

1. NAME

THE OTFORD SOCIETY

Reg. Charity No. 272974

2. OBJECTIVES

We are an amenities charity specialising in strengthening community ties, preserving the rural and historic character of Otford and improving the quality of Otford Village life by providing funding to improve village amenities. We raise funds primarily through donations and through the promotion of social activities.

2.1. AIMS

The Society is established as a charity for the benefit of all the members of the Otford community living within the parish boundaries. Its purpose and aims to achieve this outcome are:

- (i) To promote and strengthen social ties within the community and to promote unity.
- (ii) To support projects which provide for the enhancement of the community
- (iii) To promote and support local village businesses.
- (iv) To monitor planning and development activities and protect the village and surrounding area from unsuitable development or from intrusion by neighbouring communities.
- (v) To preserve buildings and structures within the parish which contribute to the heritage and history of the Otford community.
- (vi) To protect and preserve the open countryside and the natural habitat within the parish boundaries.

2.2. MEANS

The Society shall seek to achieve its aims by:

- (i) Holding community events which will bring people together and promote enjoyment and harmony.
- (ii) Supporting means by which the village is enhanced and made more attractive.
- (iii) Working in unison with the Otford Parish Council and other appropriate local organisations when pursuing our aims.

- (iv) Maintaining an online presence by which the membership can gain information on events, purchase tickets or make contributions.
- (v) Collecting /investing subscriptions and donations made to the Society in order to benefit its aims.
- (vi) Providing support and assistance to other village societies by which they can further promote their own events.
- (vii) When deemed appropriate by the Trustees, providing help, directly or indirectly, to the less fortunate living within our community.
- (viii) Maintaining a watching brief on any development proposals made within our community or in close proximity to it which could have an adverse effect upon the integrity of the village and the surrounding area. For this purpose there shall be a ring-fenced fund within the Society's financial resources to support any action which the Trustees, in their discretion, might wish to take in this respect.
- (ix) Promoting and supporting any means by which the countryside within our parish may be protected and its integrity upheld.
- (x) Providing support to community projects, local societies or local residents where deemed appropriate by the Trustees.
- (xi) Regularly informing the community of Society news through both digital and conventional media as deemed appropriate by the Management Committee.
- (xii) Holding an Annual and other General Meeting of the Society as required by our Constitution and other public meetings as required by the trustees.

3. MEMBERSHIP

Those admissible to membership shall include:

- 1: All persons over the age of 18 and living within the parish boundaries of Otford.
- 2: Any previous residents of the parish who no longer live within the parish boundaries.
- 3: Any Village society or organisation whose votes shall be exercised by a nominated representative.
- 4: Any other persons may be admitted at the discretion of the Trustees.
- 5: Each paid up member shall have one vote on each matter voted upon at any General Meeting of the Society.

- 6: All members shall agree to have their addresses and email details recorded by the Membership Secretary on the understanding that details are securely held and not passed to a third party. The Otford Society is fully committed to complying with the principles set out in The Data Protection Act 2018 and as detailed on our website.
- 7: At their discretion Trustees by agreement shall have the right to terminate the membership of a member for good reason but only after discussion with the member concerned.
- 8: The membership year will commence on 1st January

4. SUBSCRIPTIONS

There shall be an annual membership subscription fee recommended by the Trustees at the Annual General Meeting and put to the membership vote for approval.

Concessionary arrangements regarding subscription may be introduced by the Trustees at their discretion.

Members will be encouraged to make voluntary donations in excess of their membership fee.

5. TRUSTEES

The board of Trustees shall be the governing body of the Society subject only to a majority of members at a General Meeting voting against any particular decision of theirs. There shall be no fewer than four and no more than six Trustees of the Otford Society and who serve for renewable terms of one year. The elected Trustees shall be responsible for the good management and administration of the Society. They shall decide (by majority vote) upon all matters of finance, of admission to and removal from the Register of Members, and the structure and the manner of operation of the Society. Three members present shall constitute a quorum. The Trustees shall include a Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. Trustees' vacancies shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the membership. In the event of a casual vacancy arising during a year, the Trustees may fill the casual vacancy for the period to the end of the term of the person vacating the trusteeship. Nominations for a new substantive Trustee must be received in writing with a seconder, at least fourteen days in advance of the Annual General Meeting taking place. In the event of an equality in the votes cast, the Chairman shall have a second and casting vote. The Trustees shall meet not less than four times a year. The Secretary shall notify all Trustees at least fourteen days in advance of all meetings. All meetings shall be carefully minuted by the Secretary and approved by the Trustees. The Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer shall be appointed by the membership at the Annual General Meeting. A Trustee may be asked to lead on certain other matters (eg as Membership Secretary, or as chair of the Events Management Committee).

