

# **LOOK! ST ALBANS - OUR COMMUNITY VOICE ON DESIGN**

*{ - Inspired by the Past, Picture your Future - }*

## **CONSTITUTION**

### **1. NAME**

The name of the group shall be Look! St Albans - Our Community Voice on Design (hereinafter referred to as "Look! St Albans").

### **2. ETHOS**

In the spirit of community-led neighbourhood planning the ethos of Look! St Albans is to be transparent, proactive, respectful, collaborative, open, diverse, explorative and community-rooted. It follows that any information obtained by Look! St Albans from its dealings with any person or body in the performance of its Purpose and Aims must be treated as being in the public domain.

### **3. AREA**

The Area shall be those areas within central St. Albans variously described as the Civic Centre, Drovers Way, the Coupers Garage Site (Catherine Street) and the Cathedral Quarter and their respective environs, together with any other significant development sites within the central area, but also including such other sites in St Albans District as the Local Authority or a developer may consider as appropriate for the involvement of Look! St Albans.

### **4. PURPOSE AND AIMS**

Following the publication of the Design Workshop Report January 2013, coauthored by the community of St. Albans and The Princes Foundation for Building Community, to promote and enhance the design and durability criteria for the development and adaptation of St Albans City Centre, Look! St Albans intends to:-

- work for a broadly-supported consensus in designing buildings and surrounding open spaces at the outline and full planning application stage (pre-application consultation)
- become the preferred community and stakeholder consultation convenor for significant city centre developments for developers, the Local Planning Authority, and the Highways Authority
- collaborate with significant city centre developers and their planning and design teams through a structured independently externally facilitated public design charrette, using generally the following format:-

Design briefing session: evening

Hands-on focused design: daytime charrette  
Results and feedback session: evening

- hold no more than two separate design charrettes and associated meetings per year
- obtain part funding from the developer for each series of facilitated charrettes and associated meetings
- give their time to the process free of charge
- bring to the table the community-endorsed draft design codes – an excellent blend of local knowledge and widely connected interests
- provide to each developer and their planning and design team unprecedented access to local knowledge and widely connected interests in an independently facilitated open, collaborative, transparent and creative process with a view to producing hand-drawn illustrations, a list of the codes applied, and the relevant supporting text - available to all, and summarised in a short presentation
- produce to each developer, the Local Planning Authority, the Highways Authority and widely accessible local news channels a letter of recommendation for the jointly-created designs, supported by Look! St Albans
- support and promote other forms of community engagement on design where these are genuine attempts to reflect the views of the community within the development process, and where the outcomes will be publicly available. This is in accord with the Ethos of Look! St Albans and the first of the Purpose and Aims
- continue to learn about good place making and architectural detail. This could include hosting and visiting other groups involved in Neighbourhood Planning and informally organised and self-financed half- or full-day study trips to exemplar city centre developments. This would result in informal presentations and discussions
- maintain a website to increase public awareness of Look! St Albans and for the posting of information regarding its activities – see Appendix C

To achieve its aims Look! St Albans will encourage the goodwill and involvement of the wider community in taking part in design briefing sessions, charrettes and feedback sessions, with a view to improving St. Albans City Centre for the benefit of the inhabitants of the St. Albans District and to fostering community spirit and encouraging civic pride.

## **5.1 LOOK! ST ALBANS - OUR COMMUNITY VOICE ON DESIGN STRUCTURE AND DUTIES INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVES' GROUP**

(a) Each supporter of Look! St Albans shall be expected to promote the Ethos,

## Purpose and Aims of Look! St Albans.

(b) Becoming a supporter of Look! St Albans or a member of the Representatives' Group shall be open to all those living or working in the district, who are entitled to vote in the City and District of St. Albans and who will therefore be entitled to vote at Look! St Albans AGMs and SGMs. Those aged 16 and above living with someone entitled to vote in the City and District of St. Albans will also be eligible to vote at any Look! St Albans AGMs and SGMs.

(c) Those wishing to become a supporter of Look! St Albans can do so by contacting the Secretary or attending one of its meetings and asking to be included on a circulation list. A supporter can ask to be removed from the circulation list at any time.

(d) The Look! St Albans Representatives' Group shall be partially comprised of those groups, organisations and individuals as set out in Appendix A (Appendix A may be amended from time to time at the absolute discretion of Look! St Albans at an AGM).

(e) Those wishing to join the Representatives' Group from those eligible in paragraph 5(b) - but not those listed in Appendix A - shall give at least 14 days' written notice to the Secretary prior to an AGM. Should a new individual, group or organisation not listed in Appendix A wish to join the Representatives' Group between AGMs with the consent of the Representatives' Group they may be co-opted until the next AGM. At the next AGM they will be requested to formally apply to join the Representatives' Group and if elected will be added to Appendix A

(f) Each member of the Representatives' Group must be willing to attend one daytime charrette per annum and assist with its preparation.

