



Registered Charity No. 1159816
www.strettonclimatecare.org.uk

Rules as approved 5th July 2023

General Arrangements

1. As provided in the constitution, The Board of Trustees shall comprise up to twelve persons including the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. The Committee shall have the power to appoint from amongst its number a Vice-Chair, a Publicity Officer and such other officers as may be required.
2. The Board has the power to open a bank account in the name of Stretton Climate Care.
3. The General Management Committee (GMC) of Stretton Climate Care is responsible for the day-to-day running of the work of the organisation, within the Constitution and Rules of the organisation, and is answerable to the Board of Trustees.
4. All Officers and Trustees of Stretton Climate Care are entitled to be members of the GMC, if they wish, and are entitled to attend any meetings and any Trustees who are not members will be copied the Agendas, Reports and Minutes Other members of Stretton Climate Care may be co-opted onto the GMC as required, but will not have voting rights.
5. The General Management Committee is charged with taking all decisions on the work of Stretton Climate Care which do not require the agreement of all Trustees. In particular, delegation by the Board of Trustees to the GMC excludes:
 - a. Determining the budget;
 - b. Any decision not in accordance with the Constitution, Rules, Mission Statement, Aims and Objectives;
 - c. Purchase of real estate;
 - d. Approval of Annual Report and Accounts;
 - e. Appointment of Trustees.
6. The Chair of Stretton Climate Care will act as Chair of the GMC.
7. The General Management Committee will meet at least four times a year; additional meetings may be called by the Chair and Secretary if needed.

8. The quorum for meetings of the General Management Committee shall be three members.
9. The Secretary of Stretton Climate Care will act as Secretary of the GMC and will provide written agendas and minutes, which must be circulated to all Trustees, together with all reports.
10. Individual members of the General Management Committee may be allocated responsibility for individual projects/aspects of the work of Stretton Climate Care. The General Management Committee will determine the level for delegation for each project.
11. Each responsibility holder is required to work with one other Trustee and make any decisions jointly and will report back to the General Management Committee.
12. The General Management Committee will determine the budget for each project within the overall budget adopted by the organisation; the budget will allow a contingency of 5%, to be allocated at the discretion of Chair and Secretary.
13. The Annual General Meeting to be held normally in October or November of each year. Notice of the AGM will be given by electronic communications or in writing at least 14 clear days before the AGM. The financial year will end on 31st March to allow the accounts to be made up approved and examined prior to the AGM.

Declaration of Interests

14. Conflicts of interest may arise when an individual's personal or family interests and/or loyalties conflict with those of Stretton Climate Care. Such conflicts may create problems and they can:
 - inhibit free discussion
 - result in decisions or actions that are not in the interests of Stretton Climate Care
 - risk the impression that Stretton Climate Care has acted improperly.

This Rule is intended to prevent these issues arising.

Trustees will be required to set out their interests on a Form approved by the Board of Trustees and undertake to update the Form as changes occur and at least annually. The Form will be submitted to the Secretary and shared confidentially with other Trustees. It will only be used for the purpose of regulating the decision making of Stretton Climate Care and for no other purpose. Trustees must also sign the adopted Code of Conduct and submit it to the Secretary.

15. Gifts or hospitality exceeding £50 in value must not be accepted by any Trustee or any person or body acting on behalf of Stretton Climate Care without the prior consent of the Chair.
16. Trustees and members of the General Management Committee shall notify the Secretary and before any item for discussion at any meeting of Stretton Climate Care of any personal and/or private interest. That interest shall be recorded in the Minutes of the meeting. The person with such an interest shall vacate the room or be put into the waiting room if it is a video conference and not take part in any discussion or decision relating to that item. No lobbying or advice relating to that issue can be made by the person with a personal or private interest and any attempt made in that regard shall be reported to the other Trustees.

Membership and fees

17. The fees will be set by the Board of Trustees annually. The Membership year will run from 1st October to the following 30th September.

Equal Opportunities Policy

18. On no account shall the Board of Trustees, the General Management Committee or any member or body acting on its behalf discriminate against any person on grounds of race, nationality, colour, ethnic origin, disability, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religion or politics. Applications for membership from members of minority groups are welcome.
19. The Board of Trustees must ensure that the usual accommodation chosen for the Society's general meetings and other public activities, provides access, means of escape in case of fire and suitable toileting facilities for disabled people, as recommended in the Disability Discrimination Act, 1995 and 2005.

Risk Management

20. The Board of Trustees should review the general risks facing the organisation approximately annually or whenever an additional risk becomes apparent. Steps should be taken to avoid or mitigate any significant risks.

