

Hornby Drama Group

# Constitution 2024

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## 1 Organisation

1:1 The name is Hornby Drama Group, hereafter called the HDG.

1:2 The aim of HDG is to provide an opportunity for local people of all ages to participate in the production of drama events.

1:3 The normal usual meeting place is Hornby Village Institute.

1:4 Under executive control by the HDG Committee, HDG shall have the power to:

- Raise money.
- Hold bank account(s).
- Hire items and make appropriate purchases
- Set a membership fee.

## 2 Membership

2:1 Membership is open to people of all ages, and as defined as anyone who has paid the Annual membership fee. Junior membership is defined as the age of 16 years and below. (Members aged 16 years and over are defined herein as 'adults').

2:2 The Annual membership charge and the level of any ~~regular subscriptions~~ 'meeting donations' [defined in 4.6] shall be determined by the HDG committee and reviewed annually.

2:3 Payment of the Annual membership charge or regular payment of the 'meeting donation' at a General meeting [defined in 4.1] entitles the member to take part in all HDG activities, and (if elected) to serve on the HDG committee.

2:4 The Annual membership charge is payable to the HDG Treasurer (or his nominated representative) who will issue a receipt. Payment to normally be made at the AGM or at the first meeting in the year.

2:5 Membership and its entitlements ceases either:

- (i) on written cancellation of the membership by the member, or
- (ii) members who have not participated any way in one of the last three productions

2:6 The Committee, on behalf of the HDG, may cancel an individual's membership if their behaviour is deemed to be detrimental to the wellbeing or reputation of an HDG member or the HDG. The cancellation shall take place after a written warning has first been given.

2:7 The committee may vote to excuse any member from paying the Annual membership charge or 'meeting donation' at their discretion.

2:8 The Secretary (or other member nominated by the committee) shall maintain an up-to-date Membership List.

### 3 Meeting protocol

3:1 Committee Meetings may be held whenever necessary.

3:2 An Annual General Meeting (hereafter the AGM) shall normally be held in January, or as soon after as is practicable.

3:3 Minutes of every meeting shall be kept, and the minutes made available to all members upon request.

3:4 The AGM is open to all members of the HDG and the public.

3:5 The date, venue and time of the AGM will be advertised to members at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

3:6 The quorum for an AGM shall be 4 members, including the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson.

3:7 All adult members are entitled to a vote and a simple majority shall be sufficient to pass.

3:8 A member may nominate a any other member to vote for them in their absence. The absentee must notify the Secretary (in writing or by email) of the name of their nominee. The nominee must also notify the Secretary (in writing or by email) of their willingness to stand in that role.

3:9 The AGM is a formal meeting and the Agenda will include:

- ❑ Apologies from those unable to attend.
- ❑ ~~Ratification~~ Acceptance of the previous year's minutes.
- ❑ Matters arising from the previous year's minutes.
- ❑ The Chairperson's annual report.
- ❑ The Treasurer's report and presentation of ~~independently-examined~~ accounts (preferably independently examined).
- ❑ The Election of Officers and 'Ordinary' members, viz:
  - Honorary President
  - Chairperson<sup>1</sup>
  - Vice Chairperson
  - Secretary
  - Treasurer<sup>1</sup>
  - Ordinary<sup>2</sup> members
- ❑ Any Other Business.

Notes:

- 1) A Chair and a Treasurer are the minimum required for the HDG to operate
- 2) An 'Ordinary' member is one who has no specific role or duty.

3:10 Nominations for Officers, supported by a seconder, shall be given in writing or by email to the Secretary at or before AGM.

3:11 Nomination forms will be distributed with the 'Notice of the AGM' sent to members in writing no later than two weeks before the meeting. (by post, email or in person)

3:12 In the event of insufficient nominations, the only essential officers necessary for the HDG to continue operation shall be the Chairperson and Treasurer. The other roles may then be shared as necessary.

3:13 No member shall be considered for election without a signed nomination form or the equivalent, which may be signed at the AGM if necessary. If there is more than one nominee for a particular position, election shall be by secret ballot held at the AGM.

3:14 The HDG Committee shall have the right to temporarily co-opt additional members to the committee, including Junior Members, if and when considered desirable.

#### 4 Meetings

4:1 **General Meetings** are primarily for rehearsals & play readings, but may include eg. social events, guest speakers and drama workshops.

4:2 General meetings are open to all members and prospective members.

4:3 General meetings are normally held weekly – usually on a Wednesday evening. Additional meetings may be arranged as required, eg. for rehearsals.

4:4 General meetings are held at Hornby Institute, or elsewhere as ~~shall be~~ agreed by participating members.

4:6 At each general meeting there may be a nominal 'meeting donation' levied ~~charge~~ designed to offset the cost of room hire. The amount shall be determined by the committee.

#### 4:7 **Extraordinary General Meetings**

An Extraordinary General Meeting may ~~also~~ be requested by the Chair, or by Members provided that request is supported by at least one third of the current membership. Such a request must be made in writing or by email to the Secretary, and countersigned by those concerned.

5 **Committee meetings** to be held when requested by any member of the committee and supported by the Chairperson.

