

Constitution of the Literary London Society

1 Aims of the Society

1.1.1 The object of The Literary London Society shall be the advancement of research, scholarship, and public education, in particular, by the promotion of the study of the literature and cultural history of London.

1.1.2 The Society shall foster interdisciplinary and historically wide-ranging research into London literature in its historical, social, and cultural contexts, to include all periods and genres of writing and representations about, set in, inspired by, or alluding to central and suburban London and its environs, from the city's roots in pre-Roman times to its imagined futures.

1.2 In furtherance of the said objects but not otherwise the Society may:

1.2.1 collect and disseminate information on all matters affecting the said objects and exchange such information with other bodies having similar objects whether in Britain or overseas;

1.2.2 cause to be written and printed, made publicly available by electronic means, or otherwise reproduced and circulated, gratuitously or otherwise, such papers, books, periodicals, pamphlets, electronic documents, or databases as shall further the said objects;

1.2.3 organize and promote residential and non-residential conferences and similar events;

1.2.4 raise funds and invite and receive contributions from any individual or organization whatsoever by way of subscriptions and otherwise PROVIDED THAT the Society shall not undertake permanent trading activities in raising funds for the said objects, and provided that such financial contributions shall not, in the view of the Society's Executive Committee, compromise the Society's integrity and independence in pursuit of its scholarly objectives.

1.2.5 do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the attainment of the said objects.

1.3 The Society is a non-political and non-religious organization.

- 1.4 The Society is open to members from all nations, but it is based in England and its constitution is written in accordance with the law of England and Wales.

2 Membership

- 2.1 Membership of the Society shall be open to all persons interested in the aims of the Society upon payment of one year's membership fee. There shall be three categories of members: regular members, retired/unwaged members, and student members.
- 2.2 Retired/unwaged members must not be in receipt of a regular source of income other than a pension or state benefits. Students who are registered for masters level or doctoral level qualifications may join as student members. Student members may vote at General Meetings, but cannot hold elected office.
- 2.3 Membership of the Society may be suspended, terminated or refused by a vote of the Executive Committee in cases where members, or prospective members, are deemed to be bringing the Society into disrepute. Such a vote is subject to quoracy requirements, and the decision must be ratified at the next AGM.

3 Officers

- 3.1 The Society has the following officers:

- A president
- A vice-president
- A secretary
- A treasurer
- A journal editor
- A conference organiser

All officers are elected members of the committee with voting rights. Officers act as trustees of the Society.

- 3.2 Officers' posts are tenable for three years. In normal circumstances, the office of president is not directly elected, but is filled by the previous year's vice-president. Where this is impossible, the same procedure is followed as for other officers, who are elected by a majority vote (or *nemine contradicente*) at a General Meeting.

Officers, other than the President and Vice President, may be elected for a maximum of two consecutive terms. A former officer is ineligible for re-election to the same post for a period of three years at the end of their term of office. The President and Vice President may serve in that capacity only for a single consecutive term. A former President is ineligible for re-election to the posts of Vice-President or President for a period of five years at the end of their term of office.

3.3 Roles of Officers

- 3.3.1 The President's role is to preside at meetings of the Executive Committee, to preside at General Meetings of the Society, and to formulate policies and projects for presentation to the Executive Committee in accord with the Society's aims.
- 3.3.2 The Vice-President's role is to assist the President in carrying out the above functions, and to succeed to the office of President at the end of the year's term of office.
- 3.3.3 The Treasurer's role is to administer the financial affairs of the Society and to administer the society's membership. It shall be the Treasurer's duty, under the direction of the Executive Committee: to be responsible for the receipt and disbursement of the monies of the Society in a manner consonant with the Society's purposes and interests, to arrange for the safekeeping of the assets of the Society and to do so in the most advantageous and secure means possible. The Treasurer shall report to the members of the Society at General Meetings and by means of an abridged report distributed either on paper or by electronic means. The Treasurer shall cooperate in an annual audit of the Society's affairs. A competent auditor shall be appointed by the Executive Committee for that task.
- 3.3.4 The Secretary's role is to oversee the implementation of policies decided on by the Executive Committee, to administer the day-to-day business of the Society and to be responsible for the continuing operations of the Society, to coordinate the election process and make arrangements for meetings of the Executive Committee, to participate in the formulation of policies and projects for submission to the Executive Committee, to assist the President in preparing for meetings of the Executive Committee, to superintend any processes of scrutiny or peer review that may be required in the context of the Society's administrative affairs, to maintain the Society's website, to manage the Society's mailing list, and to ensure that members receive regular postings, electronic or otherwise, about the Society's activities.
- 3.3.5 The journal editor's role is to ensure that regular editions of the *Literary London Journal* appear in printed and/or electronic formats. This includes: receiving and

