of the local party shall be known as Wolverhampton Green Party, hereafter referred to as "the party".

1.2 The party is a constituent part of The Green Party of England & Wales and is subject to its rules and constitution.

1.3 The geographical area of the party is the City of Wolverhampton.

1.4 The party is also part of the West Midlands Region.

2. AIMS

2.1 The object of the party is to promote the aims of The Green Party as stated in its Constitution:

a) to develop and implement ecological policies consistent with the Philosophical Basis of the Party as expressed in the Manifesto for a Sustainable Society;

b) to that end to win seats at all levels of government;

c) to organise any non-violent activity which will publicise and further these aims.

2.2 In addition the party aims to cooperate as far as possible with various groups to build networks engaged in increasing awareness of ecological issues, making lifestyle choices, to increase quality of life, promote community empowerment and democracy, and promote economics based on one planet living.

3. MEMBERSHIP

3.1 The membership consists of all national Green Party members resident within the geographical area of the party.

3.2 Members may not be a member of another political party (other than Green Parties abroad) at the same time. Should a member join another political party then they immediately cease to be a member of the party.

3.3 There will be a category of local or associate membership of the party, which does not confer membership of the national Green Party. These members will be encouraged to join the National party.

3.4 Local members will have the right to attend and speak at all meetings of their local party, but can only vote on matters of local activity.

3.5 The subscription rates for local membership will be fixed at the the party AGM each year and the monies will accrue to the party.

3.6 All local members must adhere to the objects and aims of the party.

3.7 The party may decide to cease associate membership at an EGM or an AGM by a majority vote provided that advance notice has been given. In such a vote, only national members of the Green Party may vote.

3.8 The party will seek to resolve any disputes between members through discussion and conciliation. The Dispute Resolution Committee could be consulted and may be involved if considered appropriate. However, the party has the right and responsibility to take disciplinary action (including suspension or expulsion from the party) against any local member who has acted against the aims and agreed policies of the group or brought it into disrepute. Such decisions can only be made at a properly constituted, in quorum monthly meeting where advance notice of the matter has been given. The national disciplinary procedures shall be used for national members.

3.9 Should a situation arise in which a member is in such conflict with the branch that outside agencies such as Disputes Resolution Committee are unable to resolve the situation, then a vote may be taken to exclude that member, so that (s)he would be unbranched and thus unable to attend local party meetings. This action could take place at either an EGM or the AGM.

4. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OR OFFICERS OF THE PARTY

The local party needs to elect a Local Party contact, a coordinator, a treasurer and a nominating officer, It will need to decide what officers to elect in addition to these such as secretary, membership secretary, press officer, etc. We recommend brief job descriptions are scripted for the key posts so that both the Local Party and the member wishing to hold the post know what to expect. Responsibilities and powers should be outlined (e.g. limits on what the treasurer might spend without consulting the monthly meeting).

4.1 The party shall elect an Executive Committee (OR its Officers) at the AGM. These **must** include a **Local Party Contact, a Coordinator, a Treasurer, and a Nominating Officer** to meet GPEW requirements. Additionally to meet the Political Parties and Electoral Referendums Act (PPERA) the party is to register two specific Officers; a Treasurer (the same person as above), and a **PPERA Second Officer**, who may be one of the above or another nominee.

4.2 The party may further select any other Officers (including to its Executive Committee) as it deems necessary and in accordance with GPEW guidelines. These Officers may include, but are not limited to; **Secretary, Fundraiser, Election Agent, Electoral Returning Officer, Membership Officer** and others.

4.3 Nominations shall be proposed and seconded, and won by a simple majority vote. Any member can ask for a secret ballot.

4.4 The AGM has the discretion not to fill posts other than the four named above if no suitable nominations are forthcoming or to propose the merging of posts or the creation of other posts with the agreement of a simple majority.

4.5 Should any member of the Executive Committee fail to attend three consecutive monthly meetings without good reason or apology, the party may co-opt another person to act in their place.

4.6 In the event of a vacancy an officer may be co-opted at the next monthly meeting.

4.7 Officers may be de-selected at an AGM or EGM.

5. MEETINGS AND DECISION - MAKING

5.1 The business of the party shall be decided and managed by monthly or bi-monthly (as deemed appropriate) meetings open to all members (and potential new members).

5.2 Motions should be proposed and seconded, and will be carried by a simple majority vote of members present.

5.3 Members should be notified of any motions relating to policy at least one week before the meeting to discuss the issue.

5.4 Only members of the party will be entitled to vote. Those unable to attend may make their views known to the meeting, either in writing or through representation by another member, but only those in attendance will be entitled to vote.

