



THE **BYRON** CLUB

Constitution

This Constitution was adopted at the Especial General Meeting of The Byron Club held on Thursday, 12th August, 2021 and was afterwards approved by the Provincial Grand Secretary on behalf of the Provincial Grand Master for Nottinghamshire on Monday, 16th August, 2021.

Subsequent amendments:

<i>Adopted by the Club AGM</i>	<i>Approved by the Provincial Grand Master</i>
<i>28th October 2023</i>	<i>20th February 2024</i>

1) Declaration

The Byron Club fully acknowledges the supremacy of the United Grand Lodge of Ancient Free and Accepted Masons of England, and the Provincial Grand Lodge of Nottinghamshire/Provincial Grand Chapter of Nottinghamshire. It submits to all laws and resolutions heretofore issued by their authority, as well as all those Rules and Ordinances hereafter to be made by those bodies.

2) Club Objectives

- a. The Byron Club exists to give “New and Young Freemasons” in Nottinghamshire a means to meet and socialise with like-minded people of similar ages and stages of development within Freemasonry and to provide a link across the whole of the county and its masonic centres.

“New and Young Freemasons” relates to time in Freemasonry rather than age.

- b. The club’s primary role is to provide events, activities and other opportunities of either a social or Masonically educational nature, for new and young Freemasons to meet each other and encourage their involvement in the fraternity, aiming to increase engagement, enjoyment and understanding.
- c. The club will encourage and support participation in our Lodges, Chapters and Freemasonry in general and promote openness and pride in our membership of the Craft and the Holy Royal Arch. A key feature will be the contemporary role Freemasonry plays in modern society, particularly its relation to the younger generations.
- d. The club will act as a representative body for the views of the younger generations of Freemasons with those views and suggestions being referred to the Provincial Grand Lodge of Nottinghamshire through the appropriate channels.

3) Officers and Honorary Members

- a. Officers
 - i) The Provincial Grand Master for the time being shall be *ex-officio* the Patron of the club and the Grand Superintendent for the time being shall be *ex-officio* the Vice Patron of the club.
 - ii) The Provincial Grand Master shall appoint or reappoint a President annually at the club’s AGM. The President serves at the Provincial Grand Master’s pleasure.
 - iii) Past Patrons, Vice Patrons and Presidents may be elected as Vice Presidents of the club. Vice Presidents hold this status for life.
 - iv) The club shall elect annually as Executive Officers, a Chairman, Deputy Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

- v) Nominations to these positions must be forwarded to the Secretary in writing a minimum of 30 days before the AGM and shall be included on the paper of business for the meeting.
- vi) All propositions, resolutions, nominations or business requiring a vote in all club and Committee meetings shall be passed if approved by a majority of Full members present at the meeting.
- vii) The Patron, Vice Patron and President shall have right of attendance and full voting rights at all club and Committee meetings.

b. Honorary Life Members

- i) The club may elect at the AGM, or at an Especial General Meeting (EGM), any number of Honorary Life Members as a reward for outstanding contribution to the Club.
- ii) Nominations to these positions must be forwarded to the Secretary in writing a minimum of 30 days before the AGM / EGM and shall be included on the paper of business for the meeting.
- iii) Unless also an Executive Officer as specified under rule 3) a.iv) above, such Honorary Life Members shall not have any voting rights at club or Committee meetings.

4) Membership

a. Qualifications and Admission to Membership

- i) Full Membership, with voting rights, is open to Freemasons who have not been appointed to any Craft or Royal Arch Metropolitan, Provincial, District or Grand Rank, and who are either:
 - A current subscribing member of a Lodge or Chapter under the Provincial Grand Lodge of Nottinghamshire / Provincial Grand Chapter of Nottinghamshire, or
 - A current subscribing member of a Lodge or Chapter under the United Grand Lodge / Supreme Grand Chapter of England and currently living or working within Nottinghamshire.
- ii) Anyone not satisfying these criteria but still desirous of membership may apply to be admitted to Associate Membership, without voting rights, to assist the club.
- iii) Applications for Full or Associate membership are to be made in writing to the Secretary using the online form provided for that purpose.
- iv) On receipt of a valid application for Full or Associate membership, the Secretary is empowered to admit those who satisfy the conditions of this rule, except in the case of re-joiners whose previous membership was ceased for any reason other than non-payment or resignation (see rule 4) d.iv) below).

