

# Pontefract & District Archaeological Society

## CONSTITUTION\*

### 1. The Society

- 1.1. The Society shall be called the Pontefract & District Archaeological Society, hereafter referred to as 'The Society', and shall be affiliated to the Yorkshire Archaeological & Historical Society and the Council for British Archaeology.
- 1.2. The objective of The Society shall be to foster and promote the study of archaeology and its contribution to history, especially, but not exclusively, in and around Pontefract.
- 1.3. The Society shall:
  - 1.3.1. organise field surveys, excavations, lectures, visits and conferences;
  - 1.3.2. educate and train members in archaeological techniques; and
  - 1.3.3. publish the results of its researches for the benefit of schools, higher education, and the general public.

### 2. Membership of The Society

- 2.1. Membership of The Society shall be open to any person completing a membership application and paying the current annual subscription fee, as determined by the Annual General Meeting (AGM).
  - 2.1.1. Lectures are open to non-members on payment of a sum to be set for the year at the previous membership year's AGM.
  - 2.1.2. Anyone wishing to take part in any other Society activity must take out membership for the year in which that activity takes place.
  - 2.1.3. Application for membership includes a commitment to be bound by the terms of this Constitution.
- 2.2. Functions shall not take place under The Society's name without prior approval of the Committee.
- 2.3. Membership of The Society carries both rights and responsibilities.
  - 2.3.1. The Committee shall organise a range of activities for members, as set out in 1.3.1 and 1.3.2 above; members will be given preferential access to such activities where demand exceeds the number of places available.
  - 2.3.2. All members shall be admitted to all normal Society functions free of charge.
  - 2.3.3. Members shall be entitled to a preferential rate for any public lectures organised by The Society.
  - 2.3.4. The Committee shall ensure that appropriate insurance is taken out to cover members participating in any activity organised on behalf of The Society.
  - 2.3.5. The Committee shall ensure that risk assessments are undertaken for any activity organised by or on behalf of The Society and that, where appropriate, participants are briefed and required to sign documentation to confirm their sight and acceptance of the risk assessment and any requirements laid out therein.

- 2.3.6. The Committee shall ensure that any Society equipment used on any Society activity has been checked appropriate and safe for the intended purpose.
- 2.3.7. Notwithstanding the provisions of 2.3.4, 2.3.5 and 2.3.6, members participating in Society activities must act responsibly in respect of their own actions and care of their own property. The Society itself shall not be held responsible for any loss or injury incurred by members participating in Society activities.
- 2.3.8. Members working on Society projects shall at all times remain within the direction of the person appointed by the Committee as Project Director, and shall not, therefore, undertake any activity that has not been sanctioned by the Project Director.
- 2.3.9. The Society encourages co-operative research and fieldwork carried out on behalf of The Society by and for the benefit of all the members. However, it is a condition of membership that all members participating in such Society activities agree to all and any results arising from such activities, however obtained/recorded, becoming the intellectual property of The Society. Consequently, any member or former member is precluded from using such information for personal gain without the express permission of The Society for a period to be determined by the Committee on a case-by-case basis. The restrictions in this clause shall also apply to any person engaged by The Society for the purposes of facilitating such research or fieldwork.
- 2.3.10. Any infringement of The Society's Constitution shall be subject to examination by the full Committee. The Committee shall have the power to suspend for a period not exceeding twelve months or to expel a Member who infringes the terms of the Constitution or whose conduct, in any capacity is, in the opinion of the Committee, injurious to the good name of The Society or renders that person unfit for membership. However, no Member shall be suspended or expelled without first being given the full opportunity to advance a defence before the Committee and without a vote of at least three quarters of the Committee for the suspension or expulsion. Committee Members may require that the matter be referred to mediation by a mediator appointed by the Council for British Archaeology (Yorkshire) [CBA(Y)].
- 2.3.11. No part of a suspended or expelled Member's subscription shall be refundable.
- 2.4. The membership year shall begin, and subscriptions shall become due on the day following the AGM each year. Membership shall be deemed to have lapsed if outstanding fees remain unpaid three calendar months after the AGM.

