

Bristol University Folk Society

CONSTITUTION

1 NAME AND STATUS

- a The name of the Society shall be 'Bristol University Folk Society'.
- b The Society may also use the names of its constituent parts.
- c The Society shall be affiliated to the University of Bristol Students' Union.

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- a to make morris dancing, folk music and other folk arts available to all members who wish to participate and perform
- b to promote folk heritage
- c to encourage members to perform to the best of their ability and to provide regular practice sessions and events with this in mind
- d to be self-financing and non-profit making
- e to respect each other, our hosts, Bristol SU members and staff, the public and our environment and abide by the Bristol SU's Code of Conduct
- f to abide by the Bristol SU's policies
- g to ensure a welcoming environment to all. This will include the use of gender-free language in social folk dance contexts and wherever else appropriate.

3 MEMBERSHIP

- a The Society will be open to all members of Bristol SU.
- b No less than two-thirds of the Society's members shall be Full Members of Bristol SU.
- c Membership will be free of charge.
- d Membership is open to those of 16 years of age and older.
- e Members are bound by the Constitution.
- f New members of the Society will be offered an initial four practices or sessions, at the end of which the Committee may invite them to become Active Members of the Society and will then require them, if not already Full Members of the Union, to apply for Associate Membership of the Bristol SU (if they do not already hold it or have Life Membership of Bristol SU) and maintain it for the duration of their Society membership.
- g Active Membership of The Society is granted to those who have participated in at least one activity in the last twelve months. It may also be granted, at the Committee's discretion, to others who contribute significantly to the life of the Society.

- h Only Active Members may vote at General Meetings or stand for election to the Committee.
- i All categories of membership shall have equal rights to attend meetings and society events, with the exception made under 4k below.
- j Non-members (including those under 16) may participate in appropriate society activities with the prior agreement of either the Squire, Folk Secretary or President (as relevant to the activity).

4 COMMITTEE

- a The Society shall be managed by a General Committee (hereafter and elsewhere referred to as the Committee) of members of the Society which shall be the executive decision-making body of the society, as defined in the Union's Constitution and by-laws and by any rulings made by the Union's Societies' Network.
- b Committee posts shall include: President, Secretary, Treasurer, Equality Officer, Squire, and Folk Club Secretary, and may include other roles as outlined in the Committee Roles document, and Chairs of any subcommittees.
- c Role descriptions will be agreed by the Committee, and defined by the Committee Roles document and associated Society policies, and distributed with the initial notification of the General Meeting prior to any elections.
- d The President, Secretary, Treasurer and Equality Officer shall be Full Members of Bristol SU. The Treasurer shall not be in their final year at the University, unless otherwise agreed with Bristol SU.
- e Post-holders shall be elected annually at an AGM and shall hold office until the following AGM and may be removed only by an AGM or EGM.
- f Only Committee members may vote at Committee meetings. Each Committee Member holds one vote regardless of the number of committee roles held.
- g Quoracy for Committee meetings shall be set at 50% of the post-holders rounded up if necessary, plus one if the number of post-holders is even.
- h Motions to be voted on at a Committee Meeting shall be passed by a simple majority of votes.
- i The Committee may at any time appoint any Member of the Society to a post to fill a vacancy. Any members so appointed shall retain the office until the next General Meeting, but may be removed by the Committee at any time.
- j The Committee shall have the power to form sub-committees as and when necessary.
- k Any Member can request that a given Committee meeting or part of a meeting shall be attended by Committee members only, and such others as it may invite; this will then be decided by a vote by the whole Committee.
- l All Committee meetings must be minuted and the minutes made available to the Committee before the next meeting.

5 SUB-COMMITTEES

- a All sub-committees, delegates, working parties and representatives are appointed by the Committee and all their actions and proceedings shall be fully and promptly reported back to the Committee.
- b The Chair of a sub-committee shall normally serve on the Committee for the duration of the sub-committee's existence.
- c A sub-committee shall be responsible for preparing and maintaining such guidelines as are necessary concerning its terms of reference and procedures. All guidelines so drawn up shall be ratified by the Committee.
- d A sub-committee shall be responsible for appointing its own Chair from amongst its members and the appointment so made shall be ratified by the Committee.
- e Non-members of the Society may be invited to sit on sub-committees at the discretion of the Committee, but may only attend Committee and General meetings by invitation of the Committee, and will have no voting rights (other than on the sub-committee in question).

6 FINANCE

- a The accounts of the Society shall be audited by a person approved by the Bristol SU Finance Team when requested, but at least annually.
- b All financial arrangements must be made in accordance with current instructions to society treasurers, as set down by the Union's Societies' Network.
- c The Treasurer and one other officer may agree reasonable variance in expenditure, provided this is reported to the next Committee meeting.
- d The Bristol SU Union Affairs Officer, Sport and Student Development Officer and Director of Finance and Administration shall jointly be empowered to issue financial instructions on behalf of the Society if:
 - i the Society folds with outstanding financial affairs;
 - ii Change of Mandate forms are not completed, and the previous Committee are out of reasonable contact; or
 - iii financial irregularities are found.

7 GENERAL MEETINGS

- a There shall be an Annual General Meeting in or around the third week of February.
- b Attempts will be made to notify all members with voting rights of the AGM at least fourteen days in advance and an Agenda shall be sent to arrive by seven days in advance.
- c Quoracy for General Meetings shall be set at twice the number of committee members present plus one.
- d General Meetings shall normally be chaired by an appointee of the Committee, agreed in advance..
- e The Treasurer (or their delegate) shall present annual accounts to members at the AGM.
- f Prior to the start of election to the committee, all current committee posts become vacant.

- g Motions shall be decided at such meetings by a simple majority of votes cast, including proxy votes (provided this shall be not less than half of the votes cast).
- h A vote may be by secret ballot if requested. Votes shall be counted by a Committee member.
- i An Extraordinary General Meeting may be called by the Committee or by a number of members of the Society equivalent to the number of committee members , by application to the Committee. An EGM shall be called as specified on the application, within a reasonable time, but at least seven days' notice shall be given.
- j All General Meetings must be minuted by the Bagman (or other delegated Committee member).

8 ELECTIONS

- a Nominations must have the acceptance of the nominee, and be duly proposed and seconded by Active Members and may be submitted up to the point of election.
- b Voting shall be by simple majority of the votes cast, including proxy votes. If the position is uncontested, voting shall be by a show of hands with the addition of proxy votes, the candidate having been asked to leave the AGM room during the vote. If the position is contested then ballot papers shall be issued to those voting and a count taken of the ballot papers by a Committee Member, with the addition of proxy votes. In the case of a tie the Chair of the meeting shall have the casting vote.
- c A member present at a general meeting shall hold no more than 2 proxy votes.
- d All proxy votes are to be registered in writing in advance of the start of a General Meeting with the Committee, notifying who holds whose vote.

9 SUBSIDIARY ACTIVITIES

Some subsidiary society activities may require a separate Memorandum of Establishment. The content of this memorandum will be agreed by the Committee, shall be subject to ratification by the next General Meeting and will remain in force for the duration of the activity.

10 AFFILIATIONS

The Society shall affiliate to external bodies only where membership of those bodies is essential to the fulfilment of its core aims and only with the prior agreement of the Societies' Network.

11 CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

- a Any amendment to this constitution may be proposed and put into effect temporarily by the Committee, but must be ratified at the next properly constituted General Meeting, held under the terms of the current Constitution as last agreed at a General Meeting, by a simple majority of votes cast.
- b All such amendments shall become valid only after approval by the Societies' Network.