

Local Voluntary Support Group Constitution

The Charity's Local Voluntary Support Groups are an important part of the Coeliac UK's work. This Constitution describes the role, powers and responsibilities of the Local Voluntary Support Groups and their relationship with the Charity.

Coeliac UK is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. It is subject to many legal requirements including the Companies Act 2006 and Charities Act 1993 and 2006.

The Charity's Local Voluntary Support Groups form part of the main charity and are not separate legal bodies. The Board of Governors is ultimately responsible for all the actions and funds relating to the Local Voluntary Support Groups.

The Charity produces a Volunteer's Handbook laying out the Charity's policies on issues such as data protection and fundraising. Local Voluntary Support Groups must follow this Constitution and the policies and best practice laid out in the Handbook.

1. Name

1.1 The name is the Coeliac UK Local Voluntary Support Group

2. Role

2.1 The Charity's vision is to see:

2.1.1 a world full of choice for those with coeliac disease and DH; and

2.1.2 eventually a world free of coeliac disease and DH.

2.2 The role of the Charity's Local Voluntary Support Groups are to further the strategic objectives of the Charity in the local area by:

2.2.1 welcoming and providing direct support to those with coeliac disease/DH and/or those new to Coeliac UK

2.2.2 organising social events and activities where Members of Coeliac UK can meet, share experiences and build confidence

2.2.3 bringing Members together online through the Coeliac UK website and individual social media accounts

2.2.4 keeping Members and the Charity up to date on events, activities, news and developments

2.2.5 being self-funding

2.2.6 maintaining a Committee.

3. Powers

3.1 In order to achieve its aims, the Local Voluntary Support Group may:

3.1.1 hire venues, equipment and guest speakers

3.1.2 raise money and make payments for events and activities in accordance with the Finance Policy

3.1.3 hold a list of Members in line with data protection principles

3.1.4 do anything else that does not risk the Charity's reputation and is within the law which promotes or helps to promote the aims and strategic objectives of the Charity.

4. Rights, benefits and responsibilities

- 4.1 For so long as the Local Voluntary Support Group is acting in accordance with this Constitution, the Charity will provide the following support:
 - 4.1.1 to use the Charity name and Local Voluntary Support Group logos and to benefit from the Charity's reputation and long-standing
 - 4.1.2 access to a dedicated team at the High Wycombe office providing support and resources to assist with the running of the Local Voluntary Support Group
 - 4.1.3 access to relevant and up to date information and resources on coeliac disease and DH
 - 4.1.4 Public liability Insurance for the Local Voluntary Support Group activities in line with the insurance policy documents
 - 4.1.5 details of new and current registered Full Members in the Local Voluntary Support Group's area who have not opted out of such communications
 - 4.1.6 an online facility to publicise the Local Voluntary Support Groups activities and news and access to resources and materials.
- 4.2 Local Group Members must not be given medical advice and must not publish, in any form, medical or dietetic information unless it has been approved, in writing, by the Charity's High Wycombe office.
- 4.3 The Local Group must not undertake or promote medical research, or similar projects, without the approval of the Charity's High Wycombe office.
- 4.4 The Local Group must not give advice to local companies or manufacturers without the approval of the Charity's High Wycombe office.
- 4.5 In the event of conflict with the Committee or amongst Members of the Local Voluntary Support Group, the Charity must be contacted, in a timely manner, to arrange mediation.

5. Data Protection

- 5.1 Local Voluntary Support Groups must comply with Data Protection legislation. Please see the Local Group Handbook.

6. Membership

- 6.1 Membership of the Local Voluntary Support Groups is open to those living in postcode area.
- 6.2 Voting rights are limited to Full Members of Coeliac UK and the Local Voluntary Support Group Committee Members.
- 6.3 The list of Full Members of Coeliac UK will be accessed and administered by the Group Organiser / Group Secretary / New Members Secretary (delete as appropriate)
- 6.4 If there is good reason the Committee may refuse to accept a person as a Local Voluntary Support Group Member. However, that person has the right to appeal to the Chief Executive of Coeliac UK who shall make the final decision.

7. Equal Opportunities

- 7.1 The Local Voluntary Support Group will not discriminate on the grounds of gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sexuality, disability, religious or political beliefs, marital status or age.

8. The Committee

- 8.1 The business of the Local Voluntary Support Group will be carried out by a Committee elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- 8.2 As a minimum requirement the Committee must consist of at least three Group Officers:
- Group Organiser
 - Group Secretary
 - Group Treasurer.
- Other roles may be included on the Committee.
- 8.3 Committee Members are elected on a 12 month basis, after which they must step down but may be re-elected at the AGM.
- 8.4 In the event of the death or resignation of an elected Member of the Committee, the vacancy may be filled until the next AGM by an existing Member of Local Voluntary Support Group appointed by the Committee.
- 8.5 In addition, up to three additional Members may be co-opted onto the Committee each year, at the discretion of the existing Committee.
- 8.6 For both points 8.4 and 8.5, Committee Members brought onto the Committee in this way must then retire or put themselves forward for election at the next AGM of the Local Voluntary Support Group.
- 8.7 The Committee must ensure the Charity has an up to date list of their names and contact details.

