

Association Fantasy farm

Queer together manual
Guidebook for communal living



Fantasy Farm, a rural haven of peace, a magical space

This document makes it possible to define in more detail the statuses of the association, and to add elements related to the daily life of the association, of the place invested by it.

This document is « work in progress », it is open to modifications that are to be presented at the annual general meeting.

The association « the friends of the Armigère » was created to occupy the place called l'Armigère, to be a place for LGBTQI+ adults and friends to live and welcome, to share and engage in activities.

The main vocation of this place is to manage a kitchen garden and produce fruit and vegetables for its own consumption, its is defined as a haven, a quiet space where one can retreat. A place where one engages in activities linked to the garden, the maintenance or the place, and where well-being activities come as a complement to promote a harmonious and benevolent collaboration spirit.

A place where one must be able to express one's true nature with the respect and tolerance of all.

The name ARMIGÈRE is the name of the hamlet where the farm and the land are located, it designates a butterfly but is also a dual male and female name (in french) which designates a person who carries the coats of arms, who has the right to wear them.

At first, the Queer Ashram project decided to use the name 'les amis de l'armigère' for the association. In January 2023, the name Fantasy Farm was established as reflecting the place, its spirit, its vibe. In January 2025, the name of the association was changed, its name has since been Association Fantasy Farm.

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1 / Hierarchy, discrimination, collective

The association aims to be non-hierarchical and non-discriminatory, each person has the right to speak and express themselves in a secure and egalitarian environment.

Non-violent and egalitarian communication tools will be used for all discussions, forums and exchanges, such as consensus, talking circles, active listening, mediation and any other non-violent tool. The concept of consent is at the heart of relations within the framework of the association.

The association is carried by and for a community of LGBTI + adults from diverse backgrounds and cultures. Respect for each person, for individuality, for culture is essential.

In this sense of diversity, difference from the norm of society, the term "queer" is used. The use of this term should be unifying and not be used in a political or divisive way.

In order not to reproduce the categorization of gender and the risks of mismatch, a reflection on the neutrality of members could be considered. The term fairy is used in the community of radical fairies (feminine term), there is nevertheless another fairy character, that of the elf (term that is both masculine and feminine, a character connected to the air, to trees, to nature and to fertility). Thus the mis-gender of a fairy who wishes to be recognized as a male gender is no longer a risk that can be called an elf, a person wishing to be gendered female can then be an elf and a non-binary person will simply be an elf. . In the case of people not wishing a fairy identity, the freedom is that of being called as he / she (s) wishes.

Name and gender circles are necessary on a daily basis so that everyone can assert their identity of the day to the members present.

The goal must be to learn from each other and not to create divisions.

The place invested by the association is collective, life together, the community, the consensus take precedence over the individual interests of people or groups of people.

It is therefore quite possible that the place may not meet or correspond to every individual need or a group of individuals.

The association is not militant or political, it is peaceful and non-violent.

Its vocation is ecological, social and creative.

2 / Consensus

The main model of decision-making is that of consensus:

Consensus decision making is defined as any collective decision-making procedure where group members develop and consent to a decision in the best interests of the group. This process emphasizes the need for communication, clarity and solidarity among group members.

Consensus is mainly used in decision making at GAs by active members of the association, it can also be used for other decision-making processes.

This process differs in many ways from the organizational systems that many of us are used to and takes practice to learn.

Consensus often leads to better outcomes for a community. This process requires listening to everyone's ideas and concerns and allows each participant to have an active role in the decision-making process.

This particular decision-making model focuses on obtaining the informed consent of each participant, as in some cases it is not possible for some decisions to obtain enthusiastic agreement from the community as a whole.

The question is whether we can live with a decision and not necessarily whether we actively want it.

Individuals who present objections, concerns are invited to present them to the assembly so that the proposals may be reformulated, reconsidered.

This consensus process is based on the moral commitments of the participants:

- the common takes precedence over the individual interests,
- commit to seeking consensus in good faith,
- approach the process with an open mind, to be informed and available without a pre-determined objective,
- prepare arguments, proposals and objections upstream, present them clearly,
- engage in active listening of the other, the ideas, proposals and feelings of the assembly, respect the course of the process without interrupting participants or diverting subjects
- allow enough time so that the process is not rushed by it,
- understand the gap between consent and agreement; the solution may be "good enough for now; safe enough to try",
- leave room for creativity and individual freedom.

The process takes place as follows:

- A facilitator ensures the smooth running of the process.
- Each person speaks in turn without being interrupted, being heard.
- Technical details can complement the intervention of a speaker.
- The speaking order follows the circle, for each new point a new person starts speaking.

