**STEP UP!**

**Luton Limb Fitting Centre User Group**

**CONSTITUTION**

Amended at the AGM on 19th March 2018

1. **NAME**

The name of the group shall be "Luton Limb Fitting Centre User Group “Step Up!””.

The group will generally be known as “Step Up!”. This replaces the previous name “Step by Step”.

1. **AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES**

The overall aim of the Luton Limb Fitting Centre User Group ‘Step Up’ is to provide an effective forum for users of the Luton Limb Fitting Centre, both Amputee and Orthotic, including their carers and relatives that will make a difference to their lives as they seek to overcome the challenges associated with being disabled.

Step Up! also seeks to:

* Consider ways of achieving consistent and equitable quality of care for all patients;
* Communicate areas of patient concern to the Luton Limb Fitting Centre and Luton and Dunstable NHS Trust;
* Establish and maintain a positive two way relationship between users and Centre / Hospital Trust staff and management; and
* Raise awareness of disabled people, amputees, orthotics and their carers in order to influence national and local policy and decision making.

Step Up! will seek to undertake the following activities:

* The Group’s regular meetings provide a voice for users of the Centre - the minutes and associated papers will be regularly posted in the reception area of the Centre;
* Work with staff and management of the Centre in order to improve services;
* Assist in the provision of information, advice and guidance to users, relatives and carers;
* Assist in supporting users who have recently been disabled; and
* Organise events to raise awareness of the support and information that is available, to provide an opportunity for users to meet each other, and to raise funds for related causes.

Step Up! Will have the following powers in order to further the Objects (but not for any other purpose):

* To raise funds. In doing so, the Members must not undertake any substantial permanent trading activity and must comply with any relevant statutory regulations;
* To buy, take on lease or in exchange, hire or otherwise acquire any property and to maintain and equip it for use;
* To sell, lease or otherwise dispose of all or any part of the property belonging to Step Up!
* To co-operate with other charities, voluntary bodies and statutory authorities and to exchange information and advice with them;
* To establish or support any charitable trusts, associations or institutions formed for any of the charitable purposes included in the Objects;
* To acquire, merge with or enter into any partnership or joint venture arrangement with any other Charity formed for any of the Objects;
* To set aside income as a reserve against future expenditure
* To obtain and pay for such goods and services as are necessary for carrying out the work of the Constituted Voluntary Organization;

1. **MEMBERSHIP**

Membership is open to:

* All users of the Luton Limb Fitting Centre
* Carers and relatives of users;
* Representatives from the multi-disciplinary team based at the Centre or who have a direct interest in the Centre;
* Representatives from disability organisations with an interest in prosthetics, orthotics and wheelchairs;
* Additional observers / contributors with the agreement of the Group.

1. **MEMBERSHIP FEES**

There is no membership fee.

1. **SCOPE OF MEMBERS’ RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES**

To safeguard members of the User Group the following code of conduct should be adhered to:

* Information regarding users and their affairs which Step Up! members may come into contact in the course of their role is confidential and must not be discussed outside of their remit.
* Step Up! members will respect the confidentiality of issues discussed within the Group and the privacy and dignity of users they come into contact with.
* Step Up! members will ensure that any actions, correspondence or other activity that is directly connected to the group must first be cleared through the Chair.

1. **OFFICERS**

There shall be three officers of Luton Limb Fitting Centre User Group “Step Up!” These will be Chair, Hon Secretary and Hon Treasurer.

All Officers shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Group, from, and by the Members of the Group.

1. **DUTIES OF OFFICERS**

The Chair shall preside at all meetings of Luton Limb Fitting Centre User Group “Step Up!” and shall perform such duties as ordinarily pertain to the office.

The Chair will chair each meeting and will nominate a deputy Chair when unable to attend. The deputy must be a member of the group.

The Chair will approve the minutes before they are circulated

The Secretary shall keep all records of meetings; issue all notices in respect of meetings and shall perform such duties as usually pertains to office of secretary including keeping up to date membership records.

The Treasurer shall have custody of all Luton Limb Fitting Centre User Group “Step Up!” funds and shall account for them to the officers and full members on request. The annual audited accounts shall be presented to members at the AGM and shall perform other duties as would normally pertain to the office of Treasurer.

1. **GENERAL COMMITTEE**

The affairs of Group shall be controlled by a Committee comprising of the Officers of the Group, the Manager of the Luton Limb Fitting Centreand no more than 12 other Committee Members elected from the members of the Group.

The Committee shall meet at agreed intervals and not less than four times per year.