- v) The Secretary will maintain a register of current and past members in accordance with data protection and privacy laws and regulations, and will confirm all admissions, resignations and cessations in writing.

b. Fees and Annual Subscription

- i) On admission to membership, Full and Associate members are liable to pay the joining fee and the annual subscription for the current membership year.
- ii) The annual subscription is due and payable by all Full and Associate members in advance on the 1st of September.
- iii) Any other member joining after 1st March shall be liable for 50% of the annual subscription for that club year and thereafter pay the full amount on the following 1st September.
- iv) The amount of the joining fee and the annual subscription will be reviewed annually by the Committee.
- v) If the Committee recommends either fee be amended, a resolution to that effect shall be included on the paper of business for the next AGM, or for an Especial General Meeting (EGM) convened for that purpose.

c. Termination of Membership

- i) Cessation of any of the basic qualifications for Full membership detailed in rule 4) a.i) above will result in Full membership of the club being terminated, *ipso facto*, as detailed in rule 4) c.iii) below.
- ii) Any member desirous of terminating his membership of the club shall tender his resignation in writing by email to the Secretary.
- iii) Upon appointment to Metropolitan, Provincial, District or Grand Rank a Full member will continue as such until the end of the current subscription year, after which he will automatically become an Associate member, providing his subscription is up to date.
- iv) Any member whose annual subscription, due on 1st September, remains unpaid on the following 31st May shall be automatically excluded from the club.

d. Re-Joining

- i) If a member who has been excluded for non-payment wishes to re-join the club he must pay any outstanding subscriptions as well as the joining fee again, and the current year's membership subscription.
- ii) If a member who has resigned wishes to re-join the club he must pay the joining fee again.

- iii) The above rule 4) d.ii) may be waived at the discretion of the Chairman and Deputy Chairman depending on the circumstances of the initial resignation.
- iv) Re-joining for any other reasons other than non-payment or resignation must be considered by the Committee at their next meeting and voted upon and the vote passed by a majority of those present at the Committee meeting.

e. Complaints

- i) A member wishing to complain about the conduct of another member should address a written complaint to the Chairman or, if the complaint is about the Chairman, to the Deputy Chairman.
- ii) On receipt of a complaint, the Chairman or Deputy Chairman will appoint a panel of three members to investigate the complaint and report their findings to the committee. The member who is the subject of the complaint will have the opportunity to state their case when the matter is discussed at committee.
- iii) Where the conduct is such as to be a matter which falls within Rule 179 of the Book of Constitutions, then the complaint is to be referred to the Provincial Grand Secretary. In such cases, the processes which deal with issues of masonic discipline will be triggered by the Provincial Grand Secretary.

5) Club Meetings

a. Annual General Meeting (AGM)

- i) The Byron Club will hold an Annual General Meeting, which all members are entitled to attend, within three calendar months of the end of the subscription year at a suitable location in the Province. The exact date and time shall be directed by the Committee.
- ii) Notice of such meetings shall be given by email to all club members at least two calendar months before the date of the meeting.
- iii) The paper of business convening the meeting shall be sent via email to all club members at least fourteen days before the date of the meeting.
- iv) Only Full members, and the Patron, Vice Patron and President, shall be eligible to vote upon all resolutions put forward.
- v) The agenda for the AGM shall include reporting of the membership, explanation and adoption of the accounts and elections of Committee members, Executive Officers and Honorary Life Members as previously detailed.

b. Especial General Meeting

- i) The Chairman, or failing him the Deputy Chairman, may convene an Especial General Meeting (EGM) whenever the good of the club shall, in their opinion, require it. However, the reason for convening an EGM shall be detailed in the paper of business.
- ii) An EGM shall be held at a suitable location in the Province. The exact date and time shall be directed by the Chairman, or failing him the Deputy Chairman.
- iii) Notice of such a meeting shall be given by email to all club members at least seven days before the date of the meeting.
- iv) Attendance and voting rights shall be as for an AGM

6) Committee

a. Administration and Running of The Byron Club

- i) The day to day running of The Byron Club is the responsibility of the elected Committee.
- ii) The Committee shall consider any matters specifically referred to it by the club and/or the Provincial Grand Master.
- iii) The Chairman is empowered to appoint, from among those elected or co-opted to serve on the Committee for his year such officers in addition to the Executive roles as he deems fit to ensure the effective running of the club.
- iv) An officer appointed by the Chairman, may where necessary nominate a member of the club to assist him with his duties and when required to deputise for him. Such nomination does not confer automatic right of attendance at the Committee.

b. Composition

- i) The Committee shall consist of the Chairman, Deputy Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary and the other Byron Club members duly elected at the AGM or subsequently co-opted by the Committee in accordance with the other rules set out in the Constitution.
- i) No member may serve in more than one of the Executive Offices at the same time.
- ii) Only current Full subscribing members of the Byron Club may be elected to the Committee.
- iii) The Committee is empowered to co-opt any subscribing member of a Lodge or Chapter operating under the jurisdiction of the Provincial Grand Lodge of Nottinghamshire / Provincial Grand Chapter of Nottinghamshire to serve on the Committee, providing the total number does not exceed that defined in rule 6) b.viii) below.
- iv) All elected and co-opted members of the Committee serve for one year and may be re-elected or co-opted again up to a maximum of five consecutive one-year terms.

