

# **Guildford and Woking Humanists Constitution**

## **1. NAME**

The group shall be called 'Guildford and Woking Humanists' .

## **2. STATUS**

The Group shall be a Partner of the British Humanist Association ('the BHA'), as defined by the Partnership Agreement between the BHA and the Group, of [insert date].

## **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.
- 4.2. Anyone who takes part in the Group's activities, or who signs up to one of the Group's lists (on-line or in hard-copy), shall be defined as a 'Supporter' of the Group. Any such person who is a member of the BHA shall be defined as a 'Member' of the Group. Voting rights at general meetings shall be reserved for Members only (see point 6). The Group will actively encourage its supporters to become members or supporters of the BHA.
- 4.2. The Group will safeguard the confidentiality of membership information, and any other information communicated in confidence by the BHA.
- 4.3. The Group retains the right to refuse or withdraw membership from any member who fails to support its constitution or Partnership Agreement, or who brings the BHA or the Group into disrepute.

## 5. MANAGEMENT

- 5.1. An executive committee ('the Committee') shall manage the Group and ensure that it:
  - 5.1.1. Pursues the Group's Aims referred to in point 3;
  - 5.1.2. Fulfils the requirements of the BHA Partnership Agreement referred to in point 2.
- 5.2. The Committee shall have seven elected officers ('the Officers'), including the following position below, and may co-opt up to two further members.
  - 5.2.1. The President, who shall act as chief executive officer, and as chair of the Committee and any general meetings (unless otherwise delegated);
  - 5.2.2. 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);
  - 5.2.3. The Secretary, who shall act as the chief administrative officer, and service all committee and general meetings.
- 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 five Officers are present.
- 5.6. The President, and any other elected officer who would like to be, shall be a BHA Local Representative (BLR), as defined in the partnership agreement.
- 5.7. The President shall be the main contact in the Group for interactions with the BHA.

## 6. GENERAL MEETINGS

- 6.1. The group shall hold an Annual General Meeting ('the AGM') in January each year, which will:
  - 6.1.1. Receive the financial accounts and reports from the Committee for the period ending the 31<sup>st</sup> December of the same reporting year as the AGM;
  - 6.1.2. Elect the Officers who will serve from 1<sup>st</sup> February following the AGM;
  - 6.1.3. Discuss and vote on any resolutions that have been proposed;
  - 6.1.4. Discuss and vote on any policy or constitutional items requiring ratification.
- 6.2. An Exceptional 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 of the Officers are present and the number of Members present is one more than the number of Officers 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 the BHA, the Group is expected to:
  - 7.1.1. Maintain the financial viability of the Group;
  - 7.1.2. Decide whether or not to have a membership fee;
  - 7.1.3. Pay the annual BHA Partnership fee on time.
- 7.2. There shall not be a membership fee to join the group. Membership of the group is defined in 4.2. An Officer shall ask for voluntary donations at each of the Group's activities, where the Committee has agreed it is appropriate to do so.
- 7.2. The Group may hold events explicitly for the purpose of raising funds, either for the Group or an appropriate charitable cause.
- 7.3. The income and property of the Group shall be devoted to the promotion of the Aims of the Group.
- 7.4. 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 Officers (President, Treasurer and Secretary). Any cheques issued shall be signed by at least two Officers.
- 7.5. The Officers may not receive payment for their services to the Group.
- 7.6. In the event of the Group being dissolved, all remaining funds after payment of liabilities shall go to the British Humanist Association.

## **8. EXTERNAL RELATIONS**

- 8.2. The Group may affiliate to any appropriate body, subject to approval at a general meeting.
- 8.3. The Group may not affiliate to, or publicly support, any political party.
- 8.4. 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 the BHA's aims, strategy, policies and values, and will not take any action that brings Humanism or the BHA into disrepute.
- 8.5. 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 the BHA's aims, values and policies, the Group will give priority to the latter.

## **9. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION**

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.