



## **CONSTITUTION**

### **Dads House**

Registered address:  
5, Kensington Square  
London W8 5EP

<https://www.dadshouse.org.uk/>

### **ADOPTION OF THE CONSTITUTION**

The charity adopted its constitution on 8 March 2017. The charity registered on 4 April 2017 as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.  
Charity Number: 112419

### **ADMINISTRATION**

The charity shall be administered by the trustees.

### **NAME**

The name of the charity is DadsHouse.

### **CHARITABLE OBJECTS**

The objects of the Charitable Incorporated Organisation are:

(a) the preservation and protection of health and the relief of poverty or need for the benefit of single parents (in particular single fathers) and their children, by:

- (i) providing or assisting in the provision of information, advice, practical and emotional support, mentoring and counselling; and
- (ii) providing referrals to temporary housing landlords and free legal advice providers;

(b) to advance the education and training of single parents (in particular single fathers) who have need of such services or facilities by virtue of their poverty or social and economic circumstances, through the provision of education and training in parenting skills; and



(c) the prevention or relief of poverty by the provision of food and essential items to people in need.

## **OBJECTIVES**

- DadsHouse supports single fathers, their children, and members of their families to cope with the challenges of single parenthood by providing practical and emotional support.
- DadsHouse also supports young people leaving care – care leavers.
- DadsHouse supports those who have been excluded from education
- DadsHouse relieves financial hardship by providing support including referrals to childcare providers, free legal advice, mentoring, training.

The core work of DadsHouse is to provide support, including where necessary, food, counselling, mentoring, training, access to grants, legal advice, services, and programmes for people to enable them to develop in a secure, stable and empowering environment.

This may include referrals to other providers, including others in the voluntary sector, and professional advice.

DadsHouse is available for all and does not discriminate against anyone on grounds of gender, religion, ethnic origin, colour, nationality, sexual orientation, or disability.

DadsHouse is registered to work throughout England and Wales.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR TRUSTEES**

DadsHouse works closely with Local Authorities and Councils. It receives referrals from Local Authorities and the Voluntary Sector. Alternatively, people may self-refer.

DadsHouse is overseen by a Board of up to 12 Trustees. Trustees are appointed at the Annual General Meeting and members may be co-opted on an interim basis to fulfil specific tasks until the next Annual General Meeting. Each Trustee is required to complete an annual declaration of interests and record any conflict of interest. Trustees are appointed for a three-year term, at the end of which they may stand for re-election.

## **ROLE OF TRUSTEES**

Trustees are expected to be familiar with the charity's Objects.



Trustees are expected to observe the policies and agreed procedures of Dads House, wherever and whenever appropriate.

Trustees are expected to be familiar with, promote and contribute to the activities of Dads House. In addition to attending meetings, trustees may be asked to undertake other tasks.

Trustees are expected to attend events arranged by Dads House.

## **LIABILITY**

Trustees have certain liabilities under charity law and must ensure that DadsHouse is carrying out its stated purpose for the benefit of all. Trustees must comply with all Government regulations and those set out by the Charity Commission.

At all times Trustees must act in the best interests of DadsHouse and make balanced and informed decisions considering both the long term and short-term objectives.

No Trustee may receive any benefit from DadsHouse unless it is properly authorised and clearly in the interests of DadsHouse.

The Trustees must be able to demonstrate that DadsHouse is complying with the law, is well run, and effective.

## **FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

The Trustees are responsible for all income and expenditure of DadsHouse and must ensure that systems are in place to safeguard its assets and resources. The Board must ensure that proper accounts are kept, an Annual Summary of Activity is produced, and all governance legislation is complied with, in a timely manner. Trustees, Management and Volunteers can assist with the preparation of necessary documentation to ensure compliance.

## **CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

Trustees must not disclose confidential information about Dads House to a third party. Examples of such confidential information are

- Personal information about specific individuals or their financial affairs - users, fellow Trustees, employees or volunteers;
- the terms of any negotiations in which Dads House may be involved;



- dealings with employees;
- information about legal proceedings;
- items marked “Private” and/or “Confidential”.

