

**North East Humanists
Registered Charity No.1112965**

Bye-Laws

1. Adoption of these Bye-Laws

These Bye-Laws were adopted at the Annual General Meeting on 16 March 2023. They must be read in conjunction with the Constitution which came into effect on the same date. Throughout, in these Bye-Laws, the North East Humanists is referred to as “the Charity”.

2. Changing the Bye-Laws

These Bye-Laws may be changed by a simple majority at a general meeting, except for clause 13 which can be changed by a resolution of the Trustees.

3. President and Vice-Presidents

The Trustees may appoint a President and up to three Vice Presidents. The appointment(s) will be in recognition of their contribution to the work of the Charity or for other significant work in advancing the cause of Humanism. Neither the President nor the Vice-Presidents shall be Trustees

.4. Election of Trustees

At the AGM, the posts of Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Education Officer, Press and Publicity Officer, shall be filled by election.

In addition nine Trustees shall be elected who are not officers. To be eligible for election as a Trustee the person must be a member of the Charity and at least 18 years old.

Voting shall be by those present at the AGM or attending by video link. There shall also be proxy votes but no postal votes. Those intending to exercise proxy votes must have evidence of their right to exercise a proxy vote.

In order to stand for election as a Trustee (including those who are standing as Officers) a nomination for that member must be received by the Secretary no later than 4 weeks prior to the start of the AGM.

The nomination can be sent to the Secretary either by hard copy or by email:

In the case of a hard copy nomination, the nomination paper must be signed by the member making the nomination and by the member seconding the nomination. There must also be a signed statement on the nomination paper by the person being nominated stating their willingness to stand.

In the case of an email nomination, 3 separate emails must be received by the Secretary. All of them must be received 4 weeks prior to the start of the AGM :

- An email from the member making the nomination
- An email from the member seconding the nomination
- An email from the person being nominated stating his/her willingness to stand.

Any member whose nomination as an Officer does not lead to election shall automatically be considered as a nominee for ordinary membership of the Trustees, unless the candidate indicates otherwise at the time of nomination.

5. Appointment of Trustees

The Trustees may appoint any person who is willing to act as a Trustee, who is a member of the Charity and who is at least 18 years old, provided that the total number of Trustees at any one time does not exceed fifteen.

They may also appoint Trustees to act as officers, provided that there is a vacancy in the relevant officer post. Any such officer appointment shall be known as e.g. the "Acting Treasurer", to signify that the post was filled by appointment by the Trustees and not by election at the AGM.

6. Creation of Additional Officer Posts, Assistant Officer Posts, Committees and Sub-Committees

The Trustees may at any time create or remove Assistant Officer Posts and Additional Officer Posts, Committees and Sub-Committees.

Assistant Officers shall undertake work under the direction of an Officer, to whom they will be accountable. These posts shall be filled by appointment by the Trustees. The holders of these posts may be drawn from the Trustees or from the wider Membership or by election from the general membership (preferable).

A Member taking on an Additional Officer Post or an Assistant Officer Post does not become a Trustee by virtue of their appointment. Those appointed to these posts will hold them from the time of their appointment until the abolition of the post. During their tenure, the ratification of their appointment shall be considered at each Annual General Meeting.

7. Affiliated organisations

Organisations may request that they become affiliated to the Charity. The decisions on the rules of affiliation will be made by the Trustees.

Current organisations to which the Charity is affiliated are listed on the Charity website. Trustees contribute to other organisations either by affiliation or donation.

The Trustees shall have the power to authorise travel and subsistence expenses to those who represent the Charity at approved events, such as Humanists UK Conferences and meetings.

8. Finance

a) The Treasurer shall consult with the Trustees on the preparation of a draft budget for the new calendar year. After agreement by the Trustees this will be reported to the Annual General Meeting.

b) The Trustees shall determine the policy of the Charity with respect to the reimbursement of members for expenditure on travel whilst on the business of the Charity. In particular they shall determine a figure per mile for car journeys authorised by the Trustees.

c) Officers shall have the discretion to purchase goods and services on behalf of the Charity, provided that any individual purchase does not exceed the sum set in the budget by the Trustees. Above this sum the approval of the Trustees is required. Non officers must seek approval from an officer before any purchase.

d) The Treasurer shall prepare accounts for the calendar year as soon as possible after the end of the calendar year and submit these for approval to the Trustees. These accounts, after approval or modification by the Trustees, shall be audited and then submitted to the membership at the AGM.

9. Return to the Charity Commission

The Chair and the Secretary shall jointly be responsible for making the annual return required by the Charity Commission.

10. Copies of the Bye-Laws and Constitution

The Constitution and Bye-Laws shall be published on the Charity's website; members can request hard copies, at any time, from the Secretary.

11. Responsibilities of Trustees

All Trustees must agree, conform to, and sign The North East Humanist Trustees' Responsibilities and Code of Conduct.

12. Responsibilities of Officers

The Officers shall have the duties and responsibilities as set out in the Constitution, which shall be subject to change only by resolution of the Annual General Meeting, or a Special General Meeting, as stipulated in rule 7, subsection 2 3 of the Constitution.

The Officers shall also have the duties and responsibilities set out in clauses one to twelve of these Bye-Laws. The complete list of Officers' responsibilities, as of March 2023, are listed below. These may continue to evolve as technology and personnel change.