Health and Safety

21. Steps should be taken to ensure the health and safety of Trustees, employees, volunteers, service users and members of the public in relation to the work of Stretton Climate Care. Risk appraisals should be undertaken before any event to assess the potential risks. Any necessary measures should be taken to avoid or mitigate any risk to personal health and safety. Where necessary radical changes to activities may be necessary to maintain safety. Particular consideration should be given to maintain the safety of children who may not be as aware of danger as adults.
22. Bullying and/or Harassment will not be tolerated, and any incidents of such behaviour should be addressed in a similar process to the Complaints

Procedure set out below by Trustees. Volunteers should be advised of this Rule.

23. The General Management Committee should ensure that there is a co-ordinator for each event who will also be responsible for ensuring that a risk assessment is carried out. All such risk assessments will be reported to the Secretary. Any accidents or near misses should be reported with full details to the Secretary for consideration.

Lone working

24. This Policy must be followed by all volunteers and staff in carrying out activities on behalf of Stretton Climate Care. The Trustee responsible for the Project must ensure that the Volunteers carrying out any lone working activities are aware of this policy:
- a) The volunteer should carry a fully functioning mobile phone with pre-programmed numbers of at least two people they can call in emergency.
 - b) They should advise a responsible partner or their supervising trustee when and where they are going lone working and when they will return. If this is a long period-(over 4 hours), they should telephone to confirm that all is well after 4 hours. Advise if you change your plans.
 - c) At the completion of the task and they are safely home they should telephone their partner or supervising trustee to confirm that they are safely home.
 - d) If the partner or supervising trustee does not receive the calls as set out above, then they should call the lone worker or the person they were visiting asking to speak to the lone worker. If no reply can be achieved and this does not seem to be a technical communications issue, then the police should be alerted to a potential problem.
 - e) Where the volunteer has any doubt about entering a premises because of the person or the property they should not proceed with the task and report back to their Supervising Trustee. It will always be possible to carry out the task another way with more people or in a different place or not at all. Be aware of your surroundings and be responsive to your own feelings and act accordingly.
 - f) Make sure you know how to reach your destination and drive safely
 - g) Park in a lit area if possible and carry a torch if in hours of darkness. Put valuables out of sight and lock the vehicle. Park ready to drive off.

Dealing with aggression or physical attack

- h) Recognise and deal with anger: an angry person will show some of the following: red or sweaty face; glaring eyes and raised voice; constant movement and pointing; tense muscles; rapid or shallow breathing.

If you do encounter such a person

- i) Stay calm; speak gently, slowly and clearly while maintaining eye contact. If you cannot defuse the situation by talking things through as adults, then leave immediately and inform your supervisor/ co-ordinator what has happened. The law expects you to try and avoid physical confrontations, but if you do feel threatened or under attack, you do have the right to defend yourself and colleagues:
 - 1. Escape should always be your top priority.
 - 2. Be noisy. Noise attracts attention and distracts offenders.
 - 3. Use your personal attack alarm if you carry one.
 - 4. A personal attack alarm will deter dangerous dogs.

Any incidents should always be reported to the Supervising Trustee.

Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults

- 25. National regulations require that any person carrying out a regulated activity must have been checked through authorised Disclosure and Barring Scheme. Regulated activities include giving advice to a vulnerable adult about their affairs or working with children or young people. Where Trustees and/or volunteers propose to carry out such regulated activities then they **must not** do this except in the presence of a responsible parent, relative or guardian or responsible person such as a teacher or youth leader who has a relevant and current Disclosure and Barring Scheme Certificate which will incorporate a photo-identification. The Secretary must be informed in advance of any proposal to carry out regulated activities and how the vulnerable person will be safeguarded. Where necessary the relevant persons shall be assessed and checked through the Disclosure and Barring Scheme.

Serious Incidents

- 26. A Serious Incident is an adverse event, whether actual or alleged, which results in or risks serious harm to beneficiaries, volunteers, or others; significant financial loss and/or significant harm to our work or reputation. Any such incidents must be addressed in a similar process to our Complaints Procedure which is set out below. In addition, the Charity Commission must be informed.

Complaints

- 27. Stretton Climate Care welcomes feedback on all its activities including complaints as these will help to improve the way we do things and learn from what has gone wrong. Complaints should be submitted to The Secretary using our address at The Mayfair Community Centre, Easthope Road, Church

Stretton SY6 6BL or through our email address:
info@strettonclimatecare.org.uk. If the complaint is about the Secretary, the complaint should be addressed to the Trustees using the same address.

