



Swords Tidy Towns Draft Constitution

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1. NAME

- 1.1. The name of the group shall be “SWORDS TIDY TOWNS” - hereafter referred to as the group.

2. OBJECTIVES

- 2.1. Use the clear targets set by the Tidy Towns competition to give strong focus in tasks.
- 2.2. Build strong communication with businesses, residents associations, local council and schools to promote the groups work and to seek their help for the benefit of the community as a whole.
- 2.3. Actively seek new volunteers across a broad section of the community.
- 2.4. Promote Swords as a town of diversity and inclusiveness.
- 2.5. Be a champion of biodiversity and environmental issues.

3. MEMBERSHIP

- 3.1. Membership shall be open to all residents, proprietors, business’s and interested groups in the vicinity of Swords.
- 3.2. Each member shall be entitled to one vote at general meetings.
- 3.3. All voting members must be at least 18 years of age.
- 3.4. Membership shall be free of subscription.

4. THE COMMITTEE

- 4.1. A committee shall be elected at the [Annual General Meeting](#) (AGM) of the group and shall serve for 12 months.
- 4.2. The committee shall consist of at least three members namely: Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. These members shall have the power to co-opt other members on to the committee during the course of the year.
- 4.3. All committee members will have equal voting rights.

- 4.4. The AGM shall elect from within their numbers a Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. No committee member shall fill more than one position. Only one officer position per household, business or grouping of the aforesaid three principal officer positions.
- 4.5. Where a position on the officer board becomes vacant during the course of the year for whatever reason, then the committee shall co-opt a member to fulfil the duties of the role.
- 4.6. The committee and office bearers shall make and carry out decisions in accordance with the objectives of the group as outlined in [section 2](#) above.
- 4.7. Meetings of the committee shall be open to any member of the group who is invited to attend.
- 4.8. There must be at least three of the committee members present for any decisions to be made at a committee meeting.
- 4.9. Committee members can be voted off if they have not attended three consecutive meetings without good reason and have not submitted their apologies.
- 4.10. Committee members must declare any interest they may have in the topic under discussion and the committee will decide if they need to forfeit their right to vote on this occasion.
- 4.11. Committee members will be familiar with this constitution and with their respective roles in the Group committee policy document ([Appendix A](#)). Any alteration to the content of this document will be subjected to section 4.8 above.

5. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS OR STANDING ORDERS

- 5.1. The chairperson shall chair all meetings of the group.
- 5.2. Members may speak only through the Chair.
- 5.3. Decisions will be agreed by a simple majority, voted in through a show of hands, or if deemed necessary a secret ballot.
- 5.4. In the event of a divided vote on decisions to be made, the chair shall have the casting vote.
- 5.5. Meetings will start and end at a time agreed by the committee unless all those present agree otherwise.
- 5.6. Any offensive behavior, including racism, ageism, sexism or inflammatory remarks will not be permitted.
- 5.7. Any member who brings the group into disrepute or refuses to comply with the constitution shall be cautioned/expelled on a majority vote of the full committee.

- 5.8. Any such member will have the right to appeal within 28 days of an expulsion. The appeal shall be heard by the membership at an [Extraordinary General Meeting](#) called for that purpose.
- 5.9. The Secretary shall deal with all correspondence.
- 5.10. Agendas will be distributed to the membership at least four days before a meeting, where possible. Items for the agenda should be forwarded to the Secretary and Chair seven days before the meeting, where possible.
- 5.11. Minutes will be read prior to every meeting where possible.
- 5.12. The committee shall conform to and sign up annually to the principles of “The Governance Code for the Community Voluntary and Charity Sector in Ireland” Type A.
<http://www.governancecode.ie>

6. FINANCES

- 6.1. The group may raise funds by obtaining grants from other bodies or by fundraising schemes, by seeking voluntary contributions by local business organizations. All money raised by or on behalf of the group shall be applied to further its objectives.
- 6.2. A bank account shall be opened and maintained in the name of the group.
- 6.3. The Treasurer, Secretary and/or the Chairperson shall be signatories on the account and all bank transactions shall require two of these signatures.
- 6.4. Accounts shall be kept by the Treasurer, and made available upon request to any committee meeting where they may be inspected. Failure to bring the books on request to a meeting on three consecutive occasions will mean the Treasurer will be asked to resign
- 6.5. All expenditure shall be agreed and controlled by the committee. Receipts should be obtained for all expenditure.
- 6.6. No officer shall sign a blank cheque – all cheque amounts must be filled in before signatures are added.
- 6.7. A second committee member will be asked to verify the accuracy of the accounts before being presented to the AGM and signed off to this effect.
- 6.8. All correspondence of the group including the bank statement shall be addressed to the secretary.

7. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

- 7.1. An AGM shall be held every year before March end to discuss the activities of the group, to receive the accounts and to elect the committee.
- 7.2. The AGM shall be held at a suitable venue to accommodate as many members as possible.
- 7.3. The quorum shall be 51 % of members present, with a minimum of 5 attendees.
- 7.4. Notice of at least 7 days shall be given to members of the AGM.
- 7.5. At the AGM the resignation of all committee members will be accepted and a new committee elected.

8. EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING (EGM)

- 8.1. EGM's may be called by the committee when deemed necessary or by any member with the support of at least 3 committee members and written support of at least 5 voting members.
- 8.2. Notice of at least 7 days shall be given to members of an EGM
- 8.3. Voting rules as per AGM's and as per this constitution will apply to EGM's.

9. CHANGES TO CONSTITUTION

- 9.1. This constitution shall only be changed at the AGM or an Extraordinary General Meeting of the group.
- 9.2. For decisions to be taken there must be a quorum of at least 3 committee members of at least 51% of members present, with a minimum of 5 attendees. The voting shall be by simple majority of those present.
- 9.3. All members shall be given the required notice as defined by the meeting requirements, along with the proposed changes.
- 9.4. Proposed changes must be submitted to the secretary in writing not less than 28 days before the AGM.

10. CHILD PROTECTION

- 10.1. The group will ensure that any activities they are involved with will be a safe environment for children.
- 10.2. If group activities are to involve children a Child Protection Policy will be adopted and a committee member will be appointed to take responsibility for its implementation.

11. LEASES AND AGREEMENTS

- 11.1. As trustees for and on behalf of the group, the current Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer, may enter into leases and access agreements that are transferable to on-going elected office bearers to further the objectives of the group as set out in [section 2](#) above.
- 11.2. Equipment or assets purchased on behalf of the group shall remain the charge and responsibility of the committee.
- 11.3. The secretary shall be appointed custodian of all agreements and documentation relating to the group and its activities.

12. DISSOLUTION OF THE GROUP

- 12.1. The group may only be dissolved by a special meeting called for that purpose. Such a meeting shall come about following a proposal in writing signed by a simple majority of those remaining on the committee being submitted to the Secretary.
- 12.2. All members shall be informed of such a meeting at least 21 days before the date of the meeting.
- 12.3. Dissolution of the group shall only take effect if agreed by two thirds of the members present and voting at that meeting.
- 12.4. Any assets remaining after desolation and meeting the group's liabilities must be distributed among local charities or other community group with aims similar to the group, nominated by that meeting.
- 12.5. Any money received via funding bodies and not utilized after dissolution, should be returned to the funders in relation to the funding criteria.
- 12.6. On dissolution, any documents belonging to the group shall be disposed of in a manner agreed by that meeting.

13. DECLARATION

This constitution was adopted at the AGM of the SWORDS TIDY TOWNS Group on this date and witnessed by the following.

Signed Print Name:

Chairperson _____ Signature _____

Secretary _____ Signature _____

Treasurer _____ Signature _____

14. APPENDIX A

14.1 Committee Policy Document.

14.1.1. Role of the chair

The functions of the chair include (but are not limited) to:

Chairing all meetings of the group. During a meeting the chair is responsible for:

- Introducing any guest speakers
- Introducing each agenda item and provide any relevant background information
- Encouraging the participants to make decisions
- Make sure that the meeting stays on track and finishes on time
- Allow everyone who wishes to speak to do so (time permitting).

Other functions carried out by the chair include:

- Guiding the group to meet its objectives (aims).
- Greeting and introducing guests to group events.
- Main spokesperson for group.

14.1.2. Role of the secretary

The secretary is the main contact for correspondence of the Group. The functions of the secretary include (but are not limited to):

- Taking minutes of meetings, filing same and ensuring committee members are briefed on content.
- Informing the committee about correspondence sent to and from the group.
- Writing and receiving correspondence on behalf of the group
- Preparing the agenda (usually with the chair) for meetings.
- Attending other meetings on behalf of the group
- Keeping the community informed on social media
- Compiling and presenting the Annual Secretary's report summarising groups activities.
- Organising venues and facilities for all group meetings.
- Liaising with the groups stakeholders i.e. Fingal County Council, Business community.
- Completing application forms and applying for grants on behalf of the group.
- Custodian of group documents and assets.

14.1.3. Role of the treasurer

The functions of the treasurer include (but are not limited to):

- Opening and managing the bank account in the name of the Group
- Paying any bills incurred
- Keeping a written record of money received and money spent
- Reimbursing committee members' expenses
- Custodian of any petty cash.
- Preparing and presenting end of year financial report for the group's annual general meeting (AGM).
- Advising the group on financial matters.

15. Appendix B

15.1 Constitutional Amendments

Date	Section	Previous Wording	Current Wording	Meeting