(1) Chair

- a) To chair General Meetings, the meetings of the Trustees and regular monthly meetings or to arrange for an alternative Chair when necessary.
- b) To maintain an overview of all of the activities undertaken by the Charity, and to ensure that the provisions of the Constitution, the Bye-laws and the requirements of the Charity Commission are adhered to.
- c) To ensure that the financial status of the Charity is maintained in a viable position.
- d) To encourage the Charity to present a positive image in its relationships with its members, with other organisations and the general public.
- e) To ensure, together with the Secretary, that the annual return required by the Charity Commission is made (see Clause 10).

(2) Secretary

- a) To prepare, in consultation with the Chair, agendas for the meetings of the Trustees for circulation approximately 7 days in advance of the meeting and to ensure that the minutes of these meetings are made available approximately 7 days after the meeting.
- b) To obtain and collate the annual reports of Officers in time for circulation with papers for the AGM.
- c) To issue the Notice of the general meetings (AGM and Special General Meetings) and agenda to the membership, along with the annual Reports of Officers in the case of the AGM, at least three weeks in advance of the meeting, and to ensure that the minutes of these meetings are made available no more than 14 days after the meeting.
- d) To operate the relevant administrative procedures at the AGM and Special General Meetings. These include procedures for the election of the Trustees and procedures for dealing with motions. (See Clause 4)
- e) To respond to queries from the public about the nature of NEH, HUK, ceremonies and celebrants.
- f) To maintain a list of affiliated organisations.
- g) To ensure, together with the Chair, that the annual return required by the Charity Commission is made (see Clause 10).

(3) Treasurer

- a) To monitor the Charity's finances and to inform the Secretary, Chair, and Trustees of any concerns.
- b) To pay out promptly all legitimate expenses incurred on behalf of the Charity within the approved limits of expenditure and subject to the provision of an appropriate receipt.
- c) To liaise closely with the Membership Secretary regarding annual payments by the members.
- d) To maintain records which will enable statements of the Charity's financial status to be made to the committee during the year.

- e) To provide the Trustees with guidance on any corrective action required to maintain a satisfactory financial position.
- f) To review the Charity's "Minimum Reserve" as part of each Annual Report.
- g) To apply to the Inland revenue for the refund of Gift Aid.
- h) To prepare accounts for the calendar year as soon as possible after the end of the calendar year and submit these to the Trustees. These accounts, after approval by the Trustees, shall be audited and, together with the Annual Report, submitted to the membership for information prior to the AGM.
- i) To keep an inventory of all the property of the Charity.

(4) Role of Education Officer

Schools

- a) To receive and keep a record of requests for school visits in NE from both HUK and directly from schools.
- b) To allocate school visits to trained school speakers.
- c) To monitor the position of humanist representation on SACREs.
- d) To coordinate and up-date the Education Panel of school speakers and SACRE reps.
- e) To keep up-to-date with HUK developments
- f) To update the Education area of the NEH website and contribute to the monthly bulletin as appropriate.
- g) To write and circulate other documents and material to support school speakers, SACRE, and teachers.

Outreach

- a) To liaise with other local and regional organisations, such as museums, about the representation of Humanism.
- b) To coordinate the use of our publicity material, especially through the use of the NEH stall, in the street and other appropriate events.

(5) Media and Publicity Officer(s)

- a) To seek ways of publicising the existence and aims of NEH.
- b) To produce a monthly bulletin that highlights the recent and current activities of NEH and the wider Humanist movement.
- c) To ensure that the Charity's website and other electronic means of communications (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, and MailChimp) are kept up to date.
- d) To publicise NEH events using the Charity's website, Social Media, (including ads), and HUK's calendar of events.
- e) To encourage members to communicate Humanist views using social media or traditional media such as radio and local TV shows.
- f) To develop contacts with local media.
- g) To pass on requests that we receive through the website to the appropriate officer: for example, requests for school speakers to the Education Officer, and membership enquiries to the Membership Secretary.

(6) Membership Secretary

- a) To respond to enquirers about NEH by letter or email and give information about our website.
- b) On receipt of application forms, to send a welcome pack including a copy of our Bye-Laws and direction to our G.D.P.R. policy on the website.
- c) To maintain a membership list with address, email, telephone numbers, and status of membership subscription.
- d) To notify the Media and Publicity Officer of the deaths of members for mention in emails and/or the bulletin and to arrange for obituaries to be written if appropriate.

- e) To maintain a file of correspondence and keep the membership data base up to date.
- f) To send hard copy subscription requests for members who do not pay by standing order, or equivalent, and to follow up unpaid subscriptions with one reminder.
- g) As far as possible, to be aware of members who are not in good health or who are socially isolated and who might be helped by occasional phone calls and/or emails.
- h) To liaise with the Treasurer about membership subscriptions.
- i) To make arrangements for someone to greet members and guests and make them feel welcome at the monthly meetings.
- j) To keep a list of the numbers of those attending our monthly meetings including, as far as possible, the numbers watching online.
- k) To maintain the NEH printer and stock of stationery.
- l) To prepare, print, and distribute any leaflets/publicity information and correspondence as required.

7. Management Committee

The Trustees shall be known informally as The Management Committee.

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- Amended 21.03.2013
- Amended 20.03.2014
- Amended 21.05.2015
- Amended 15.03.2018
- Amended 16.03.2023