

Constitution

(first ratified at the 2000 AGM and amended in 2007, 2008, 2009, 2012 and 2022)

1. Objective of the Group

To expand the knowledge and awareness of our local, national and international heritage by:

- a) providing a meeting place in the Wigan district for people who are interested in archaeology;
- b) arranging appropriate speakers;
- c) arranging visits to sites of interest;
- d) initiating archaeological investigations and field work which are appropriate for the society.

2. Organisation of the Group

The group will consist of:

- a) **Members** - i.e. those who have paid annual subscriptions.
Members will receive a monthly newsletter. They will be eligible to stand for election to the committee, vote at Annual General Meetings and Extraordinary General Meeting's and enjoy a privileged entrance fee.
- b) **Visitors** - any member of the public is welcome to attend any open meeting;
- c) **Honorary members** - people who have the right to full membership without paying annual subscriptions and monthly fees;
- d) **Committee** - an elected committee will consist of no less than five and no more than eight members, three of whom will be officers, i.e. chairperson, secretary and treasurer.
- e) **Web-members** - those who are unable to attend the monthly meetings. They pay only half the normal subscription fee but do not have voting rights. However they will receive the monthly newsletter and have access to all areas of the society's website. If they attend a monthly meeting they are treated as visitors.
- f) **Associate members** - those who have already joined an associated group. They pay half our annual subscription and do not have voting rights but otherwise will be treated the same as normal members (e.g. have access to all areas of the society's website).

3. Election of the Committee

- a) Committee members shall be elected by a show of hands at the Annual General Meeting.
- b) They will stand for one year but will be eligible for re-election after that time.
- c) Candidates of the committee must be members (as defined above) and shall forward their names, together with those of a proposer and seconder (who must also be members), to the secretary or chairperson no later than a week before the Annual General Meeting.
- d) If necessary new committee members may be co-opted by a majority of the existing committee, (providing the maximum of eight members is not exceeded).
- e) Co-opted committee members will serve until the next Annual General Meeting.

4. Role of the Committee

- a) A quorum of 60% will be necessary before committee decisions can be made.

- b) The committee will be responsible for:
 - i) maintaining the objectives of the group as stated above;
 - ii) payment of monies up to a maximum of £500 except where money has been obtained by grant for a particular purpose;
 - iii) the treasurer, alone, will be responsible for payment of monies to a maximum of £50;
 - iv) calling Extraordinary General Meeting's when necessary.
- c) The Committee may by unanimous vote and for good reason terminate the membership of any individual, provided that the individual concerned shall have the right to be heard by the committee before a final decision is made.
- d) When a unanimous decision can not be arrived at then a vote is taken and the decision of the majority accepted.

5. Funds

- a) The funds of the society shall be paid into a bank account operated by the committee in the name of the society. Accounts/details shall not be changed without due cause or agreement from the members.
- b) All cheques drawn on the account must be signed by two out of three unrelated signatories. These must be members of the committee and one must be the treasurer.
- c) The Society is established as a non-profit making organisation.

6. Open Meetings

- a) Open meetings will be held on the 1st Wednesday of every month except January and August
- b) Speakers will be booked for most Open Meetings.
- c) Trips will be arranged as appropriate.

7. Annual General Meetings

- a) Annual General Meetings will be held on the first Wednesday in February.
- b) A quorum of 33% will be necessary before decisions are made.
- c) Reports of officers will be given.
- d) Annual subscriptions and monthly fees for the forthcoming year will be decided.
- e) Extra Items for the agenda must be submitted to the secretary or chairperson, with names of proposer and seconder, at least two weeks before the Annual General Meeting
- f) The secretary or another designated person shall take minutes of the meetings. These will be available to any member on request.

8. Extraordinary General Meetings

- a) The committee may call an Extraordinary General Meeting whenever appropriate.
- b) The committee must call an Extraordinary General Meeting if at least five members request such a meeting in writing stating the business to be considered. At least 21 days notice must be given.
- c) Members only will be eligible to vote.
- d) A quorum of 33% of members will be needed before a decision can be taken.
- e) The secretary or another designated person shall take minutes of the meetings. These will be distributed to the members.

9. Alterations to the Constitution

Alterations to the constitution may be made at the Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting

10. Winding up of Society

- a) Any decision to wind up the society would be taken by a quorum of members at an Extraordinary General Meeting.
- b) Society equipment, with the exception of that obtained with a grant, would be auctioned and the proceeds, together with any society funds, would not be distributed among the remaining members but would be given to a likeminded organisation or a charity of the Society's choice. Grant awarded equipment, or money obtained by auction of the same, would be offered to the original donor.

11. Fieldwork Teams

These are formed to organise and run specialised work on behalf of the Society (e.g. survey and excavation work)

- a) They will consist of at least two members (a leader and a deputy who will be endorsed by the committee) plus any number of other interested members.
- b) The arrangement will be project specific and last for the duration the project.
- c) The leader and/or his deputy will be co-opted onto the committee (if they are not already members) and will report to the committee as the work progresses.
- d) The day to day running of the project will be the responsibility of the key members of the team - however the overall scope of the work will be determined by the committee.
- e) In the case of excavation work, either the leader or his deputy will be assigned as Project Leader and (for risk assessment and insurance purposes) must be present at all times during the work.
- f) For health and safety reasons no individual member of the team will be allowed carry out excavation work on their own.
- g) Any expenditure by the team must be ratified by the committee (if less than £50 – this can be done by the treasurer alone).

12. Unauthorised Work

- a) All work carried out on behalf of the Society must be authorised by the committee and carried out within the terms of the previous item.
- b) No individual member of the society should use the name of the Society, without permission, to gain access to a site from any land or property owner.
- c) Contact by an individual member with official organisations should be carried out with the full knowledge and approval of the committee.
- d) No member shall jeopardise the good name of the Society by any means (e.g. using the Society name for personal publicity or to obtain materials/artefacts from other organisation for personal use or financial gain).

13. Insurance

- a) The Society shall maintain Third Party Liability Insurance to cover all bona fide members when carrying out archaeological work in the field (restricting depth is 2 metres). This will insure the members against damage to third party property and utilities (the value of which to be decided by the committee).
- b) Further insurance will also be taken out at the committee's discretion to cover such things as damage or theft of the society's equipment (All Risk Owned Property), Legal Costs and Employer's Liability .

14. Working for Outside Bodies

Non-archaeological or work carried out outside the Wigan Borough will be undertaken on the discretion of the committee based on the following criteria:-

- i) We would welcome a donation (if the body has funding available)
- ii) Site permission has been granted
- iii) Insurance cover is adequate
- iv) It does not interfere with current fieldwork
- v) It does not damage the Society's image or reputation

15. Payment of Subscriptions

- a) If a member's annual subscription is not renewed within three months of the renewal date, membership is deemed to have lapsed until such time as subs are paid (however newsletters will continue to be sent out until the following AGM).
- b) Reduced subscription will be allowed (usually half price) for students under the age of 21