

Loughborough Naturalists' Club

The name of the Society shall be the 'Loughborough Naturalists' Club' (herein "Club").

1. Objectives

The objectives of the Club shall be to:

- Foster the study and recording of natural history and the conservation of wildlife in Vice-County 55, especially that of Charnwood and the surrounding area.
- Encourage co-operation between its Members in the field of natural history.
- Co-operate with other bodies and individuals in the pursuance of the above objectives.

2. Membership

2.1 Membership of the Club shall be open to persons genuinely interested in the aims and items covered in this Constitution, and is subject to the approval of the Committee. All Members shall abide by and be bound by this Constitution. Membership of the Club does not give authorisation to Members to trespass on private land.

2.2 Membership types shall include Full, Shared, Junior and Affiliated Members.

2.2.1 Full Members are individuals who pay the full Membership fee.

2.2.2 Shared Membership is for two or more people who live at the same address and will receive only one mailing. Under-sixteens do not have voting rights.

2.2.3 Junior Membership is for persons under 16, but will not have voting rights.

2.2.4 Affiliated Membership is for Educational establishments, Natural History societies and other scientific bodies who are eligible for affiliation to the Club but will not have voting rights.

2.2.5 Honorary Life Membership. Members who have rendered outstanding service to the Club and who have promoted its aims shall be eligible for election as Honorary Life Members on nomination by the Committee. They shall pay no subscription but shall have all the privileges of Full Membership. The number of Honorary Life Members at any one time shall be left to the discretion of the Committee.

2.2.6 The Club may create and confer other special categories of Membership as it may see fit, led by recommendations of the Committee.

2.4. Suspension or Termination of Membership

2.4.1 The Committee may expel or suspend any Member if the Committee considers that their conduct is detrimental to the Club or its aims. Any Member expelled or suspended shall be informed of the expulsion or suspension and the grounds thereof in writing by the Secretary. They shall be given an opportunity of appealing by appearing before a panel nominated by the Committee by submitting in writing the nature of their appeal, together with a cheque made payable to the Club for £25 to cover any expenses in good time for the next Committee Meeting. If the appeal is successful and costs are not incurred this will be refunded. At the appeal, the Member may be accompanied by a friend, as a support but is not able to contribute verbally.

3. Fees and Finances

3.1 Each Membership category shall pay such affiliation fees, subscriptions, and entrance fees as voted for at the Annual General Meeting (herein the "AGM"). Membership will be from the 1st of January annually. Member subscriptions for those joining after 1st October shall cover the following 15 months.

3.1.2 A Member may resign at any time by giving notice in writing to the Secretary, but no subscriptions paid shall be refunded.

3.1.3 Any Member whose subscription is more than six months overdue shall be deemed to have resigned.

3.2 The monies of the Club shall be kept under the control of the Treasurer who shall be responsible to the Committee. The Treasurer shall make no payment exceeding a sum from time to time laid down by the Committee. Normally sums to be paid over and above the agreed value by cheque must be in accordance with the Bank Mandate with two signatories. However if agreed and included in the minute's by the committee BACS payments will be authorised.

3.3 The Treasurer shall keep the Clubs monies in a bank account or other financial institution, with the approval of the Committee and shall keep all necessary records of account. The Committee shall from time to time complete the bank's usual mandate for the purpose of controlling the bank account.

3.4 The accounting year for the Club shall be from the 1st December annually.

3.5 The accounts will be subject to review by a Competent Examiner who should not be a Club Member, prior to being presented to the AGM.

4. Officers

4.1 The Officers shall be the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Indoor Meetings Co-ordinator, Outdoor Meetings Co-ordinator, the Editorial Panel, Records Co-ordinator and the immediate past Chairman in the year after holding office. Up to four other Club Members shall be elected as Committee Members. All such Officers shall be honorary officers unless the Club decides otherwise.

4.2 Officers shall be elected at the AGM and shall take and hold office until the conclusion of the next AGM.

4.2.1 All nominations for Officers and Committee shall be made in writing and should indicate the willingness of the nominee to stand. They must be signed by at least two Full or Joint Members and shall be in the hands of the Secretary seven clear days before the date of the AGM. Should there be two or more candidates for an office they shall be elected by a show of hands.

5. The Committee

5.1 The affairs of the Club shall be managed by the Committee, which shall consist of the Officers and elected Committee Members or in case of a vacancy any co-opted Member.

5.1.1 The Committee shall have power to co-opt Members. A co-opted Member shall not serve beyond the termination of the AGM following the Member's co-option but would be eligible for proposal and election at the AGM.

5.1.2 The Quorum for a meeting of the Committee shall be 50% persons entitled to vote at it.

5.1.3 Committee meetings will be led by the Chair or in their absence the Vice-Chair. If necessary the Committee shall elect some other Member to chair that particular meeting.

5.2 Meetings of the Committee shall be held on the dates and at the times decided by them. The number and frequency of meetings should be sufficient to meet the needs of the Club, but no less than three times per year. If such other Club business requires, more dates may be added.

5.3 Each Member of the Committee shall have one vote and in the case of equality, the Chair of the meeting shall have a casting vote.

5.4 The Committee may delegate matters to a sub-Committee or to individuals who shall be responsible to the Committee and need not be Members of it. No decisions involving finance shall be delegated, such matters to be dealt with by the Committee only.

5.5 The minutes of the Committee meetings after approval may, at the decision of the Committee, be circulated in whole or in part to the Members of the Club.

6. Annual General Meeting

6.1 An Annual General Meeting ("AGM") shall be held in the second quarter of the year, in April, or on such a date as The Committee shall appoint.

6.1.1 Notification of the AGM, together with an Agenda, Election of Officers and other forms will be made available at least seven days prior to the Meeting.

