

East Sussex Seniors' Association (ESSA) Constitution

The East Sussex Seniors 'Association (ESSA) is a non-political umbrella Association for all seniors 'forums in East Sussex. Currently these forums represent the following areas in East Sussex: Eastbourne, Hastings and St Leonards; Lewes District; Meridian Coast and Downs; Rother; Seaford; and Wealden.

- 1) This is the constitution of the organisation known as the '**East Sussex Seniors' Association**', to be referred to throughout this document as '**ESSA**'.
- 2) **Aims**
 - 2.1) ESSA wants East Sussex to be a county that hears and acts upon the voice of older people, so that:
 - 2.1.1) The contribution of older people to the community is valued and their views are taken into account.
 - 2.1.2) Older people have extra help and support when they need it through services that they have helped to design and develop.
 - 2.1.3) Older people have access to opportunities that keep them healthy, independent and active.
- 3) **Objectives**
 - 3.1) As the umbrella organisation for seniors' forums in East Sussex, ESSA strives to:
 - 3.1.1) Ensure high standards in local government and other public services for older people.
 - 3.1.2) Ensure that older people are fully involved in the development of services and policies which affect them.
 - 3.1.3) Create appropriate opportunities in which older people can participate and be active members of their communities.
- 4) **Equal Opportunities Statement**
 - 4.1) ESSA is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity and recognising diversity. The values that underpin equality of opportunity and diversity are essential to ESSA being able to pursue our aims and objectives when working with our members, volunteers, partners and funders.
 - 4.2) ESSA has a separate Equality and Diversity Policy, setting out our commitment to equalities and diversity.

5) Strategy

H5

- 5.1) In bringing together and supporting the contribution of people over fifty years of age in East Sussex, ESSA will respond to and influence changes in policies and services affecting these people. ESSA hopes to achieve this by undertaking the following actions:
- 5.1.1) Understanding and reflecting the views and issues raised by the grass roots membership of the individual forums that make up the constituent parts of ESSA.
 - 5.1.2) Representing the views of people over fifty who are members of the local older people's forums on policies and services and other issues affecting their lives, and ensure their voices are heard and heeded.
 - 5.1.3) Encouraging providers of services for older people to work together to deliver the most effective services to older people in the county
 - 5.1.4) Collecting and disseminating information on services, activities and opportunities for people over fifty living in the county.
 - 5.1.5) Where appropriate undertaking activities, projects and initiatives on a county-wide and cross-county basis that support people over fifty to play an active part in their community, and to raise funds to do this.
 - 5.1.6) Convening and participating in meetings with service providers as and when the need arises.
 - 5.1.7) Taking part in strategic planning and service planning partnerships by nominating representatives to attend meetings and reporting to the members of ESSA.
 - 5.1.8) Reporting through its membership to the individual seniors' forums represented on ESSA and thus ensuring that all forum members are kept informed of progress and change.
 - 5.1.9) Inviting individuals from service providers to meet with older people to discuss concerns and work in partnership to make changes.
 - 5.1.10) Working closely with service providers and policy makers at local and national level.
 - 5.1.11) Promoting the welfare and interests of all older people regardless of gender, ethnicity, age, disability, sexuality, religion, cultural or political belief.
 - 5.1.12) Encouraging special interest and working groups as needed on a county-wide level.

6) Membership

- 6.1) Full membership of ESSA is open to independently constituted older people-led seniors' forums in East Sussex that support this constitution.¹
- 6.2) A copy of the forum's constitution will be required in support of any new application to become a member of ESSA.

¹ For the purpose of this constitution the definition of older people-led seniors 'forums is forums that are led on a voluntary basis by a core committee of older people who live in the geographical area stated in the forum's constitution, and who are accountable to the forum's wider membership. The members of the forums are acting primarily in a private capacity that is independent of any organisational influence, whether this is statutory or voluntary. The committees are elected each year at the individual forum's AGM

- 6.3) Each member forum will be represented on ESSA by two named members nominated by each forum.
- 6.4) There will be identified named deputies for each named representative in the event that the nominated representative is unable to attend the management meetings of ESSA.
- 6.5) They may be supplemented by non-voting specialists nominated by the local member forums.
- 6.6) Decisions will be made wherever possible by reaching consensus. In the event that this cannot be achieved the decision will be put to the vote with each member forum carrying one vote. If an equal number of votes is cast the Chair will have a second or casting vote.

7) Annual General Meetings

- 7.1) The Quorum for Annual General Meetings will be not less than half the voting members (a voting member being a member forum of ESSA) present within half an hour of the time specified for the start of the meeting.
- 7.2) Voting at Annual General Meetings will be done on a per forum basis with one forum having one vote. If an equal number of votes are cast, the Chairperson shall have a second or casting vote.
- 7.3) The first Annual General Meeting will be held not later than 3 months after the 31st March 2008. Subsequent AGMs will be held not more than 3 months after the 31st March in subsequent years. At least forty two days' notice will be given in writing or by electronic form by the Secretary to each member Forum and this will include an invitation to put forward two nominated representatives to sit on ESSA and two deputies. Any member shall be entitled to receive on request, a hard copy of any document or information sent to that member otherwise than in hard copy form.
- 7.4) The business of the ESSA AGM will include.
 - 7.4.1) Receiving and discussing the Annual Report.
 - 7.4.2) Receiving the annual accounts.
 - 7.4.3) Receiving the two nominations plus two deputies to ESSA from each member forum. Nominations to be made fourteen days prior to the meeting.
 - 7.4.4) Consideration of any resolutions to amend the constitution. These must be received twenty-eight days prior to the meeting. An alteration will require the approval of a two thirds majority of the membership present and voting at the meeting.

