

Alstonefield Village Hall Committee Charity – ‘Plain English’ version of Constitution

*This document is a plain-English clarification of the Charity Commission Scheme sealed on 18 August 1978 (Charity No. 228929), incorporating 2012 amendments. It does **not** replace the original legal Scheme, which remains authoritative (available on request from the Secretary or Chair).*

1. Name and Status

The charity is known as **Alstonefield Village Hall Committee** (formerly the Alstonefield Institute). It is a registered charity governed by a Charity Commission Scheme.

2. Purpose of the Charity

The charity exists to **provide and maintain a village hall** for the benefit of the residents of the Parish of Alstonefield.

The hall may be used, without distinction of political, religious or other opinions, for:

- Meetings
- Lectures and classes
- Recreation and leisure-time activities

The aim is to improve the quality of life for people living in the parish.

3. Property of the Charity

The charity owns the village hall and associated land, including:

- Alstonefield Memorial and Community Centre, DE6 2FR (Title SF543998)
- Adjacent land to the south of the hall (Title SF552120)

These properties are held on trust solely for the charity’s purposes.

4. Trustees and Governance Structure

4.1 Trustees

- The **Managing Trustees** are the members of the Village Hall Committee.
- The **Custodian Trustee** is the Charity Commission, which holds the legal title to the land.

Trustees are legally responsible for managing the charity and acting in its best interests.

5. Village Hall Committee (Managing Trustees)

The Committee normally consists of **up to 10 members**, made up of:

- **4 Elected Members**, elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM)
- **Representative Members**, appointed by local organisations

Representative Members may be appointed by:

- Alstonefield Parish Council
- The Parochial Church Council of Alstonefield
- Up to four other local organisations, as determined by the Committee at the AGM

Each appointing organisation must notify the Committee Secretary of its representative.

- **Co-opted Members**

The Committee may co-opt up to **four additional members** if useful for skills or experience. Co-opted members are trustees once appointed.

6. Terms of Office and Vacancies

- All trustees retire at each AGM but may be re-elected or re-appointed.
 - Casual vacancies may be filled by the Committee or, for representative members, by the relevant organisation.
 - Committee decisions remain valid even if there are vacancies.
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7. Trustee Eligibility and Conduct

A trustee ceases to hold office if they:

- Resign in writing
- Become bankrupt or incapacitated

Before acting, each trustee must sign a declaration accepting their responsibilities.

Trustees:

- Must not receive payment or personal benefit from the charity
 - Must not have conflicts of interest, unless formally authorised by the Charity Commission
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8. Meetings and Decision-Making

- The Committee must meet at least **twice a year**.
- Special meetings may be called by the Chair or any two trustees with 7 days' notice.
- A quorum is **at least one-third of the Committee**.

Decisions are made by majority vote. The Chair has a casting vote if needed.

9. Officers, Rules and Delegation

The Committee may:

- Appoint unpaid officers (e.g. Chair, Treasurer, Secretary)
- Employ staff if necessary
- Set rules for hall use, bookings, and charges

All such rules must support the charity's purposes.

10. Finance and Property Management

- All income must be paid into a charity bank account
- Funds may be used for maintenance, insurance, utilities, staffing, and other running costs
- Surplus funds not needed immediately should be invested in accordance with charity law

The hall and contents must be adequately insured.

11. Annual General Meeting (AGM)

- The AGM is held each April or as soon as practicable thereafter
- All parish residents aged 18 or over may attend and vote
- At least 14 days' public notice must be given

The Committee must present an annual report and accounts.

12. Donations

The Committee may accept donations or property, provided they are consistent with the charity's purposes.

13. Interpretation and Authority

Any questions about the interpretation of this constitution or the validity of actions taken under it are determined by the Charity Commission.

Note: This document is intended to improve clarity and accessibility. In the event of conflict, the original Charity Commission Scheme and subsequent Orders take precedence.