**Trustees are expected to:**

- assist in raising funds. In exercising this power, the trustees must not undertake any taxable permanent trading activity and must comply with any relevant statutory regulations.
- co-operate with other charities, voluntary bodies and statutory authorities and to exchange information and advice with them.
- obtain and arrange payment for such goods and services as are necessary for carrying out the work of the charity.
- create such advisory committees as the trustees think fit.
- seek the opinion, whether paid or unpaid, of professional advice when appropriate.
- employ and remunerate such staff as are necessary for carrying out the work of the charity.
- open and operate such bank and other accounts as the trustees consider necessary and to invest funds and to delegate the management of funds.
- do any other lawful thing that is necessary or desirable for the achievement of the objects.

**Trustees should not:**

- buy, take on lease or in exchange, hire or otherwise acquire property and to maintain and equip it for use. [shouldn't this be left out?!]
- sell, lease or otherwise dispose of all or any part of the property belonging to the charity. In exercising this power, the trustees must comply as appropriate with sections 117 - 122 of the Charities Act 2011.
- borrow money and to charge the whole or any part of the property belonging to the charity as security for repayment of the money borrowed. The trustees must comply as appropriate with sections 124 - 126 of the Charities Act 2011 if they wish to mortgage land owned by the charity.



## **DEALING WITH THE MEDIA**

DadsHouse attaches great importance to its public profile and reputation. All media enquiries should be passed to the Chief Executive or Founder.

## **RELATIONSHIPS WITH USERS AND STAFF**

It is important that a creative partnership exists between Trustees and staff, and between Trustees, Volunteers, and users. Trustees, Volunteers and Staff should always show respect for users and act towards them in a professional, tactful, and courteous manner.

## **POLITICS**

Dads House is a non-party-political organisation. Trustees must not attempt to use their position in any way to promote political views.

## **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Trustees have a legal obligation to act in the best interests of Dads House. Trustees must ensure that private and personal interests do not influence decisions and that Trustees do not use their position to obtain any sort of personal gain, either for themselves, family, friends, or associates.

If any item under discussion at a meeting poses a conflict of interest, the Trustee should declare the interest: if the interest is clear and substantial, the Trustee should leave the meeting while the discussion and decision are taking place.

All decisions where a conflict of interest has been declared will be recorded in the minutes, noting the nature and extent of the discussion, an outline of the discussion, the actions taken to manage the conflict. Where a Trustee benefits from the decision, this will be reported in the Annual Report and Accounts.

## **CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS**

If a Trustee is convicted of a criminal offence (other than a minor driving offence), this should be reported immediately to the Chief Executive who will



treat this information with the utmost sensitivity. It will be for the Chief Executive to decide, after taking appropriate advice, whether the individual is legally allowed under the Charities Acts to continue as a Trustee of Dads House.

## **REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES**

Trustees, Employees and Volunteers may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in training or in the performance of their duties, provided that this has been approved in advance.

## **GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY**

Trustees should never accept any hospitality which could be interpreted as influencing the way in which they carry out their duties as a Trustee. Nor should they offer hospitality to others on behalf of Dads House. If hospitality is accepted or given, it should be noted in the Register of Interests.

When declining hospitality or a gift, a Trustee should be courteous but firm and draw the attention of the person making the offer to the existence of this Code of Conduct.

Trustees may accept modest working meals and light refreshments in the course of their duties without making any declaration or obtaining written consent.

## **COMPLAINTS**

General complaints about Dads House should be referred to the Chief Executive. Particular complaints about the services provided by Dads House, members of staff or volunteers should be referred to the Chief Executive who will deal with them under the Complaints Procedure.

