

CONSTITUTION & AIMS

GENIE* COMMUNITY GROUP

*Gap Electronic News & Information Exchange

1. Name

The name of the group shall be GENIE COMMUNITY GROUP, established as a community-led project, owned and run by volunteer members of the group (The Management Committee) for the benefit of the community.

2. Aims

The overarching aim of GENIE COMMUNITY GROUP will be to provide, whenever necessary on an *ad-hoc* basis, a free, fast dissemination of useful, unbiased, important or urgent community information, via e-newsletters, to all online residents who desire to receive it.

It also aims to provide a website as an additional source of free and useful community information.

This will include a) a number of web pages of different categories of local information likely to be useful to new and existing residents as a reference source and b) an online calendar of local and regional events. As this is a perpetual calendar, this same facility can also be used as an 'event planner' to indicate to all event organisers which dates have been booked to avoid possible date clashes.

In order to do this:

The group aims to maintain a 'Master List' (subscriber list) in accordance with the Data Protection Act and all other relevant laws and statutes.

The group aims continually to grow the Master List through encouraging subscription. Newsletters will be sent out initially using a standard commercially available bulk email service. Therefore, individuals would choose to subscribe (opt in) and may unsubscribe (opt out) at any time.

The group aims to ensure that only important, accurate, impartial and relevant news is sent out.

3. Contributors

Genie welcomes news stories and anyone can write in to Genie about local events for the newsletters. The Genie team reserve the right to decide what to include.

Ceasing to be a contributor

Contributors (regular or casual) are free to cease making contributions at any time. However, it would be appreciated, when possible, if regular contributors could to give as much notice as possible, in order to provide time for a replacement to be found and trained to take over their role.

4. Subscribers

Subscription is free and open to anyone who:

-lives in Goring, Streatley, South Stoke, the surrounding area, or anywhere else who is interested in the activities in the area; and actively 'opts in' by registering for the newsletter service.

Subscription will begin as soon as the request and required information (name, e-mail address and village or town of residence) has been received. No fee or any payment whatsoever will be required to subscribe. Information on subscribers to be requested and kept on file will be limited to the basic requirements to mail to them efficiently and in a targeted way (ie email address, village name and which newsletters they have opted to subscribe to).

Those who subscribe to individual newsletters will automatically be added to the 'Master List'. This will ensure that the mailings for the 'Public Information' newsletter (which uses the full Master List) go to the maximum number of people in the community.

The subscribers' information will be maintained, in compliance with the Data Protection Act and any relevant laws and statutes, and will be kept by the designated Data Controller. Access to the names and e-mail addresses on the Master List will be appropriately restricted to only key members of the Management Group on a 'need to know' basis.

5. Equal Opportunities

GENIE COMMUNITY GROUP will not discriminate on the grounds of gender, gender-identity, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sexuality, disability, religious or political belief, marital status or age.

6. Officers and Management Committee

The business of the group will be carried out by a Management Committee elected at the Annual General Meeting. The Committee will meet as necessary and not less than once a year.

The Committee will consist of 4 - 5 members, and be composed of 3 officers and 2 or 3 committee members. Up to 2 additional members may be co-opted onto the committee (totalling 7 members) at the discretion of the committee.

The officers' roles are as follows:

- Chair, who shall chair both general and committee meetings
- Secretary, who shall be responsible for the taking of minutes and the distribution of all papers
- Treasurer who shall be responsible for maintaining accounts

In the event of an officer standing down during the year a replacement will be elected at the next Annual General Meeting of members. The Management Committee will if possible appoint an interim officer until such time as the Annual General Meeting.

Any committee member not attending a meeting without apology for three consecutive meetings will be contacted by the committee and asked if they wish to resign.

Members of the Genie Committee are listed in 'About Us'.

7. Meetings

7.1. Annual General Meetings

An Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held within fifteen months of the previous AGM.

All committee members will be notified in writing at least 3 weeks before the date of the meeting, giving the venue, date and time.

