

**THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED
FIREFIGHTERS
(DISTRICT No. 4)**



**WEST MIDLANDS FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE
BRANCH
CONSTITUTION**



2017

Amended (2024)

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED FIREFIGHTERS

DISTRICT No 4

**WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE BRANCH
CONSTITUTION**

CONTENTS

Section 1	Title	Page 3
Section 2	Aims & Objectives	Page 3
Section 3	Membership	Page 3
Section 4	Committee	Page 4
Section 5	Local Committees	Page 5
Section 6	Conduct of Business	Page 6
Section 7	Annual subscriptions and Financial arrangements	Page 6
Section 8	Annual General Meeting	Page 8
Section 9	Alterations to the Constitution	Page 8
Section 10	Dissolution of Branch	Page 8
Appendix 1	Sub-Borough Folding	Page 9
Appendix 2	Annual Subscription and Mileage Rates	Page 9

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED FIREFIGHTERS

DISTRICT No 4

**WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE BRANCH
CONSTITUTION**

1. TITLE

1.1. The Branch shall be known as the National Association of Retired Firefighters, **West Midlands Fire & Rescue Service Branch.**

2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.1. Promote and safeguard the interests of Members.
- 2.2. Maintain a link of continuity with serving members of the Fire & Rescue Service.
- 2.3. Assist the Service wherever possible and appropriate, and in particular with the work of caring for and communicating with Members.
- 2.4. Encourage social activities.

3. MEMBERSHIP

3.1. Membership of the Association shall be open to former uniformed and nonuniform personnel, whether whole time or part time, who have retired or were discharged (other than on disciplinary grounds) from Fire Brigades Service maintained by Fire Authorities or any other Fire Service in the United Kingdom, every such person joining the Association shall be styled a "Member" with the power to vote at Annual General Meetings and Special General Meetings.

Membership shall also be open to all Widow/Widowers or Partners who receive a Pension from the Fire Service

3.2. The National Council of NARF is served by a number of District Committees and in many cases, these are served by Brigade area committees known as Branch Committees. A member may join his/her Local Branch, where such a Branch exists. After Joining NARF WMFS Branch, membership shall fall due for renewal on the 1st

January in each calendar year. Members of NARF WMFS Branch will be affiliated to one of four Local Committees

which are based upon the geographical boroughs within the West Midlands and funded by devolved Branch subscriptions. WMFS Branch Members will be affiliated to the Local Committee of their choice. Any Member who does not wish to join a Branch may become a Direct Member of NARF, but such members will not benefit from the services and support of a Branch.

3.3. Branches, **at their discretion**, may admit other persons as Associate members who will be entitled to all the rights and benefits afforded to members, providing that they pay the prescribed subscription at Branch, District and National levels.

4. COMMITTEE

4.1. The Business of the Branch shall be managed by the Branch Committee, though much of this business will be devolved locally to four constituted Local Committees on a geographical basis (see Section 5) and pursuant of the Aims and Objectives set out in Section 2 above.

4.2. The **Branch** Committee Shall Consist of a President, Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and two members elected by each of the Local Committees (four in the case of City of Birmingham *to reflect the conjoining of 2 Divisional Committees in a previous structure*) and shall be represented at District Committee.

4.2.1. The Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive Officer of the West Midlands Fire & Rescue Service shall be invited to occupy the office of President in an ex-officio capacity.

4.2.2. The Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer will be appointed by the membership by a simple show of hands at an Annual General Meeting, or Special General in special circumstances.

4.2.3. Representatives from each Local Committee shall be appointed by the Local Committees in accordance with 4.2. above.

4.2.4. The Branch will nominate two Members, annually, to represent its interests at the NARF District Committee and to vote at District Committee as mandated by the Branch Membership and empowered by the District Constitution. *(i.e., WMFS Branch Representatives will command a total of 10 votes compared to 2 votes by all other Branches within the District, and subject to the*

constitution of NARF District No.4). The office of District Representative will have no additional voting rights at Branch Committee meetings.

4.3 The Chief Fire Officer of the West Midlands Fire & Rescue Service may appoint a Liaison Officer who will be entitled to attend any Branch or Local meeting.

4.4 The Branch Committee shall hold not less than three Ordinary Meetings each year and an Annual General Meeting.

5. LOCAL COMMITTEES

5.1 The Branch Membership in:-

5.1.1. City of Birmingham,

5.1.2. City of Coventry & Solihull Borough,

5.1.3. Dudley Borough & Sandwell Borough,

5.1.4. City of Wolverhampton & Walsall Borough,

will each be entitled to form a Local Committee in the name of those cities/boroughs. Each Local Committee will consist of a Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, and normally not less than four ordinary committee members.

(Eight in the case of City of Birmingham to reflect the conjoining of 2 Divisional Committees in a previous structure)

5.2. Local Committees may draft and adopt a constitution which reflects the Aims and Objectives of the WMFS Branch Constitution and is approved by the Branch Committee, thus empowering them to discharge, locally, the business of the Branch set out in Sections 2 and 3 above.

5.3. Local Committees will receive funding annually, devolved from subscriptions collected by the Branch Treasurer, and may receive other donations and income from time to time.

