

## **7.8 Branches <sup>1</sup>**

**7.8.1** Members in any constituency or group of constituencies shall be able to establish a local Branch of the Party, subject to the proposed area having at least 100 Members and Registered Supporters (except at the exceptional discretion of the Executive Committee), and to the approval of the Executive Committee or the Chief of Staff operating on its behalf.

**7.8.2** Branches shall form an essential component of the Party's efforts to achieve women's equality in the UK, working in their communities to gain supporters, turn those supporters into Members, and Members into WE volunteers; to disseminate information about the Party; and to campaign for change according to WE policies in the local area.

**7.8.3** Branches shall meet a minimum of four times a year and the meetings shall be open to all Branch Members and Registered Supporters.

**7.8.4** At such open meetings Branches shall select a minimum of three Appointed Officers, which shall include: a Branch Leader; a Data Manager, who shall be responsible for operating the local WE Membership database; and a Treasurer who shall be the registered treasurer of the Local Party in terms of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 and any subsequent legislation. The Branch may select a Branch Secretary, or may determine that that role shall also be carried out by the Data Manager. The Branch may appoint other officers, including temporarily, for specific tasks related to the Branch's development. Branch Members may insist on a secret ballot to elect candidates. All candidates must be Party Members. All Appointed Officer and other Branch roles shall be open to role-sharing arrangements, with the exception of the role of Treasurer. People who share an Appointed Officer role shall each be Appointed Officers.

**7.8.5** All Appointed Officers shall sign the Code of Conduct for Appointed Officers. Anyone other than Appointed Officers handling communications on behalf of the branch shall sign a Volunteer Agreement.

**7.8.6** In accordance with this Constitution the Branches may decide on local rules to govern their internal affairs.

**7.8.7** Each Branch must ensure its own compliance with the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 and any subsequent legislation, in consultation with the Executive Committee and the Party Treasurer.

**7.8.8** Branches can participate in public debate at the local level and shall ensure such participation is entirely consistent with WE policies and the Code of Conduct for Appointed Officers.

**7.8.9** If a Branch wishes to contest an election, it shall, in collaboration with the relevant Hub, submit a request with adequate notice to the Steering Committee, whose decision is final.

**7.8.10** Where a local Branch proposes to support the Party's fundraising activities or to fundraise to finance local campaigning it shall agree a governance process with the Treasurer to ensure compliance with all relevant legislation and the Party's aims.

**7.8.11** A Branch's boundaries shall be determined and may be redrawn by the Executive Committee, upon consultation with Branch Leaders.

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<sup>1</sup> - extract from The Women's Equality Party Constitution Sept 2016, ratified at Conference November 2016.