

# West End Morecambe Big Local Partnership (WEM)



New Member Pack

October 2020

Welcome to our New Member pack – in here you will find:

<b>Section 1</b>	An explanation of how we recruit new members
<b>Section 2</b>	The role of a Big Local member explained
<b>Section 3</b>	The application form we ask you to fill out
<b>Section 4</b>	A copy of our Values
<b>Section 5</b>	Our Constitution – this version does not have its Appendices attached so please let us know if you would like to see copies of these
<b>Section 6</b>	A copy of our Code of Conduct that we will ask you to sign if you join us

We've put this pack together to give you a feel for the role of a partnership member and the rules we work to. There's a lot of information here but please don't let that put you off – if we accept your application there will be lots of help on hand. We will offer you a partnership member 'buddy' who will help you settle in if that's something that would work for you. We've given you this information because it is important that you understand that partnership members have roles and responsibilities.

## **West End Morecambe Big Local Partnership (WEM)**

### **How we recruit new members**

Any resident of the West End is eligible to be a member of WEM and there are many ways of being involved in our activities. Our decision-making body is our Partnership which will have a minimum of 8 members and up to a maximum of 16 members, with at least 51% of these being residents.

As a Partnership, we aim to reflect the community around us and we are working towards a diverse membership in terms of race, belief, age, gender, disability and sexual orientation. But as Big Local Partnership members, we can only represent ourselves and no other organisation or group of people.

At the moment (September 2020), we have a way to go before we reach 16 members so there is no formal 'election' process in place – you will see from our constitution (Section 4) that we are aiming to have such a process in place during 2021. We are currently advertising for 3 or 4 residents to join the Partnership - some applicants will be invited to a Zoom (video conferencing) chat with our Chair and other resident members of the Partnership - If accessing the internet is a problem for you please ring our Secretary Johnny on 0759 305 0858 and he'll talk through other ways of engaging with us.

Once you have filled in our application form, we will talk to you about how you'd like to get involved. If we invite you to join the Partnership, we will ask you attend one meeting as an observer before you make your final decision and before we approve your application. This is an opportunity for you to see how everything works in practice before you make a commitment.

If an applicant isn't selected for membership, and wishes to challenge this decision, they should provide their reasons in writing for the Partnership to review. Our full appeals process is outlined in our Constitution.

To find out more about WEM Big Local, our website can be found [here](#). To find out more about the Big Local Programme, you can find Local Trust's website [here](#).

## **What is the role of a Partnership Member?**

The role of a partnership member is wonderfully diverse and changes as the partnership itself develops and as the volunteer's life experience changes too. To a large extent it can be what the volunteer wants it to be.

There are rules but on the whole Big Local is very flexible and driven by the residents that volunteer as a partnership member.

### **What partnership members are responsible for:**

agreeing a shared vision based on the priorities of their community  
creating the Big Local plan  
overseeing its delivery alongside its Local Trusted Organisation and any staff employed  
collecting evidence to show how the plan is progressing  
reviewing the plan and partnership to make sure they are working in the best way possible to maximise community benefit

At least 51% of a partnership has to be resident members to make sure they are the ones making decisions. Most partnerships also have some 'officers' round the table who may or may not be full voting members – it's great to have people involved who have different experiences and who can connect you to local services but they mustn't represent an organisation when working as a Big Local member.

### **What partnership members need to think about:**

Encouraging a range of people in your area to be involved, in a thoughtful, inclusive, open and meaningful way  
Working openly and transparently, which includes recording and communicating how decisions are made  
Behaving in line with Big Local values and ethos, as well as the locally agreed code of conduct and constitution  
Managing any conflicts of interest effectively and report any potential misuse of funds to Local Trust

Your Local Trusted Organisation is chosen by the partnership – it is a local organisation that you are comfortable with that acts as your bank, holding the grant on your behalf and making sure it is used appropriately.

Depending on your plan, they might do other things for you like managing staff and holding leases on your behalf. The idea here is that residents are not asked to take on legal responsibilities, especially early in their partnership's development.