## **DELEGATION**

In addition to their statutory powers, the trustees may delegate any of their powers or functions to a committee of two or more trustees. A committee must act in accordance with any directions given by the trustees. It must report its decisions and activities fully and promptly to the trustees. It must not incur expenditure on behalf of the charity except in accordance with a budget previously agreed by the trustees.



The trustees must exercise their powers jointly at properly convened meetings except where they have delegated the exercise of the powers (either under this provision or under any statutory provision).

The trustees may invite advisers onto the board to advise on specialist subjects or take professional advice whether paid or unpaid.

The trustees must consider from time to time whether the powers or functions which they have delegated should continue to be delegated.

## **DUTY OF CARE AND EXTENT OF LIABILITY**

When exercising any power (whether given to them by this constitution, or by statute, or by any rule of law) in administering or managing the charity, each trustee has a duty of care to use the level of care and skill that is reasonable in the circumstances, taking into account any special knowledge or experience that he or she has or claims to have

No trustee, and no one exercising powers or responsibilities that have been delegated by the trustees, shall be liable for any act or failure to act unless, in acting or in failing to act, he or she has failed to discharge the duty of care.

## **APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES**

Dads House is overseen by a Board of up to 12 Trustees. The Terms of Reference for the Board are set by the Trustees.

Trustees are appointed at the Annual General Meeting or they may be co-opted on an interim basis until the next AGM. New Trustees are required to make a declaration of their support for the objects of Dads House.

Trustees are appointed for a 3-year term, at the end of which they may stand for re-election.

The number of trustees shall not be less than three. Apart from the first trustees, every trustee must be appointed by a resolution of the trustees.

In selecting individuals for appointment as trustees, trustees must have regard to the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the effective administration of the charity.

The trustees must keep a record of the name and address and the dates of appointment, re-appointment and retirement of each trustee.



The trustees must make available to each new trustee, on his or her first appointment:

A copy of this constitution;

A copy of the charity's latest report and statement of accounts.

## **ELIGIBILITY FOR TRUSTEESHIP**

No one who is under the age of 18 years shall be appointed as a trustee

No one shall be entitled to act as a trustee whether on appointment or on any re-appointment as trustee until he or she has expressly acknowledged, in writing or verbally at a trustee meeting, his or her acceptance of the office of trustee of the charity.

## **TERMINATION OF TRUSTEESHIP**

A trustee shall cease to hold office if he or she:

Is disqualified from acting as a trustee by virtue of sections 178 and 179 of the Charities Act 2011 or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that provision;

In the opinion of the trustees is reasonably believed to have become physically or mentally incapable of acting as a trustee and may remain so for the immediate future;

Is absent from all their meetings held within a period of nine months and the trustees resolve that his or her office be vacated.

Notifies to the trustees a wish to resign (but only if enough trustees will remain in office when the notice of resignation takes effect to form a quorum for meetings). Trustees that wish to resign must give at least 1 months' notice.

A Trustee shall cease to hold office if at a meeting of the trustees where at least half of the trustees are present, a resolution is passed that he or she be removed from office. Such a resolution shall not be passed unless the trustee has been given 14 clear days' notice that the resolution is to be proposed, specifying the circumstances alleged to justify removal from office, and has been afforded a reasonable opportunity of being heard by the Trustees or of making written representations to them.





## **TRUSTEE MEETINGS**

### **Ordinary meetings**

The trustees must hold at least four ordinary meetings each year to discuss charity matters and make strategic decisions.

These meetings should, where possible, be spread equally across the year.

The last meeting of each year must occur before the annual report and accounts are due for submission.

At least 1 meeting each year must involve the physical presence of those trustees who attend the meeting. Other meetings may take such form, including videoconferencing, as the trustees decide provided that the form chosen enables the trustees both to see and to hear each other.

The trustees must arrange at each of their meetings the date, time and place of their next meeting unless such arrangements have already been made. Not less than ten days' clear notice must be given to the other trustees.

### **Special meetings**

A special meeting is a meeting that is arranged between general meetings, called normally to discuss matters that arise unexpectedly.