- v) Executive Officers may serve in the same office for a maximum of three consecutive one-year terms.
- vi) If an Executive Officer is first elected to office in the fifth and final year of his service on the Committee, that officer may serve for an additional two years, taking his total service on the Committee to a maximum of seven years.
- vii) A former Committee member who has served a maximum term may be re-elected or co-opted again to serve again after the expiry of at least one year.
- viii) The Committee membership shall number no fewer than 10 and no more than 10% of the total number of club members reported for the previous year at the AGM.
- ix) The number of members of the Committee for each ensuing year shall be determined by the member nominated by the Committee to be Chairman for that year.
- x) The Executive Officers detailed in 3) a.iv) above are in addition to the above number.
- xi) Past Chairmen may on occasions be called upon by any of the Executive Officers for guidance and may serve on working groups or panels as required.

c. Nominations

- i) At a Committee meeting held before the AGM each year, there shall be a vote to approve nominations of Full members of the club to serve as Executive Officers for the ensuing year.
- ii) Unless extenuating circumstances as determined by the Committee have been in effect, any current Committee member who has not attended 50% or more of the Committee meetings, and/or who has not made a reasonable contribution to events or discussions relating to the club in a year, shall not be eligible for nomination to office for the following year.
- iii) Nominees for all Executive Officer positions must have served on the Committee for a full 12 months before being nominated.
- iv) If there is more than one candidate for an office, then a ballot will take place.
- v) If that ballot proves a draw, then the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated from running and the ballot will be retaken with the remaining candidates.
- vi) If two candidates remain with the same number of votes, both candidates shall be invited to present their respective cases to hold office to the Committee at a subsequent meeting to be held prior to the AGM when a further vote will take place in respect of both candidates.
- vii) Should a Committee Member object to a proposed nominee then his objections should be discussed openly, with all mentioned present at a Committee meeting. Should such circumstances arise, it may be appropriate to defer the nomination of a particular office to a subsequent committee meeting to be held prior to the AGM.

Nomination of the Chairman

- viii) The nominee for Chairman will normally be the incumbent Deputy Chairman.
- ix) If the incumbent Deputy Chairman is no longer qualified to serve by virtue of 6) b., or does not wish to be nominated or the vote falls short of the required majority, another Committee member, qualified according to rules 6) b. and 6) c.iii), shall be proposed and voted upon.

Nomination of the Deputy Chairman

- x) The nominated Chairman may propose the nomination of a Deputy Chairman, qualified according to rules 6) b. and 6) c. iii), to assist him in the execution of the Chairman's functions.
- xi) In the event that the nomination of Deputy Chairman is not approved, another qualified Committee member shall be proposed and voted upon as above.

Nomination of the Secretary and Treasurer

- xii) Any member of the Committee may propose Committee members qualified according to rules 6) b. and 6) c.iii) to be candidates for nomination as Secretary and Treasurer.
- xiii) The incumbent Treasurer will arrange for his successor and/or Executive Officers to be appointed as authorised cheque signatories with suitable access to the club's online bank facilities.

Nomination of Other Committee Members

- xiv) Candidates, who must satisfy the requirements of rule 6) b.ii), shall be proposed and seconded by two Full members of the Club.
- xv) Candidates should be able to demonstrate:
 - a. they are able to attend and support club events and Committee meetings
 - b. they have the time and are willing to assist in the organisation or running of events.
- xvi) Proposers and seconders should submit their nominations, including details of their nominee's Craft rank and their Nottinghamshire Lodge(s) / Chapter(s), in writing to the Secretary not later than two months before the AGM.

d. Elections

- i) The full names, Craft ranks and Lodge / Chapter details of all persons nominated to serve as Executive Officers or for election to serve on the Committee for the ensuing year shall be published on the paper of business for the Annual General Meeting.

