

Northamptonshire Natural History Society and Field Club
(Founded 1876)

Laws of the Society

1 NAME - The Society shall be named “The Northamptonshire Natural History Society and Field Club”.

2 OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY - The objects of the Society are to promote interest and research in Natural History and Allied and Natural Sciences, particularly relating to Northamptonshire.

To provide facilities for the reading of papers, exhibition of specimens, the maintenance of a Library and Collections, the recording of research and field work, and the extension of knowledge by such other means as the Council may from time to time determine.

3 THE SOCIETY shall not, and by its Laws may not, make any dividend, gift, division, or bonus in money, unto or between any of its Members.

It may, however, pay such honorarium to its General Secretary and to its Treasurer, as may be approved by the Society at its Annual General Meeting.

4 CONSTITUTION - The Society shall consist of Honorary, Life, Family Life, Full, Family, Corporate, Mutual Corporate, and Junior Members, and such other groups of Members as the Council may from time to time determine.

5 MEMBERSHIP

(a) HONORARY MEMBERS - Any person having been recommended by the Council, may be elected an Honorary Member at an Annual General Meeting, and shall receive the Society’s Programme and Journal.

(b) LIFE MEMBERSHIP - Any Member over 21 years of age may seek Life Membership, and commute further annual payments on payment of 20 years’ purchase of the subscription for Full Members for the time being.

(c) FAMILY LIFE MEMBERSHIP - The spouse of a Life Member who is also a member of the Society and over 21 years of age, may commute further annual payments on payment of 20 years’ purchase of the subscription for Family Members for the time being.

The spouse of a Life Member over 21 years of age, not being a member of the Society, may seek Family Life Membership and being proposed and seconded by Members, may be elected by the Council, and on election shall pay the sum of 20 years’ purchase of the subscription for Family Members for the time being.

(d) FULL MEMBERS - Prospective members may be elected at any Council Meeting. Such Members shall receive the Society’s Programme and Journal.

(e) FAMILY MEMBERS - The spouse and up to 3 children of any Full Member residing under the same roof, shall receive the Society’s Programme, but shall not be entitled to receive the Society’s Journal. Extra copies may be purchased from the Society’s Secretary or Treasurer.

(f) CORPORATE MEMBERS - Any Society, School, or other Organisation may seek Corporate Membership, and on application may be elected to Corporate Membership at any Council meeting. Such Corporate Members to receive one copy of the Journal and six programmes.

(g) MUTUAL CORPORATE MEMBERS - Mutual Corporate Membership is open to kindred Societies who can offer reciprocal membership. Such Membership shall be the subject of agreement between the Council and the kindred Society.

(h) JUNIOR MEMBERS - Young persons under 18 years on January 1st may be elected Junior Members, and shall receive a copy of the Society’s Programme and Journal. They shall have access to the Society’s Library but shall not borrow the Society’s books, except when specially authorised, the Section Secretary giving authorisation to countersign the Library Book. Children under 16 must be accompanied at all times by a parent or guardian.

6 DUTIES AND PRIVILEGES OF MEMBERS - (Honorary, Life, Family Life, Full, Family, Junior)

A Member shall be admitted to all meetings of the Society, and have the use of all books, specimens and instruments, subject to such conditions as the Council may from time to time determine. He/she may also introduce friends to the Society's meetings, which friends shall not attend more than three meetings in any one year- without applying to join as members in their own right. Notwithstanding this privilege, the Council may decide that certain meetings shall not be open to Members' friends. These friends shall not take part in the proceedings of any meeting except by permission of the Chairman, and no one under the age of 18 may vote.

7 POWERS TO RESTRICT MEMBERS - The Council of the Society shall have power to restrict Membership to such persons as they consider suitable, and shall not be called upon to give any reason for the non-election of any person.

Any member whose conduct is, in the opinion of the Council, prejudicial to the interests of the Society, may be removed from the Society by the Council, by the vote of a majority of two-thirds present at a meeting of the Council, on the Agenda Paper of which the words "Removal of a Member" shall have appeared; provided that no Member may be so removed unless seven days written notice has been sent to him/her by the Secretary to attend a meeting of the Council, such notice to set out the nature of the complaints made against him/her, and an opportunity has been offered him/her of answering such complaints and of explaining his/her conduct to the satisfaction of the Council.

8 SUBSCRIPTIONS - The annual subscription shall be fixed at the Annual General Meeting on the recommendation of the Council from year to year.

The annual subscription shall be due on the first day of January in each year, until resignation or declaration of forfeiture of membership, The Council shall have power to declare that any member whose subscription is nine months in arrears, shall cease to be a member of the Society.

Any person admitted to membership of the Society on or after 1st. October, and on payment of the appropriate subscription, shall be entitled to membership from that date until twelve months after the following 31st. December.

