

British Lichen Society: Rules of the Society

1st edition: (September 2021)

In no circumstances will the Rules of the Society take precedence over the Constitution: in any areas of conflict the Constitution will be considered as the definitive document under which the Society operates.

1. Name

The name of the society shall be the **British Lichen Society**.

2. Objectives

- To promote for the benefit of the public the conservation of lichens and their habitats, and to raise awareness of the importance and significance of lichens in the environment;
- For the public benefit to advance education in the study of lichens, especially in relation to those of the British Isles, including through publications, meetings, workshops and support for scientific research.

In furtherance of these objectives:

- to publish results of investigations and other relevant work in the Society's publications to the extent that the Council of the Society and Editors deem to be suitable; such publications may be available for sale to the public.
- to facilitate the exchange of information among lichenologists by organising field meetings, workshops, conferences, lectures, exhibitions, websites, social media and by other means.
- to support and encourage research, recording and conservation management of lichens.
- to promote education and awareness of lichens and to support the training of lichenologists.
- to aid in the maintenance of adequate representative collections of British lichens in the national and other public herbaria.
- to establish and maintain a collection of lichens for the use of members and others.
- to develop and maintain databases of information on the distribution and conservation status of lichen species in the British Isles.
- to maintain a library of books and lichenological journals.
- to raise money by membership fees or by any other means, at the discretion of Council, and within the rules set by the Charity Commissioners.
- to aid in the establishment, management and maintenance of conservation areas, especially those considered of priority importance for lichens.
- to promote the views of the Society on matters relating to lichens at a local and national level.

3. Membership

The Society shall have honorary members, regular members, and family members.

Honorary members shall be nominated by the Council in accordance with the criteria outlined in Rule 13 and elected on a majority vote of those present and voting at a General Meeting of the Society. Election of an Honorary Member should not

increase their number beyond 2.5% of the total membership at that time. They shall enjoy the same benefits as regular members but shall pay no subscription and receive *The Lichenologist* free of charge.

Regular members shall be persons who have signed the form of membership and paid the subscription. They have full membership rights and receive the *Bulletin*. Regular members are entitled to subscribe to *The Lichenologist* at a special member's rate. Members under the age of 18 are not eligible to vote at a General Meeting or serve on Council.

Full-time students, persons under the age of 18, persons aged 65 or over, and others at the discretion of the Trustees are entitled to take up regular membership at a discounted subscription rate. Regular members aged 65 or over may pay a life subscription.

Family membership is available to persons living in the same household as a regular member. Family members receive no publications and have no right to vote at a General Meeting or serve on Council.

4. Equality and Diversity

The Society welcomes members from all backgrounds, and will not discriminate unfairly or unlawfully on the grounds of gender, race, colour, nationality, sexuality, age, religious beliefs, marital status, or disability.

5. Membership administration

The Society has contracted the Royal Society of Biology to administer membership, receive subscriptions etc. In most cases questions on membership can be dealt with by the RSB (email member-admin@britishlichensociety.org.uk) but where matters cannot be resolved the Membership Secretary or the Treasurer is the main point of contact.

6. Subscriptions

Subscription rates for regular and family membership, including the discounts and life subscription option specified in Rule 3, shall be determined by Council and promulgated to the membership at least one month before they become due. Council has an obligation to make any increase as small as possible consistent with the health of the Society's finances, according to its charitable purpose. A member's subscription rate for *The Lichenologist* shall be determined in the same way.

Subscriptions **shall be payable in advance on or before 1st January each year.**

- A person joining the Society as a regular member who has paid a subscription shall receive all the Society's publications to which he or she is entitled and are issued during the calendar year(s) for which the subscription is paid.
- Members who have not paid a current subscription will not receive publications; membership terminates if no renewal payment is received within the first 3 months of a year. If a renewal payment is received later in the year membership will be reinstated.
- Those joining the Society for the first time after 1 October each year may opt to have their initial membership period extended to the end of the following year without further subscription, but will receive only the Winter Bulletin in that initial year, assuming stocks are available.

7. Trustees

The Trustees of the Society shall comprise a minimum of three (as specified in the Constitution), and in normal circumstances eight persons. Trustees will serve for a period of three years; detailed rules on their appointment and re-election are contained in the

Constitution. To avoid major changes in the composition of the Trustee team in the future, for the first year in which the CIO operates, two of the eight Trustees will be appointed for a one-year term, three for two years and the final three for a full three-year period.