soliciting submissions to the journal, sending submissions to peer review, causing accepted articles to be appropriately revised and edited, and ensuring that such articles appear in the *Journal* in a timely fashion. The journal editor is also responsible for ensuring that the reviews editor makes fair reviews available for the journal.

- 3.3.6 The Conference organiser's role is to ensure that the annual conference of the Society is well-organised and well-attended. This includes: liaising with the host institution, writing and disseminating a call for papers, publicising the conference, identifying and appointing plenary speakers, choosing a conference theme, collecting and assessing paper and panel proposals, choosing participants and informing them of the progress of their application, producing a conference programme, and amending it as necessary as the annual conference evolves.

4 Executive Committee

4.1 Membership

- 4.1.1 The Executive Committee consists of the Officers, the immediate Past President, three elected Ordinary Members, and holders of appointed posts, which may include, but are not limited to, the posts of Journal Reviews Editor, International Representatives, and Postgraduate and Early Career Scholar Representatives.
- 4.1.2 All members of the Committee have equal voting rights, subject to quoracy requirements. The President has a casting vote.
- 4.1.3 All members of the Committee shall be members of the Society in good standing. Holders of appointed posts have voting rights, but their presence at a meeting does not by itself fulfil quoracy requirements.
- 4.1.4 The Executive Committee has four formal Subcommittees: the Finance Subcommittee, the Publications Subcommittee, the Conference Subcommittee and the Officers' Subcommittee. Members of the Executive Committee may be invited to sit on a Subcommittee in a personal capacity. In addition to the President, Vice-President and Secretary, who sit on all Subcommittees, membership of Subcommittees includes holders of the following posts:

1. Finance Subcommittee
 - Treasurer
 - Past President

2. Publications Subcommittee
 - Editor of the Literary London Journal
 - Journal Reviews Editor
3. Conference Subcommittee
 - Treasurer
 - Conference organiser
4. Officers' Subcommittee
 - Treasurer
 - Conference organiser
 - Journal editor
 - Past President

- 4.1.5 Subcommittees may take decisions on behalf of the Executive Committee. Subcommittees may meet either actually or virtually. Decisions taken by subcommittees must receive the assent of two thirds of the subcommittee. If this cannot be obtained, the question must be referred to the full committee. The Finance Subcommittee has a remit for the financial affairs of the Society, the Publications Subcommittee for the Literary London Journal, the Society's website, and any other publications in print or electronic form, and the Conference Subcommittee for the Annual Conference and any other events sponsored by the Society. The remit of the Officers' Subcommittee is the administration of the Executive Committee itself, including the creation and abolition of appointed posts, and appointment of holders of appointed posts.
- 4.1.6 The election of Ordinary Members and Officers shall take place in accordance with the procedures set out below. These procedures shall be overseen by the Secretary. Elections shall take place annually.
- 4.1.7 Ordinary Members shall hold office for not more than three years. If a situation should arise where adhering to the three-year term of office would result in more than one ordinary member having to retire in any one year, then ordinary members may extend their term for one year, subject to prior ratification at the AGM; this may be done no more than three years in succession. They are not eligible for re-election as ordinary members for a period of three years after their term of office has expired, but may be elected as Officers of the Society during that period.
- 4.1.8 The Executive Committee shall have power to create not more than three appointed posts on the committee between General Meetings.

4.1.9 Appointed posts on the committee are not subject to election, but the subsequent General Meeting must ratify any appointments, whether to existing or newly created posts.

4.1.10 All appointed posts on the committee are subject to a term of three years. Holders of all appointed posts may be reappointed to those posts a maximum of three times by the Executive Committee, subject to ratification by the General Meeting.

4.1.11 No person may hold more than one post on the committee simultaneously. No member of the Committee shall be under the age of eighteen years.