5:2 The HDG Committee shall have the right to temporarily co-opt additional members, including Junior Members, if and when it may be necessary.

5:3 The Committee is elected by members of the Hornby Drama Group at their Annual General Meeting.

5:4 A quorum of three officers shall be necessary for a Committee meeting to take place and make decisions. In the event of their being only elected officers [3.12], then those two individuals plus two 'ordinary' committee members shall suffice as a quorum.

5:5 All committee members are entitled to a vote and a simple majority shall be accepted.

5:6 Committee meetings shall be minuted.

5:7 Each member of the HDG Committee shall be elected for a period of one year or until the next AGM when a fresh committee will be elected.

5:8 No member shall serve in the role of the Chairperson or the Vice-chairperson for more than four consecutive years.

**6 Financial matters** are the responsibility of the committee.

6:1 The Treasurer, on behalf of HDG, has the power to open bank account(s) as directed by committee vote.

6:2 Withdrawals from all bank accounts shall require ~~three~~ two signatures ~~signatories~~, one of whom shall be the Treasurer (or the Chairperson if he/she is unavailable, in which case the Treasurer must be notified of the transaction without delay) and the other being a committee member.

6:3 No member of the HDG shall be paid for their services.

6:4 A member of the HDG may be reimbursed for reasonable out of pocket expenses (to a value not exceeding 3x the annual membership fee) without prior reference to the Treasurer.

6:5 If the sum exceeds 3x the annual membership fee, prior agreement must be reached with the Treasurer, or another HDG committee member if the Treasurer is unavailable in which case the Treasurer must be notified of the transaction without delay. Receipts should ideally be produced with every claim made. If no receipt is available, the claim must be itemised, signed and dated before presentation to the Treasurer.

6:6 The prices of tickets, programmes and refreshments shall be decided by the HDG Committee before each production.

6:7 The Treasurer's report shall ideally be examined by an independent (~~non-committee~~ HDG member) person before presentation to the AGM. Any member may request an independent examination at the AGM, but the request must be supported by at least one other member present.

## **7 Child Protection Policy**

7:1 The HDG shall have a 'Child Protection Policy'. It shall be reviewed annually by the committee. (This policy is intended to apply also to 'vulnerable adults' as and when appropriate).

7.2 The HDG Committee is responsible for ensuring that some members are registered with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) before allowing children to participate in HDG activities, and that their registration is maintained.

## **8 Safety**

8.1 A Safety Officer shall be appointed by the HDG committee. He/she will take prime responsibility to monitor general safety, and ensure good standards are maintained throughout the production process.

8.2 At the outset of any production, the Safety Officer shall undertake a risk assessment. This shall take due regard to hazards which may particularly affect children. For example, recognising the fact that children may be unfamiliar with theatre tools & equipment, and the back-stage environment during performances (darkness and confined spaces).

8.3 The Safety Officer shall brief all participants of “house rules” regarding health and safety, prior to any production. Care shall be taken to ensure that this briefing is delivered in a manner appropriate for young children, and that the salient messages are understood by all. (A separate briefing specifically for children may be the best way of achieving this. It could include ‘games’ to consolidate learning and demonstrate understanding, eg. the location of fire exits and the fire muster point).

8.4 If a someone is injured during any HDG activity, the injury and response shall be recorded in the HDG accident book. If appropriate, this record shall be countersigned by the Duty Child Protection Officer.

## **9 Changing the Constitution**

9:1 Amendments to the Constitution shall be agreed by committee members and ratified at an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) of the HDG.

9:2 The (EGM) quorum shall be 50% of the adult membership.

9:3 At least two week’s written notice of an Extraordinary General Meeting shall be given to all members, informing them of the reason together with the date, time and venue of the proposed meeting.

9:4 The (EGM) shall be a formal, minuted meeting. Any amendment to the Constitution shall be proposed and seconded, and adopted by vote of 75% of those present.

## **10 Grievance procedure**

10:1 If a member has a problem with the way the HDG is run, they should first raise it informally with the Chair. If a satisfactory resolution cannot be agreed, the member has the right to put their case to the committee in person. Following debate and a formal vote (with the concerned member absent), the committee’s decision on a course of action to resolve the matter shall be final.

## **10 Winding up the Hornby Drama Group.**

11:1 If it should be necessary to ‘wind up’ the HDG, the Committee shall call an Extraordinary General Meeting of the HDG.

11:3 The quorum shall be 75% of the adult membership.

11.4 A formal (proposed and seconded) resolution to close the HDG is necessary, a 75% vote of those present being required for adoption.

11.5 The elected Treasurer shall give an account of the current financial situation, together with details of any outstanding debts, or money owed to the HDG.

11.6 In the event of the demise of the HDG, disposal of all outstanding funds shall be decided by majority vote. Ideally, funds shall be donated to another local amateur drama group, or if not practicable to the Hornby Village Trust, but this shall be decided by a 90% vote of those present.

11.7 In the event of the demise of the HDG, all items owned by the HDG shall first be offered to the nearest existing amateur drama group. If this is not practicable, every effort shall be made to sell or dispose of them appropriately and any money raised be added to the 'outstanding funds' (as defined in 10.6 above) and disposed of accordingly.

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