The responsibilities of the Trustees are to oversee the governance of the Society in a way that is consistent with its Constitution, and to ensure that the Officers manage the Society's affairs appropriately. They shall be entitled to participate in all meetings of the Officers and other Committees as they see fit, and to be provided with all of the documentation associated with those meetings. They also have all the necessary authority to meet independently and to make decisions appropriate to their role.

8. Officers

The officers of the Society shall be the President, the Vice-president, the Secretary, the Treasurer, the Membership Secretary, the Field Meetings Secretary, the Senior Editor of the *Lichenologist*, the *Bulletin* Editor, the Website Editor, the chairs of the Conservation Committee, Data Committee, the Education and Promotions Committee and the Finance Committee. The positions of President, Secretary and Treasurer shall be held by three different members at any one time.

9. Council

The Council of the Society shall consist of the Trustees and the Officers. The President shall be an ex-officio member of any Committees that the Council considers necessary for the running of the Society. The retiring President shall remain a member of the Council for one year following his/her retirement. The Council shall have the power to co-opt to fill any vacancy on the Council or when specialist advice is needed.

The following are not members of Council and report via the Vice President. They are entitled to receive the minutes of Council meetings and to make a personal report at the Council meeting immediately prior to the AGM: Database Manager, Archivist, Herbarium Curator and Librarian.

10. Election of Trustees and Officers

Nominations for Trustees shall be in writing, submitted with the consent of the nominee, and shall be received by the Secretary at least two weeks before an Annual General Meeting. The Council shall have power to make nominations at any time prior to an Annual General Meeting. The members thus elected shall not be eligible for re-election until one year after their term of office, apart from in exceptional circumstances.

The President shall be nominated by the Council and elected for a term of two years by a majority vote of those present and voting at an Annual General Meeting of the Society. Nominations for the Vice-president and all other officers shall be in writing, submitted with the consent of the nominee, and shall be received by the Secretary at least two weeks before an Annual General Meeting. The Vice-president shall be elected for a term of two years and shall be ex-officio a member of all the Society sub-committees during his/her term of office. All other officers are elected for a term of one year, and may continue in their posts without time limit subject to annual ratification by the membership. The election of officers shall be by a majority vote of those present and voting at an Annual General or Special General Meeting.

11. Decision-making by Council

Council may make decisions at regular meetings, extraordinary meetings or via email ballot or similar electronic means when necessary. In the case of remote decision-making, matters requiring formal votes will either be deferred until the next full Council meeting

or an extraordinary meeting will be held. Where it is practical, Trustees and Officers may attend meetings via telephone or video link.

12. Meetings

The Society shall hold an Annual General Meeting and such others as the Council shall decide. The Secretary (or in his or her absence a person appointed by the chairman of any meeting) shall publish to all members of the Society the formal decisions taken at every General Meeting of the Society. Minutes shall be taken of all formal meetings of the Society and its Council. Notice of a General Meeting of the Society shall be sent to members at least four weeks before the date of the meeting. The procedure and order of business at meetings shall be decided by the chairman. A Special General Meeting of the Society shall be convened on the requisition of the Council or of the membership, according to the rules laid out in the Constitution. The requisition shall be addressed to the Secretary and shall specify the purpose for which the meeting is called. A convening notice stating this purpose shall be sent to every member at least fourteen days before the meeting is to take place. Notice of a Council meeting shall be sent to all members of Council at least fourteen days before the date of the meeting. A quorum at a General Meeting of the Society shall be twenty five members and at a meeting of the Council eight members of Council.

13. Honours and Awards

Honorary Members shall be distinguished lichenologists and / or persons who have rendered outstanding service to lichenology. They shall be elected in accordance with Rule 3. Presentation of Honorary Membership may be made at an international lichenological meeting or at a General Meeting of the Society.

Recipients of the **Ursula Duncan Award** shall be persons who have rendered outstanding service to the Society; they may be proposed by any member of the Society, seconded by five other members and shall be approved by Council. The award will be made at a General Meeting of the Society.

14. Grants

The Society makes small grants to members periodically, in furtherance of its charitable objectives. In the case of grants of less than £1000, a small committee is delegated by Council to make decisions on its behalf. These are reported to Council at each meeting. Decisions on larger grants are made at Council meetings.

15. Changes to the Rules

Changes to the Rules of the Society may be proposed by Council or by the membership, under the same conditions as for nomination of Trustees in Section 9. They will be voted upon at General Meetings, and adopted with a simple majority of the members present.