4.2 Meetings

4.2.1 The Executive Committee shall meet at least two times a year, once at the time of the Annual Meeting of the Society and at such other times as it may determine, or at the call of the President, or, if the President is unable to act, at the call of the Vice-President, or, if both are unable to act, at the call of the Secretary, or at the written request of at least four voting members of the Executive Committee directed to the Secretary.

4.2.2 Meetings of the Executive Committee can only be held at a venue, time and date agreed by the President and Secretary, and reasonable steps must be taken to notify all committee members. Meetings are only quorate when six committee members are present, of whom at least two are elected members. Non-quorate meetings may engage in discussion of Society policies, but may not take decisions which involve financial expenditure. All meetings of the Executive Committee and Subcommittees must be minuted (or a summary of email or similar exchanges produced for virtual meetings of subcommittees), and the minutes circulated to all members of the committee, or relevant subcommittee. Minutes of each meeting must be agreed to be an accurate record, normally at the next meeting of the Executive Committee or relevant subcommittee.

4.2.3 Elected members of the Executive Committee members are required to attend its meetings. In the event of non-attendance at two meetings successively without due reason or notice, or without submitting a written report, members are liable to be removed from the Executive Committee. When travelling expenses for Executive Committee members are paid, such expenses will normally only be paid for claims related to travel within the UK, in accordance with a formal expenses policy drawn up by the Treasurer.

- 4.2.4 The Executive Committee shall have power to create fixed-term working parties, whose membership may include non-members of the Executive Committee. Meetings of working parties need not be minuted, but must be reported back to meetings of a Subcommittee, or the full Executive Committee. The only function a working party can undertake is discussion of Society policies; they are not vested with any of the powers of a quorate Executive Committee meeting.
- 4.2.5 The Executive Committee shall have power to appoint consultants, in areas where specialist expertise is needed. They are not required to be members of the Society, nor of the Executive Committee, unless elected in the usual way. However, they may be required to attend meetings of the Committee, or Subcommittees, as necessary, and may be paid for their services to the Society.
- 4.2.6 The Executive Committee shall define the duties of all working parties and appointed posts it creates, and the Secretary shall inform the members of the Society of the actions of the Executive Committee and of those of any Subcommittee through a bulletin or by any other appropriate means.

5 General Meetings of the Society

- 5.1 The Society shall hold an Annual General Meeting. In emergencies, the Executive Committee has the power to cancel the Annual General Meeting or to change its date or location.
- 5.2 The Annual General Meeting will:
1. accept the minutes of the previous year's Annual Meeting, subject to any corrections, and consider any matters of an annual nature arising therefrom;
 2. receive reports on the year's work from the officers;
 3. receive the audited accounts of the society;
 4. set the membership fees of the society;
 5. elect officers and ordinary members to vacant positions on the Executive Committee;
 6. ratify the appointment of appointed members of the Executive Committee;
 7. provide a formal occasion for members to question the Executive Committee, and to provide suggestions and feedback for the Committee's consideration;
 8. transact any other business of an annual nature.

- 5.3 In exceptional circumstances, an Emergency General Meeting can be called by a simple majority of the Executive Committee or at the request of not less than 20% of the members ('written' includes notice given by electronic mail)
- 5.4 Members must be given at least one month's written notice of general meetings ('written' includes notice given by electronic mail).

6 Elections and Ratification

6.1 Officers and Ordinary Members of the Executive Committee are elected by a majority of Society members present at a General Meeting. Vacancies in elected positions occurring between elections may be filled by decision of the Executive Committee; appointed holders of these positions must stand for election at the next available opportunity. Appointments to appointed posts on the Executive Committee are not subject to election, but must be ratified by the General Meeting.

6.2 Election Procedure

6.2.1 Candidates for election must be fully paid-up members of the Society (i.e. who have paid their membership fees for the year in which the election takes place, and have no outstanding membership fees for other years). Eligibility to vote is restricted to members of the Society in good standing (i.e. who have paid any applicable membership fees for the year in which the election takes place).

6.2.2 Nominations may be made by the Executive Committee or by petition to the Secretary. Nominations by petition for posts on the Executive Committee shall be made by fully paid-up members before a deadline published by the Secretary at least one month in advance. To be valid, a nomination by petition must be supported by at least two fully paid-up members of the Society and must be accompanied by a statement from the nominee (who must also be a fully paid-up member) declaring a willingness to serve if elected.

