

Muskham Vale Heritage Group Constitution

1. The Organisation

The constitution set out below is that of “Muskham Vale Heritage Group”, commonly known as “MVHG” and/or “Muskham Vale Group”. It was adopted by the membership as of the date at the foot of this document.

2. Aims & Objectives

To investigate and record the heritage of the “Muskham Vale” and the surrounding area as agreed by the membership. This is defined within the terms Heritage, Landscape, History, Archaeology, Access and Community or related objectives agreed by the group.

To conserve and enhance the local environs, particularly initiatives relating to heritage and countryside access.

To train members in aspects of historic research, archaeology, landscape development, heritage, conservation plus associated subjects and techniques to a proficiency sufficient to allow them to undertake investigations to a professional standard.

To promote public interest in the heritage of “the vale”, particularly amongst the local community, through educational and other activities.

3. Membership

3.1. Full Membership

Membership is open to all who wish to fulfil the above aims and is prepared to adhere to the constitution, spirit and any rules or codes of conduct of the organisation as agreed by the membership. Membership is by application and is at the discretion of the serving officers of the organisation who may decide to put the application to the membership at a meeting.

The group will hold insurance to cover full members when actively involved in any group activity. For this reason, full membership is open to persons of a minimum age of 18 years.

A full member is defined as someone who, having been granted membership, has paid their subscription for the current period and is not subject to disciplinary

action of any kind. Full members are entitled to vote on issues affecting the organisation and to hold any office within the club subject to election at an Annual General Meeting (AGM) or Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM).

Anyone carrying out activities detrimental to the good name of the organisation can have their membership reviewed by the elected officers. Such activities shall include trespass, damage to (or the removal from) archaeological sites, of materials, artefacts, finds, or other items, without consent, and/or any unlawful activity. Once the officers have reviewed the situation they should take the action they deem necessary to resolve the problem and restore the good name of the organisation. This may include the expulsion, or suspension, of the member and, in the case of unlawful activity, informing the relevant authority.

For reasons of insurance, only full members will be permitted to become involved in active projects, such as restoration, conservation or archaeological excavation

3.2. Associate Membership

Those who do not wish to become full members may attend monthly meetings and similar activities as Associate Members, on payment of an entry charge. Associate members will be considered as visitors for insurance purposes. Although they may be able to visit any excavation or other group project, this would only be on invitation and they would not be permitted to participate in such activities.

3.3. Honorary Membership

Members may elect, or award, the status of "Honorary Member" to previous or retiring members to mark past service. Honorary membership may also be awarded to persons outside the organisation who have assisted the development of the organisation and/or its wider aims and objectives.

Honorary members may be elected at an AGM or EGM or, if required, at any other time subject to confirmation at the next AGM or EGM, which must be held within 90 days. Honorary members pay no annual subscription and the position carries no voting rights. All honorary members are subject to re-election annually, at the AGM, and the total number of honorary members should not exceed a figure equivalent to 15% of full members.

Where honorary members attend regular meetings of the organisation they should pay the members rate for that meeting, unless invited as a guest of the Officers. They should not become involved in the business of the organisation unless invited so to do by the person chairing that meeting. Should an honorary member wish to become active within the organisation, or take office, they must take up full membership.

4. Subscriptions & Charges

The subscription year will run for 12 months from a date agreed by the steering committee and, subsequently, at the AGM.

4.1. Annual Subscriptions

Annual subscriptions will be levied at the rate agreed by the Steering Committee and thereafter by the membership at an AGM or EGM.

The annual subscription is designed to underpin the finances, insurance, communication, administration, storage, and other main expenditure incurred in the running of the organisation.

Subscriptions should be paid in full within 28 days of the start of the subscription year or date determined at an AGM or EGM. Where circumstances dictate, and at the discretion of the Treasurer, members may opt to pay in two instalments, six months apart (by private arrangement).

Membership will be for 12 months on a pro-rata basis (i.e. if someone joins one month after the start of the year their membership fee will be eleven twelfths of the annual subscription).

Unless there is an exceptional cost, membership will include attendance at the monthly meetings.

For Associate Members, a charge will be payable for meeting attendance.

5. Officers

Annually, at the AGM, the following office holders will be elected by the membership to serve for one year, after which they may stand for re-election for a subsequent term of office, whether in the same position or as a different office holder. All officers must serve the aims and objectives of the organisation, abide by the constitution and attend meetings on a regular basis.