A special meeting may be called at any time by the person elected to chair meetings of the trustees or by agreement of a majority of the trustees.

Not less than ten days' clear notice must be given to the other trustees of the matters to be discussed at the meeting.

## **CHAIR AND CHAIRING OF MEETINGS**

All meetings shall be chaired by the person who has been elected as Chair.

The trustees at their first ordinary meeting in each year must elect one of their number to chair their meetings.

The person elected shall always be eligible for re-election.

If that person is not present within ten minutes after the time appointed for holding a meeting, the trustees present must choose one of their number to chair the meeting.



The person elected to chair meetings of the trustees shall have no other additional functions or powers except those conferred by this constitution or delegated to him or her by the trustees.

## **QUORUM**

No decision may be made by a meeting of the trustees unless a quorum is present at the time the decision is made.

The quorum shall be two or the number nearest to one third of the total number of trustees, whichever is the greater.

Where the quorum is not present, the Chair may decide to proceed with the meeting, but no decisions may be made.

Where a decision has been made not to proceed, or the Chair is absent when the quorum is not present, the meeting shall be adjourned to such time and place as the trustees shall determine.

The trustees must re-convene the meeting and must give at least five clear days' notice of the re-convened meeting stating the date time and place of the meeting.

## **VOTING**

No-one, apart from the trustees, can vote at a trustees meeting. Trustees cannot delegate their responsibilities in this area and cannot ask someone else to vote on their behalf.

At meetings, decisions must be made by a majority of the trustees present voting on the question.

In the case of an equality of votes, the person chairing the meeting shall have a casting vote whether or not he or she has voted previously on the same question but no Trustee in any other circumstances shall have more than one vote.

A resolution in writing (including email) signed by all the trustees shall be as valid and effectual as if it had been passed at a meeting of the trustees.

Any conflict of interest declaration must be noted in the meeting minutes.

## **MINUTES**



The trustees must keep minutes, in books kept for the purpose, or by such other means as the trustees decide, of the proceedings at their meetings. In the minutes, the trustees must record their decisions and, where appropriate, the reasons for those decisions. The trustees must approve the minutes at the subsequent meeting.

## **DISPUTES**

If a dispute arises between the trustees about the validity or propriety of anything done by the trustees under this constitution, and the dispute cannot be resolved by agreement, the trustees party to the dispute must first try in good faith to settle the dispute by mediation before resorting to litigation.

## **ANNUAL ACCOUNTS, REPORT AND RETURN**

The trustees must comply with their obligations under the Charities Act 2011 with regard to:

- The keeping of accounting records for the charity;
- The preparation of annual statements of account for the charity;
- The auditing or independent examination of the statements of account of the charity;
- The transmission of the statements of account of the charity to the Commission;
- The preparation of an Annual Report and its transmission to the Commission;
- The preparation of an Annual Return and its transmission to the Commission.

## **REGISTERED PARTICULARS**

The trustees must notify the Commission promptly of any changes to the charity's entry on the Central Register of Charities.

## **REPAIR AND INSURANCE**

The trustees must keep in repair and insure to their full value against fire and other usual risks all the buildings of the charity (except those buildings that are required to be kept in repair and insured by a tenant *of the charity??*). They must also insure suitably in respect of public liability and employer's liability.

## **APPLICATION OF INCOME AND PROPERTY**



The income and property of the charity shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the objects.

A charity trustee is entitled to be reimbursed from the property of the charity or may pay out of such property reasonable expenses properly incurred by him or her when acting on behalf of the charity.

A charity trustee may benefit from trustee indemnity insurance cover purchased at the charity's expense in accordance with, and subject to the conditions in, section 189 of the Charities Act 2011.

None of the income or property of the charity may be paid or transferred directly or indirectly by way of dividend bonus or otherwise by way of profit to any trustee of the charity.