9. Committee Meetings

- 9.1 The Committee will meet no less than three times a year.
- 9.2 A quorum of a meeting of the Committee must be no less than half of the Committee including two Group Officers. No decisions can be made unless the meeting is quorate.
- 9.3 In the event of a tie, the Group Organiser has the casting vote.
- 9.4 Committee meetings will be open to any Member of the Local Voluntary Support Group wishing to attend who may speak but not vote.
- 9.5 No payment must be made to any Committee Member except as repayment of receipted expenses properly and reasonably incurred on behalf of the Local Voluntary Support Group.
- 9.6 Any Committee Member who has not communicated with the Committee over a three month period may be contacted by a Group Officer and asked if they wish to continue.
- 9.7 Committee Members who have retired have a responsibility to handover all materials, including Membership data, relating to the Local Group and role to their successor within three months of retiring. If there is no successor in place materials can be returned to the Volunteer Team at Coeliac UK.
- 9.8 If there is good reason, the Charity may remove a Committee Member. Any person removed as a Committee Member by the Charity must not be re-appointed by any Committee for a period as agreed by the Chief Executive of Coeliac UK.

- 9.9 If a Committee Member is removed by the Charity, they must immediately hand over any Local Voluntary Support Group documents, including Membership data, or other Local Voluntary Support Group property to the Committee.

10. Meetings - Annual General Meetings

- 10.1 An Annual General Meeting must be held before 31 May each year (following the formation of the Local Voluntary Support Group).
- 10.2 All Members must be notified by post or email at least 28 days before the date of the meeting, giving the venue, time and location.
- 10.3 At the AGM:
- 10.3.1 the Committee will present a report of the work of the Local Voluntary Support Group over the year
 - 10.3.2 the Committee will present the accounts of the Local Voluntary Support Group for the previous year
 - 10.3.3 the Committee Members, including Group Officers, for the next year will be elected
 - 10.3.4 any proposals, submitted to the Group Officers at least 7 days in advance of the meeting, will be discussed.
- 10.4 Nominations may be made to the Group Secretary before the meeting or at the meeting.
- 10.5 There is one vote per Full Member of Coeliac UK and one vote per Committee Member. Each eligible Member has only one vote.
- 10.6 The quorum for the AGM is 10% of the Local Voluntary Support Group's Coeliac UK registered Full Members or 15 registered Full Members (whichever is the lower number).
- 10.7 In the event of the Committee failing to call an AGM any Local Voluntary Support Group Member may complain to the Chief Executive of the Charity who will then call the meeting.
- 10.8 Written minutes of the AGM recording the votes and decisions must be circulated to all Members of the Committee and to the Charity's High Wycombe office within 28 days of the meeting. The minutes should also be available to all Members on request.

11. Meeting - Special General Meetings

- 11.1 A Special General Meeting must be called at any time at the request of the Committee, or by more than one quarter of the Local Voluntary Support Group's registered Full Members, giving a written request to the Committee stating the reason for their request.
- 11.2 The meeting must take place within two months of the meeting request.
- 11.3 All Members will be given at least 28 days' notice of the meeting, giving the venue, date, time and agenda. Notice may be given by phone, email or post.
- 11.3 There is one vote per Full Member of Coeliac UK and one vote per Committee Member. Each eligible Member has only one vote.
- 11.4 The quorum for the Special General Meeting is 10% of the Local Voluntary Support Group's Coeliac UK registered Full Members or 15 registered Full Members (whichever is the lower number).

11.5 Written minutes of the Special General Meeting recording the votes and decisions must be circulated to all Members of the Committee and to the Charity's High Wycombe office within 28 days of the meeting. The minutes should also be available to all Members on request.

12. Meetings - General meetings and other events

12.1 All other meetings and events are open to all Members and the public

12.2 All Members should be given at least 28 days' notice for any event giving the venue, date, time, and agenda (if applicable). Each Member should be contacted directly but notice may be given by email, post or other electronic means.

13. Finances

13.1 All money raised by or on behalf of the Local Voluntary Support Group is only to be used to further the aims of the Charity and the Local Voluntary Support Group, as specified in item 2 of this Constitution.

13.2 All Local Groups must follow the Charity's Finance Policy – please see related document.

14. Closing the Local Voluntary Support Group

14.1 If the Committee decides to close the Local Voluntary Support Group they must convene a Special General Meeting

14.2 The Coeliac UK Board of Governors has the power to close any Local Voluntary Support Group not complying with this Constitution or otherwise bringing the Charity into disrepute. The Charity must give written notice to all Committee Members and Full Members of the Local Voluntary Support Group, though failure to do so does not invalidate the decision.

14.3 In either case all remaining assets, once outstanding debts have been paid, must be returned in full to Coeliac UK and the bank account closed. The Committee must hand over to the Charity all documents, including Membership data, and other property relating to the Local Group.

15. Amendments

15.1 Only the Coeliac UK Board of Governors may alter this Constitution.

**This Constitution was agreed at the Annual General Meeting of the Coeliac UK
Local Voluntary Support Group on**

Date

Signed

Position held

Signed

Position held

Signed

Position held

Signed

Position held

Signed

Position held

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Position held

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Position held