

# National Equine Welfare Council



## CONSTITUTION – April 2007

### 1. NAME

The name of the organisation shall be “**The National Equine Welfare Council**”, hereinafter referred to as the Council or NEWC.

### 2. PURPOSE

NEWC is a voluntary organisation the purpose of which is to act as a focus and forum for charities, breed societies and kindred organisations concerned with equine welfare, in order to enhance equine welfare throughout the UK and Ireland.

### 3. VISION

- a) To be the equine welfare organisation in Great Britain, that will represent effectively its Members' views and wishes on horse welfare, especially to Government.
- b) To be capable of co-ordinating and carrying out actions to relieve and prevent equine suffering, and to improve horse welfare throughout the United Kingdom.

### 4. OBJECTS

The Council's objects are:

- a) To promote effective methods of dealing with abuse, neglect, cruelty or unnecessary suffering of any sort concerned with equines.
- b) To encourage and assist all equestrian and equine-related organisations to meet and maintain the standards laid down in the **NEWC Code of Practice for Organisations involved in the Keeping of Horses, Ponies & Donkeys**.
- c) To provide government, statutory and other bodies, and the general public with an authoritative and unified source of advice and information on equine welfare.
- d) To disseminate information and educational material to assist better horse-management.
- e) To support, within the limits of its resources, campaigns agreed by the Management Board, having received the support of the membership.
- f) To facilitate discussion between Member organisations (herein referred to as 'Members').
- g) To co-ordinate an appropriate response to Members and other equine organisations in difficulty.
- h) To encourage equine charities and related organisations to become Members of NEWC.
- i) To provide advice and support to Members, access to training and information relating to the business of running a charity.
- j) To co-ordinate and/or run equine welfare initiatives in the UK that may be beyond the capability or willingness of individual charities.

## 5. MEMBERSHIP

### a) Types of Membership:

#### i) **Full Members & Full Welfare Members.**

Societies or organisations having equine welfare as a major part of their activities are eligible to become Full Members or Full Welfare Members, who will have voting rights and their representatives will be entitled to stand for election to the Management Board.

#### ii) **Associate Members**

Other organisations which do not fulfil the requirements for Full or Full Welfare Membership as set out in (i) but which are interested in supporting the Council's objects are eligible to apply to become Associate Members. Such members are entitled to attend all meetings of NEWC but they may not vote.

#### iii) **Honorary Life Membership**

This may be granted to individual Members at the discretion of the Management Board. Honorary Members may attend General Meetings of the Council, but will have no vote.

### b) Applications for Membership:

Applications for Membership, Full, Full Welfare or Associate, will be processed in accordance with agreed administrative procedures.

## 6. MANAGEMENT BOARD

The routine business of NEWC shall be conducted by an elected Management Board.

### a) The Management Board will comprise six Full Members of NEWC who will elect from that number:

- i) Chairman
- ii) Vice Chairman
- iii) Treasurer

### b) A paid Secretary shall be appointed by the Management Board.

### c) Each Member will serve on the Board for a period of three years, with each retiring Member becoming eligible for re-election at the next AGM. There is no limit on the number of occasions individual members may offer themselves for election to the Board.

### d) In the event of a vacancy occurring between elections the Board may, at its discretion, call a general meeting to elect a replacement, or co-opt a member until a ballot takes place at the next General meeting of the Council.

### e) Appointment of the Full and Full Welfare Members' representatives will be decided by ballot amongst Full and Full Welfare Members.

i) Members of the Management Board represent their particular organisations, but are elected as individuals. When an elected member is unable to attend a meeting of the Board, a substitute may **not** attend in his/her stead.

ii) Should an individual member leave his/her organisation, or the organisation ceases to be a member of NEWC, he/she will be required to resign from the Board. The Board may, at its discretion, call a General meeting to elect a replacement or co-opt an individual until a ballot can be held at the next General Meeting.

- f) A quorum will be formed if not less than three voting members of the Management Board are in attendance.
- g) The Board, at its discretion, may appoint **Sub-Committees** to look into specific areas of activity. All groups will be chaired by a person appointed by the Board. The chairman of each group will be responsible for appointing members according to their expertise in this particular field, and for the provision of progress reports to the Board.
- h) The activities of sub-committees will be recorded in the minutes of Board meetings, which will be distributed to all members of NEWC.

## 7. **PRESIDENT / VICE PRESIDENTS.**

- a) The Management Board will invite a suitable person to become President of NEWC.
- b) The Management Board will also decide the number and identity of Vice Presidents to be appointed. The maximum number of Vice Presidents to be appointed shall be FOUR.
- c) The President and Vice Presidents will be responsible for encouraging, advising and warning the Management Board and will have the right to be fully informed on the deliberations and decisions of the Board. In addition they should represent and support the aims of the Management Board to outside bodies within their area of expertise.
- d) The appointment of the President and Vice Presidents will be for a period of two years extendable by invitation of the Management Board.
- e) The President and Vice Presidents may attend and take part in discussions at all meetings of the Council and Management Board.
- f) The positions of President and Vice President of NEWC do not carry voting rights.