28. The complaint will be acknowledged within 7 days and a point of contact established for further information if required. The confidentiality of complainants and others involved will be appropriately protected. The aim will be to address the complaint and resolve it to secure an appropriate outcome for the complainant.
29. In the first instance the complaint will be investigated by two appropriate Trustees appointed by the Secretary and Chair or two other Trustees if the complaint concerned actions by those officers. The aim will be to respond as quickly as possible to any complaint in writing setting out how the complaint will be resolved. This process should not exceed six weeks.
30. If the complainant is dissatisfied with response and states the reasons for that dissatisfaction, the matter will be referred to the Board of Trustees for consideration. A response shall be made as soon as possible and within twelve weeks of the complainant requesting a review of the original response.
31. Complaints should be investigated with an open mind and due transparency and ensure that the investigation does not seek to disregard or belittle the seriousness of the matter raised. Where necessary, the investigating Trustees should seek external advice. A full record of the investigation should be made. Any doubt about such issues should be considered by the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees should receive a report on the Complaint, the investigation and the outcome. The Complaint, an outline of the findings and the outcome of the Complaint should be reported in The Annual Report.

Public Statements

32. Press Releases should only be issued by the Chair, Publicity Officer or Secretary. They should be copied to Trustees and the Project Worker on or before issue so that all can be aware of any statement made. The Publicity Officer should consult the Chair or in his/her absence the Secretary prior to issuing a press release.
33. Normally, contentious letters and press releases should be circulated to the Trustees for comment before being issued. Where the details cannot be agreed, then the letter or press release will not normally be issued until it can be considered by the General Management Committee. If the Chair considers that the letter or press release is sufficiently important and urgent and it is not practical to bring it before the General Management Committee before it should be issued, then consultations with the Trustees should take place prior to the Chair deciding whether to issue the press release or letter in its original or amended form taking into account any comments received.
34. Press releases and other publicity material must acknowledge the support of our grant aiding bodies and include any logos and /or statements as appropriate.

35. Trustees and other persons acting on behalf of Stretton Climate Care must follow the Charity Commission Guidance on Campaigning and Political Activity Guidance for Charities (Publication CC9).

Social Media Posts

36. Unlike writing a press release, which can be reviewed by others, a social media post is generally written without opportunity for review by others. These are some general guidelines which are intended to help avoid the some of the problems that can arise from the writing of hastily written social media posts.
37. If you act with maturity and consideration for other users, you should have no problems.
- Don't be unpleasant. Demonstrate and share intelligence, wisdom and humour.
 - Take some responsibility for the quality of the conversations in which you're participating
38. Be aware that you may be misunderstood, so try to be clear about what you are saying and expect that people may understand your contribution differently than you intended. Remember that text isn't always a great medium for conversation: tone of voice (sarcasm, humour and so on) doesn't always come across when using words on a screen.
39. Our Rules do not tolerate racism, sexism, homophobia or other forms of hate-speech, or contributions that could be interpreted as such. We recognise the difference between criticising a particular government, organisation, community or belief and attacking people on the basis of their race, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, disability or age. As a charity we cannot express support for or criticise a particular political party although we can support or criticise a specific policy or opinion.
40. Please do not post large chunks of text copied from other sources as this may be an infringement of copyright. Short quotes to illustrate a point may be permissible. If you wish to refer to external sources of information, it's better to include a link to an appropriate external website. However, make sure that all external links included in comments meet these Rules
41. To avoid breaking defamation laws in your comments, please ensure that you verify the information in your comment, especially when presenting negative statements as facts. Also avoid jumping to conclusions, exaggerating or making subtle implications. Remember that adding the word 'allegedly' to a statement does not stop it being defamation.

Data Protection

42. Stretton Climate Care's Trustees, other Members of The General Management Committee and Volunteers must follow statutory rules called 'data protection principles'. They must make sure any information held is:

- used fairly and lawfully
- used for limited, specifically stated purposes
- used in a way that is adequate, relevant and not excessive
- accurate
- kept for no longer than is absolutely necessary
- handled according to people's data protection rights
- kept safe and secure
- not transferred outside the European Economic Area without adequate protection

There is stronger legal protection for more sensitive information, such as:

- ethnic background
- political opinions
- religious beliefs
- health
- sexual health
- criminal records

Data containing this sensitive information should only be retained where it is essential for a specific project, only disseminated where essential and with consent of the individual and then safely deleted when no longer required. The Board of Trustees will periodically review data protection use.

Financial Controls

43. Stretton Climate Care's accounts are subject to examination by an Independent External Examiner annually. It is also necessary to have internal financial controls. The aims of these internal financial controls are:

- to protect the charity's assets
- to identify and manage the risk of conflicts of interest, loss, waste, bribery, theft or fraud
- to ensure that financial reporting is robust and of sufficient quality
- to ensure that the trustees comply with charity law and regulation relating to finance.

These controls should be reviewed annually.

44. No single individual should have sole responsibility for any single transaction from authorisation to completion and review. No individual shall authorise payments for projects for which they have been responsible.

45. The following controls are intended to provide protection for Stretton Climate Care's funds:

.Cash receipts including donations must be recorded in a duplicate receipt book or in a sealed collecting box which is only to be opened and the contents counted in the presence of two un-related Trustees or members of a Committee of Stretton Climate Care

- cheque and cash receipts should be promptly recorded in the accounting records
- cheques and cash should be banked regularly and promptly
- cheques and cash not banked on the day of receipt should be placed in a secure place
- funds should normally be banked gross without deduction for costs or expenses.