Nominations for the Management Committee may be made to the Secretary before the meeting, or at the meeting. The quorum for the AGM will be 25% of the committee membership or 3 members, whichever is the greater number.

At the AGM:

The Committee will present a report of the work of GENIE COMMUNITY GROUP over the year.

The Committee will present the accounts of GENIE COMMUNITY GROUP for the previous year.

The officers and Committee for the next year will be elected.

Any proposals given to the Secretary at least 7 days in advance of the meeting will be discussed.

7.2 Special General Meetings

The Secretary will call a Special General Meeting at the request of the majority of the committee or at least two other members giving a written request to the Chair or Secretary stating the reason for their request.

The meeting will take place within thirty days of the request.

All members will be given at least two weeks' notice of such a meeting, giving the venue (if not a virtual meeting) date, time and agenda, and notice may be by telephone, email or post.

The quorum for the Special General Meeting will be 25% of the membership or 3 members, whichever is the greater number.

7.3 Management Committee Meetings

Management Committee meetings may be called from time-to-time by the Chair or Secretary. Committee members must receive notice of meetings at least 7 days before the meeting.

The quorum for Committee meetings is three Management Committee members.

7.4. Rules of Procedure for meetings

All questions that arise at any meeting will be discussed openly and the meeting will seek to find general agreement that all members present can agree to.

If a consensus cannot be reached a vote will be taken and a decision will be made by a simple majority of members present. If the number of votes cast on each side is equal, the chair of the meeting shall have an additional casting vote.

8. Finances

An account will be maintained on behalf of the group at a bank agreed by the Management Committee. Three cheque signatories will be nominated by the Committee (one to be the Treasurer). The signatories must not be related nor members of the same household.

All payments will be authorised by two of the signatories.

For cheque payments, the signatories will sign the cheque.

For other payments (such as BACS payments, cash withdrawals, debit card payments or cash payments), a requisition note will be signed by two signatories, and held by the treasurer.

Records of income and expenditure will be maintained by the Treasurer and a financial statement given at each meeting. All money raised by or on behalf of GENIE COMMUNITY GROUP is only to be used to further the aims of the group, as specified in item 2 of this constitution.

9. Editorial Policy

Genie is a not-for-profit service run by unpaid community volunteers. These volunteers aim to be editorially independent and to provide useful community information without commercial, political or personal bias.

All articles, alerts and stories published in newsletters and event entries on Genie's online calendar, whether written by Genie volunteers or submitted by the public, will be subject to the above stated editorial principle.

Genie is a low-cost digital service, and as such does not need or seek advertising income. However, when an organisation is seeking a local person for an unpaid or paid position which is for the benefit of the local community, the management group may consider publishing an advertisement on its merits, although Genie would reserve its right to edit any wording if thought necessary.

When its modest reserves require topping up donations from local charitable and non-commercial organisations are sought and have usually always been forthcoming. Should this not be the case when required, a non-participatory sponsor from a suitable commercial organisation, who accepts and agrees with Genie's editorial policy, may be accepted.

10. Amendments to the Constitution

Amendments to the constitution may only be made at the Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting.

Any proposal to amend the constitution must be given to the Secretary in writing. The proposal must then be circulated with the notice of meeting.

Any proposal to amend the constitution will require a two thirds majority of those members present and entitled to vote.

11. Dissolution

If a meeting, by simple majority, decides that it is necessary to close down the group it may call a Special General Meeting to do so. The sole business of this meeting will be to dissolve the group.

If it is agreed to dissolve the group, all remaining money and other assets, once outstanding debts have been paid, will be donated to a local charitable organisation. The organisation will be agreed at the meeting which agrees the dissolution.

This constitution was agreed at the Inaugural General Meeting of the GENIE COMMUNITY GROUP on 22 March 2016 and updated on 15 June 2021.

Name and position in group - Ron Bridle, Chairperson

Name and position in group - Mary Carr, Treasurer

Name and position in group - Bryan Urbick, Secretary