The duties of the Committee shall be:

* + 1. To control the affairs of the Club on behalf of the Members
    2. To arrange social / information meetings for members not less than four times per year
    3. To make decisions on the basis of a simple majority vote. In the case of equal votes, the Chair shall be entitled to an additional casting vote.

Committee Member failing to attend meetings

Unless the Committee otherwise resolves in any individual circumstance any committee member who fails without proper reason to attend three consecutive committee meetings in any period of twelve calendar months commencing with each Annual General Meeting shall be deemed to have retired from his or her position as a Committee Member upon the third default occurring. The committee shall have an absolute discretion to determine whether or not the retiring Member had proper reason for his or her default, and a Resolution of the Committee that such defaulting Member has retired as a consequence of this Rule shall be conclusive.

The Committee will use it’s reasonable endeavours to procure that notice in writing (and which may be by e-mail) of such Resolution shall be given to the retired Member at his or her last known address recorded with the Committee but any failure by the retired Member to receive such notice shall not invalidate the Resolution recording his or her retirement.

Any such Member shall not be eligible for re-election as a Committee Member for a period of two years commencing with the Annual General Meeting next following such retirement.

Committee Members being co-opted onto the Committee

* + 1. The Committee shall be entitled to co-opt Members, for either General or Specific purposes.
* Any co-opted committee member shall serve until the Annual General Meeting next following their co-option when they shall retire, but shall not be restricted from seeking election as a Committee Member at such Annual General Meeting.
* Co-opted committee members will be considered full committee members, and entitled to vote and/or be nomintated for Office.

Committee Meetings are open to members. Guests may be invited by prior arrangement with the Chair.

Members will endeavour to forward suggested items for discussion to the Chair at least a week before the meeting to allow time for circulation.

Minutes of meetings will be circulated to all Members within two weeks after each meeting

1. **TERM OF OFFICE**

For the officers of the Group a term of office will be three years, one officer retiring each year on a rolling program.

General Committee Members will be elected for two years, again on a rolling program.

This ensures the continuity of the committee in that officers and members of the committee are not all re-elected each year.

Consecutive terms of office will be acceptable.

1. **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Annual General Meeting of Luton Limb Fitting Centre User Group “Step Up!” shall be held not later than 31st March each year. Twenty eight days notice to be given of the AGM.

The business of the Annual General Meeting shall be to:

* + Confirm the minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting and any General Meetings held since the last Annual General Meeting.
  + Receive the annual report of the Committee from the Chair or nominated Officer.
  + Receive the accounts for the year from the Treasurer.
  + Elect the Officers and General Committee Members in accordance with this constitution.
  + Transact such other business received in writing by the Secretary from Members fourteen days prior to the meeting and included on the agenda.

Special General Meetings may be convened by the General Committee or on receipt by the Secretary of a request in writing from not less than 10 Members of the Group. At least 21 days notice of the meeting shall be given.

Nomination of candidates for election shall be made in writing to the Secretary at least 14 days in advance of the Annual General Meeting. Voting will be by nomination and election at the AGM. In the event of over-subscription, voting will be by secret ballot at the AGM.

Voting at all meetings shall be by a simple majority of members attending. In the event of equal votes, the Chair shall be entitled to an additional casting vote

A quorum shall be at least five membersone of whom must be an officer of the committee.

1. **FINANCES**

All income shall be paid into the appointed Bank or Building Society Account. The reasonable expenses of the Chair, Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer incurred in carrying out their office shall be met from the funds, **Subject to approval of the committee.**

The Chair, Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer will sign cheques. (Any two signatures from the three)

The financial year shall end on 31st December.

Luton Limb Fitting Centre User Group “Step Up!” shall have the power to raise funds and to invite and receive grants, donations and other contributions

Reasonable expenses incurred by Members for administrative, accommodation, meals and/or travel relating to the work of Step Up may be reimbursed from funds subject to prior agreement from the committee.

1. **ALTERATIONS TO THE RULES**

These terms of reference may be amended, provided that any such amendment is made by resolution passed by a simple majority of the members present and voting at a General Meeting.

1. **DISSOLUTION**

If the members resolve to dissolve Step Up! the Chair will remain in office and be responsible for winding up the affairs of the group in accordance with this clause.

The Chair must collect in all the assets of the Constituted Voluntary Organization and must pay or make provision for all the liabilities of the Constituted Voluntary Organization.

The Chair must apply any remaining property or money to Luton & Dunstable Limb Fitting Centre Charitable Account LD1E

In no circumstances shall the net assets of Step Up! be paid to or distributed among the members.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Print: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_