(g) The Representatives' Group shall total no more than 30. If more than 30 wish to join at an AGM an election process will take place for those not in Appendix A.

(h) The Representatives' Group will elect and if necessary dismiss any officer or member of Look! St Albans or any others listed in Appendix A. The Representatives' Group will have the right to amend the Constitution subject to agreement at the AGM.

(i) Each supporter of Look! St Albans and the Representatives' Group will be entitled to a maximum of one vote per item of business. In case of a tied vote see paragraph 8(d).

(j) Interested parties, being those who work or have an interest in St. Albans city centre, but who do not live within the City & District of St. Albans, and who wish to be kept informed of the work of Look! St Albans, shall be those listed in Appendix B. Any interested party can inform the Secretary of their wish to be included on this list.

(k) The Chairperson shall not be someone who is also the chair of another local organisation unless the Representatives' Group considers that there is no other candidate who would be a suitably effective and appropriate chairperson.

(l) A spokesperson shall be appointed by the Representatives' Group to be Look! St Albans' sole point of contact with media and the general public, in order to maintain a

clear and consistent voice for the Look! St Albans initiative and to prevent any possible misunderstanding or misinterpretation. The spokesperson will be expected to canvass opinion within the Representatives' Group before making statements or giving quotes, whilst it is acknowledged that because of Press deadlines there will be times when this will not be practical.

## **5.2 REPRESENTATIVES' GROUP POWERS AND MEETINGS**

Members of the Representatives' Group shall individually and collectively promote the Ethos, Purpose and Aims of Look! St Albans

(a) The Look! St Albans Representatives' Group may exercise the powers to:-

(i) invite and receive contributions, and raise funds where appropriate, to finance the work of Look! St Albans and to open a Bank Account to manage such funds

(ii) publicise and promote the work of Look! St Albans and organise meetings, trips, training courses, seminars, workshops or similar events

(iii) share information locally on good practice, via email, Flickr, Twitter and other low cost social media

(iv) work with groups of a similar nature and exchange information, advice and knowledge with them, including co-operation with other voluntary bodies, charities, statutory and non-statutory organisations

(v) enlist or employ such staff (who shall not be members of the Representatives' Group) as are necessary to conduct activities to meet the Ethos, Purpose and Aims

(vi) take any form of action that is lawful, which is necessary to achieve the Ethos, Purpose and Aims of Look! St Albans

(b) The Representatives' Group shall comprise representatives of those groups, organisation or individuals who are referred to in paragraphs 5.1 (b) and 5.1 (d)

(c) The Representatives' Group will meet at least twice a year for formal meetings with the expectation that it will meet on at least a further two occasions a year informally

(d) At least seven days' notification must be given to its members for a Representatives' Group Meeting

(e) The Representatives' Group Meeting will elect a Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary, and the procedure for the election of officers will be determined by the Representatives' Group.

(f) The Representatives' Group may appoint working parties from within or outside the list of supporters of Look! St Albans to consider and advise on specific matters.

(g) Supporters of Look! St Albans may attend as observers any meeting of the Representatives Group and the Chairperson may invite an observer or observers who

are not supporters or members of the Representatives' Group to attend, but they may not vote. The Representatives' Group reserves the right to exclude observers where a majority of Representatives' Group members present deem that this is necessary for the effective conduct of the Group's business.

(h) At least one third of the then current members of the Representatives' Group (of whom at least two are to be officers also) must be present at the start of any Representatives' Group meeting for it to be declared quorate.

(i) Voting shall be by a show of hands on a majority basis. In the case of a tied vote, the Chairperson or an appointed Deputy shall make the final decision.

(j) It shall be the responsibility of the Chairperson to chair all meetings, or a designated Deputy in his/her absence. All meetings must be minuted and the minutes must be accessible to all who live in the City and District of St. Albans and interested parties.

(k) The Representatives' Group may take appropriate steps, including purchasing insurance, to indemnify its members against any liabilities resulting from their work for Look! St Albans.

### **5.3 POWERS OF OFFICERS**

The officers of the Representatives' Group shall individually and collectively promote the Ethos, Purpose and Aims of Look! St Albans and shall undertake the work of Look! St Albans and may delegate powers on specific matters to such persons as they respectively see fit.

