



# Sussex and Surrey Coppice Group



## 2022 CONSTITUTION

- 1) The Group shall be called the Sussex & Surrey Coppice Group (hereinafter referred to as the Group).
- 2) The area served by the Group is Sussex and Surrey but the Group shall be free to enrol members from other areas and undertake projects and activities in other areas.
- 3) The aims of the group are:-
  - a) To promote the practice of coppicing and its products.
  - b) To promote the Groups' activities and the products of its members.
  - c) To inform landowners and coppice workers about grants for the regeneration of coppice woodlands and other relevant grants.
  - d) To encourage the exchange of information among members.
  - e) To encourage and promote the highest environmental, ethical and craft standards within the group.
  - f) To seek opportunities for education and training for members of the Group and affiliates.
  - g) To source Woodlands for members to work in.
  - h) To share work among members of the Group.
- 4) To fulfil the above aims the Group will:-
  - a) Support its members
  - b) Undertake activities approved by the Committee in the furtherance of the aims or for the benefit of the Group.
  - c) Raise money through membership subscriptions and by any other means approved by the Committee for carrying out the aims or for other benefit of the Group.
  - d) By decision of the Committee, take up affiliation to or membership of any organisation for the benefit of the Group and/or its members and/or in the furtherance of the aims of the Group.
- 5) The Group shall hold Members' Meetings at least four times a year. The date and venue and Agenda for each Members' Meeting shall be notified to all members and all members shall be entitled to attend.

One of the Members' Meetings, at approximately the same time each year, shall be designated the Groups' Annual General Meeting.

- 6) At each Annual General Meeting, the members present shall elect a Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary and a maximum of six further members, these persons shall act as a Management Committee until the next Annual General Meeting.
- The Management Committee shall be responsible for the day to day running of the Group and shall explain their actions if called upon to do so at Members' Meetings.
- All nine Committee members shall resign at each Annual General Meeting and may offer themselves for immediate re-election for a further year.
- There shall be no limit to the number of times Committee members may offer themselves for re-election but the Committee shall endeavour to ensure a regular intake of new members.
- 7) The Management Committee shall hold meetings at least four times a year to conduct the administration of the Group. Minutes of Committee meetings shall be kept and circulated to Committee members.
- The quorum for meetings of the Management Committee shall be five.
- i. The Committee may, at its sole discretion and without giving reasons, refuse any application for membership of the Group.
  - ii. The Committee may refuse to renew any membership if in the opinion of the Committee a member has brought, or is likely to bring the Group into disrepute or has infringed the constitution.
  - iii. The Committee may agree the affiliation of educational establishments, conservation groups/ charities and other organisations to the Group at its discretion where it considers there is benefit to the group by such an affiliation. Such affiliations will be reviewed at least once per year by the committee for their appropriateness and relevance to the Group aims and actions taken where any divergence is identified.
- 8) Financial accounts of Group funds shall be kept by the Treasurer, shall be submitted annually to an independent inspection, and shall be submitted for members' approval at the Annual General Meeting.
- The Group's membership year shall run from 1<sup>st</sup> January.
- The Group's financial year shall run from 1<sup>st</sup> July.
- Two Committee Members shall have Bank account access, those being the Treasurer and Membership Secretary.
- 9) Payment of membership subscriptions shall be due on 1<sup>st</sup> January annually. Any member who has not paid their membership subscription by 1<sup>st</sup> March following the due date shall cease to be a member forthwith.
- 10) The level of membership subscription for the next membership year shall be set annually by a majority of members voting at the Annual General Meeting.
- 11) During the currency of their membership or affiliation, members are entitled to use the Group name and logo for the purposes of advertising and marketing. Non-members and non-affiliated educational establishments and organisations are not entitled to use either the group name or logo and it must be removed from advertising or marketing materials. Use of the Group name or logo indicates acceptance of, and adherence to, the aims of the Group as listed in No.3 of the Constitution.

- 12) The Group may be disbanded by consent of a two thirds majority of members attending an Extraordinary General Meeting convened by the Chairman for the purpose.

If the Group is disbanded all liabilities shall be met and any unspent grants repaid. Thereafter all remaining assets shall be divided equally between the members of the Group. No member shall have any further claim on the assets of the Group.

At the time of the distribution of assets, a statement showing how the distribution is calculated shall be provided to all members.

- 13) This constitution may only be altered by consent of two thirds of members attending an Annual General Meeting of the Group.
- 14) The Group Committee can hold meetings remotely (online) where meeting in person is not possible or advisable. Any matters or actions voted upon shall be subject to the same rules as meetings in person.
- 15) Members meetings shall allow member's views to be expressed and votes to be cast by proxy where a member is unable to attend in person and a proxy is advised to the Group Secretary in writing 1 week in advance of the meeting.
- 16) The Committee shall be able to request an 'extraordinary discretion' clause to be invoked by simple majority vote of the Group members attending a members meeting where representing the Group's interests and promoting the Group's Aims and Objectives are prejudiced by circumstances beyond the Group's control.
- 17) The 'extraordinary discretion' clause is subject to revocation by majority vote at any members meeting and must be subject to annual review to continue.

*Last update: July 2022*