46. Regular checks should be made to ensure that:

- records of cash and cheques received agree with bank paying-in slips or counter foils
- counter foils or paying-in slips agree with the bank statements, both in terms of amount banked and date of credit
- transfers or other direct payments into the bank are identified and verified against supporting paperwork

These checks should be made by a person appointed by the Board of Trustees other than the person concerned with the original recording and/or authorising of the transactions .

47. All expenses can only be claimed using Stretton Climate Care's form.

Expense claims should be authorised by 2 of the following Trustees: Treasurer; Assistant Treasurer; Chair and Secretary and not the claimant and checked for accuracy before payment. Reimbursement should be made by cheque or BACS transfer. Any mileage rate paid for motor travel should not exceed HMRC rates to ensure that it does not result in a tax liability for the charity or the claimant.

48. Payments for services performed or goods provided should be proposed by the commissioning person using the relevant form setting out the purpose of the service or the goods provided. Such payments to external suppliers of goods and services can be only made after authorisation by 2 of the following Trustees: Treasurer; Assistant Treasurer; Chair and Secretary and who are not responsible for commissioning the work or service performed. Reimbursement should be made by cheque or by BACS.

49. Records of payments should be checked periodically to cheque stubs and bank statements - these checks may often be carried out as part of the bank

reconciliation processes. Periodic checks should be made to ensure payments are supported by invoices which have been properly authorised. Periodic checks should be made to ensure expenditure from restricted funds is in line with the restriction placed on how funds are to be used. These checks should be made by someone other than the person concerned with the original recording of the transactions and who has been appointed by the Board of Trustees.

50. Proper and realistic estimates of income and expenditure need to be made for each area of Stretton Climate Care's activities for each financial year. From this information the overall budget will be set which should be agreed by the trustees before the start of the financial year to which it relates. Expenditure and income should be regularly monitored against the Budget at each meeting of the General Management Committee and the Board. Where there are significant variations, the reasons should be probed.
51. Trustees, Members of the General Management Committee and volunteers must not accept hospitality exceeding £5 in value from any other person or body.
52. Donations from unknown individuals to Stretton Climate Care should not be accepted without an understanding of the motives of the person and who they are. Where the motive is not acceptable, the donation should be returned.

Procurement and Contracts

53. The intention of these rules is to ensure that Stretton Climate Care achieves and can demonstrate: value for money; purchases products or services in a fair manner; gives consideration to the use of local products and suppliers; and considers the risks and problems that may arise from the procurement or product or service.
54. In many cases, purchasing may involve the use of grant funds which require competitive quotes or particular standards to be achieved and documentation to be made available on request, sometimes for many years. Therefore documents must be obtained and provided to the Treasurer.
55. In considering the purchase of any product or service (mainly those over £100 in value) consider the following
 - a) Is the expenditure within the Budget allocated and is the budget funded by confirmed income? Check with the Treasurer if necessary. If not, then approval will be needed.
 - b) Have you researched the specification needed and is it clearly defined? Consider quality, price, delivery, reliability of supplier, local alternatives. In terms of services such as design, the cheapest option may not be best value for money.

- c) Obtain competitive quotes wherever possible or required by a grant aiding body. Approval will be needed where competitive quotes are practical and not obtained.
- d) Ensure any quotations are fully specified. Who does what, when and where? If payment is required in advance try and avoid this. Consider using a credit card and reclaim the cash ensuring the contract mentions Stretton Climate Care if possible. If payment is required in advance, what arrangements are there for cancellation on either side? Consider the risk of non-delivery of the product or service and what remedy would be available.
- e) If the supplier provides a statement of terms and conditions read it and check it does not make unreasonable exclusions of liability. If it does do not accept them automatically but go back and negotiate an exclusion of inadmissible terms if possible. This is not possible for some products such as software.
- f) Keep and pass on records of the process/contracts to the Secretary who must advise the Treasurer of commitments entered into.
- g) After purchase, consider the insurance of any products with the Treasurer and update our Inventory.

56. A contract can range from the simple such as buying a light bulb to a hire agreement for the electric bikes. The former still involves the basic ingredients of a contract which are the Offer made by us to purchase. (the price displayed or requested is called an invitation to treat). There must be certainty as to terms-for example which light bulb, what price (called consideration more generally) and when it is to be provided. Most contracts do not have to be in writing but the key features should be agreed and recorded in writing so that should there be any problems there is clarity as to the terms of the contract. The contract record should be copied onto the Secretary.

57. In terms of complex contracts then the use of a solicitor may be necessary. If in doubt on the terms of any contract, consult with Secretary.