The steps of the process are as follows:

Description of the point concerned, presentation of the elements in a neutral way by the facilitator.

Round of context, relative to the point concerned, the problematic, the motivation, each person gives his explanations relating to the problematic.

Round of ideas and proposals to address the problem that has been defined.

Decision to:

- continue with a new round of idea exchange
- postpone the process because it requires more elements
- make a proposal to the assembly
- If a participant is ready to make a proposal,
- his role is then that of 'proposer',

the process then continues as follows:

Round to check clarity - each participant confirms or not their understanding of the proposal made. This is an opportunity for everyone to ask questions in order to understand the proposal as a whole. The person who offered the proposal to the group answers and clarifies the elements of his proposal, to promote a good understanding, this proposal can be reformulated.

It is important that people in the group ask the questions, even if they think they are unimportant. The aim is to remove any doubt or possible misinterpretation of the proposition. A clarification requires sticking to understanding the proposition and nothing more. It's already a real change in the habit of ignoring your reaction here. This is the start of real active and emphatic listening.

Round of feelings - Everyone can freely formulate how they feel, and more broadly anything they have to say about the proposal as it is formulated and clarified at this stage, and also whether it meets their needs and those identified by the group.

It is important that everyone respects this phase, and listens to what others have to say, without judgment. This should be clear to the group, to allow everyone to express themselves as much as possible, even for the most timid or those who tend to think that their feelings are not important. It is the responsibility of everyone in the group to contribute through these comments and reactions.

This round is vital for the person making the proposal to get a feel for the temperature of the group compared to what they have proposed, and to incorporate all comments. He must then be very attentive and humble to receive all these comments. He must know how to distinguish between things: if for example the reactions to the proposal clearly show that the proposal does not suit the group, he must hear it and accept it, in order to modify or withdraw his proposal in time. afterwards, without taking it as an offense to his person or his work.

Amendment or withdrawal of the proposal - The proponent is invited, on the basis of what he heard, to further clarify his proposal, propose modifications (amend) and make additions, to create an improved proposal through the participation of other. He can also withdraw the proposal. What is sought is mutual consent, and not to "get through" your proposal. Simply withdrawing a proposal that would have attracted a lot of objections saves the group time and energy. In case of withdrawal, the process resumes with a new proposal or a new round of ideas.

The aim here is to reduce reluctance and to ensure that the amended proposal receives as little objections as possible.

Formulation of objections - Everyone is asked to question themselves internally in order to be able to clearly formulate any objection. An objection is not a preference, advice or other proposition. It is the expression of what is not "livable" for each person and for the group. Everyone must ask themselves the questions: can I live with this proposal? If not, what will prevent me from being effective and active in its implementation if it were chosen? Do I see a reason why if we adopt the proposal, it will hurt the group? All this must be sincerely and very clearly expressed. The facilitator is there to help the person objecting to actually touch and express their objection.

Raising objections - The facilitator takes a tour to see if the group members have objections. At first, they are just invited to say "yes" or "no". If there are only "yes", the proposal is accepted directly and the process is complete.

If not, the objections are listened to and dealt with one by one.

To object is to let go of it as something personal and to make it the richness of the group.

Evaluating objections one by one - The first step is to identify whether an objection outright cancels the proposal.

It is also a matter of validating whether the objection is "reasonable".

If not, the objection is ignored and the next one is dealt with. If the objection is reasonable, the process continues.

An objection is reasonable if:

- it invites an improvement of the proposal by the collective intelligence of the group
- it eliminates the proposition, making it impossible to carry out (we save time by switching to another proposition)
- it is argued in a clear and convincing way
- it is not a roundabout way, consciously or not, of expressing a preference or another proposition

The facilitator listens to all objections, puts forward the one that cancels the proposal if this is the case. In the case of a "strong objection" which includes the others, it will be dealt with as a priority.

It is important to deal with the objections one after the other, to avoid complicating the proposal. The facilitator should reassure the participants on this point and that it will be their turn to explain their objection. This phase is very delicate. The facilitator does not have the power to say whether the objection is reasonable or not. He can only ask questions that help the objector to sense whether or not he wishes to maintain his objection. Only the objector can say whether his objection is reasonable or not, making his way of consciousness vis-à-vis his objection. Nonetheless, it may be interesting to hear from the group on the "reasonableness" of an objection, but staying focused on the idea that it is the objector who will get the way, or not. It is helpful here to have the objection stated and written in front of the group.

