

**CONSTITUTION**

**THE ANGLO-SAXON, NORSE AND CELTIC SOCIETY**

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# **THE CONSTITUTION OF THE ANGLO-SAXON, NORSE AND CELTIC SOCIETY**

## **1. Name**

The name of the Society shall be: “The Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic Society” (hereafter referred to as the Society).

## **2. Objectives**

(1.) The Society’s aims shall be:

- (i.) To promote knowledge and understanding of the cultures, history and languages of the Insular world and Scandinavia between the decline of the Roman Empire and the High Middle Ages.
- (ii.) To organise and promote meetings between individuals interested in this period and area, for social as well as intellectual purposes.
- (iii.) To produce not less than one issue per annum of the magazine “Gesta Asnacorum” and in addition to produce such other publications as the committee and editorial staff shall agree upon.
- (iv.) To organise trips for members that will enrich their knowledge and understanding, which they might not otherwise have the opportunity to pursue.
- (v.) To hold an annual Black Tie Dinner at a College, to which all members of the Society will be invited, including current students, academic staff, and alumni.

## **3. Membership**

- (1.) Membership of the Society shall be open to all members of the University and any others who may apply to the Committee.
- (2.) There may be an annual fee for membership, which shall be fixed by the Committee and changed from time to time, according to the committee’s discretion.
- (3.) Life Membership may be gained at the discretion of the Committee, according to such fees as the Committee may determine.
- (4.) The Committee shall have the right to offer Honorary Membership for life (free) to any person as it sees fit. Presidents Emeritus shall be Honorary Members for life.
- (5.) No application for membership shall be refused on grounds of race, sex, sexual orientation, religion or political views.

- (6.) The Committee may expel or suspend any member for behaviour likely to bring the Society into disrepute, or to adversely affect the smooth running of the Society in a major way. Such an expulsion or suspension can only be effected by a majority vote of all Committee member, excluding the Senior Treasurer, and shall be subject to confirmation at the next General Meeting of the Society. In the event of an expulsion, the excluded member is required to return all equipment, documents and finances belonging to the Society within 7 days. They will not be entitled to any full or partial refund of annual subscriptions. If the excluded or suspended member wishes to appeal the decision, that appeal should be made to the Senior Treasurer, who will consider all the facts, and whose decision will be final. An appeal as to the process of exclusion, but not a further investigation into the facts, may be lodged with the Junior Proctor.
- (7.) In matters of membership, the decision of the committee is final (except as specified in § 3. (6.) above).
- (8.) All members shall have full voting rights at Society meetings, whether Ordinary, Life or Honorary Members.

#### **4. Voting Rights**

- (1.) In General Meetings (both Annual and Extraordinary) (see § 5., 6., 7. (10), 9. & 10.), all members of the Society, whether Ordinary, Life or Honorary Members, shall have equal voting rights.
- (2.) Ordinary members of the Society are entitled to attend committee meetings, but may not vote in them.
- (3.) In meetings of the Committee, all officers have equal voting rights, whether elected (§ 5. (1.)-(5.)) or co-opted (§ 5. (8.)).
- (4.) All votes shall be settled by simple majority (except as in § 9. (3.) and § 10. (1.), which is an extraordinary circumstance). The Chair of the meeting should only vote if the result is a tie and the Chair's vote will carry or defeat the motion.

#### **5. The Committee**

- (1.) The Annual General Meeting and the Election of Officers should take place during the second half of Lent term, to allow for handovers to take place over the Easter Vacation. Failing this, the Annual General Meeting shall be held at the earliest possible date thereafter. The time and venue of this meeting will be determined and publicised by the Committee at least twelve Full Term days beforehand. All members shall be welcome to attend, and hold voting rights.
- (2.) The Committee shall be elected via an online voting system, with the option of email or paper voting for members of the Society unable or unwilling to participate using this method. Nominations for the Committee may be submitted at any point until the AGM, when hustings will be held. Candidates for the Presidency must submit a manifesto to the Secretary before the AGM for distribution among Society members. Timings for candidate presentations and

question will be decided at the discretion of the outgoing President. Any member of the Society may be nominated for any Committee post by any member of the Society, including themselves. Nominees may decline any nomination.