5.1. Chairperson

Responsible for the overall organisation of the group. This will include taking the chair at committee meetings and being the main spokesperson of the group. Unless delegated to other members, this includes the recording and collation of finds, the management of field operations, the oversight of reports and the general management of the organisation including project prioritisation, etc.

5.2. Honorary Secretary

Responsible for the dissemination of information within the organisation and externally, including the production of programmes, newsletters, updates, maintaining up-to-date membership information, etc. Where necessary, the Secretary will assist the Chairperson in the general management of the organisation and will chair meetings if required.

5.3. Committee Secretary

The committee secretary will assist the Honorary Secretary by being responsible for any meeting agendas, minutes and other administrative activities to aid the running of the group.

Some aspects of the secretarial role may be delegated to other members.

5.4. Honorary Treasurer

Responsible for the management of the finances of the organisation. This will include the maintenance of accurate accounts of the organisation, banking, the collection of subscriptions, meeting charges, payment from funds of any amounts owing, insurances, affiliation fee, etc. It will be the responsibility of the Treasurer to prepare an annual summary of the accounts of the organisation for presentation at the AGM.

All the above offices are honorary though the organisation will reimburse the office holder for costs which are directly occurred in carrying out their duties, save for time and routine travel within the area.

5.5. Committee Members

There will be further members of the committee [minimum two, maximum five] who will aid the overall running of the group. Such persons may take on specific interest areas, whether geographical, topical, organisational, or may be without portfolio.

In addition, non committee members may take on a variety of roles involved in research, archivist, social, etc.

6. Routine Meetings

Subject to determination at the AGM, routine activity meetings will be held monthly, throughout the year, unless agreed otherwise. The routine meeting night is currently the first Thursday of each calendar month.

7. Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting shall be held prior to the end of each subscription year. This will help ensure that all members are fully paid up and eligible to vote.

Any delay should only be permitted in exceptional circumstances and should be agreed by the membership at a routine meeting.

The AGM should:

- a) receive and agree the reports of the outgoing officers
- b) receive and agree the accounts for the year.
- c) elect officers to serve for the following year
- d) elect honorary member
- e) receive the proposals of incoming officers
- f) agree the subscriptions for the following year
- g) agree any changes to the constitution

7.1. Notice of Annual General Meetings

All full members must receive 28 days notice of the AGM, together with a draft agenda of the meeting. Members have 7 days to inform the Secretary or Chairman of any additions to the agenda which, if they occur, must be notified to all members no less than 14 days before the date of the meeting.

Only items listed on the agenda of the AGM may be voted on at that meeting. Any other items raised may not be voted on at the AGM although the meeting may vote to call an Extraordinary General Meeting should the meeting agree that those items need urgent attention. This is to ensure that all members are given the required notice of major decisions.

7.2. Quorum

Any AGM (or EGM) shall only be considered quorate if at least 2 (two) officers and at least one quarter of full members are present to validate any decisions. If such a quorum is not present a further meeting shall be called within one calendar month of the original date. The number of members present at any subsequent meeting shall be deemed to constitute a quorum.

Voting by proxy is not allowed and all voting shall be by show of hands.

8. Extraordinary General Meetings

An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) may be called if the Chairperson, or two other officers, or three full members, make such a request.

An EGM may be called to consider one or more issues relating to the election or suitability of officers, subscriptions, constitution, honorary membership, or any other issue considered by the caller(s) [see above] to be outside the remit of routine business meetings.

An EGM should be chaired, where possible, by the Chairperson unless the circumstances of the meeting make that inappropriate. In such circumstances an alternative officer, or one of the full members calling for the EGM, should take the chair.

As with an AGM, only items listed on the agenda and notified to the membership in accordance with the rules set out in previous section, may be determined at any EGM.

Where emergency decisions are deemed necessary by a majority of the serving officers, those officers may make such decisions subject to the confirmation of an EGM or AGM within 60 days. Any such move should be taken with the agreement of a business meeting.

9. Dissolution

Any decision to dissolve the organisation can only be taken by an AGM or EGM. Notice of any such meeting must be in accordance with the notice period as set out above.

If an AGM or EGM agrees to dissolve the organisation, any assets remaining, once outstanding debts have been met, will be donated to the local branch of the Young Archaeologists of the Council of British Archaeology, either as tangible assets or as cash.

10. Adoption of Constitution

The above constitution was adopted by the Steering Committee on:

19th day of June 2008.

Signed _____ (Chairperson) Date: ____/____/2008.

Print Name: _____. This constitution will be ratified by the membership at the next AGM/EGM which will be within twelve months of the above date.