## 8. **MEETINGS**

- a) **General Meetings:** NEWC will hold not less than two General meetings per year. One of these meetings shall be designated the Annual General Meeting (AGM) at which the following business must be included on the Agenda:
  - i) Election of members of the Management Board
  - ii) Presentation of NEWC accounts
  - iii) Setting of the annual subscriptions.
- b) **Notice:** The Secretary must provide to all Members not less than twenty-eight days written notice of the AGM.
- c) **Representatives:** Each Member Society shall be entitled to nominate one person as its representative at all General meetings of NEWC. A member organisation may be represented by more than one person at a General meeting of NEWC, but only one representative may vote.
- d) **Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM):**
  - i) The Secretary will be required to call an Extraordinary General Meeting of NEWC following a request by:
    - A General Meeting of The Council; or

- The Management Board; or
- A minimum of twenty percent of Full Members; or
- A combination of the President and two Vice Presidents, or three Vice Presidents.

ii) The Secretary will give Members not less than twenty-eight days written notice of such a meeting. This must be by post and not electronic mail.

e) **Management Board:**

i) The Management Board shall meet not less than twice yearly. The Board may co-opt, from time to time, Members or Associate Members to assist in the conduct of specific business.

ii) Minutes of the Management Board meetings will be circulated to all Members and Associate Members.

f) **Quorum:** For the purposes of all General meetings of NEWC a quorum shall be **twelve** Members.

g) **Visitors:** Any person or persons may be invited to address any meeting, or to join in the discussion of any matter, with the Management Board's consent. Such persons shall not be entitled to vote.

h) **Voting:**

i) Except for the election of Officers, which shall be conducted by secret ballot, all votes and resolutions passed by the Council or Management Board will be decided by a simple majority on a show of hands.

ii) Nominations for Officers and Members of the Board shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary at least six weeks before the General Meeting. Each nomination must clearly identify the proposer and seconder and be accompanied by a declaration from the nominee confirming his or her willingness to stand.

iii) The appointed representative of every Full or Full Welfare Member organisation shall be entitled to cast one vote only.

iv) In all cases of equality, the Chairman shall have the casting vote.

**9. MEMBERS' RESPONSIBILITIES**

a) NEWC is to be seen as an independent body working with, but not subordinate to, other organisations.

b) Any meeting of NEWC shall take decisions on a simple majority of those voting. Each Member or Associate Member has the right of objection to a specific proposal and not to be bound by it.

c) Notwithstanding the right of objection, the following commitments are absolute and thus demand strict adherence by all Members, regardless of membership category.

i) **Adherence to this Constitution.**

ii) Where horses are kept by Member organisations, compliance with the **NEWC Code of Practice for Organisations involved in the Keeping of Horses, Ponies & Donkeys.**

- iii) Acceptance of the rule that no individual shall have a right to speak on behalf of NEWC except the Chairman or Vice Chairman, or any person given specific authority to do so by the Chairman or Vice Chairman when dealing with a specific subject. Member organisations shall not commit NEWC to policies not previously agreed by the Management Board.
- iv) Members shall at all times strive to set a high standard of example of equine management to other equine organisations.
- v) Members must not behave in a manner likely to bring NEWC into disrepute.
- vi) All external correspondence relating to the work of NEWC must be conducted through the office of the Secretary.

## **10. FINANCE**

- a) The Management Board has responsibility for control of NEWC's finance and assets.
- b) The Honorary Treasurer shall receive subscriptions and donations, and issue receipts. All cheques shall be signed jointly by two nominated members of the Management Board.
- c) At each and every Annual General Meeting, the Honorary Treasurer shall produce a balance sheet showing the state of the accounts, and such accounts shall be audited and offered for adoption at the AGM. The auditor will be appointed by the Management Board.
- d) Full and Associate Members shall pay the annual subscriptions as set at the Annual General Meeting. Subscriptions are due annually on 1<sup>st</sup> January.

## **11. COMPLAINTS AGAINST MEMBERS**

The Management Board will investigate all complaints in accordance with the agreed procedure.

## **12. INTERPRETATION**

For the purposes of this Constitution, the word "horse" shall include a pony, donkey, mule and any other equid.

## **13. AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION**

This Constitution may be revised, amended or replaced in whole or in part by a two thirds majority of those present and entitled to vote at an Annual or any other General Meeting of the Council.

*Amended 20<sup>th</sup> April 2007*