



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 through donations and through conducting 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:

1. To promote and strengthen social ties within the community.
2. To support projects which provide for the enhancement of the community
3. To promote and support local village businesses
4. To monitor planning and development activities and protect the village and surrounding area from unsuitable development or from intrusion by neighbouring communities.
5. To preserve buildings and structures within the parish which contribute to the heritage and history of the Otford community.
6. 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:

1. Holding community events which will bring people together and promote enjoyment and harmony.

2. Supporting means by which the village is enhanced and made more attractive.
3. Working in unison with the Otford Parish Council and other appropriate local organisations when pursuing our aims.
4. Maintaining an online presence by which the membership can gain information on events, purchase tickets or make donations.
5. Collecting /investing membership fees, profits and donations made to the Society to benefit its aims.
6. Providing support and assistance to other village societies considered appropriate by the Trustees, by which they can further promote their own causes.
7. When deemed appropriate by the Trustees, providing help, directly or indirectly, to the less fortunate living within our community.
8. 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.
9. Promoting and supporting any means by which the countryside within our parish may be protected and its integrity upheld.
10. Providing support to community projects, local societies or local residents where deemed appropriate by the Trustees.
11. Regularly informing the community of Society news through both digital and conventional media as deemed appropriate by the Management Committee.
12. Holding an Annual and other General Meetings of the Society as required by our Constitution and other public meetings as required by the Trustees.

3. MEMBERSHIP

Those admissible for 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 other persons may be admitted at the discretion of the Trustees.
4. Each paid up member shall have one vote on each matter voted upon at any meeting of the Society.
5. 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.
6. The membership year will commence on 1st January.

4. SUBSCRIPTIONS

1. There shall be an annual membership fee recommended by the Trustees at the Annual General Meeting and put to the membership vote for approval.
2. Concessionary arrangements regarding the membership fee may be introduced by the Trustees at their discretion.
3. Members may be encouraged to make voluntary donations in excess of their membership fee.

5. TRUSTEES

1. The board of Trustees shall be the governing body of the Society.
2. Decisions made by the Trustees shall be final.
3. There shall be no fewer than four and no more than six Trustees of the Otford Society. Trustees can stand and be elected for a maximum term of three years which is renewable.
4. The Trustees shall be elected by the membership at the Annual General Meeting.
5. The Trustees shall elect among themselves a Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary.
6. Three members present at a meeting shall constitute a quorum.
7. 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 of removal from the Register of Members, and the structure and the manner of operation of the Society.
8. 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.
9. In the event of an equality in the votes cast, the Chairman shall have a second and casting vote.
10. Members seeking election to become a Trustee must submit their request in writing to the Secretary with a seconder, at least fourteen days in advance of the Annual General Meeting taking place.
11. 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.
12. All meetings shall be minuted by the Secretary and approved by the Trustees.
13. Any of the prescribed roles may be held jointly if agreed by the Trustees.

6. DISQUALIFICATION OF A TRUSTEE

1. In the event of gross misconduct, for example breaking any of the Charity Commission regulations that apply to being a Trustee, that Trustee should be deemed automatically dismissed from the board of Trustees.
2. The Chairman shall report this dismissal to the membership.
3. 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.

7. HONORARY PRESIDENT

An Honorary President may be invited to fulfil the role of figurehead for the Society. He/she shall not be counted a Trustee nor a member of the Management Committee. He/she shall have no voting rights and may only attend meetings upon receiving an invitation from the Chairman.

8. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

1. A Management Committee shall be appointed by the Trustees comprising no fewer than six members.
2. All Trustees are members of the Committee.
3. Proposals for membership of the Management Committee shall require approval by the Trustees.
4. 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.
5. Five members, which shall include a minimum of two Trustees, shall constitute a quorum.
6. Sub-committees may be set up from time to time.
7. All meetings shall be minuted by the Secretary and approved by the Management Committee as accurate.

9. GENERAL MEETINGS

1. An Annual General Meeting of the members shall be held each year. Its purpose is to receive the Trustees' report and the audited accounts of the Society.
2. It is also held to elect the Trustees, to appoint the auditors and to consider any other matters brought forward by the members.
3. Members shall be notified in advance of the Annual General Meeting at least fourteen days prior to it taking place.
4. Extraordinary General Meetings of the Society may be held at the written request of ten members or if proposed by the Trustees.
5. Twenty members shall constitute a quorum for both the Annual General Meeting and any Extraordinary General Meetings of the Society.
6. Members may propose motions requiring a vote at a General Meeting subject to advance notice in writing to the Secretary 14 days in advance of the meeting.
7. The Voting Procedure: Only persons who are registered as a fully paid-up member, may vote at meetings of the Otford Society.
8. Proxy Votes: When a member is duly notified of a General Meeting cannot attend they shall be entitled to cast a proxy vote(s) by writing to the Secretary or Chairman five days before such a meeting, setting out their voting intentions

10. COMMUNICATION

To maintain consistency and accuracy, all public communication concerning the Society's affairs or promotion of events must be passed through the Chairman or a nominated member, i.e. Communications Secretary.

11. FINANCIAL YEAR

The financial year shall run from 1st January to 31stDecember. All Society financial accounts shall have been audited prior to their presentation at the Annual General Meeting.

12. THE FETE FUND

A charity fund will be established to support community needs during each year. It will be known as the Fete Fund.

1. The Fete Fund will be financed by the allocation of a proportion of the profits made from the organising of the Otford Village fete and other similar events.
2. The exact proportion of profits allocated to the Fete Fund each year will be decided by the Trustees.
3. Potential recipients of financial support from the Fete Fund will be requested to apply in writing to the Management Committee.
4. The Management Committee may itself also suggest potential beneficiaries for the Fete Fund.
5. The dispersal of monies from the Fete Fund will be recommended by the Events Management Committee for approval by the Trustees.
6. The Objectives of the Society will act as a guide to the administration of the Fete Fund.

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 meeting of the Society, 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

1. The Trustees shall pay, out of the Society funds, all proper expenses of administration and management of the Society.
2. All receipts shall be submitted to the Treasurer.
3. No member of any committee shall make a financial commitment on behalf of the Society without the prior authorisation of the Trustees
4. The Trustees are authorised to maintain such bank or similar accounts as they see fit and to authorise how these accounts are to be operated.

15. INSURANCE

It shall be the responsibility of the Trustees to ensure that appropriate insurance cover has been taken out to insure Trustees, members of the 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 or by an Extraordinary General meeting.

17. WINDING UP/DISSOLUTION OF THE SOCIETY

1. In the event that no Trustee 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.
2. An Extraordinary General Meeting shall then be called and notified to all members with 14 days notice.
3. All members shall be informed that the Society is at risk of being wound up and shall have the opportunity to offer their application as candidates to become a Trustee.
4. At the Extraordinary General Meeting, if further Trustees are not elected, then the acting Chairman shall give public notice of the intention of the Society to wind up.
5. That intention shall then also be notified to the Charities Commission.
6. 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.