6.2 The business to be transacted at an AGM shall be the presentation of reports and accounts; the election of Officers - who will have been recommended by the Committee; amendments to the Constitution; the determination of Membership and entrance fees and any other business.

6.3 The Chair or in their absence, Vice-Chair will preside at the meeting.

6.4 The following shall be entitled to vote: Members, Joint Members and Honorary Members.

6.5 Other Members (Affiliated and Junior), and non-members, are entitled to attend the AGM but they are not entitled to vote but may speak at the meeting, as can any other person with the Members acquiescence.

6.6 All business at an AGM shall be transacted by a simple majority of those present and voting but no amendment shall be made to the Constitution save by a resolution carried by an affirmative vote of at least two thirds of those present, entitled to vote and voting.

6.7 Any resolution put to the AGM shall be decided on a show of hands, unless before the ballot is taken the Chairman of the meeting, or at least five voting members, demand a postal vote. Should a postal ballot be demanded it shall be carried out by the Committee.

6.7.1 Should it be necessary up to three scrutineers shall be appointed at the meeting at which the ballot is demanded to assist and report the number of votes made, and the result notified to all Members of the Club.

6.7.2 In the event of an equality of votes, either by a show of hands or by postal ballot, the Chair of the meeting shall be entitled to a further casting vote, in addition to their vote as a Member.

7. Special General Meeting

7.1 Should such a meeting be required it will be called whenever The Committee considers it expedient or whenever not less than five Members so request it in writing, delivered to the Secretary who shall call a meeting within 21 days.

7.2 The SGM will only consider the matter(s) for which it has been called, and the rules in 6.7 will be followed.

8. Indemnity

8.1 Any person serving on any Committee or sub-Committee of the Club or appointed by and acting on behalf of the Club shall be indemnified by the Club against any costs, claims, damages or any expenses which may arise from any action taken with the Clubs' authority other than any such arising from the wilful act or default of such person. For the avoidance of doubt the Committee acting on behalf of the Club may take out such insurance as it considers reasonably necessary to cover any such matters or the conduct of the same and may pay the premiums thereon out of its general funds.

9. Finality

9.1 The Committee shall determine any question on the interpretation of the Constitution including the regulations under the Constitution. The Committee's decision on such matters shall be final and binding unless a Special General Meeting of the Club determines otherwise.

10. Dissolution

10.1 The Club may at any time be dissolved by the consent of three-quarters of Members entitled to vote and who are present at a Special General Meeting called for that purpose. Upon dissolution of the Club, any funds, property or other assets of the Club remaining after satisfying the debts and liabilities of the Club shall be disposed of according to the wishes of the majority of Members.

The records deposited with the Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland (hereafter ROLLR) in the absence of any decision to the contrary, shall become the property of the ROLLR or its successor in title.

This Constitution was originally adopted at the Annual General Meeting of the Club in March 1998, and is now presented having been fully updated ratified and re-presented by the Committee to the Membership at the AGM on 13th April 2019

Appendix

Role Descriptions and Heritage distribution including Access to Club Records

Role Descriptions

Chair / Vice-Chair: The Chair (or in their absence the Vice-Chair), shall preside at all meetings.

The Secretary: shall be responsible for keeping minutes of all Committee meetings and the AGM / SGM except where otherwise agreed and shall at all times in the execution of their duties act under the superintendence, control and direction of the Committee.

The Membership Secretary: shall be responsible for responding to enquiries concerning Membership of the Club, shall present Membership applications to the Committee at their next meeting, shall collect subscriptions and maintain an up-to-date list of Members. All Member information shall be held in accordance with current legislation.

The Treasurer: shall monitor all incoming monies to the Club and issue receipts where necessary and make payment for invoices received in line with that laid out in 3.2. They should keep a true and complete record of all financial accounts of the Club, which may be subject to independent review annually.

The Indoor Meetings Co-ordinator: shall be responsible at the direction of the Committee for arranging hire of rooms for all Club meetings, preparing and tidying of such rooms and for obtaining speakers and equipment for the meetings.

The Outdoor Meetings Co-ordinator: shall be responsible for arranging field meetings and for supplying the Secretary with such details as may be required for notifying Members of all these arrangements.

The Editorial Panel: which may include the Records Co-ordinator shall prepare Heritage and be responsible for requesting from Members all records and information necessary for this purpose.

Records Co-ordinator: shall be responsible for receiving Members records, scan or copy originals, distribute to Heritage writers and store or arrange for permanent storage of records.

Heritage Distribution and Access to Club Records

It is envisaged that the Clubs' Heritage Publication will be produced up to four times a year – dependent on when records and information is received. One copy per publication will be made available to each of the Membership types, normally as printed copy, but may be replaced in an electronic format on request. This single copy as supplied by the Club shall remain the intellectual property of the Club and its intrinsic copyright of that publication will remain.

Additionally each Member is entitled to a copy of the Annual Report. For any additional printed copies a fee will be required as directed by the Committee to cover any additional costs arising.

Any Member of the Club shall have access to copies of the Club records upon giving reasonable notice in writing to the Records Co-ordinator, stating the records required. Any information so obtained shall be regarded as confidential and shall not be divulged to any person who is not a Member of the Club without the consent of the Committee. These records (or scans thereof, possibly in electronic format) are deposited in a secure place with the ROLLR and it must be recognised that access to these records may be subject to directives laid down by that organisation.

Members will be able via email to receive a link to recordings made by the club. These recordings are deemed to be LNC (and potentially third party) property only. No authorisation will be given to share these recordings. However, at the committees discretion, this may be varied on a case by case basis.

Revised version of this constitution was agreed at the A.G.M on 13th April 2019.
Additions to this were made and agreed on 10th April 2021.