

# **Gloucestershire Humanists Constitution**

**Last amended February 2021**

## **1. NAME**

The group shall be called 'Gloucestershire Humanists' (herein 'the Group')

## **2. STATUS**

The Group shall be a Partner of The British Humanist Association, commonly known as Humanists UK, as defined by the Partnership Agreement (dated February 2019) between Humanists UK and the Group.

The Group shall be affiliated to the National Secular Society. (See 8.1)

## **3. AIMS**

The Group aims to:

- 3.1. Make a positive contribution to Humanism locally by providing a forum for humanists to meet, to develop their knowledge and thinking, and to develop the sense of a local community of humanists within the wider community.
- 3.2. Act locally to promote and increase the understanding of Humanism as a positive world view.
- 3.3. Represent atheist, humanist and secularist people in the area, and provide a balance to religious groups influence in local affairs.

## **4. MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS**

- 4.1. The Group shall welcome anyone, regardless of ability, age, gender, race, or sexual orientation, and who has an interest in atheism, humanism or secularism or the particular topic under discussion.
- 4.2. Anyone who has paid the Group's membership fee, (see point 7.2), shall be defined as a 'Member' of the Group. Voting rights at general meetings shall be reserved for Members of the Group only (see point 6). A 'Supporter' of the group is anybody on a mailing list but who has not paid membership and takes a limited part in other Group activities. The Group will actively encourage its members to join Humanists UK and its supporters to become members of the Group.
- 4.3. The Group will safeguard the confidentiality of membership information, and any other information communicated in confidence by Humanists UK or any other partner/affiliate.
- 4.4. The Group retains the right to refuse or withdraw membership from any member who fails to support its constitution of Partnership Agreement or who brings Humanists UK or the group into disrepute.

## **5. MANAGEMENT**

- 5.1. An executive committee ('the Committee') shall manage the Group and ensure that it:
  - Pursues the Group's Aims referred to in point 3;
  - Fulfils the requirements of the Humanists UK Partnership Agreement referred to in point 2.
- 5.2. The Committee shall have two elected officers ('the Officers') in the positions below. Up to five further members may be elected or co-opted.
  - The Treasurer, who shall act as chief financial officer, and who shall be responsible for ensuring that the Group fulfils its financial requirements (see point 7);
  - The Secretary, who shall act as the chief administrative officer, and service all committee and general meetings.
  - The Group may elect a Chair or may share this role between committee members.
- 5.3. The Officers shall be individually elected every year at the Annual General Meeting. The Committee shall inform the Members at least six weeks before the AGM of the opening of nominations for the election, and of the procedures and dates of the election processes.
- 5.4. The Committee shall meet at least once every two months and the Secretary shall give the Officers at least a fortnight's notice of forthcoming committee meetings.
- 5.5. The Committee will be in quorum when at least three Committee Members are present.
- 5.6. The Secretary shall be the main contact in the Group for interactions with Humanists UK.

## **6. GENERAL MEETINGS**

- 6.1 The group shall hold an Annual General Meeting ('the AGM') in February each year, which will:
- Receive the financial accounts and reports from the Committee for a one-year period from the previous year's AGM
  - Elect the Officers who will serve from 1<sup>st</sup> April following the AGM;
  - Discuss and vote on any resolutions that have been proposed;
  - Discuss and vote on any policy or constitutional items requiring ratification.
- 6.2 An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) may be convened by the Committee or by petition to the Secretary of at least one fifth of the Members. The Secretary shall convene an EGM within six weeks of the receipt of such a petition. Only the items stated in the notice given to Members shall be considered at the EGM.
- 6.3 The Members shall be given at least six weeks' notice of AGMs and at least a fortnight's notice of EGMs.
- 6.4 Only Members as defined in point 4.2 shall have voting rights at general meetings.
- 6.5 A general meeting shall be in quorum if at least three Committee Members are present and the number of Members present is one more than the number of Committee Members present.
- 6.6 In any dispute concerning the affairs of the Group a general meeting shall be the final authority.

## **7 FINANCE**

- 7.1 As a Partner of Humanists UK, the Group is expected to:
- Maintain the financial viability of the Group;
  - Decide whether or not to have a membership fee;
  - Pay the annual Humanists UK Partnership fee on time.
- 7.2 Should there be an annual membership fee and a concessionary rate, both shall be agreed at the AGM, based on a proposal made by the Treasurer. Any Humanists UK members wishing to join the Group shall be made an introductory offer, equal to the concessionary rate, for their first year's membership.
- 7.3 The Group may hold events explicitly for the purpose of raising funds, either for the Group or an appropriate charitable cause.
- 7.4 The income and property of the Group shall be devoted to the promotion of the Aims of the Group.
- 7.5 Any bank accounts opened for the Group shall be in the name of the Group and shall be in the name of at least three of the Committee Members. Any cheques issued shall be signed by at least two Committee Members.
- 7.6 The Officers may not receive payment for their services to the Group other than agreed expenses in the name of the Group.
- 7.7 In the event of the Group being dissolved, all remaining funds after payment of liabilities and any charitable donations agreed by the membership shall go to Humanists UK.

## **8 EXTERNAL RELATIONS**

- 8.1 The Group may affiliate to any appropriate body, subject to approval at a general meeting.
- 8.2 The Group may not affiliate to, or publicly support, any political party.
- 8.3 Within the Group's resources and capabilities, and taking into account local circumstances, when engaging in external activities and dealing with third-parties the Group shall support Humanists UK's aims, strategy, policies and values, and will not take any action that brings Humanism or Humanists UK into disrepute.
- 8.4 If there is a conflict between activities in support of any other organisations the Group is affiliated or associated with, and those in support of Humanists UK's aims, values and policies, the Group will give priority to the latter.

## **9 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

- 9.1 The constitution may be amended by a resolution passed by at least two-thirds of the Members present at a general meeting. Notice of resolutions to change the constitution must be included in the notice of the general meeting.