

Community Land Trust Steering Group

DRAFT

Terms of Reference

Aim

To explore the setting up of a Community Land Trust to provide affordable housing and meet other social, economic and environmental needs of the community.

Role and responsibilities of the Steering Group

- (a) Take action to explore the mechanisms for setting up a Community Land Trust
- (b) Consider and agree the Community Land Trust's area of benefit
- (c) Consider and agree the nature and focus of the housing and other provision required
- (d) Consider and agree the legal model to be utilised
- (e) Consider and prioritise development / acquisition opportunities available
- (f) Explore the options available for funding homes and other provision
- (g) Work with the Sussex Community Housing Hub to prepare a Concept Note
- (h) Seek funding to enable the organisational set up and incorporation of the Community Land Trust
- (i) Develop a communication strategy to engage and involve the wider community

Membership: Open to all members of the community who are signed up to the Steering Group's aim and ways of working. Normally between 5 and 10 people

Roles of the members:

Steering Group members need to be:

- (a) Interested in the Community Land Trust project and committed to championing its cause;
- (b) Able to take on responsibility and devote time, experience and / or skills; and
- (c) Maintain enthusiasm for the project at all times.

Chairman / Vice Chair

The Steering Group will elect a Chair and Vice Chair

The role of the Chair is to:

1. Provide overall coordination and direction of the Group
2. Ensure the efficient conduct of the Steering Group's business and meetings;
3. Ensure that all members are given the opportunity to express their views and that appropriate standards of behaviour are maintained;
4. Manage the delegation of key responsibilities and resolution of any Steering Group problems;
5. Establish a constructive working relationship with other organisations i.e. Sussex Community Housing Hub, Local Authorities, Registered Providers etc;
6. Ensure that the Steering Group receives professional advice when it is needed, either from the Sussex Community Housing Hub or from external sources;
7. Representing the organisation as appropriate; and
8. Take decisions delegated to the Chair.

Secretary

A Secretary will be appointed by the Steering Group

Their role will be:

1. To take and circulate minutes of meetings
2. Circulate meeting agendas and papers seven days ahead of meetings
3. Ensure that Steering Group members have access to timely information, papers, advice relevant to its discussions to enable decision making
4. Arrange meeting venues and refreshments
5. Provide support for wider communication / promotional activities such as a website / Facebook
6. Liaise with key stakeholders – including: the National CLT Network, parish / town council, local authority etc
7. Undertake correspondence / complete returns as necessary
8. Liaise with the Chair / Treasurer to ensure good coordination

Treasurer

A treasurer will be appointed by the Steering Group

Their role will be:

1. Open and manage the bank account
2. Maintain accurate accounts
3. Report to the Steering Group and members when the organisation is formed.
4. Ensure financial procedures are followed
5. Be involved in and advise on financial decisions
6. Be aware of and manage any financial transactions
7. Liaise with the Chair / Secretary to ensure good coordination

Meetings

Meetings will be held monthly initially and reviewed in the light of activity / need.

At the start of each year the dates for meetings will be planned twelve months ahead to help facilitate attendance.

Meetings will be conducted in line with the following 'Ground Rules'.

Steering Group Meeting Ground Rules

Successful meetings don't happen by chance. Individual Steering Group members need to work at good conduct.

- One person speaks at a time;
- The Chair decides who that person will be;
- The speaker may speak only on the issue being considered;
- Those wishing to speak will be given an opportunity;
- Decisions require majority support; and
- Once voted upon, no further discussion is permitted.

The **Ground Rules** can help ensure that you have successful and productive meetings:

The Chair: Is in charge of the meeting.

Agendas: Will be prepared well in advance and distributed to the Steering Group members together with any papers seven days in advance of a meeting.

The agenda is the meeting map and is critical for staying on course. Any issue that may take substantial Steering Group meeting time must be clearly identified to the Chair well in advance of the meeting to determine whether agenda modification is necessary or possible. Should an issue arise without prior notice and require extended discussion time this item will either be considered under *Any Other Business*, or if possible deferred to the next or an additional meeting. This process will help ensure that all items on the agenda received the necessary time for consideration.

Issues for clarification or the requirement for further detail must be communicated to the Chair, or where applicable to the author of reports and proposals at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. Items or queries received late cannot be guaranteed and answer or necessary consideration.

Tabled Papers are not good practice and should only be used for information only. Where information is tabled affecting a decision at the meeting, the Steering Group should carefully consider whether or not this is accepted or alternatively delay the item and associated decisions until the next meeting.

Preparation: Must be undertaken by all members prior to the meeting by fully reviewing the papers provided and seeking additional information where necessary.

Time: Meetings will usually be held on prior agreed times / dates / venues. Each meeting should ideally not last more than 2 hours – with a comfort break on the agenda if longer.

Respect: Mutual respect will be a guiding principle, along with open sharing of information. Listening carefully to all points of view and sharing all pertinent information will be important. All ideas should be treated as good ideas - openly and with respect. No derogatory or negative comments will be used. If participants do not understand they should ask for greater explanation.

Attendance: Attendance will be expected, however it is appreciated that there will occasionally be extenuating / valid reasons for absence. Absence and the reason for not being able to attend should be advised to the Chair or Secretary in advance.

On-Time: Steering Group Members will be expected to be present prior to the start of the meeting unless prior notice has been given.

Conflict Resolution: In the event of a disagreement, the Chair will lead on agreeing a way forward. This may be in the form of a vote (if appropriate) to gauge the majority view or a deferred decision pending further discussion after the meeting.

Disruptions: Telephones must be off during meetings unless by prior agreement and members should refrain from using their mobile phones during meetings.

Participation: Participants will speak in turn and where more than one person is seeking to speak – as directed by the Chair.

Procedure: The agenda will be in a standard format which will include standard items: apologies, declarations of interest, minutes of the previous meeting, matters arising; items for decision, items for information, items for noting and any other business - which must be notified to the Chair prior to the meeting.

Decisions: Debate is encouraged; where possible the Chair should aim to get a consensus of opinion. Where there is disagreement, a vote of opinion may be taken to gauge the majority view. When a decision has been reached, Steering Group members should abide by the groups decision.

Team: Everyone should work together as a team. Openness, honesty, positive, equality, assistance, conciseness are all team attributes to be developed and used at meetings;

Jargon: All members should make efforts to avoid the use of jargon – don't assume that everyone else understands it!

Declarations of Interest: Conflicts of interest occur when an individual stands to gain personally (financially or otherwise) from any discussion or decision. It is important that all members are proactive in declaring any actual, or importantly, any potential conflicts of interest that may be perceived by the wider community.

The Chair and the remaining voting members of the meeting will then decide whether individuals declaring an interest must leave the meeting for the relevant item or just not take part in the discussion or decision making.

Confidentiality: Meetings may receive information which is not in the public domain often relating to individuals, organisations or financial matters. It is the responsibility of members to ensure that information remains confidential to the meeting unless prior agreement has been given by the Chair for this to be discussed elsewhere. Individuals must never use confidential information for their personal advantage or the advantage or disadvantage of anyone known to them or to disadvantage or discredit the Community Land Trust.

Any Member guilty of disclosing confidential information may be subject to termination of their membership.

Breaches of the Ground Rules: Anyone who does not comply with the Ground Rules will be asked to leave the meeting by the Chair. Anyone excluded from a meeting because of their behaviour will only be allowed to return to future meetings if they agree to abide by the Ground Rules.

Make it Fun: Steering Group members are volunteers. Where possible the 'two way' experience should be enjoyable and pleasant.