### **3. Officers of The Society**

- 3.1. The affairs of The Society shall be controlled by a Committee which shall comprise:
- 3.1.1. the President and Vice-President, which officers shall be proposed by the Committee and confirmed by the AGM, to be held for life or until resignation;
- 3.1.2. Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Field Director, and Web-Master;
- 3.1.3. several ordinary Committee Members; at the first Committee meeting following the AGM, individual Committee Members will be allocated responsibilities, including:
- compiling a programme of lectures, excursions, and/or day schools;
  - being responsible for oversight of the Hermitage;

- being responsible for liaison with other bodies concerned with the heritage of Pontefract;
  - post-excavation procedures when appropriate.
- 3.2. All Officers and Members of the Committee (with the exception of the President and Vice-President), shall be elected at the AGM from and by the members of The Society on a democratic basis.
- 3.3. No suspended Member shall be elected as an officer of The Society or be entitled to vote at any meeting during the period of their suspension.
- 3.4. Terms of office shall be for a period of three years, the offices of Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer to cycle in consecutive years; all other Committee Members to cycle in similar fashion (i.e., in consecutive years). This will conform to the pattern of cycling begun in 2015†.
- 3.5. If any Officer or Member of the Committee resigns before the end of the three-year term:
- 3.5.1. another Society member may be co-opted to fill the post until the following AGM;
  - 3.5.2. at that AGM, the post will be open to election for the remainder of the original three-year term.
- 3.6. Upon completion of their three-year term, Officers and Members may be re-elected to the same office or another office the following year.
- 3.7. The Committee shall meet at least once per calendar month, with the exception of August.
- 3.7.1. A quorum shall be six Members.
  - 3.7.2. In the absence of the President, Vice-President or Chairman the Committee shall elect a *pro tem* Chairman from amongst those present.
  - 3.7.3. The draft agenda for meetings will be made available in the Members' section of the website at least one week before each Committee meeting. The minutes of each meeting will be made available in the same place by one week after the meeting.
- 3.8. The duties of the Committee shall be to:
- 3.8.1. control the affairs of The Society;
  - 3.8.2. organise the range of activities cited in para. 1.3;
  - 3.8.3. keep accurate accounts of The Society's finances through the Treasurer: these should be available for reasonable inspection by Society members, and checked before, and available at, the AGM;
  - 3.8.4. maintain a bank account in The Society's name requiring at least two named and unrelated senior Officers to sign each cheque;
  - 3.8.5. make decisions on the basis of a simple majority vote, the Chairman to be entitled to an additional casting vote in the event of a tied vote;
  - 3.8.6. co-opt non-voting persons in circumstances where additional expertise is needed.

- 3.8.7. to appoint such sub-committees as they believe necessary; any such sub-committee shall be accountable to the Committee whose Officers shall, subject to a vote of the whole membership, be responsible for making final decisions.
- 3.9. Any Officer who has not paid his/her subscription within three months after the AGM shall automatically be removed from office. In such circumstances, another Society member may be co-opted to fill the post until the following AGM.
- 3.10. Reasonable re-imbusement shall be made to Officers and Committee Members for expenses incurred in organising Society activities.

#### **4. Society Procedures**

- 4.1. The AGM shall be held within two weeks of the end of April each year.
- 4.2. At the AGM:
- 4.2.1. the Treasurer will present accounts checked by an independent financial examiner;
  - 4.2.2. the Chairman will report on the year's activities;
  - 4.2.3. Officers and Committee Members (with the exception of the President and Vice-President) shall be elected by a simple majority vote.
- 4.3. Proposed changes to The Society's Constitution must be notified to the Committee in writing at least four weeks prior to the AGM, and include signed statements by the proposer and seconder. Proposed amendments will be voted upon at the AGM and determined by a simple majority vote.
- 4.4. In the event of any dispute arising in relation to the Constitution or the functioning of the Committee, the matter(s) must be brought before the whole membership of The Society.
- 4.4.1. This may be done at any AGM; or at an Extraordinary General Meeting convened by The Society following written representation to the Committee by at least ten members of The Society.
  - 4.4.2. If necessary, at such a meeting, by resolution of two-thirds of the members present, the members may require that the dispute be referred to mediation by a mediator appointed by the CBA(Y).
- 4.5. In the event that The Society's membership falls below ten, the Committee shall wind up its affairs, donating remaining funds equally to the Council for British Archaeology (Yorkshire Region), and the Yorkshire Archaeological & Historical Society, or such organisations as may succeed or incorporate either or both of them. Books, photographs, equipment, documentation and other artefacts will be passed against written receipt to the Yorkshire Archaeological & Historical Society or such organisation as may succeed or incorporate it.

**Notes:** the following do not comprise part of the Constitution, but clarify points as agreed at the AGM's.

\* This Constitution incorporates amendments passed at The Society's AGM's on 24<sup>th</sup> April, 2015 and 28<sup>th</sup> April 2017.

† The end of each Committee officer's/member's term of office is shown on the appropriate year's membership card.