5.4. Any Local Committee may join with one or more other Local Committee to form a conjoined committee and carry out the joint functions of those Local Committees. In such conjoined committees there shall be a requirement for only one Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer but the number of ordinary members shall be cumulative and the entitlement to seats at the Branch Committee shall be cumulative.

5.5. WMFS Area Commanders may appoint a serving officer to act as liaison officer to each Local Committee.

5.6. Local Committees shall hold not less than three Ordinary Meetings each year and an Annual General Meeting.

6. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS.

6.1. Ordinary Meetings shall be held at a place and time as determined by the Committee and not less than 28 days' notice should be given to each member.

6.2. Notice of Motions for consideration or inclusion on the Agenda of Ordinary Meetings must be submitted to the Secretary at least 21 days before the meeting.

6.3. All Branch Members shall be entitled to attend all Branch meetings and shall be entitled to one vote in each motion proposed at the Annual General meeting or Special General Meetings of the Branch. At any Regular Ordinary Meeting only the Branch Officers and Branch Committee Members appointed by each Local Committee, or their proxy, shall be entitled to vote.

6.4. Voting shall be by a simple show of hands and carried by a simple majority. When voting is equal, the Chairman shall have an additional casting vote.

6.5. Voting arrangements for Local Committees will be contained within respective Local Committee Constitutions.

6.5a

In the event of unforeseen circumstances arising beyond their control in such that a member of the Committee or members of NARF West Midlands Fire and Rescue Branch cannot attend a meeting in which they are scheduled to attend they may, subject approval of the Chair of the Committee, use any Conference video facility which may be available at the present time.

Subject to the nature of the circumstances arising 48hrs notice where possible of any request to do so should be given to the Chair.

Approval of such should not be unreasonably withheld.

6.6. A quorum for the Branch Committee shall be seven including at least two of its elected officers.

6.7. A quorum for Local Committee shall be stated within respective Local Committee Constitutions.

7. ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS AND FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

7.1. The National Association Of Retired Firefighters is funded almost entirely by subscriptions from its membership. These subscriptions consist of a subscription to the National Council, a subscription to the District Committee, and a subscription to the Branch Committee. The level of these subscriptions is notified to members upon joining and can only be adjusted by a resolution at the Annual General Meetings and are set out in Appendix 1.

Members subscriptions shall fall due for payment on January 1st of each Calendar year, however, WMFS NARF members' monies will be collected on or after May 1st in each year following his/her retirement and each May 1st thereafter until cessation of membership. There will be no refund of subscriptions when membership is ended part way through a year.

(N.B. A new member first subscription shall be collected in May following retirement)

These subscriptions are all collected as a single payment at Branch level and there are two ways this is achieved: -

7.1.2. Stoppage from Pension. With the authority of a signed mandate from the member, a single annual stoppage from members' pension is collected in May of each year by West Midlands Fire and Rescue Service Pensions Section who then forward the whole amount collected to the Branch Treasurer by May.

7.1.3. Cash Payment. Cash payers may remit their subscriptions to their Local Committee Treasurer in time for him/her to forward them to the Branch Treasurer before 1st May.

7.2. Upon receipt of these monies and without delay, the Branch Treasurer will forward Subscriptions collected on behalf of National Council and District Committee to the District Treasurer. He/she will also liaise with Local Committee Secretaries to confirm the exact number of members affiliated to each Local Committee. Using this figure as a multiplier the appropriate sum (see Appendix 1) per member shall be paid to the Local Committee Treasurers.

7.3 The Branch Treasurer will have overall responsibility for the collection of all monies from the membership and due to the Association. The Branch Committee shall have

the power to delete the name of any member who is two or more years in arrears and to whom due notice in writing has been served.

7.4. The Branch Treasurer will operate a bank account in the name of **National Association of Retired Firefighters (WMFS) Branch** which will require a minimum of two signatures for any withdrawal. He/she will report regularly to the Branch Committee on the current financial situation and will prepare an Annual Income and Expenditure Account which will be audited by an independent auditor and presented to the Annual General Meeting.

7.5. Second class rail fare and reasonable out of pocket expenses may be allowed to members of the Branch Committee when attending meetings or other Association business where this has been authorised by the chairman. If the committee member chooses to use his/her own vehicle, and provided this is reasonable, he/she should be paid the National association rate per mile. **(See Appendix I)**

8. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

8.1. The Annual General Meeting shall be held at a place and time as determined by the Committee and not less than 28 days' notice should be given to each member.

8.2. Notice of Motions for consideration or inclusion on the Agenda for the Annual General Meeting must be submitted to the Secretary at least 21 days before the meeting.

8.3. A Special General Meeting may be called at the request in writing of the majority of the Boroughs, with City of Birmingham to count as two Boroughs in this count.

9. ALTERATION OF THE CONSTITUTION.

9.1. The constitution shall not be amended except with the approval of two thirds of the members present and voting at an Annual General Meeting or a Special General meeting.

10. DISSOLUTION OF THE BRANCH

10.1. The Branch shall not be dissolved except by a decision of the Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting, **due notice of which has been given in accordance with section 8**, and not then if less than two thirds of the members present vote in favour of dissolution.

