



## **CONSTITUTION**

## **Preamble:**

We, the members of the Milton Keynes Goan Community, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, ensure tranquility, promote the general welfare, secure the blessings of unity, cultural richness, and contribute to our prosperity and the wider community, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the Milton Keynes Goan Community.

## **Article I: Name and Purpose**

**Section 1. Name:** The name of this community shall be the "Milton Keynes Goan Community."

**Section 2. Purpose:** The purpose of the Milton Keynes Goan Community is to foster a sense of unity, preserve and promote Goan culture, traditions, and values, provide a supportive and inclusive environment for its members residing in the Milton Keynes area, and actively contribute to the prosperity and well-being of the wider community.

## **Article II: Membership**

**Section 1. Eligibility:** All individuals who identify as Goan or have a genuine interest in Goan culture and reside in the Milton Keynes area are eligible for membership.

**Section 2. Rights and Responsibilities:** Members of the Milton Keynes Goan Community have the right to participate in community events, voice their opinions, contribute to the betterment of the community, and actively engage in initiatives that promote the prosperity of both the Goan community and the wider community. They also have the responsibility to respect and uphold the values and traditions of the Goan culture.

**Section 3. Membership Fee:** To support community activities and initiatives, a membership fee may be established. The amount and frequency of this fee shall be determined by the Core Committee Members and communicated to the other members.

**Section 4. Membership Cancellation:** The Core Committee reserves the right to cancel an individual's membership where deemed necessary. Grounds for cancellation may include but are not limited to violations of community guidelines, disruptive behavior, or activities inconsistent with the values and objectives of the Milton Keynes Goan Community.

**Section 5. Resignation and Non-Payment:** Members may resign at any time by providing written notice to the Secretary. Additionally, any member who has not paid their membership fee for one year will be contacted by the Core Committee. The Committee will then decide whether that member is deemed to have resigned or withdrawn of his/her membership.

**Section 6. Membership Secretary:** A Membership Secretary shall be appointed, responsible for keeping accurate and up-to-date records of community members, managing the membership database, and assisting in membership-related matters.

## **Article III: Governance**

**Section 1. Leadership:** The Milton Keynes-Goan Community shall be governed by a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, and other positions deemed necessary, elected by the community members every three years.

### **Section 2. Duties of Officers:**

- *Chairperson:* The Chairperson shall preside over community meetings, represent the community in external matters, and provide overall leadership.
- *Vice Chairperson:* The Vice Chairperson shall support the Chairperson and assume responsibilities in their absence.
- *Secretary:* The Secretary shall maintain records of community meetings, handle correspondence, and keep members informed of community activities.
- *Treasurer:* The Treasurer shall manage community finances, maintain financial records, and provide regular reports to the community.
- *Membership Secretary:* The Membership Secretary shall be responsible for keeping records of members, managing the membership database, and assisting in membership-related matters.
- *Other Positions Deemed Necessary:* Additional positions may be established as needed to address specific community needs and enhance the effectiveness of community governance.

## **Article IV: Cultural Preservation**

**Section 1. Promotion of Goan Culture:** The Milton Keynes Goan Community shall actively promote and preserve Goan culture through cultural events, festivals, workshops, and other activities held in the Milton Keynes area, contributing to the cultural diversity and vibrancy of the wider community.

**Section 2. Language and Education:** Efforts shall be made to promote the use of the Konkani language and provide educational programs not only for the community members but also for the wider community to enhance understanding and appreciation of Goan history, traditions, and values.

## **Article V: Community Events and Outreach**

**Section 1. Organization:** The Milton Keynes Goan Community shall organize regular events, celebrations, and gatherings in the Milton Keynes area to foster a sense of community and celebrate Goan traditions. Outreach initiatives shall be undertaken to involve the wider community in these events.

**Section 2. Inclusivity:** Community events shall be inclusive, welcoming all members residing in the Milton Keynes area, and efforts shall be made to extend invitations to the wider community to promote unity and understanding.

## **Article VI: Prosperity and Community Engagement**

**Section 1. Economic and Social Initiatives:** The Milton Keynes Goan Community shall actively engage in economic and social initiatives that contribute to the prosperity and well-being of its members and the wider community.

## **Article VII: Finances**

**Section 1. Bank Account:** An account will be maintained on behalf of the Milton Keynes Goan Community at a bank agreed upon by the committee.

**Section 2. Cheque Signatories:** Three cheque signatories will be nominated by the Committee, with one of them being the Treasurer. The signatories must not be related nor members of the same household.

**Section 3. Payment Authorization:** All payments, including cheque payments, BACS payments, cash withdrawals, debit card payments, or cash payments, will be signed by two of the signatories.

**Section 4. Record Keeping:** For cheque payments, the signatories will sign the cheque. For other payments, a requisition note will be signed by two signatories and held by the Treasurer.

