



## National Equine Welfare Council (NEWC)

### CONSTITUTION April 2008

#### 1. NAME

The name of the organisation shall be “**The National Equine Welfare Council**”, herein after 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

- To be the equine welfare organisation in Great Britain, that will represent effectively its Members’ views and wishes on horse welfare, especially to Government.
- 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:

- i. To promote effective methods of dealing with abuse, neglect, cruelty or unnecessary suffering of any sort concerned with equines.
- ii. 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**.
- iii. To provide government, statutory and other bodies, and the general public with an authoritative and unified source of advice and information on equine welfare.
- iv. To disseminate information and educational material to assist better horse-management.
- v. To support, within the limits of its resources, campaigns agreed by the Management Board, having received the support of the membership.
- vi. To facilitate discussion between Member organisations (herein referred to as ‘Members’).

- vii. To co-ordinate an appropriate response to Members and other equine organisations in difficulty.
- viii. To encourage equine charities and related organisations to become Members of NEWC.
- ix. To provide advice and support to Members, access to training and information relating to the business of running a charity.
- x. 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**

### 5.1 **Types of Membership:**

- i. **Full Equine Welfare Member:**  
Welfare organisations involved in the keeping of horses, ponies, donkeys & hybrids thereof, having passed inspection by NEWC and having achieved registered charity status.
- ii. **Full Welfare Member**  
Other non-horse keeping organisations having welfare as one of their main aims (as per Constitution). To include breed societies, veterinary organisations, scientific organisations etc.
- iii. **Associate Equine Member \***  
Businesses involved in the keeping of horses, ponies, donkeys & hybrids thereof, and passing inspection<sup>^</sup> by NEWC.  
To include riding schools, livery yards and retirement livery yards etc.
- iv. **Associate Member \***  
Commercial businesses associated with the equine or equestrian industry. To include saddlers, tack shops, feed companies etc.
- v. **Supporter Member \***  
Individual people, online registration and payment.  
No Voting rights
- vi. **Honorary Membership \***  
This may be granted to deserving individuals at the discretion of the Management Board. Honorary Members may attend General Meetings but have no voting rights.
- Friends of NEWC \***
- vii. This applies to a member of any category gifting extra funds as a donation in addition to their Annual Subscription. Credit will be given to each donating organisation on the NEWC website, in NEWC Information packs and in the NEWC Annual Accounts.

[\* New categories to be introduced in January 2009]

### 5.2 **Applications for Membership:**

Applications for Membership 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.

- 6.1 The Management Board will comprise of up to 8 Full or Full Welfare members of NEWC, who will elect from that number:
- i. Chairman
  - ii. Vice Chairman
- 6.2 The positions of Treasurer and Secretary shall be appointed by the Management Board.
- 6.3 Members of the Management Board 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.
- 6.4 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 individuals may offer themselves for election to the Board.
- 6.5 The Board may co-opt, from time to time, person(s) to assist in the conduct of specific business. Co-opted person(s) have no voting rights.
- 6.6 In agreed exceptional circumstances, the Management Board may appoint a *pro tem* member to fulfil the role of a long term absentee. This position will carry full voting rights.
- 6.7 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.
- 6.8 In the event that a member of the Management Board fails to satisfactorily fulfil their duties, they may be asked to stand down by the Chairman and Vice Chairman.
- 6.9 The Management Board shall meet a minimum of four times a year.
- 6.10 A quorum will be formed if three or more voting members of the Management Board are in attendance.
- 6.11 Minutes of Management Board meetings will be circulated to all Members.
- 6.12 The Board, at its discretion, may appoint **Sub-Committees** to look into specific areas of activity.
- i. All Sub-Committees will be chaired by a person appointed by the Management 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 Management Board.
  - ii. The activities of sub-committees will be recorded in the minutes of Management Board meetings, which will be distributed to all members of NEWC.

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

- i. The Management Board will invite a suitable person to become President of NEWC.
- ii. 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.
- iii. 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 Management Board. In addition they should represent and support the aims of the Management Board to outside bodies within their area of expertise.
- iv. The appointment of the President and Vice President will be for a period of two years extendable by invitation of the Management Board.
- v. The President and Vice President may attend and take part in discussions at all meetings of the Council and Management Board.
- vi. The positions of President and Vice President of NEWC do not carry voting rights.

## **8. MEETINGS**

### **8.1 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.

### **8.2 Notice:**

The Secretary must provide to all Members not less than twenty eight days written notice of the AGM. This must be by post and not electronic mail.

### **8.3 Representatives:**

Each Member Organisation 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.

### **8.4. 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.

#### 8.5 **Quorum:**

For the purpose of all General meetings of NEWC a quorum shall be **twelve** Members.

#### 8.6 **Visitors:**

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

#### 8.7 **Voting:**

- i. Except for the election of Management Board members, 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 of those entitled to vote.
- ii. Applications for positions on the Management Board shall be submitted to the Secretary at least six weeks before the General Meeting using the appropriate form. This form will clearly identify the seconder and include a signed declaration from the nominee confirming his or her willingness to stand and this must include the signed support of the Chairman of Trustees and Chief Executive of the applicant's organisation.
- 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**

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

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

9.3 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**

- 10.1 The Management Board has responsibility for control of NEWC's finance and assets.
- 10.2 All cheques shall be signed jointly by two nominated members of the Management Board
- 10.3 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 and approved by the Council.
- 10.4 All 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 purpose 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 two thirds majority of those present and entitled to vote at an Annual or other General Meeting of the Council.

**17<sup>th</sup> April 2008**

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