Improvements to the proposal - The discussion is free, everyone can provide solutions in order to remove the objection addressed. Each objection is an opportunity for the group to be creative in transforming what is blocking into a better solution for all. We seek solutions to each objection brought. When the solutions found remove the objections of the person who raised them, he says so, and the process can continue (dealing with the next objection).

A treated solution may give rise to another potential objection. It can appear clearly during the discussion and be taken into account in the new solution. If, on the other hand, it becomes too

complex, it may be decided to deal with the objections that appear as and when following. In this case, objections are added to the list and they are dealt with one after the other.

When the group deals with an objection, everyone gives their best to help raise the objection: it's like a cooperative game where we all win if the objection is raised. It works if the group keeps good listening and respect for the word so that collective intelligence is born. Here, too, our old ways of wanting to get MY objection taken care of are coming back. We can also observe an impatience of the group to deal with the subject, to "get it over with". Calm, listening and confidence in the process are essential to maintain the benefits of consent.

Validation of consent - When all objections have been raised, there is no further discussion. Nothing prevents this solution from being adopted, because everyone and the group can live with it. It is therefore appropriate here to reformulate the proposal very clearly, to write it down and to validate that it is approved by all.

Here may appear resistance from old paradigms, such as "my solution was better", or "this solution is not the best". It is important to live them and to trust in the application of the solution before opposing it. In short, moving forward rather than indulging in our mind which actually tells us "what if it doesn't work", which brings us back into doubt and will make applications more likely to fail. !

Celebration of the decision - This is to mark the fact that the decision has been made. Which means that the group has been listening, with respect, and that they will be able to move forward. It is up to the group to define how they will celebrate this (applause, meal, party ...).

It is important to celebrate to mark that the group has reached a milestone. This allows everyone to achieve progression. The "energy" of the group at that time is an indicator of each person's authenticity in the process being lived: if you want to celebrate, that's a good enough sign; if one is resigned and silent, it is important to ask questions about the understanding and application of the process.



3 / Way of life, contribution and daily rhythm

The association "the friends of the Armigère" has defined its object in its statutes. All the activities, projects and the daily life of the association and its members when they act on behalf of the association must be in agreement with this.

Some details should be added in the form of a definition of the terms used and of proposals which meet the points set by the statutes:

ECOLOGICAL LIFESTYLE

It is about limiting as much as possible the ecological footprint of humans on nature, but also of humans on humans. Understanding the impact of our actions on nature and other humans must be understood so that respect for nature and others can be harmonious.

Kitchen gardening on site is at the heart of this process, the vegetable and fruit garden will be the main activity of the association to produce organic foods to eat.

As food self-sufficiency is not an option, it is important that external supplies respect the association's ecological commitments as much as possible.

The reduction of waste and trying to give it value through recycling and up-cycling as well as the sharing of resources are part of this approach. Logic must also prevail in consumer decisions, taking into account the entire chain of production and usage.

SOBER LIFESTYLE

The place invested by the association must provide a safe environment for people who have broken away from addictions or who wish to be free from them. The term sobriety has been used to promote a simple and natural setting and way of life, allowing for better personal and collective harmony.

VEGETARIAN LIFESTYLE

The place invested by the association will practice vegetarianism. The consumption of animals will be prohibited, the food produced by the animal may be consumed, but in moderation, these products must come from sources that ensure the best possible treatment of animals. The presence of "domestic" animals on site will not be encouraged, but neither will an animal be rejected if it needs assistance or shelter.

Harmonious relationship of humans with nature: "Wild" animals will be treated with dignity and respect, and for those considered "harmful", the association will try to find the best ways to live together. The use of products harmful to nature will be avoided.

CONTRIBUTIONS AND PARTICIPATION OF VISITING MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

Each person who visits the association becomes a de-facto member of it, he is required to contribute to the existence and development of it. This contribution must be financial and participatory.

The financial contribution is freely decided by each member, no one will be refused for lack of funds. An indicative amount of daily contribution taking into account the actual costs of a person as well as a part related to the management of the place, the association, and the financing of projects will be displayed and will allow each visiting member to contribute according to his/her means.

The participatory contribution is linked to the daily activities of the association, whether in the upkeep of the place, taking care of the vegetable garden, cooking and household chores. This participation represents only a few hours a day, it is an integral part of community life.