10.2. Special provision.

If the branch is unable to fulfill its constitutional obligations as described in Section 4 and Section 6 of the West Midlands Constitution for two consecutive years (AGM to AGM) or more, then any member attending AGM (whether quorate or not) shall be entitled to motion that the Branch be dissolved and provided that the motion is seconded, it shall be carried by default.

10.3. If the Committee is dissolved, it shall be the duty of the meeting to arrange for the disposal of any assets remaining in the credit of the Branch. Any vote thereon will be decided by a simple majority.

Approved and adopted by NARF WMFS Branch

Signature of Branch Chair

J. Littleton

Date: 22nd March 2017

Amended at Annual General Meeting 21st March 2018

Signature of Branch Chair

J. Littleton

Date: 21st March 2018

Amended at Annual General Meeting 19th October 2022

Signature of Branch Chair

J. Littleton

Date: 19th October 2022

Amended at Annual General Meeting 26th April 2023

Signature of Branch Chair

J. Littleton

Date: 26th April 2023

Amended at Annual General Meeting 08th May 2024

Signature of Branch Chair

J. Littleton

Date: 08th May 2024

APPENDIX 1

Borough Having to Close

In the event of a West Midlands Borough having to close due to no one taken over the Chair, Secretary or Treasurer posts we need to put in place a procedure to protect the finances and the members of that Borough.

The Borough cannot operate with just one person, there must be at least two members for the committee.

The following should be adhered to protect the Borough Finances and Members:

- ❖ Once the Borough has folded all members of that Borough will become members of the West Midlands Branch, if they want any member from the folded Borough can join any of the other Boroughs that are still available.
- ❖ All money left in the Borough Account should be sent to the West Midlands Treasurer who will ring fence it, so if the Borough re-starts up, they have money to operate.
- ❖ The number of members that are in the Borough when it folded will be set as to the day it folded and each year the allowance from West Midlands Branch that they receive by stoppage from Pension in May for each of the members will be ring fenced in the folded Borough finances, this will also take into consideration any member that has moved to another Borough.
- ❖ Widows will be set as to the numbers that are in the Borough at the time of folding, and any money from prize draw etc will be ring fenced for when the Borough reforms.
- ❖ No new widows will be accepted until the Borough has been reformed.
- ❖ Any new members that want to join the Borough that has folded will become West Midlands members and their money will be paid into the ring-fenced money until Borough has reformed.

- ❖ Due the Borough is not in operating no Sports & Welfare Money can be paid to the folded Boroughs ring fenced money as they are not operating.
- ❖ All money that has been ring fenced for the folded Borough will be paid into the West Midlands Accounts if the Borough has not reformed after 5 years.
- ❖ If more than one Brough folds then consideration should be taken in setting up a West Midlands Branch without Boroughs.



APPENDIX 2

MEMBER'S SUBSCRIPTIONS AND MILEAGE RATES

EFFECTIVE DATE	NATIONAL SUB'S	DISTRICT SUB'S	BRANCH SUB'S	AMMOUNT OF BRANCH SUB'S DISTRIBUTED TO LOCAL COMMITTEE per MEMBER	TOTAL ANNUAL SUB'S	NATIONAL ASSOCIATION MILEAGE RATE	Date of AGM	SIGNATURE OF CHAIR
Pre-2016	£5.00	0.25p	0.25p	£3.50	£9.00	0.40P/mile	22/03/2017	<i>J. Littseton</i>
2017	£5.00		0.25p	£3.50	£9.00	0.40P/mile	22/03/2017	<i>J. Littseton</i>
2018	£5.00		0.25p	£3.50	£9.00	0.40P/mile	21/03/2018	<i>J. Littseton</i>
2019	£5.00		0.25p	£3.50	£9.00	0.40P/mile	20/03/2019	<i>J. Littseton</i>
2020	£5.00		0.25p	£3.50	£9.00	0.40P/mile	22/03/2020	<i>J. Littseton</i>
2021	£5.00		0.25p	£3.50	£9.00	0.40P/mile	03/03/2021	<i>J. Littseton</i>

EFFECTIVE DATE	NATIONAL SUB'S	DISTRICT SUB'S	BRANCH SUB'S	AMMOUNT OF BRANCH SUB'S DISTRIBUTED TO LOCAL COMMITTEE per MEMBER	TOTAL ANNUAL SUB'S	NATIONAL ASSOCIATION MILEAGE RATE	Date of AGM	SIGNATURE OF CHAIR
2022	£7.00		1.00p	£4.00	£12.00	0.40P/mile	19/10/2022	<i>J. Littleton</i>
2023	£7.00	0.25p	0.75p	£4.00	£12.00	As per HM Revenue and Customs #	26/04/2023	<i>J. Littleton</i>
2024	£7.00	0.25p	0.75p	£4.00	£12.00	As per HM Revenue and Customs #	08/04/2024	<i>J. Littleton</i>

Mileage will be set as per HM Revenue and Customs as per National Association of RetiredFighters Standing Orders which will take effect from the start of each Tax Year