**Newton Humanists Constitution**

1. **NAME**

 The group shall be called ‘the Newton Humanists’ or ‘the NH’ (herein ‘the Group’).

1. **STATUS**

The Group shall be a Partner of Humanists UK, as defined by the Partnership Agreement between Humanists UK and the Group, of [insert date].

1. **AIMS**

The Group aims to:

* 1. Make a positive contribution to Humanism locally by providing a forum for humanists to meet, to develop their knowledge and thinking, and to develop the sense of a local community of humanists within the wider community.
	2. Act locally to promote and increase the understanding of Humanism as a positive world view.
	3. Represent atheist, humanist and secularist people in the area, and provide a balance to religious groups influence in local affairs.
1. **MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS**
	1. The Group shall welcome anyone, regardless of ability, age, gender, race, or sexual orientation, and who has an interest in atheism, humanism or secularism.

*Examples of two common definitions of membership are given under 4.2. Delete the one you do not want.*

* 1. *Example A.* Anyone who takes part in the Group’s activities, or who signs up to one of the Group’s lists (on-line or in hard-copy), shall be defined as a ‘Supporter’ of the Group. Any such person who is a member of Humanists UK shall be defined as a ‘Member’ of the Group. Voting rights at general meetings shall be reserved for Members only (see point 6). The Group will actively encourage its supporters to become members or supporters of Humanists UK.
	2. *Example B.* Anyone who takes part in the Group’s activities, or who signs up to one of the Group’s lists, shall be defined as a ‘Supporter’ of the Group. Anyone who has paid the Group’s membership fee, (see point 7.2), shall be defined as a ‘Member’ of the Group. Voting rights at general meetings shall be reserved for Members of the Group only (see point 6). The Group will actively encourage its members and supporters to become members or supporters of Humanists UK.
	3. The Group will safeguard the confidentiality of membership information, and any other information communicated in confidence by Humanists UK.
	4. The Group retains the right to refuse or withdraw membership from any member who fails to support its constitution or Partnership Agreement, or who brings Humanists UK or the Group into disrepute.
1. **MANAGEMENT**
	1. An executive committee (‘the Committee’) shall manage the Group and ensure that it:
		1. Pursues the Group’s Aims referred to in point 3;
		2. Fulfils the requirements of Humanists UK Partnership Agreement referred to in point 2.
	2. The Committee shall have seven elected officers (‘the Officers’), including the following position below, and may co-opt up to two further members.
		1. The President, who shall act as chief executive officer, and as chair of the Committee and any general meetings (unless otherwise delegated);
		2. The Treasurer, who shall act as chief financial officer, and who shall be responsible for ensuring that the Group fulfils its financial requirements (see point 7);
		3. The Secretary, who shall act as the chief administrative officer, and service all committee and general meetings.
	3. The Officers shall be individually elected every year at the Annual General Meeting. The Committee shall inform the Members at least six weeks before the AGM of the opening of nominations for the election, and of the procedures and dates of the election processes.
	4. The Committee shall meet at least once every two months and the Secretary shall give the Officers at least a fortnight’s notice of forthcoming committee meetings.
	5. The Committee will be in quorum when at least five Officers are present.
	6. The President, and any other elected officer who would like to be, shall be a Humanists UK Local Representative (BLR), as defined in the partnership agreement.
	7. The President shall be the main contact in the Group for interactions with Humanists UK.
2. **GENERAL MEETINGS**
	1. The group shall hold an Annual General Meeting (‘the AGM’) in April each year, which will:
		1. Receive the financial accounts and reports from the Committee for the period ending the 31st March of the same year as the AGM;
		2. Elect the Officers who will serve from 1st May following the AGM;
		3. Discuss and vote on any resolutions that have been proposed;
		4. Discuss and vote on any policy or constitutional items requiring ratification.
	2. An Exceptional General Meeting (EGM) may be convened by the Committee or by petition to the Secretary of at least one fifth of the Members. The Secretary shall convene an EGM within six weeks of the receipt of such a petition. Only the items stated in the notice given to Members shall be considered at the EGM.
	3. The Members shall be given at least six weeks’ notice of AGMS and at least a fortnight’s notice of EGMs.
	4. Only Members as defined in point 4.2 shall have voting-rights at general meetings.
	5. A general meeting shall be in quorum if at least three of the Officers are present and the number of Members present is one more than the number of Officers present.
	6. In any dispute concerning the affairs of the Group a general meeting shall be the final authority.
3. **FINANCE**
	1. As a Partner of Humanists UK, the Group is expected to:
		1. Maintain the financial viability of the Group;
		2. Decide whether or not to have a membership fee;
		3. Pay the annual Humanists UK Partnership fee on time.

*Two examples are given in 7.2 of common membership fee structures. Delete the one you do not want.*

* 1. *Example C.* There shall not be a membership fee to join the group. Membership of the group is defined in 4.2. An Officer shall ask for voluntary donations of £2 at each of the Group’s activities, where the Committee has agreed it is appropriate to do so.
	2. *Example D*. There shall be an annual membership fee and a concessionary rate, both of which shall be agreed at the AGM, based on a proposal made by the Treasurer. Any HUMANISTS UK members wishing to join the Group shall be made an introductory offer, equal to the concessionary rate, for their first year’s membership.
	3. The Group may hold events explicitly for the purpose of raising funds, either for the Group or an appropriate charitable cause.
	4. The income and property of the Group shall be devoted to the promotion of the Aims of the Group.
	5. Any bank accounts opened for the Group shall be in the name of the Group, and shall be in the name of at least three of the Officers (President, Treasurer and Secretary). Any cheques issued shall be signed by at least two Officers.
	6. The Officers may not receive payment for their services to the Group.
	7. In the event of the Group being dissolved, all remaining funds after payment of liabilities shall go to Humanists UK.
1. **EXTERNAL RELATIONS**
	1. The Group may affiliate to any appropriate body, subject to approval at a general meeting.
	2. The Group may not affiliate to, or publicly support, any political party.
	3. Within the Group’s resources and capabilities, and taking into account local circumstances, when engaging in external activities and dealing with third-parties the Group shall support Humanists UK’s aims, strategy, policies and values, and will not take any action that brings Humanism or Humanists UK into disrepute.
	4. If there is a conflict between activities in support of any other organisations the Group is affiliated or associated with, and those in support of Humanists UK’s aims, values and policies, the Group will give priority to the latter.
2. **AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSITITION**

The constitution may be amended by a resolution passed by at least two-thirds of the Members present at a general meeting. Notice of resolutions to change the constitution must be included in the notice of the general meeting.