(a) **The Chairperson** and in the absence of the Chairperson the Deputy Chairperson shall:-

(i) call and chair regular meetings of the Representatives' Group and have a casting vote on elections and resolutions

(ii) act on behalf of Look! St Albans and with the support of the Deputy Chairperson represent it externally

(iii) have the power to take decisions (in consultation with the Deputy Chairperson) on urgent matters between meetings of the Representatives' Group

(iv) interpret the Constitution. The Chairperson's interpretation may be overturned by two-thirds of those present at the Representatives' Group meetings

(v) act as joint signatory on the "Look! St Albans - Our Community Voice on Design" Bank Account

(b) **The Treasurer** shall:-

(i) be responsible for maintaining the accounts of "Look! St Albans - Our Community Voice on Design"

(ii) be responsible for presenting a budget annually for the following year to a Representatives' Group meeting

(iii) submit a detailed summary of the accounts at Representatives' Group meetings when necessary but not less than once in each calendar year.

(iv) act as a joint signatory on the "Look! St Albans - Our Community Voice on Design" Bank account

(v) take the Chair at meetings if the Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and Secretary are absent

(vi) take the Minutes if the Secretary and Deputy Chairperson are absent

(c) **The Secretary** shall:-

(i) be responsible for organising meetings, maintaining the Minutes and Constitution of Look! St Albans - Our Community Voice on Design and making them available to supporters of Look! St Albans and members of the Representatives' Group and others expressing an interest in the activities of Look! St Albans.

(ii) take the Chair at meetings if the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson are absent

(iii) act as joint signatory on the "Look! St Albans - Our Community Voice on Design" Bank account

(iv) update supporters of Look! St Albans and members of the Representatives' Group and others expressing an interest in the activities of Look! St Albans when appropriate

## **6. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Should any member of Look! St Albans or the Representatives' Group, or any associate partner or relative of such member, have a pecuniary or potential pecuniary interest in any city centre site of interest to Look! St Albans, that member should declare his or her interest at or before the start of the meeting and not vote on any issue pertaining to that site.

## **7. AFFILIATIONS, OPERATIONS AND INDEPENDENCE**

(a) Look! St Albans shall not be affiliated to any political party or organisation

(b) All supporters of Look! St Albans and members of the Representatives' Group shall act in meetings in the best interests of those living, working or having interests in St. Albans City Centre and in pursuance of the Ethos, Purpose and Aims of Look! St Albans.

(c) So far as it is in the power of Look! St Albans to influence the content of any reports and outcomes from the charrettes, Look! St Albans will endeavour to ensure that they

are prepared in accordance with best practice and in accordance with local and national policy and guidance, and Look! St Albans shall seek to work collaboratively with the Local Authority and other interested parties to achieve this.

## **8. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) AND OTHER SPECIAL MEETINGS**

(a)(i) The AGM shall take place no later than three months after the date of the anniversary of the inaugural AGM and subsequent AGMs. At least twenty-eight days' notice must be given before the AGM takes place.

(a)(ii) Attendance at and participation in an AGM or other Special Meeting shall be by:-

(aa) attendance at a physical meeting place; and /or

(bb) using one or more electronic facilities as may be approved by the Representatives' Group from time to time that enables those entitled to attend and vote at an AGM or other Special Meeting to attend and participate simultaneously in a meeting of Look! St Albans without attending a physical meeting place.

(b)(i) A combination of supporters of Look! St Albans and members of the Representatives' Group totalling at least ten (which number is to include at least one third of the then current members of the Representatives' Group) must be present at the start of any AGM or SGM for it to be declared quorate.

(b)(ii) Any person entitled to attend and vote at an AGM or other Special Meeting and who attends and participates in a meeting by using an electronic facility of the type referred to in 8(a)(ii)(bb) above and specified in a notice of that meeting shall be counted in the quorum for that meeting.

(c) There is a strong expectation that all then current members of the Representatives' Group will attend any AGM and SGM

(d) All persons meeting the criteria for being a supporter of Look! St Albans or for membership of the Representatives' Group as referred to in paragraphs 5.1(b) and 5.1(d) above are entitled to attend and vote at the AGM. Voting shall be made by a show of hands on a majority basis (save for votes on Constitutional Amendments and Dissolution as to which see paragraphs 9 and 11 below). In the case of any tied vote, the Chairperson or an appointed Deputy shall make the final decision.

(e) It shall be the responsibility of the Chairperson to Chair all meetings, or a designated deputy in his/her absence. All meetings must be minuted and the minutes must be accessible to interested parties.