All of these tasks and responsibilities are carried out by partnership members as a team, alongside their Local Trust Rep and their Locally Trusted Organisation. New members are not expected to have experience of these things before they join but if they have useful skills then partnerships should take advantage of these.

### **What Local Trust expects:**

that you take care of yourselves and each other in undertaking any Big Local activity, contributing only what you are able to and not over-burdening yourselves and bringing in other people to share the load

that you make decisions about how money and other resources are spent, using a process for agreeing who will deliver services and activities in line with your plan

that each partnership reflects the make-up of its own area and meets the Big Local criteria

that you operate in an open, constructive, honest, inclusive and respectful way and that you make this commitment in a Code of Conduct

that you challenge the behaviour of others involved in Big Local that break your Code of Conduct

that you make sure that any staff involved in your Big Local are managed fairly and effectively

There are lots of ways of being a partnership member from simply attending monthly meetings and playing your part there, to being involved in developing projects in our themed groups or putting yourself forward as Chair once you have some experience under your belt.

It might be that organising events is what you like to do rather than being member of a committee or getting involved in writing newsletters and leaflets. All we ask is for your time and commitment and we'll provide the opportunities and training.

### **What you can expect to gain**

Although they have their problems from time to time, many members describe their partnership as a 'family' that they feel loyal to, and that alongside the serious work they do, they get to have a lot of fun with

Some partnership members bring skills and experience that they value the opportunity to use

Others gain in confidence as they get to develop skills and experience that they haven't had before, and for some that looks good on their CV

Taking part in formal training provided by Local Trust but only if you want to

Being able to make a practical difference to the community that your friends and family live in is very satisfying

Getting to know more about your neighbourhood and how others experience it

Understanding how things work can help build resilience to set backs and build the determination to overcome problems and find another way

The opportunity to meet other people involved in Big Local across England and share experiences

**We look forward to having you on board!**



## West End Morecambe Big Local – Membership Application Form

<b>Full name of applicant</b>	
<b>Address</b>	
<b>Postcode (required)</b>	
<b>Telephone Number(s)</b>	
<b>Email address</b>	

**Tell us something about yourself, about your neighbourhood, your hobbies, your work – anything that you'd like us to know about you:**

**1. How did you find out about West End Morecambe Big Local?**

**2. What do you know about our work already?**

**3. What ideas do you have for improving where you live?**

**4. Being a Partnership member can involve time and energy outside of regular monthly meetings. How will you manage this?**

**5. How can you demonstrate that you share our values? (attached at section 4)**

**6. Do you agree to abide by our Code of Conduct? (attached at section 5)**

**YES/NO**

**7. Do you agree to abide by our Constitution? (attached at section 6)**

**YES/NO**

**8. Do you have any further thoughts on WEM? We are interested in both negative and positive reflections.**

**Name:** ..... **Date:** .....

The Partnership will consider your application and if we feel that you might be able to help us deliver our plan, we will invite you to meet our Chair and other resident partnership members (normally via Zoom but other arrangements can be made). If we want to invite you on to the Partnership, we will ask you to observe the next West End Morecambe Big Local Board meeting before you make that commitment.

By joining WEM you are agreeing to abide by its constitution and also its code of conduct which you will be asked to sign.