5.5 The monthly business meeting will be deemed to be in quorum if there are 4 or more paid up members in attendance.

5.6 Attendance and business conducted at meetings shall be recorded in minutes to be approved by the next meeting.

5.7 A draft agenda will be circulated at least one week in advance of each meeting, together with the minutes of the previous meeting. Anyone can suggest additional items for the agenda in advance of or at the start of the meeting. These additional items may be regarded as 'any other business'.

5.8 The party recognises that Officers may be required to take ad hoc decisions on behalf of the party or otherwise; Party Officers are therefore required to liaise with each other in making such decisions. In the event of a decision needing to be made before a monthly meeting, an emergency decision may be made by agreement of a simple majority of the officers of the Party, This decision must be ratified by the next monthly meeting.

5.9 Working groups may be set up to discuss specific issues such as policies, procedures, campaigns, literature updating etc. Any decision shall be ratified by the monthly meeting. All members can attend these groups.

5.10 The party may agree arrangements to hold meetings with neighbouring local parties with the aim of supporting those local parties with mutual interest; this may include having Officers in common (e.g. election agent, media officer, etc).

5.11 The party will recognise it is served by volunteers, but as far as is possible, they will be expected to take a proactive role in facilitating communications, such as in the use of email, the internet and social media, and the telephone so as to reduce postal communication cost. The party will respect members' privacy and minimize email traffic, but members are expected to agree to the inclusion of their email addresses on open lists of communications for party business.

5.12 The party aims to operate by consensus and according to norms of conduct respecting the opinion of all members.

6. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

6.1 Every year an AGM shall be held for the purposes of:

- (a) Presentation of a report of work which has been carried out over the year
- (b) Presentation of a financial statement for the year
- (c) Election of the Executive Committee OR Officers
- (d) Agreeing the cheque signatories
- (e) Setting the membership fee for local membership
- (f) May include reviewing strategy and setting goals for the following year and beyond.
- (g) Any other business on the agenda (to be determined in the same way as for a monthly meeting).

6.2 The Chair shall be taken by a nominated person as agreed by members attending the monthly business meeting prior to the AGM.

6.3 All members of the party who are present have one vote each, and resolutions must have the support of a simple majority.

6.4 Notice of the AGM shall be given at least one month prior to the meeting and any motions for consideration shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary at least two weeks prior to the meeting,

6.5 The Agenda will be circulated in advance at least one week prior to the meeting.

6.6 The Chair has the right to rule on the admissability of any emergency motions put forward.

6.7 The quorum of an AGM shall be 4, or 25% of members of the local party (whichever is the smaller).

6.8 An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) on a particular agenda may be called on the request of the monthly meeting or at least 4 members of the party. The same general rules apply to EGMs as to AGMs.

6.9 The party undertakes to hold such meetings annually but not more than eighteen months since the previous meeting.

7. FINANCE

7.1 The Treasurer shall collect or arrange the collection of all money due to the party and shall receive all donations to the party and shall be the custodian thereof.

7.2 The Treasurer will arrange payment of any bills incurred by the party, and will notify the group if it is in danger of becoming overdrawn.

7.3 All money drawn from the party's bank account shall be signed by two authorised persons from a list of three, to be agreed at the AGM.

7.4 Wherever possible, funds will be held by a banking organisation with a policy of ethical investment acceptable to the membership (such as Triodos, Unity Trust, Cooperative Bank, Ecological Building Society).

7.5 Members, Ward Parties and Working Groups may incur expenditure on behalf of the party provided prior approval is obtained from a monthly meeting, OR This expenditure may be subject to certification by the Treasurer that there are sufficient funds to cover it

7.6 Any affiliation fees to another organisation or donations to another group must have the approval of a monthly meeting.

8. SELECTION OF ELECTION CANDIDATES

8.1 For selection of parliamentary candidates national rules must be followed.

8.2 For selection of local authority candidates, candidates should be approved at a regular meeting,

8.3 For selection of regional assembly candidates, candidates should be approved at a regular meeting.

8.4 Party members who wish to stand in parish council elections or similar posts as a party representative should seek prior approval at a regular meeting.

9. AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION

This constitution can only be altered by an AGM or EGM of the party. Amendments to this constitution require advance notice.

10. WINDING UP

The party may cease to exist or join with other local Green Parties, only by agreement of an EGM or AGM. In the event of the party being wound up, the balance of funds shall be transferred to The Green Party (of England & Wales), OR to West Midlands Regional Party, or to any succeeding or neighbouring Party so identified at an AGM or EGM, In the event of the party becoming defunct, national rules apply.

11. DEFINITIONS

Advance notice

Some business requires advance notice. This is written notification to the entire membership eligible to vote at the meeting. For an AGM or EGM it shall be posted 15 days before the meeting. For a monthly meeting it shall be 8 days. Motions requiring advance notice may not be substantially amended at the meeting.