The Council may at its discretion waive all or part of any subscription.

9 OFFICERS - The Officers of the Society shall consist of a President, Vice-Presidents, Honorary Vice-Presidents, President-Elect, a General Secretary, and a Treasurer.
Election of the President.

Candidates shall be nominated by two Members of Council, in writing to the current President. The Council will choose from such candidates, and the successful candidate will be presented to the AGM for their approval one year before they take office. If no valid nominations are submitted before the Council meeting preceding the AGM, then the President may propose a candidate unilaterally.

10 DUTIES OF THE PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT - The President shall be, by virtue of his/her office, the Chairman of the General Meetings of the Society and of the Council. The senior Vice-President (last President) present shall take the Chair in the absence of the President. The retiring President shall become a Vice-President of the Society for three years following the expiration of his/her term of office.

Terms of Presidency

In the following, a year is the period between successive Annual General Meetings.

The President shall serve for a period of two years.

The President-elect shall be entitled to attend the meetings of the Finance and General Purposes Sub-Committee for a period of one year before the beginning of his/her term as President.

The immediate past President shall be entitled to attend the meetings of the Finance and General Purposes Sub-Committee for a period of one year after the end of his/her term as President.

11 DUTIES OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY - The General Secretary shall cause the recording of the proceedings of the Society at all its general meetings, and prepare the minutes of the Council Meetings. The General Secretary shall also keep the Minutes Book of the Society; shall conduct the business of the Society; and shall prepare an Annual Report.

12 DUTIES OF THE TREASURER - The Treasurer shall receive all sums due to the Society and make all payments authorised by the Council, cheques in payment thereof to be

countersigned either by the President or a Trustee. The Treasurer shall keep an account of all his receipts and payments in the Society's Cash book, which accounts shall be balanced annually and be examined by two Members not on the Council acting as auditors, or by a professional Auditor approved by the Council. The Treasurer shall also keep a Register of the names and addresses of all Members of the Society.

13 MANAGEMENT OF THE SOCIETY

(i) COUNCIL - The overall management of the affairs of the Society and the administration of its funds shall be vested in the Council which shall consist of the following :-

The Officers,
The Programme Editor,
Journal Editor,
Librarian
and one representative per Section.
Up to four Trustees (including any of the above)
The Public Relations Officer.

The Council shall meet once in every quarter. and at such other times as may be necessary, The Council shall, at their first meeting after the Annual General Meeting, appoint a "Financial and General Purposes sub-committee" whose function shall be as hereinafter set out. The Council quorum shall be not less than eight.*

(ii) FINANCIAL AND GENERAL PURPOSES SUB-COMMITTEE - The sub-Committee appointed as aforesaid shall be wholly responsible for the management and administration of the Society on a day to day basis, and this shall include the management of the Society's Rooms.

(iii) SECTIONS - The Council shall have the power to appoint sub-Committees to control any aspect of the Society's affairs as it shall consider necessary, and to pass regulations to control the setting up and running of individual Sections of the Society, which sub-committees or Sections shall be bound by such regulations provided that the same shall not be inconsistent with these Laws and the Objects of the Society. Such regulations shall be posted in some conspicuous part of the Society's premises, and shall be binding on all Members.

(iv) POWER TO CO-OPT - The Council shall have power to co-opt additional Members onto the Council, the Financial and General Purposes Sub-Committee, or any other sub-committee as they shall consider necessary from time to time.

14 MEETINGS - Meetings of the Society and its Sections shall be open to all Members. Students, groups of students, and others interested in the work of the Society, may be invited to meetings, subject to Clause 6.

15 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - The Annual General Meeting shall be held each and every year at a date decided by the Society Council, the period between such meetings not exceeding 15 months, when the General Secretary's Report, and the Treasurer's audited accounts shall be submitted, the Council and Officers for the ensuing year elected, and other business relating to the interests of the Society transacted.

Mode of voting: all votes shall be taken by show of hands, or if demanded by ballot.

A Special General Meeting may be convened at any time by the Council, and shall be convened within 28 days from the receipt of a request in writing signed by not less than fifty Members specifying the object of the meeting for any of the following purposes :-

- (a) to consider, and if approved make any alteration to the Laws of the Society.
- (b) to deal with any special matter which the Council may desire to place before the Members.
- (c) to receive the resignation of the Council, or to remove any member or Members thereof from office, and to fill any vacancy or vacancies caused thereby.
- (d) to deal with any special matter which the Members requiring the meeting may desire to place before the Society.

Notice convening a Special General Meeting shall be sent to the Members not less than seven days before the meeting and shall specify the matters to be dealt with.

