

Climate Action Lewisham Constitution Document, September 2019, updated October 2023

Name: Climate Action Lewisham

Status: Unincorporated Community Association

Rationale:

The climate crisis is accelerating at an alarming rate. Urgent and drastic action is required to address climate change and important related issues, such as waste, loss of biodiversity, over-farming and marine degradation. The key issue that links these crises is over-consumptive lifestyles in the UK and the rest of the global North and there is a need to create a new narrative in our society that allows all of us to flourish and live within the limits of our planet's resources. We believe that local-level social action and campaigning is one of the most effective ways to support this new narrative.

Lewisham is the 13th most densely populated borough in London, and it is expected to see an increase in population by 12% in the next decade. Lewisham Council declared a Climate Emergency in February 2019 and published its Climate Emergency Action Plan in 2020, setting out its ambition to make Lewisham carbon neutral by 2030. As relatively privileged citizens of the world, it is important for civil society groups, such as Climate Action Lewisham, to play a role in supporting, promoting and contributing to progress towards a just and sustainable world.

1. Aims and Objectives:

Climate Action Lewisham (CAL) is part of the Friends of the Earth local action network. It aims to support and generate initiatives in Lewisham that reduce our collective greenhouse gas emissions and create thriving sustainable neighbourhoods in the face of ecological crisis.

Goals:

- To raise awareness among Lewisham residents about the climate and ecological crisis by generating and delivering local initiatives aimed at addressing these issues.
- To support and hold Lewisham Council to account for the delivery of its Climate Emergency Action Plan and its ambition to make Lewisham carbon neutral by 2030.
- To support other initiatives aimed at tackling the climate and ecological crisis at the individual, community, borough, London-wide and central government levels.

2. Membership:

2.1 Individuals may choose to become either a supporter or a member of CAL. Anyone resident or working in the London Borough of Lewisham may become either a supporter or a member of CAL. This is open to anyone regardless of ability, political orientation or religious affiliation, race, gender or sexual orientation. Members and supporters must adhere to the values and behaviours that have been agreed with Friends of the Earth, which are set out in the local charter and published on the CAL website.

2.2. Members must pay an annual membership fee, must be in agreement with the aims and objectives of CAL and must be interested in supporting the development of the group and participating in activities. Members will be entitled to attend and vote at the Annual General Meeting (AGM), put themselves forward for committee or officer roles, and receive invitations to special CAL events.

2.3 Supporters are not required to pay an annual membership fee. They will receive regular CAL communications and will be able to attend AGM meetings, but are not entitled to vote or put themselves forward for committee or officer roles.

2.4 Members and supporters must be 18 years of age and over. Members and supporters are expected to be inclusive, respectful and constructive both online and in person.

2.5. We communicate with members and supporters via a mailing list, via social media channels and face to face.

2.6 CAL has the right and responsibility to suspend or expel a member who has brought the name of the group into disrepute, acted inappropriately, or been deemed to work against the aims or values of the group. This decision may be taken by a majority of the elected committee. The elected committee has the right to terminate or reinstate membership after a suspension period of three months.

3. Meetings:

3.1 There shall be an elected decision-making committee ('the committee'), which will meet as required throughout the year. It is responsible for making high level decisions, for example, about the priorities and direction of the organisation and approving spend over £250.

3.2 At all meetings, one member of the committee will act as chair and for that meeting their authority stands on matters of process, decision-making, and adherence to the behaviour principles, detailed above (inclusive, respectful and constructive). Decisions will be made by majority vote and, in cases where votes are tied, the chair will have the casting vote.

3.3 An Annual General Meeting will be held once a year, within 15 months of the previous AGM.

3.4 Dates of the AGM will be circulated to members and supporters by email, on social media and the website, with three full weeks' notice of the date and venue.

3.5 The purpose of the AGM will be:

1. To hear the report on the activities of the group and its project groups for the preceding year
2. To elect the committee, the treasurer and the administrator
3. To identify matters of importance to concentrate on and work toward in the forthcoming year
4. To hear the report on the finances of the group, prepared by the treasurer
5. To agree on any changes to the constitution, or to the modus operandi of Climate Action Lewisham.

3.6 At the AGM a quorum will be a minimum of 5 people. If there is no quorum, a new AGM must be called. Each member present in a meeting shall have one vote. Decisions are to be made by a show of hands and motions shall be agreed by a majority of those present and eligible to vote. All

members are eligible to vote and a list of voting members will be kept by the Administrator and used to inform voting on core decisions. Any member on the list who is absent on the day of the AGM may cast votes remotely in advance of the meeting.

3.7 An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) can be called by a vote of the committee or if eight or more members make an application to the committee to call an EGM. The same rules and processes for an AGM apply to an EGM.

4. Committee and officer roles:

4.1 At the Annual General Meeting, members will elect a treasurer and up to 10 other committee members. There should be a minimum of five members for the committee to function. Members wishing to be elected as treasurer or committee members should put themselves forward, be seconded at the AGM and then voted in by a show of hands. The Committee shall be able to co-opt up to three members to the Committee.

4.2 The AGM/committee may appoint an administrator. If the administrator is not a committee member, but a volunteer from among the membership, the committee has the authority to co-opt them to the committee. If it becomes necessary to employ a paid administrator, they shall not be co-opted to the committee.

4.3 The treasurer is responsible for the finances of the organisation (see Finance section below)

4.4 The administrator is responsible for the day to day running of the organisation.

5. Finance

5.1 CAL's financial year shall run from 1 January to 31 December. A statement of income and expenditure will be prepared at the end of each year for presentation and agreement at the AGM. Where possible, the statement and the financial records should be independently inspected by a suitably qualified person prior to presentation at the AGM.

5.2 Any bank accounts opened for CAL shall be in the name of Climate Action Lewisham and must have three signatories, the treasurer and two committee members. To avoid conflicts of interest, the signatories should not be related or in a relationship. The majority of financial transactions shall be the responsibility of the treasurer.

5.3 Any cheque issued must be signed by the treasurer and one other signatory. There will be a delegated responsibility to the treasurer for debit card and online banking transactions up to £250, beyond which email authorisation from another signatory will be required.

6. Dissolution of Climate Action Lewisham.

6.1 Climate Action Lewisham may be dissolved at any time by a Special General Meeting motion at which a majority of voting members vote to dissolve the group if it is felt for any reason that it is no longer viable or appropriate. After any debts and liabilities have been settled, remaining goods and financial assets shall be donated to an organisation with sympathetic aims in the local area.

Signed:



Alice Tate-Harte and Matt Horbacki on behalf of the Decision-Making Committee

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ben Middleton", is written over a light blue rectangular highlight.

Ben Middleton, Treasurer