- (3.) Email and paper votes shall be counted by the Secretary. If the Secretary is seeking election to any post, the votes for that post will be counted by the outgoing President or Vice-President, or the Chairperson of the meeting, in that order of preference, or by a person nominated by the meeting for this purpose.
- (4.) The election and count may be conducted by means of acclamation in the form of a show of hands by those present at the AGM, or by secret ballot within one Full Term week of the AGM, or by electronic means, as the Committee shall see fit to arrange.
- (5.) Candidates may submit statements to be read at the AGM if they are unable to attend. Officers may be elected *in absentia* if they are unable to attend the AGM.
- (6.) The Committee may hold elections to a single post at any Ordinary Meeting, if they so choose.
- (7.) The Committee may at its discretion co-opt additional Committee members to itself where it perceives the need, or to fill vacancies that may arise.
- (8.) The Committee shall comprise: President, Treasurer, Secretary and Gesta editor (to be known as Gesta Bretwalda should he or she be aided by any deputy editors) and at least three other Officers to help with the running of the Society, with the Committee comprising at least seven individuals in total, with the following specific roles:
  - (i) The President shall be responsible for arranging Society speaker meetings and trips and notifying the membership of the Society of forthcoming events in a weekly bulletin.
  - (ii) The Treasurer shall be responsible for the financial matters of the Society, shall audit the Society's finances annually, and produce a financial report to be discussed at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). See § 6. (2.)
  - (iii) The Secretary shall be responsible for maintaining a list of the membership of the Society. The Secretary shall also be responsible for taking minutes of committee meetings, including the AGM and any Extraordinary General meeting. If the Secretary is absent for any reason, a substitute shall be nominated for that meeting.
  - (iv) The Gesta editor shall be responsible for the production of the magazine *Gesta Asnacorum* and in addition the production of such other publications as the committee and editorial staff shall agree upon (see § 2. (1.) (iii)).
- (9.) Other offices may be created, filled and dissolved at the discretion of the Committee. The roles and responsibilities of these offices shall be recorded in the Society Codes and Conventions.
- (10.) In addition there shall be a Senior Treasurer, who shall be a member of the Regent House, or other person approved by the University's Junior Proctor. The Senior Treasurer shall be appointed by the elected members of the Committee and shall be ex officio a member of the Committee.

- (11.) None of the senior Committee positions of President, Treasurer and Secretary may be held in plurality (i.e. no member may have more than one of these positions), however these posts may each be filled by multiple people. Other Committee positions (including Gesta editor and all other posts) may be held in plurality with each other or with the senior positions, however holding such posts in plurality does not grant the holder multiple votes in meetings.
- (12.) The new Committee shall assume its responsibilities during the eighth week of Full Term in tandem with the outgoing Committee with a view to fully handing over during the Easter Vacation.
- (13.) A majority of members of the Committee shall be full-time undergraduate or postgraduate students of the University.
- (14.) The committee is expected to be represented at all Society events so that they may be known and accessible to the membership.

## **6. Meetings of the Society**

- (1.) The Society shall hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) (as specified in § **5**. (1.)).
- (2.) The AGM shall approve minutes of the last General Meeting and the Society's accounts for the preceding year (which will be submitted to the membership for consideration before submission), elect the Committee for the year ahead and conduct such other business as is deemed necessary by the Committee and those present at the AGM, or of which they have been notified by members *in absentia*.
- (3.) An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) may be held at any time during Full Term. It shall be held in Cambridge and may be called by the Committee or at the written request of at least seven members (including Honorary and Life Members), (or one half of the total membership of the Society, whichever may be the lesser). Seven days written notice shall be given to members before an EGM is held. An EGM shall have the same powers as an AGM.
- (4.) The President or in his/her absence the Vice-President shall take the Chair at any General Meeting. In the absence of the President and the Vice President, another Committee member shall chair that meeting.
- (5.) The quorum for a General Meeting shall be seven members (including Honorary and Life Members) (or one half of the total membership of the Society, whichever may be the fewer) and a written record of every General Meeting shall be kept.
- (6.) Ordinary Meetings of the Society shall occur upon a regular basis, as determined by the Committee in accordance with the Traditions of the Society. Members of the society shall be given due and ample notice of such Meetings.
- (7.) The purpose of an Ordinary Meeting is not the transaction of the business of the Society (as is the purpose of the Committee and of General Meetings), but the pursuit of its aims (see § **2**.).
- (8.) A General Meeting of the Society, and only a General Meeting of the Society, may over-rule the Committee, on any matter (except as in § **3**. (7.)) and is the occasion for changes to the constitution (see § **9**).