16 SOCIETY PROPERTY - The Society property is vested in the Trustees of the Society.

TRUST RULES

(i) There shall be not more than eight and not fewer than five Trustees of the Society, of whom any four (whose nomination shall be made from time to time by the Trustees and

notified in writing to the General Secretary) shall be ex-officio Members of the Council but so that if any Trustee shall already be an elected member of the Council the number of Trustees to be so nominated shall be reduced accordingly.

(ii) The property of the Society (other than cash, which shall be under the control of the Treasurer) is vested in the Trustees to be dealt with by them as the Council shall from time to time direct by resolution (of which an entry in the Minute Book shall be conclusive evidence), provided however that no structural additions to, or alterations of, or disposal of the Society's premises shall be made without the agreement of at least three-quarters of all Members of the full Council.

(iii) The Trustees, as custodians of the Society's property, shall not become personally liable for any loss or expense incurred in the execution of the Trust Rules, and shall be fully indemnified against risk and expense out of the Society's property.

(iv) The Trustees shall hold office until death or resignation or until removed from office by a resolution agreed by at least three quarters of all the Members of the full Council. If by reason of any such death, resignation, or removal it shall appear necessary to the Council that a new Trustee or Trustees shall be appointed, or if the Council shall deem it expedient to appoint an additional Trustee or Trustees, but so that the total number of Trustees shall at no time exceed eight, the Council shall by resolution nominate the person or persons to be appointed the new Trustee or Trustees. For the purpose of giving effect to such nomination the President is hereby nominated as the person to appoint new Trustees of the Society within the meaning of Section 36 of the Trustee Act 1925 and he/she shall by deed duly appoint the person or persons so nominated by the Council as the new Trustee or Trustees of the Society and the provisions of the Trustee Act 1925 shall apply to any such appointment. Any statement of fact in any such deed of appointment shall in favour of a person dealing bona fide and for value with the Society or the Council be conclusive evidence of the fact so stated.

(v) If at any time The Society in general meeting shall pass a resolution authorising the Council to borrow money, the Council shall thereupon be empowered to borrow for the purposes of the Society such amount of money, either at one time, or from time to time, and at such a rate of interest, and in such form and manner, and upon such security, as shall be specified in such resolution, and thereupon the Trustees shall, at the discretion of the Council make all such dispositions of the Society's property, or any part thereof, and enter into such agreements in relation thereto, as the Council may deem proper for giving security for such loans and interest. All Members of the Society whether voting on such a resolution or not, and all persons becoming Members of the Society after the passing of such resolution, shall be deemed to have assented to the same as if they had voted in favour of the resolution.

17 LETTING OF ROOMS - The letting of Rooms shall be the prerogative of the Society's Council, who may delegate their authority to a sub-Committee.

No member may use any room or apparatus except as provided in the Laws. No member may permit a second party, not being a member of the Society, to use any Rooms.

The Rooms shall be let only to members or such Societies or other bodies whose objects are, in the opinion of the Council, compatible with those of the Society. A condition of such letting to be that such members Society or organisation shall be responsible for any damage to the building and contents, and third party liability, and shall indemnify the Society against any claim whatsoever arising. Such indemnity to be in writing and in the form prescribed by the Society.

18 KEYS OF THE ROOMS - The Council shall determine who shall hold the keys of the Rooms. The key-holders are responsible for the security of the Rooms, both on entering and leaving, and for the proper use of the Rooms and equipment during such time as the Rooms are open, and must be on the premises during such times. Key-holders are responsible for ensuring all lights and electrical apparatus are switched off.

19 APPARATUS - No apparatus or equipment shall be removed from the Rooms, except as specially authorised by the Council or the Finance and General Purposes Sub-Committee of the Society

20 THE COUNCIL MAY SUSPEND the operation of any Law during a state of National Emergency, or in any other circumstance where they may decide it to be in the best interest of the Society as a whole such suspension to be reported to the Members at the next General Meeting, and approval for the Council's action to be sought. If such approval be not given, the suspension shall be thenceforward null and void.

21 IN CASE ANY MATTER shall arise not provided for in these Laws or in case of doubt as to their interpretation, the same shall be decided by the Council, and reported to the Society at a full meeting for confirmation.

22 A COPY OF THE LAWS shall be given to every member on election, and they shall be bound thereby. Subsequent copies may be purchased at cost.

A copy of the Laws shall be on display in the Society's Rooms at all times.

23 ALTERATION TO THE LAWS - No alterations shall be made to the Laws except at a General Meeting of the Society, and any proposed alterations shall be circulated to Members, with notice of the meeting. Any alterations adopted shall be posted permanently with the copy of these laws displayed under Clause 22.

Adopted by the AGM 27th June 2002

* Changed by the AGM 13th September 2005

Dawn Lovitt. President.