**Thank you.**

## **West End Million Big Local Partnership**

### **Statement of Values**

**Respect** - for each other, for those we serve, those who serve us and for our environment

**Fairness** - towards everyone without favour or prejudice

**Honesty** - in all our communications and dealings with others

**Integrity** - in that our actions are consistent with our words

**Kindness** - to each other, our community and the environment

**Trust** - in that we trust each other and expect the same in return

**Dependability** - in that we practice commitment to each other and what we have pledged to do

**Collaboration** - with groups, organisations and individuals committed to improving Morecambe's West End

## West End Morecambe Big Local Partnership

### CONSTITUTION (amended and agreed January 2020)

#### 1.0 About West End Big Local Partnership

- 1.1 The West End Big Local Partnership is an unincorporated organisation that was set up in order to manage the Big Local plan for the West End area of Morecambe. It is responsible to Local Trust which is a charity that administers the Big Local funding.
- 1.2 The partnership also works with a Locally Trusted Organisation (LTO) that handles all financial matters on its behalf and holds responsibility for such issues as staffing and insurances. The responsibilities of the LTO are outlined in a grant agreement with Local Trust and in a Memorandum of Understanding with the Partnership.
- 1.3 We are a values led organisation (see Annex 1) and are working with partners that share our values to deliver more of what the residents of the West End want and need. We are not a source of major grant funding but instead want to develop projects and ideas with those working to improve the lives of West End residents.
- 1.4 Our Vision is: *Our community, taking action and being heard*. The themes for our 2018-2021 plan are Community, Health & Wellbeing, Enterprise & Economy and Place.

#### 2.0 Membership

- 2.1 Any resident of the West End is eligible to be a member of the West End Big Local Partnership and there are many other ways of being involved in our activities. The Board will have a minimum of 8 and a maximum of 16 members. The partnership may co-opt anyone with a stake in the West End (e.g. neighbouring residents, local business owners) as a member of the partnership but priority will always be given to residents. We want our Partnership to reflect the community we are supporting, for example in terms of age, gender and ethnicity. Local Trust requires there are no more than two residents of the same household or family serving on Big Local partnerships and, only one member of a household or family can have a specific role such as Chair.
- 2.2 Members will be appointed to the Partnership once a year at an open meeting. At the end of the current Plan in 2021, 50% of the current board will step down and may, or may not, decide to stand for reappointment. From 2021, this will happen at each annual open meeting. Prospective new members will be asked to complete a simple membership application in advance of the open meeting, which will have been advertised widely and in a timely way. They will observe one meeting, and sign the Partnership's Code of Conduct, if they and the partnership confirm the applicant's membership. The new member will take part in a formal induction before attending their next meeting.
- 2.3 Members are free to leave the Partnership at any time. Members may be asked to leave if they do not follow this Constitution, if they break the Code of Conduct or if they act in a way that is contrary to our Statement of Values. Members should

consult the Chair if they feel this has happened and this may be brought to a future meeting of the Partnership for discussion and resolution (see 3.7). If a member decides to leave the Partnership for their own reasons, this decision will be respected. A member may request a sabbatical if circumstances mean they need to step back from the Partnership for a while but they are sure they wish to return – sabbaticals will be granted at the Partnership's discretion.

- 2.4 If a member is asked to leave the Partnership, they will receive the reasons for this decision in writing. If the member wishes to challenge this decision, they will have the right to be heard by the Local Trusted Organisation. If the ex-member still feels that their expulsion is unfair, the Big Local Rep will support the member in contacting Local Trust for clarification on the issue.
- 2.5 Observers will be welcomed at Partnership meetings but this must be agreed with the Chair in advance of the meeting. Observers can request the opportunity to present to the Partnership. Observers will not be present when any confidential or sensitive issues are to be discussed. West End Morecambe will hold at least one open meeting each year (see 2.2) to which local residents will be invited. All meetings will be minuted and agreed minutes will be available on WEM's website.

### **3.0 Management**

- 3.1 The Partnership will elect, or re-elect, a Chair and Vice Chair yearly, before the annual open meeting, and using a closed ballot. The Partnership may also create roles for members that see them advocating for and reporting on particular issues or opportunities. The role descriptions for Chair, Vice Chair and Partnership member are included in Annex 2 - if further roles are agreed by the Partnership, this Constitution will be amended to include those role descriptions also.
- 3.2 The Board will meet at least once a month – meetings will be called by the Chair and may be requested by any member. The Board may also have sub groups for important tasks and these groups will be accountable to the Partnership.
- 3.3 In order for decisions to be made and recorded, a quorum of 60% of the current membership must be present, 51% of which must be residents of the West End. Wherever possible, decisions will be reached by consensus and if a decision cannot be reached on important but non urgent issues the Chair may defer the discussion until the following meeting. Where voting is necessary, only resident members will take part. The Chair will not have a vote unless the voting is tied in which case the Chair will vote to avoid deadlock. Decisions taken at meetings that are quorate will be final – proxy votes will not be accepted.