(f) Members of Look! St Albans will be able to vote on:-

(i) approval of the Annual Report & Accounts

(ii) annual report from the Look! St Albans Representatives' Group

(iii) the identity of the Community Organisations entitled to attend the Representatives' Group meetings

(iv) persons wishing to stand for election to the Representatives' Group pursuant to paragraph 5.1(g)

(v) changes to this Constitution

## **9. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS**

(a) Any changes to this Constitution must be agreed by a two thirds majority of those present and voting at an AGM or SGM

(b) Amendments to this Constitution may be called for by the then current Officers of Look! St Albans or by at least one third of the members of the Representatives' Group and conveyed to the Secretary formally in writing. The Secretary and other Officers shall then decide on the date of an AGM or a SGM to discuss such proposals, giving supporters of Look! St Albans and members of the Representatives' Group at least four weeks' (twenty eight days') notice. For the avoidance of doubt no such matters shall be considered at an AGM or a SGM unless those supporters and members have received notice of them as above.

## **10. FINANCE**

(a) Any money acquired by Look! St Albans, including donations, contributions and bequests, shall be paid into a Bank account operated by the Representatives' Group. All funds must be applied to the Ethos, Purpose and Aims of Look! St Albans and for no other purpose.

(b) Bank Accounts shall be opened in the name of Look! St Albans – Our Community Voice on Design. Any deeds, cheques, etc., relating to the Look! St Albans Bank Account shall be signed by any two of the following members of the Representatives' Group: Chairperson; Deputy Chairperson; Treasurer; Secretary. The signatories to a single cheque must not be related to or be members of the same household

(c) Any income/expenditure shall be the responsibility of the Treasurer who will be accountable to ensure funds are utilised effectively and that Look! St Albans stays within budget. Official accounts shall be maintained, and there will be carried out any appropriate external scrutiny and/or audit of them as required by legislation current from time to time (but not by someone who is a member of the Representatives' Group of Look! St Albans). An annual financial report shall be presented at the AGM. The Look! St Albans accounting year shall run from 1st April to 31st March.

## **11. DISSOLUTION**

Dissolution of Look! St Albans may be called for by the then current Officers of Look! St Albans or by at least one third of the members of the Representatives' Group and conveyed to the Secretary formally in writing and must be agreed by a two thirds majority of those present and voting at an AGM or SGM. Any assets or remaining funds after debts have been paid shall firstly be offered back to their providers if these can be adequately identified, or subsequently transferred to local charities or similar groups at the discretion of the Representatives' Group.





## **APPENDIX A**

For voting purposes, one person one vote, and if one person represents more than one organisation or association they can only cast one vote.

All members agree to attend and assist with the preparation of at least one workshop if required per annum. All members agree to promote the Look! St Albans ethos to be pro-active, respectful, collaborative, open, diverse, explorative and community-rooted.

Where a nominated representative of the Associations or Organisations listed in this Appendix or of other bodies having membership of Look! St Albans is unable to attend any meeting the onus will be on him or her to provide a substitute representative and to brief that substitute on Look! St Albans and matters relevant to that meeting so far as he or she is able to do so.

### **REPRESENTATIVES OF LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS, REPRESENTATIVES OF LOCAL ORGANISATIONS AND INDIVIDUAL LOCAL RESIDENTS**

Description: Within the city and district boundaries with an interest in the city centre, including *but not exclusively*, Residents' Associations, Business Associations, St Albans District Council, Individual Local Residents, environmental groups, Individual local businesses, schools, churches,

Tim Leicester - Verulam Road Residents Association

Councillor Geoff Harrison (representing the current administration St Albans District Council)

Place vacant - Spatial Planning & Design Team Leader, St Albans District Council

Anthony Oliver - The Cathedral and Abbey Church St Albans and Fishpool Street Residents Association

Mel Hilbrow - (Deputy Chair) Director, St Albans Chamber of Commerce and Executive Director, St Albans Enterprise Agency Ltd

Independent members

Vanessa Gregory (Chair)

Chris Debenham (Treasurer)

James Gregory (Secretary)

## **APPENDIX B**

**INTERESTED PARTIES** of those who work or have an interest in St Albans city centre **BUT DO NOT LIVE WITHIN THE CITY AND DISTRICT OF ST ALBANS** yet wish to be kept informed of the work of Look! St Albans

**Sandy Walkington** Immediate Past President, St Albans and Hertfordshire Architectural and Archaeological Society (Elected 12th September 2017)

## **APPENDIX C**

**Website:** The Representatives' Group aims to establish a website on which Look! St Albans - Our Community Voice on Design can post its workshop report Updated January 2013, subsequent outcomes of facilitated Design Charrettes, notices, minutes and other information of interest.

**Footnote:** Rationale for the Constitution for Look! St Albans - Our Community Voice on Design

The Constitution has been drafted to ensure that control of Look! St Albans – Our Community Voice on Design cannot be taken over by unrepresentative groups e.g. one particular interest group.

SIGNED: Chairperson

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SIGNED: Deputy Chairperson

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SIGNED: Treasurer

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SIGNED: Secretary

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SIGNED: Member

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SIGNED: Member

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