6.2.3 It is the responsibility of the Executive Committee to ensure that there is at least one nomination for every post that is to be filled.

6.2.4 Elections will be decided by a show of hands of members present at a General Meeting.

6.2.5 Eligible voters may cast one vote for each named Officer post for which an electoral process is being conducted, and a number of votes for Ordinary Members which

corresponds to the number of Ordinary Member committee posts which the Secretary has announced as available. Where there is no more than one nomination for a named Officer post, or no more candidates to become Ordinary Members than posts which have been announced as being available, then no formal election procedure will take place, the nominated candidates being deemed to have been elected by unanimous acclamation, subject only to ratification by the General Meeting.

6.2.6 The Secretary is responsible for the conduct of the election, including the assessment of numbers of votes cast. In the event that balloting results in a tie, it shall be broken in a manner to be determined by the Executive Committee.

6.2.7 All elected members of the Executive Committee shall officially begin their term of office from the Annual General Meeting at which their election is announced.

6.3 Ratification Procedure

6.3.1 When a new appointed post has been created, or when a new person has been appointed to an existing appointed post, the appointment must be ratified by the subsequent General Meeting. The secretary must announce the appointment. A vote will not be taken but the appointment will have been ratified unless a majority of members present object to the appointment. If that occurs, the Executive Committee must appoint another person to the post within a three month period.

6.3.2 When an Officer or Ordinary Member has been elected by unanimous acclamation, the election must be ratified by the General Meeting. The secretary must announce the election. A vote will not be taken but the election will have been ratified unless a majority of members present object to the election. If that occurs, the Executive Committee must appoint another person to the post within a three month period, and the person so appointed must stand for election at the next available opportunity.

7 Fees

7.1 It is the responsibility of the Executive Committee to recommend an appropriate membership fee.

7.2 Membership fees shall be agreed by a majority vote, or *nemine contradicente*, at a General Meeting. The General Meeting does not have to accept the recommended

fee, and proposals for other fee levels may be made and voted upon if they are duly nominated and seconded at the appropriate time in the Meeting.

- 7.3 Subscriptions fall due on the 1st January, and last for the duration of that calendar year, regardless of when they are paid. If the amount of the membership fee is changed, the change becomes effective at the beginning of the calendar year which succeeds that in which notice has been given.

8 Disbursement of Funds

- 8.1 Where appropriate, the Executive Committee has power to disburse available funds to individuals or groups on behalf of the Society's membership for purposes which directly contribute to the Society's aims. Applications for such funding will be subject to peer review, and must include mechanisms for documenting and monitoring expenditure.
- 8.2 The Executive Committee has power to grant bursaries, either as awards or as fee waivers, to individuals attending conferences organized by the Society. Criteria for the award of these bursaries must have been published by the Committee no less than two months before the date of the conference.
- 8.3 The Executive Committee has power to award prizes to individuals and organisations which, in the view of the Executive Committee, have contributed strongly to the Society's aims. Criteria for the award of any prizes will be published no less than two months before the closing date for entries to the prize competition.

9 Amendments to the Constitution

- 9.1 A General Meeting of the Society may amend the Constitution by a majority of two-thirds of the members present and voting, provided that a quorum of fifteen members be present.

10 Dissolution

- 10.1 The Society may be dissolved by the agreement of not less than three-quarters of those members present at a General Meeting specially summoned for this purpose as provided in Section 5.3 above. Any funds existing at the time of dissolution shall

not become the property of any member or members but shall be devoted to furthering the objectives defined in Section 1.1, as assessed by independent peer reviewers following a process of application as described in Section 8.1.

11 Transition to a new Constitution

- 11.1 A new Constitution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption by the membership at a General Meeting.

12 Adoption

This constitution was agreed and adopted by the following persons present at a General Meeting held at the Institute of English Studies, University of London, Senate House, Malet Street, London, WC1E 7HU on 20 July 2011

Jenny Bavidge
Nick Bentley
Brycchan Carey
Laura Colombino
Laureano Corces
Preeti Desodiya
Kim Duff
Susan Fischer

Simon Goulding
Peter Jones
Julia Kind
Chi-fang Sophia Li
Tzu Yu Allison Lin
Carmela Mana
Lindsay Martin
Lawrence Phillips

Tatiana Pogossian
Holly Prescott
Amrita Satapathy
Philip Tew
Candy Wood
Mazin Zeki