If members are unable to attend a meeting, they may make their views known concerning items on the agenda, via the Chair, but will not have a vote. Members must always represent themselves and not any organisation they may be associated with – from time to time it may be necessary for members to register an interest (see 4.2) if their association with other organisations becomes relevant.

- 3.4 The Big Local Rep will attend Board meetings and may support the Chair in setting agendas. Members can put forward agenda items up to one week before the meeting date.

- 3.5 If a member is unable to attend three meetings in a row, the Chair will meet with them in advance of them attending a further meeting. The member will be updated on the progress of the partnership since their last meeting or agree with the Chair that they will withdraw from the Partnership as they are no longer in a position to attend regularly. Partnership members are expected to abide by the role description in `` 2 and, as well as attending meetings regularly, this includes things such as preparing for meetings and contributing to debate. If a member finds it difficult to fulfil the role, the Chair, at their discretion, may refer this membership to the Partnership for review.
- 3.6 The partnership has adopted Local Trust's Code of Conduct for Big Locals which is attached at Annex 3. If members feel that the Code has been broken, they must raise this during discussions or by consulting the Chair, in a timely way, outside of the meeting in which the breach occurred. If the alleged breach has been committed by the Chair this should be reported to the Local Trust Rep. Breaches may then be brought to a future meeting of the Partnership for discussion and resolution (which can include expulsion), at the discretion of the Chair (or Rep when appropriate).

Training will be provided for any member of the Partnership who identifies that they have difficulties with an aspect of the Code of Conduct and they will be able to continue to attend meetings at the discretion of the Chair. However, any serious breach (in the opinion of the Partnership) or an inability to treat people with respect will result in immediate removal from the Partnership. The Code of Conduct applies to anyone who is associated with the West End Morecambe Partnership including paid staff, volunteers and observers.

#### **4.0 Accountability**

- 4.1 The issues and ideas that the Partnership discusses may involve members in dealing with sensitive, confidential or controversial issues. Members must exercise care in performing their duties and responsibilities, particularly when they are made aware of information that is not available to everyone. If confidential or privileged information is provided, it may only be used for the business of the Partnership and it must not be passed on to anyone who is not a member. Members should respect each other's' confidentiality at all times and that of residents of the West End who might share information about themselves.

If members are concerned about the safety or the welfare of any individual or group of individuals and want to share information as a result, they should discuss this first with the Local Trusted Organisation that supports the Partnership.

- 4.2 Conflicts of interest will depend largely on the context or situation. A broad definition of a conflict of interest might be a situation where an individual or organisation could use their position for personal gain or, importantly, where someone looking at the situation from outside might reasonably assume that they had done this.

Some of the most common forms of conflict of interests are:

- Other Roles – In which the interest of one role might contradict another.
- Family and Friends Interests – In which a member makes a decision that might be seen to benefit a relative.

- Gifts – Where the person benefiting from a decision provides a gift to the person making a decision.

It is natural for conflicts of interest to occur. The fact that a conflict of interest exists, is not in itself a problem or issue but this potential conflict should be recognised and recorded in order to protect the Partnership and its members.

In the course of meetings or activities, members will disclose any interests that they may have in a decision. The Chair will seek the views of the members present and then decide whether the member declaring an interest, in each instance, should:

- Leave the room while the issue is discussed and decision taken
- Stay in the room but take no part in discussion or decision making
- Take part in discussion but not vote on a decision
- Play a full part in discussion and decision making

The disclosure of interests and the action taken will be recorded in the minutes.

