# Devon Hedge Group: Community Woodfuel from Hedges Toolkit

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| Woodfuel Group Constitution |
| A template for a constitution for a small woodfuel group |
| Version: 5 April 2016 |
| **Andrew Shadrake** |

###### Note: This constitution is suitable for small woodfuel groups with an income under £5000 (excluding grants) which do not wish to buy land, or employ staff, and which will take out public liability insurance. All others should take legal advice, and consider establishing a company. Delete all items in red.

Disclaimer: This agreement is based on a template provided in good faith, by Devon Hedge Group, which takes no responsibility for its contents, use, or direct or indirect effect. If in doubt, obtain professional advice.



###### [INSERT NAME OF WOODFUEL GROUP] CONSTITUTION

**1. Name**

The association’s name is ……………………………………………………(“the association”)

**2. Purposes**

The association's purposes are:

1. To enable people living in and around [insert location] to source and process local wood for woodfuel, from hedgerows and woodland.
2. [insert any second activity, such as to promote community supported woodfuel activity, improve health, etc]
3. [Insert third activity if applicable, such as reduce carbon emissions, or fuel poverty].

**3. Carrying out the Purposes**

In order to carry out the purposes the association’s committee has the power to:

1. Raise funds, and receive grants and donations
2. Use the association’s money and assets
3. Take a lease or license of any property, and buy any property except land
4. Lease, license or dispose of all or part of the association’s property
5. Borrow money, including through hire purchase
6. Co-operate with other organisations and to exchange information and advice with them
7. Provide indemnity insurance for members of the committee
8. Do any other things, other than buy land or employ.

**4. Membership**

1. Membership of the association shall be open to anyone who is aged 16 or over, supports the association’s purposes, is approved by the committee and pays any annual subscription.
2. The committee may terminate a person’s membership if they believe it is in the best interests of the association to do so.

**5. Officers**

The association shall be managed by a committee, appointed at the annual general meeting, and consisting of a chairperson, a secretary and a treasurer, and up to twelve others. They will all retire at the end of each year but may stand for re-election. The committee may co-opt members to fill any vacancy.

**6. Committee Meetings**

1. The committee shall hold at least two ordinary meetings each year.
2. At least one third, or three members, of the committee, whichever is greater, must be present at meetings for it to take decisions.
3. Committee members may act by majority decision, with the chairperson having a casting vote in the event of a tie.
4. The committee shall keep minutes at every meeting, and approved at the next one.
5. The committee may appoint one or more sub-committees.
6. If committee members have a conflict of interest they must declare it before this matter is discussed, and leave the meeting while it is being decided.

**7. Money and Property**

1. All money belonging to the association shall be paid into its bank account, except for petty cash. All cheques drawn on the account must be signed by at least two members of the committee.

The officer must make sure accounts are kept.

**8. Annual General Meeting - AGM**

1. The AGM must be held every year, with 14 days notice given to all members telling them what is on the agenda. Minutes must be taken of the AGM, and approved at the next one.
2. There must be at least 20% of the membership present at the AGM.
3. Every member has one vote.
4. The officers shall present the annual report and accounts.
5. Any member may stand for election as an officer.
6. The first business of the meeting shall be for the members present to appoint a chairperson.

**9. General Meetings**

1. The committee may call a general meeting of the association at any time, and must call one within one month if twenty percent of the membership request them to do so. The committee must give at least 14 days notice to all members, giving the reason for the meeting.
2. Minutes shall be taken of every general meeting, and approved at the first AGM or general meeting following it.
3. There must be at least 20%, or ten members of the association, whichever is the greater, present at any general meeting.

**10. Alterations to the Constitution**

Subject to the following provisions of this clause the constitution may be altered by a resolution passed by not less than two thirds of the members present and voting at an AGM or general meeting.

**11. Dissolution**

If the committee decides that it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the association it shall call a general meeting. Any assets remaining after the satisfaction of any proper debts and liabilities must be given to another voluntary organisation whose purposes benefit all or part of the same locality as the association.

**12. Setting up the Association**

This constitution was adopted on the ………………20… by the people whose signatures appear below. They shall form the committee until the first AGM, which must be held within one year of this date.

Signed Print name and address

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