## **BENEFITS AND PAYMENTS TO TRUSTEES AND CONNECTED PERSONS**

In this constitution 'connected person' means:

A child, parent, grandchild, grandparent, brother or sister of the trustee;  
The spouse or civil partner of the trustee or of any person falling within sub-clause above.

A person carrying on business in partnership with the trustee or with any person falling within sub-clause above;

An institution which is controlled:

By the trustee or any connected person falling within sub-clause above; or

By two or more persons falling within sub-clause (4)(a), when taken together

A body corporate in which:

The charity trustee or any connected person falling within sub-clauses has a substantial interest; or

Two or more persons falling within sub-clause (5)(a) who, when taken together, have a substantial interest.

Sections 350 – 352 of the Charities Act 2011 apply for the purposes of interpreting the terms used in this clause.

No trustee or connected person may:

- Buy or receive any goods or services from the charity on terms preferential to those applicable to members of the public;



- Sell goods, services or any interest in land to the charity;
- Be employed by, or receive any remuneration from, the charity; [where does this leave Billy?!]
- Receive any other financial benefit from the charity, unless the payment is permitted, or authorised by the court or the Charity Commission ('the Commission').
- Scope and powers permitting trustees' or connected persons' benefits.
- A charity trustee or connected person may receive a benefit from the charity in the capacity of a beneficiary of the charity provided that a majority of the trustees do not benefit in this way.
- A charity trustee or connected person may enter into a contract for the supply of services, or of goods that are supplied in connection with the provision of services, to the charity where that is permitted in accordance with, and subject to the conditions in, section 185 of the Charities Act 2011.
- Subject to sub-clause of this clause a charity trustee or connected person may provide the charity with goods that are not supplied in connection with services provided to the charity by the charity trustee or connected person.

A charity trustee or connected person may receive interest on money lent to the charity at a reasonable and proper rate which must be not more than the Bank of England bank rate (also known as the base rate).

A charity trustee or connected person may receive rent for premises let by the trustee or connected person to the charity. The amount of the rent and the other terms of the lease must be reasonable and proper. The charity trustee concerned must withdraw from any meeting at which such a proposal or the rent or other terms of the lease are under discussion.

A charity trustee or connected person may take part in the normal trading and fundraising activities of the charity on the same terms as members of the public.

## **DISSOLUTION**

The trustees may dissolve the charity if they decide that it is necessary or desirable to do so. To be effective, a proposal to dissolve the charity must be passed at a special meeting by a majority vote of the trustees. Any assets of



the charity that are left after the charity's debts have been paid ('the net assets') must be given:

To another charity (or other charities) with objects that are the same or similar to the charity's own, for the general purposes of the recipient charity (or charities); or

To any charity for use for particular purposes which fall within the charity's objects.

The Commission must be notified promptly that the charity has been dissolved and, if the trustees were obliged to send the charity's accounts to the Commission for the accounting period which ended before its dissolution, they must send the Commission the charity's final accounts.

**If the CIO is wound up, the members of the CIO have no liability to contribute to its assets and no personal responsibility for settling its debts and liabilities.**

## **AMENDMENT OF CONSTITUTION**

The charity may amend any provision of this constitution provided that:

No amendment may be made that would have the effect of making the charity cease to be a charity at law;

No amendment may be made to alter the objects if the change would undermine or work against the previous objects of the charity;

No amendment may be made to the objects without the prior written consent of the Commission;

Any resolution to amend a provision of this constitution is passed by at least half of the trustees present and voting at an official trustee meeting.

A copy of any resolution amending this constitution shall be sent to the Charity Commission within twenty one days of it being passed.



**DECLARATION**

DadsHouse hereby adopts and accepts this Constitution as a current operating guide regulating the actions of all the charity trustees.

SIGNED (CHAIR): .....

NAME: William McGranaghan

DATE: 8 March 2017

SIGNED (Trustee): .....

NAME: Zahir Laaref

DATE: 8th March 2017

A signed copy of this document is kept in DadsHouse offices.