6. EVENTS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

There shall be appointed by the Trustees and which shall report to the Trustees, an Events Management Committee comprised of no less than six members. All Trustees are members of the Committee. Proposals for membership of the Events Management Committee shall require approval by the Trustee committee. The primary purpose of the Committee is to propose, organise and manage the community events which the Society runs throughout the year and any projects which it undertakes. Five members, which shall include a minimum of two Trustees, shall constitute a quorum. All minutes shall be minuted by the Secretary and approved by the Events Management Committee as accurate. The Committee may request that the Trustees require a member of the Committee to vacate his or her position on the Committee.

7. PUBLIC MEETINGS

An Annual General Meeting of the members (and representatives of Society members) shall be held each year. Its purposes are to receive the Trustees' report and the audited or financially examined accounts of the Society, to elect the Trustees and any officers, to appoint the auditors or financial examiners, and to consider any other matters brought forward by the members.

Members shall be notified in advance of the Annual General Meeting at least fourteen days prior to its taking place.

Extraordinary General Meetings of the Society may be held at the written request of ten members.

Twenty-five members personally present, shall constitute a quorum for both the Annual General Meeting and any Extraordinary General Meetings of the Society.

8. PROJECT LEADS

Project Leads shall be appointed by the Projects Management Committee in order to take forward and lead a project to its completion. The Lead shall be responsible for preparing a budget on a project, forming its sub-committee and managing it to its completion. The proposed budget will require the approval of the Trustees before the project is made active. In the event that the budget requires re-assessment, only the Trustees shall approve further expenditure over and above the initial estimate. The Lead shall be responsible for signing off on expenses within the agreed budget incurred by team members.

The Lead may elect another person, not a part of the Management Committee, to act on his/her behalf. However, responsibility for budget control shall remain with the elected Management Committee Lead.

10. COMMUNICATION

To maintain consistency and accuracy, no public communication may be made concerning the Society's affairs or promotion of events unless such communications are passed through the Chairman or a nominated member.

11. FINANCIAL YEAR

The financial year shall run from 1st January to 31st December. All Society financial accounts shall be audited or financially examined.

12. THE FETE FUND

The financial return from the Otford Village fete, after the deduction of all costs, shall be divided by the Treasurer between the Otford Society and the Fete Fund. The Fete Fund shall be held in order to respond to individual community requests for financial support during the year. The proportion allocated to the Fete Fund and to the Otford Society shall be based upon the recommendation of the Trustees.

Any requests for financial support may then be made in writing to the Events Management Committee. The dispersal of monies from the Fete Fund will be recommended by the Events Management Committee for approval by the Trustees. The Objectives of the Society will act as a guide to the approval process.

13. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Any Trustee or member of the Events Management Committee or any other sub-committee, who has a financial or professional interest in any item under discussion in a committee meeting, shall declare his or her interest and not participate in any voting on the matter. Any such interest shall be noted in the Minutes.

14. EXPENSES AND APPLICATION OF FUNDS

The Trustees shall pay, out of the Society funds, all proper expenses of administration and management of the Society. Following payment such expenses and the setting aside of any reserve funds that may be deemed expedient, the remaining balance of funds may be applied by the trustees in the furtherance of the purposes of the Society.

15. INSURANCE

It shall be the responsibility of the Trustees to ensure that appropriate insurance cover has been taken out to insure trustees, and members of the Events Management Committee, and anyone acting under their direction, against action or injury whilst undertaking matters on behalf of the Society.

16. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

Any amendments to the Constitution shall not become effective until approved by a majority vote of the members at the Annual General Meeting.

17. WINDING UP/DISSOLUTION OF THE SOCIETY

In the event that no officer of the Society is prepared to stand as Chairman, or in the event there are insufficient trustees to run the Society affairs the standing Chairman shall propose the winding-up of the Society. An Extraordinary Public Meeting shall then be called and notified to all members, allowing at least fourteen days prior to the meeting taking place. At the Extraordinary Public Meeting, unless a member is prepared to take on the Chairmanship, or volunteer to fill the position of the insufficient Trustees, then the acting Chairman shall give public notice of the intention of the Society to wind up. That intention shall then also be notified to the Charities Commission. All Society Funds and assets, following the deduction of any necessary winding-up costs, shall then be allocated amongst Otford Charities that have been formed to bring benefit to the community.

18. DISQUALIFICATION OF A TRUSTEE

In the event that a Trustee of the Society should offend or break any of the Charity Commission regulations that apply to being a Trustee, that Trustee should be deemed automatically dismissed from the board of Trustees. The Chairman shall report this dismissal to the membership. A new interim Trustee may be elected by the remaining Trustees, should they deem it necessary, until the next Annual General Meeting when any new applicants may be proposed and voted upon by the membership.