4.3 The Partnership recognises that from time to time members of the West End community, or our delivery partners, may wish to question the conduct of the Partnership itself. If any community member or partner has a concern, they should write to the Chair to explain this – the Chair will ensure that this is discussed by the Partnership at their next meeting and that a written response is made within a reasonable timeframe. If the Chair is the subject of the complaint, this should be referred to the Local Trust Rep. Community members and partners may be invited to meet with the Partnership if their concerns are unresolved. If the Partnership is unable to resolve the issue after further discussion, the Big Local Rep will support the community member or partner in contacting Local Trust for clarification on the issue.

4.4 The Partnership will hold open meetings at least once a year which will be widely promoted in a timely fashion. The Partnership will work towards an accessible website and have a presence on social media which will also be promoted widely. The Partnership will also produce newsletters from time to time which it will endeavour to have delivered to every household in the West End.

## **5.0 Alterations to this Constitution**

Any changes to this constitution must be agreed by a quorum of the Board and will apply from the following meeting. It requires the approval of more than 60% of resident members.

## **6.0 Dissolution**

The partnership may be wound up at any time if agreed by two thirds of its members and any assets remaining after all debts paid shall be given to another organisation with similar aims – this will be actioned by the Partnership's Local Trusted Organisation at the time of winding up. Whilst the partnership is receiving funding from Local Trust it must secure their agreement before taking such action.

## **West End Morecambe Big Local Partnership (WEM)**

### **Code of Conduct**

As a partnership we agree to abide by the Big Local values and expectations:

- Everything the partnership does will stand the test of scrutiny by people in the West End, Local Trust, community members, stakeholders, funders and the courts
- Integrity, respect and honesty are the hallmarks of all conduct when dealing with others within the partnership and equally when dealing with individuals and institutions outside it
- The partnership will strive to maintain an atmosphere of openness throughout the community to promote confidence of the public, stakeholders, Local Trust, the Big Lottery Fund, charity regulators and government
- We will encourage a range of people in the West End to be involved in a thoughtful, inclusive, open and meaningful way
- We will operate openly and transparently, including recording and communicating how decisions are made

As a member of the partnership I agree that:

- I will not break the law or go against charity regulations
- I will abide by the Big Local policies and procedures and by WEM's own practice and process
- I will always strive to act in the best interests of West End Morecambe
- I will declare any conflict of interest or of loyalty, or any circumstance that might be viewed by others as such, as soon as it arises so that I do not gain any improper personal benefits or favourable treatment
- As a member of WEM, I will not permit others to benefit from a conflict of interest
- I will engage in debate and voting in meetings according to procedure, maintaining a respectful attitude toward the opinions of others while making my voice heard. I will not interrupt or talk over others.
- I will prepare well for meetings, reading any papers sent out in advance and thinking about questions I might want to ask or points I might raise.
- I will attend meetings on a regular basis, at the time agreed.
- I will maintain confidentiality (where this has been agreed by the partnership) about what goes on in the meeting
- I will always represent the decisions made properly by WEM even where I disagree with the conclusion drawn

- I will respect equality of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

As a partnership we will not tolerate behaviour which produces damaging or hurtful effects, physically or emotionally, on people. Inappropriate behaviour includes abusive, threatening or intimidating behaviour and applies to phone calls, emails, letters, in person and face-to-face meetings. This includes:

- insults and name-calling
- swearing, offensive language and gestures
- inappropriate jokes
- ridiculing and undermining behaviour
- inappropriate or unnecessary physical contact
- physical assault or threats of physical assault
- intimidating, coercive or threatening actions and behaviour, including pointing and shouting
- unwelcome sexual advances
- isolation, non-cooperation or deliberate exclusion
- inappropriate comments about a person's appearance
- intrusive questions or comments about a person's private life and malicious gossip
- offensive images and literature
- pestering, spying or stalking.

I agree to be bound by this Code of Conduct and understand that if I break the conditions laid out here I may be asked to leave the partnership.

Name:

Date:

Signature:

If somebody's behaviour is making you feel uncomfortable or you find it unacceptable, report it to the Chair or your Big Local Rep. If it's not appropriate to talk to either of these people, get in touch with our Locally Trusted Organisation, Lancaster CVS, on 01524 555900.