In addition to this participation in daily tasks, projects will always be in progress and the members present will be invited to participate on a voluntary basis. If the nature of the work site presents a risk, the association will be covered by insurance but it will be the responsibility of each participant to take out personal bodily injury insurance for a participatory work site beyond their liability insurance. (30 euros per year at Twizza)

TIMES OF THE DAY, A HEALTHY AND BALANCED RHYTHM

Collective rest times will be offered at several times of the day:

Group breaks in the middle of the morning and at the end of the afternoon

Collective meals at noon and in the evening at rather regular and consistent hours

The morning meal will be free and will take place in peace

These are moments of break from activities to meet and share collectively

A 90-minute nap time after lunch, as well as bedtime and wake-up times that will signal the times when silence and calm should be respected, times to rest in peace and respect for the rest of others.

Outside of these times, noise pollution should be limited? Unnatural music is not prohibited, but should not disturb other members. For washing up or festive moments, music can be used more abundantly and without restraint.

Natural music will be privileged and can be used at any time apart from moments of rest and calm.

The practices of well-being and meditation will be privileged, their practice will be respected and promoted, moments and places dedicated to these practices will be created and will allow everyone to practice individually or in a group. These practices will in no way be dogmatic. Free and personal moments will also be part of everyday life

Talking circles will be used frequently and a weekly program will be proposed by the members present, additional moments can of course be added if the need is felt.

4 / Members of the association

Several categories of members are needed because not everyone will want to get involved or participate in the same way.

DE FACTO MEMBER

Any contributor, visitor to the association becomes a full member and accepts the statutes and rules of the association. Any de facto member can participate in the annual GA but has no power of objection.

ACTIVE MEMBER

Any de facto member may wish to get involved in the management, governance and decisions of the association. He must then apply to become an active member during the GA. This request will be subject to the approval of other active members after having spent a minimum of 2 weeks at the location. The status of active member is to be renewed at each annual GA. An active member can be dismissed if his effective participation is non-existent or other shortcomings are noted.

The active members will divide the tasks and responsibilities into working groups.

A president and a treasurer will be appointed and will be responsible for keeping budgets and controlling expenditure. Initially and for the first 2 years, except in cases of force majeure, these responsibilities will be held by the founding members, Mark Aumoine and Christian Cottalorda.

RESIDENT MEMBER

The notion of residence is linked to the fact of wishing to spend more than 2 weeks at the place per year outside of stays and retreats organized by the association or one of its members.

Residence is subject to the approval of other residents and active members and must be justified by a written request.

The right of residence is not intended to guarantee permanent residence and may be revoked following an agreement between the parties concerned.

The residence is not subject to rent but requires a contribution to cover costs and contribute to the daily life of the place. An active participation in the daily activities, maintenance and development projects of the association and the place are part of the obligations of the resident member.

Requests for artistic and therapeutic residencies may be considered and will be studied on a case-by-case basis

EXCLUSIONS, REVOCATIONS

Any member, whatever the status, can be excluded at any time in the event of a proven breach of the rules of tolerance, consent and consensus. Mediation will be offered in all cases, to assess the situation and consider the possibility of exclusion.

PRIVACY, DISCRETION

Photographs taken at the location must not include people without their consent. The publication of photographs on social networks must be done sparingly, keeping in mind that the place without being completely secret must remain discreet.

5 / The activities of the association

Any active member can propose activities to other members and these can be undertaken without any agreement of the annual meeting if they respect the statutes and contribute to the development of the association and the place.

The main activities are:

- The residence
- Welcoming visitors for short stays outside of any thematic stay
- The organization of thematic stays linked to the upkeep and development of the place, to well-being, to artistic or other activities.

6 / The finances and expenses of the association

Funding for the place and its daily life comes mainly from donations and contributions from members.

As a general rule, donations fall into the association's management fund which covers all expenses as follows:

- Local taxes, insurance, electricity, water, purchase of equipment, various materials
- Miscellaneous supplies, administrative costs
- Food and daily expenses

Expenses must be in accordance with the concepts of sobriety, the search for savings, recycling, limiting waste but also with regard to the quality / price ratio.

Non-food investment expenses must be validated and controlled by the treasurer or the president of the association, no other member can incur expenses without having prior approval. No refund will be made on an expense that has not obtained this agreement. Any reimbursement with agreement will be made on presentation of an invoice.

For food expenses, the fund, supplied by contributions from members present, allows these expenses to be paid. An income / expenditure book will be kept and invoices and supporting documents for expenditure must be entered there. One of the active members on site will be responsible for this notebook and the cash register and will pass the items on to another member when he leaves, closing the accounts for the period for which he was responsible.

Special funds may be created to receive donations specific to a project or an investment and these funds will then be reserved for expenses related to this specific project. In the event that the project is completed and there are still funds available, they will then be reinjected into the common management fund.