## **7. Committee Meetings**

- (1.) A Committee Meeting shall be convened at least once each Term.
- (2.) A quorum for a meeting of the Committee shall be at least half of the Officers of the Committee.
- (3.) All Members of the Committee shall be given due and ample notice of the meeting, at which time the minutes of the last meeting shall be circulated and the floor opened to requests for the Agenda.
- (4.) Every Committee Meeting must first approve the minutes of the last Committee Meeting before continuing to other matters.
- (5.) The President shall compile the Agenda for each Committee Meeting which should be distributed to the committee prior to that meeting.
- (6.) The President shall Chair each meeting.
- (7.) If the President is unable to attend a meeting or fulfill the above duties for any reason, the President's role shall be played by the Vice-President, then in turn the Treasurer, Secretary, or other officer of the Committee as the Committee shall determine before the meeting commences.
- (8.) The Secretary, or a substitute chosen by the Committee before the meeting commences, shall keep minutes of each meeting and circulate them to the Committee afterwards. The minutes can be made available to any Society Member upon request.
- (9.) The President, Vice President, Treasurer and Gesta Editor (Bretwalda) should make regular reports to the Committee on their areas of responsibility, as should any other Officers who hold specific duties.
- (10.) A Vote of No-Confidence may be held against any Officer of the Committee.
  - (i.) This must be proposed in Committee with due notice through the Agenda, and seconded by at least one quarter of the Officers of the Committee.
  - (ii.) It must then succeed in a Committee vote with a majority of at least three quarters.
  - (iii.) An EGM shall then be convened for the purpose of a general Vote of No Confidence (see § 6. (3.)).
  - (iv.) A vote shall be held at the EGM at which a simple majority is required to remove the Officer from office.
  - (v.) The Officer who is subject to the Vote of No Confidence should step out of their normal role until the matter has been decided

## **8. Financial Matters**

- (1.) The Society shall maintain a banking account with a suitable Bank or Building Society.

- (2.) It shall be the responsibility of the Junior Treasurer to ensure that monies received are properly accounted for and that the Society's financial records are kept in good order.
- (3.) A Senior Treasurer shall be appointed by the Committee, and shall ensure that the Society's accounts are properly audited.<sup>1</sup>
- (4.) The Senior Treasurer shall not be liable for any financial debt or other obligation of the Society, in accordance with the requirements of registration with the Junior Proctor. Any such debt or obligation should be authorised personally by the Senior Treasurer in writing.
- (5.) For so long as the Society shall be Registered with the Junior Proctor, it shall be the responsibility of the Committee to ensure that the Society complies with the requirements for Registration as a University Society (excepting those laid down as the responsibility of the Senior Treasurer in § 8 (3.) & (4.)).

## **9. Changes to the Constitution**

- (1.) Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by any three members of the Society, and must be submitted to the Secretary, in writing, at least three Full Term days before the AGM or EGM. This constitution may only be amended at an AGM, or an EGM called for that sole and express purpose.
- (2.) The quorum for an Amendment to the Constitution shall comprise not less than seven members of the Society (including Honorary and Life Members) (or half of the total membership of the Society, whichever may be the lesser).
- (3.) No amendment to this Constitution intended to remove the position of Senior Treasurer, to alter its prerogatives and duties, or to change the criteria and procedure for the appointment of a Senior Treasurer can be put to a vote without the prior written agreement of the Junior Proctor of the University of Cambridge.
- (4.) The amendments shall be passed by a two-thirds majority vote which must take place at the General Meeting.

## **10. Dissolution of the Society**

- (1.) The Society may be dissolved at an AGM, or an EGM called for that sole and express purpose, provided that at least twenty-one days written notice of the intention to dissolve the Society has been given to the members. A motion to dissolve the Society must receive unanimous support in order to be passed.
- (2.) Any motion for the Dissolution of the Society shall provide that the assets remaining after all liabilities have been met shall be transferred to the Societies Syndicate, or to any other registered University Society that the meeting shall nominate and approve.

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<sup>1</sup> At the time of writing, Dr. Dance, lecturer in Old English and Fellow of St. Catherine's College, Cambridge, stands in the capacity of Senior Treasurer of this Society.