8) Extraordinary General Meetings

- 8.1) An Extraordinary General Meeting of ESSA may be called at twenty-eight days' notice in writing by the Secretary on the written request of four individual forums or two-thirds of the membership of ESSA whichever is the greater. Notification will include a statement of the business to take place.

9) Management

- 9.1) ESSA will be directed by a committee which will meet at least quarterly each year.
- 9.2) Officers of the committee will be as follows:
Chairperson,
Vice chairperson,
Treasurer,
Secretary,
Publicity Officer,
Any additional identified officer posts may be created with the agreement of a majority of the management committee.
- 9.3) The newly appointed management committee following the AGM will ensure that all officer posts are filled firstly from the nominated representatives and where any posts remains unfilled the committee can co-opt an existing forum committee member to fill the post. Any co-optees, to fill officer posts, will not have any voting rights.
- 9.4) The rest of the committee will be made up of the remaining nominated representatives from the member forums as at the previous inaugural meeting/ AGM. The committee will need to co-opt members as necessary in order to ensure that it also includes the Chairs of any Special Interest Groups e.g. Transport & Environment Forum, Health & Social Care Forum and the Development Committee.
- 9.5) Specialists may be co-opted by ESSA to contribute particular skills and experience, but without voting rights.
- 9.6) Officers are required to retire at each AGM but will be eligible for re-election.
- 9.7) The committee has the power to form county-wide special interest groups and working parties on themes that are of interest to all older people across the county. The membership of these groups and working parties will be co-opted from the individual forums. The Chairs of the Special Interest Groups will be an existing member of the ESSA management committee or where they are not a member of the management committee, they will be required to attend the ESSA management meetings in order to report back progress.
- 9.8) Invalidation of the committee will not be caused by any failure to appoint or any defect in the appointment, election or qualification of any voting member or officer.
- 9.9) The Quorum for all meetings of the committee shall consist of one half of the full membership represented on the committee (i.e. one forum equals one member).
- 9.10) Voting shall be by a simple majority on a show of hands or by ballot as the committee may decide. In the event of an equality of votes the Chairperson shall exercise the casting vote.

9.11) Location and date of the subsequent meetings shall be determined at each meeting.

H5

9.12) In the event of a vacancy occurring on the committee, the deputy for the nominated representative will occupy the position until the next AGM.

10) Finance

10.1) ESSA shall have the power to receive money and funds by means of contributions, donations, subscriptions, deeds of covenant, legacies, grants or any other lawful method, except where application for funding represents a conflict of interest.

10.2) An account shall be opened by the Honorary Treasurer in the name of ESSA at a bank or building society to be decided from time to time by the Management Committee.

10.3) The Management Committee will authorise in writing the Officers to sign cheques on behalf of ESSA. All cheques must be signed by two of the authorised signatories, and similarly with on-line accounts, two officers must authorise transactions.

10.4) The Treasurer shall keep good and proper accounts of all the financial transactions of ESSA and will submit a summary of accounts to each Management Committee meeting. He/she will also present full annual accounts to the AGM after they have been inspected by the Independent Examiner. The Independent Examiner to be appointed at each AGM.

10.5) The income and property of ESSA will be applied for the purpose of ESSA as set out in this constitution and no portion will be paid directly or indirectly by way of profit to any member of ESSA.

10.6) Reasonable out of pocket expenses that are incurred through participating in the day-to-day business of ESSA will be paid from the ESSA budget regulated by the Management Committee.

11) Indemnity

11.1) It will be a requirement for each member forum of ESSA to have Public Liability Insurance.

12) Alterations to the Constitution and/or Dissolution

12.1) ESSA may be dissolved or this Constitution may be altered or amended by a resolution passed by two thirds majority of those present and voting at an Annual General or Extraordinary General Meeting of ESSA.

12.2) Any proposal to alter this Constitution must be delivered in writing to the Secretary not less than twenty-eight days before the Annual General Meeting or Extraordinary General Meeting at which it is to be considered.

12.3) In the event of dissolution, after paying or making provisions for all debts and liabilities of ESSA, the Management Committee will transfer any remaining assets to one or more voluntary groups having similar objectives to those of ESSA.

13) Signatories to this constitution

Eastbourne Seniors' Forum

Chair Date

Hastings and St Leonards Seniors' Forum

Chair Date

Lewes District Seniors' Forum

Chair Date

Meridian Mature Citizens' Forum

Chair Date

Rother Seniors' Forum

Chair Date

Seaford Seniors' Forum

Chair Date

Wealden Senior Citizens' Partnership

Chair Date

Constitution adopted 18th April 2007

Constitution updated and agreed 24th June 2008

Constitution updated and agreed 29th June 2011

Constitution updated and agreed 12 June 2012

Constitution updated and agreed 10 June 2014

Constitution updated and agreed 9 June 2015