Constitution of the Friends of [insert Library name here] Library

1 Name
The group’s name is The Friends of ............................................................... Library
(referred hereafter as the ‘Friends’)

2 The purposes of the Friends are:
The Friends will work (as per the Friends of Libraries Unlimited Handbook) in agreement with their Library Supervisor(s)* and Libraries Unlimited, the Charity that runs public libraries in Devon and Torbay, to:

(1) Actively promote their local library and the services, events, and activities it offers
(2) Work within the vision, values, and purposes of Libraries Unlimited
(3) Help to raise money for their local library
(4) Hold events and activities for people of all ages
(5) Represent views of its members, when necessary, on relevant issues in relation to their local library
(6) Enhance their local library by providing practical assistance
(7) Develop ways of encouraging wider use and membership of their local library
(8) Be members of Libraries Unlimited

*For the purposes of this document the term ‘Library Supervisor’ will be used to describe the member of staff who has the responsibility for managing the building, staff, and volunteers at that library e.g., Centre Manager, Senior Library Supervisor, Library Supervisor or Team Leader

3 Putting this into practice
To carry out the purposes, the Friends have the power to:
(1) raise funds, receive grants and donations
(2) apply funds to carry out the work of the Friends
(3) do anything which is lawful and necessary to achieve the purposes providing it is aligned with Libraries Unlimited’s values and purposes

All groups are encouraged to adopt current best practice. Excellent free advice and guidance can be found via the Charity Commission and NCVO (National Council for Voluntary Organisations) websites.

4 Friends Committees
The Friends shall be managed by a committee consisting of a Chair, Secretary and Treasurer who are appointed at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Friends. The Library Supervisor or an appropriate staff representative will be an ex-officio member of the committee.
5 Friends Membership

(1) The Friends shall have a membership. People who support the work of the Friends can apply to the committee to become a member. Once accepted the committee will keep an up-to-date membership list which is shared with Libraries Unlimited. Friends old cannot hold the role of Treasurer until they reach 18 years of age.

(2) The committee may remove a person’s membership if they believe it is in the best interests of the Friends. The member has the right to be heard by the committee before the decision is made and can be accompanied by a friend.

(3) Membership shall be open, and new members welcomed, irrespective of sex, sexual orientation, age, race, and nationality or political, religious, or other opinions, to individuals, who support the purposes of the Friends. Friends Groups will proactively work to be accessible to all. The Friends will aim to represent through its membership and activities the full range of library users and the wider needs and interests thereof.

(4) Friends automatically become Members of Libraries Unlimited and are added to the Register of Members.

6 Friends Committee meetings

(1) The Committee must meet at least 3 times each year. Minutes shall be taken at each meeting and retained for future reference.

(2) At least 3 committee members must be present at the meeting to be able to take decisions. The committee may act by majority decision.

(3) If committee members have a conflict of interest, they must declare it and leave the meeting while this matter is being discussed or decided.

(4) During the year, the committee may appoint up to 2 additional members they will stand down at the next AGM.

7 Friends Annual General Meeting – AGM

(1) The AGM must be held every year, with 21 days’ notice given to all members telling them what is on the agenda. Minutes must be kept of the AGM.

(2) There must be at least 4 members present at the AGM.

(3) Every member has one vote.

(4) Any question arising at a meeting of the group shall be decided by a simple majority of those present. All members are eligible to vote. In the case of equality of votes, the chair shall have a second or casting vote.

(5) The committee shall present the Friends annual report and accounts, the library supervisor’s report, and invite Libraries Unlimited to give an update at the AGM.

(6) At the AGM they will elect a chair, treasurer and secretary, and a maximum of 2 additional committee members to serve for the next year. They will retire at the next AGM but may stand for re-election. The Library Supervisor or appropriate staff representative from the library will be an ex-officio member of the committee.

(7) Any member may stand for election.
8 Special/Emergency General meetings

If the Committee members consider it is necessary to change the constitution, or wind up the Friends, they must call a Special General Meeting so that the membership can make the decision. Committee members must also call a Special General Meeting if they receive a written request from the majority of members. All members must be given 21 days’ notice and told the reason for the meeting. All decisions require a two thirds majority. The Special General Meeting will meet to consider the business specified on the notice and for no other purpose. Minutes must be kept.

(1) **Winding up** - any money or property remaining after payment of debts must be given to Libraries Unlimited for the benefit of the local library. In the event of the closure of the local library, any money or property remaining after payment of debts can be given to a local charity or organisation with similar purposes to Libraries Unlimited.

(2) **Changes to the Constitution** - can be made at AGMs (Annual General Meetings) or Special General Meetings.

(3) **Special/Emergency General Meeting** - called on written request from a majority of members, or by Committee members to consult the membership.

9 Money and property

(1) Money and property must only be used for the Friends purposes.

(2) Property bought for the library with funds raised by Friends will be donated to and belong to the library.

(3) Friends must maintain financial records. The most recent annual financial accounts must be made available on request.

(4) Members cannot receive any benefit, money, or property from the Friends, except to refund reasonable out-of-pocket expenses.

(5) Money must be held in the Friends’ bank account. All cheques/payments must be signed/authorised by 2 members one of whom must be a committee member.

10 Constitution adopted

This constitution was adopted and agreed on ............................ by:

[DD/MM/YYYY]

Signed.........................................................................................................................

Name [Printed]...........................................................................................................

Role.......................................................... ...........................................................................

Name of Friends Group: ..................................................................................................

Address: .....................................................................................................................

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This Constitution is based on the Charity Commission model for small charities GD4 | March 2019

Please send a copy of this signed document to your Library Supervisor, and to the Executive Officer by emailing it to elections@librariesunlimited.org.uk