**Section 5. Financial Records:** Records of income and expenditure will be maintained by the Treasurer, and a financial statement shall be given at each community meeting.

**Section 6. Use of Funds:** All funds raised by or on behalf of the Milton Keynes Goan Community shall be dedicated solely to furthering the aims of the group, as specified in Article V: Community Events and Outreach, Section 1.

## **Article VIII: Amendments**

**Section 1. Amendment Process:** This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the members present at a community meeting in Milton Keynes. Proposed amendments must be communicated to the members in advance.

## **Article IX: Dissolution**

**Section 1. Dissolution Process:** In the event of dissolution, the community shall provide a notice period of at least 90 days to all members. During this time, community assets and responsibilities shall be managed according to the procedures outlined by the Core Committee members. In the event of dissolution, the assets of the Milton Keynes Goan Community shall be distributed to charitable organizations or causes that align with the values and objectives of the community.

## **Article X: Code of Conduct**

**Section 1. Offensive Behavior:** Any offensive behavior, including racist, sexist, or inflammatory remarks, will not be permitted. Anyone behaving in an offensive way or breaking the equal opportunities policy may be asked not to attend further meetings or to resign from the group if an apology is not given or the behavior is repeated. The individual concerned shall have the right to be heard by the Core Committee, accompanied by a friend, before a final decision is made.

## **Article XI: Meetings**

### **Section 1. Annual General Meetings (AGM):** \_\_\_\_\_

**1.1 Schedule:** An Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held within fifteen months of the previous AGM.

**1.2 Notification:** All members will be notified in writing at least 3 weeks before the date of the meeting, providing details of the venue, date, and time.

**1.3 Nominations:** Nominations for the committee may be made to the Secretary before the meeting or at the meeting.

**1.4 Quorum:** The quorum for the AGM will be 10% of the membership or 10 members, whichever is the greater number.

#### **At the AGM:**

- The Committee will present a report of the work of the Milton Keynes Goan Community over the year.
- The Committee will present the accounts of the Milton Keynes Goan Community for the previous year.
- The officers and Committee after every 3 years will be elected.
- Any proposals given to the Secretary at least 7 days in advance of the meeting will be discussed.

### **Section 2. Special General Meetings:**

**2.1 Initiation:** The Secretary will call a Special General Meeting at the request of the majority of the committee or at least eight other members giving a written request to the Chairperson or Secretary stating the reason for their request.

**2.2 Schedule:** The meeting will take place within twenty-one days of the request.

**2.3 Notification:** All members will be given two weeks notice of such a meeting, providing the venue, date, time, and agenda. Notice may be by telephone, email, or post.

**2.4 Quorum:** The quorum for the Special General Meeting will be 10% of the membership or 10 members, whichever is the greater number.

### **Section 3. General Meetings:**

**3.1 Frequency:** General Meetings are open to all members and will be held at least once every 3 months or more often if necessary.

**3.2 Notification:** All members will be given two weeks' notice of such a meeting, providing the venue, date, time, and agenda. Notice may be by telephone, email, or post.

**3.3 Quorum:** The quorum for a General Meeting shall be 10% of the membership or 5 members, whichever is the greater number.

**Section 4. Committee Meetings:**

**4.1 Initiation:** Committee meetings may be called by the Chairperson or Secretary. Committee members must receive notice of meetings at least 7 days before the meeting.

**4.2 Quorum:** The quorum for Committee meetings is three Committee members.

**Article XII: Rules of Procedure for Meetings**

All questions that arise at any meeting will be discussed openly, and the meeting will seek to find general agreement that everyone present can agree to.

If a consensus cannot be reached, a vote will be taken, and a decision will be made by a simple majority of members present. If the number of votes cast on each side is equal, the Chairperson of the meeting shall have an additional casting vote.

**Article XIII: Ratification**

This Constitution shall be considered ratified upon approval by a majority vote of the founding members residing in Milton Keynes, present at the inaugural meeting of the Milton Keynes Goan Community.

This constitution was agreed upon and ratified at the Inaugural General Meeting of the Milton Keynes Goan Community on:

Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> / Dec / 2023

**Signatories:**

Name: Othelia Fernandes Position in the Community: Chairperson

Signed: [Signature]

Name: Arshi Colaco Position in the Community: Vice Chairperson

Signed: [Signature]

Name: SIMON VARELLA Position in the Community: events + cultural co-ordinator

Signed: [Signature]

Name: Jenifer Menezes Position in the Community: Social Coordinator

Signed: [Signature]

Name: LIGORI D'NEUO Position in the Community: Treasurer

Signed: [Signature]

Name: MELISSA FERNANDES Position in the Community: ASST. SECRETARY

Signed: [Signature]

Name: LAVINIA RODRIGUES Position in the Community: Vice-Event Coordinator

Signed: [Signature]