- ii) The nominations shall be voted upon at the Annual General Meeting and be elected by a show of hands.
- iii) If such a vote is not carried nominations for each position will be made from the floor and voted upon in the same way until occupants for those roles are confirmed.
- iv) The Committee once elected may co-opt other members qualified under rule 6) b.iii) to serve on the Committee, subject to the number defined in 6) b.viii) not being exceeded.
- v) The full names, Craft ranks, and Lodge / Chapter details of all persons nominated to be co-opted to the Committee shall be published on the paper of business for a meeting of the Committee.
- vi) The proposal to co-opt nominated members to the Committee shall be decided by a show of hands and a majority vote shall pass.

f. Committee Meetings

- i) Meetings of the Committee shall be chaired by the Chairman, or failing him the Deputy Chairman, or failing him a Past Chairman who remains a subscribing club member.
- ii) Five elected Committee members present shall form a quorum.
- iii) The Committee should meet at monthly intervals, or thereabouts.
- iv) It shall be the responsibility of the Secretary, or failing him a suitable deputy, to book any required resources and to circulate an agreed agenda at least forty-eight hours in advance of each meeting.
- v) It shall be the responsibility of the Secretary, or failing him a suitable deputy, to circulate minutes within 10 working days after a Committee meeting.

g. Committee Complaints

- i) The procedure for dealing with complaints brought against Committee Members shall follow the same procedures as those set out for members in rules 4) e. above.
- ii) The Chairman shall have the authority to remove any Committee member from an appointed office but not to remove those elected to Executive Office by the membership at the AGM.
- iii) In such a case the Chairman will consult with at least two Members of the Committee, or past Chairmen, prior to making such a removal.
- iv) Removal from an office shall not mean removal from the Committee, unless the Committee member in question is considered to have brought the Byron Club, or Freemasonry in

general, into disrepute and in such circumstances, the complaint is to be referred to the Provincial Grand Secretary.

- v) Any Committee Member liable to fall under the conditions of rule 6) c.ii) shall be the subject of a review by the rest of the Committee.
- vi) The review will establish whether the member's historic attendance levels and contributions are sufficient to qualify him for re-election at the next AGM.
- vii) The Provincial Grand Master of Nottinghamshire and the person appointed by him as President of the Byron Club, shall have the authority to remove members from the Committee and/or the club outright at their discretion. Any such decision to remove a member from the Committee will be communicated in writing to the Chairman of the Committee and the member subject to the action by the Provincial Grand Secretary.

7) Accounts

a. Payments from Club Funds

- i) All expenditure will be examined by the Committee to ensure that it promotes Freemasonry in general, The Byron Club in particular, or is for a particular event.
- ii) Expenditure of £100 and under is payable at the discretion of any combination of two Executive Officers, which will then be declared and explained at the next Committee meeting.
- iii) Payments made in an emergency may be made by the Treasurer, after first having been authorised by the Chairman and Deputy Chairman and shall be reported to the Committee at the next Committee meeting.
- iv) Payment of any sum exceeding £100 will be discussed at a Committee meeting and voted upon by a show of hands and shall be passed by a majority of Committee members present

b. Accounts Presentation and Adoption

- i) The accounts shall be made up to 31st August in each year and presented, duly examined, to a meeting of the Committee for its approval, prior to their being recommended for adoption by the membership at the AGM.
- ii) A copy of the accounts and of the Examiners' certification that all balances have been checked and that the accounts have been examined shall be sent to all members with the paper of business convening the AGM.
- iii) The accounts for the previous year shall be formally adopted at the AGM by a show of hands and shall be passed by a majority of Full members present.

c. Examiners Committee

- i) The Examiners Committee shall consist of two paid up Full members of the club who shall be elected annually at the AGM by a show of hands and passed by a majority of Full members present.
 - ii) The names of those members nominated as Examiners shall appear on the paper of business for the AGM.
- d. Dissolution of the Club
- i) If, for whatever reason, The Byron Club is dissolved, all financial assets shall be donated to the Provincial Grand Lodge of Nottinghamshire's Charity Fund and all non-financial assets, and records such as minute books, shall be passed to the Provincial Grand Secretary.

8) Amendment of Constitution

- a. In the first instance any proposed amendments to this Constitution shall be put forward to the Committee and discussed at a suitable Committee meeting.
- b. The Committee may vote to recommend the proposed amendment, for approval by the membership at the next AGM, or at an EGM specially convened for that purpose.
- c. Any amendment to this Constitution shall require:
 - i) A written notice of motion be sent to all members 28 days prior to the next AGM, or EGM convened for that purpose, detailing the changes to be proposed.
 - ii) A formal resolution for the amendment of the Constitution shall be set out on the agenda for the AGM, or EGM convened for that purpose.
 - iii) A resolution to amend the Constitution shall be carried by a show of hands of Full members present.
- d. Amendments shall not be effective until subsequently approved by the Provincial Grand Master.