



Royal Scottish Country Dance Society

Belfast Branch

Constitution and Rules

Revised and adopted at Annual General Meeting on 24th May 2011

Amended at Annual General Meeting on 27th May 2015

Amended at Annual General Meeting on 30th May 2018

Amended at Annual General Meeting on 29th May 2019

Amended at Annual General Meeting on 7th July 2021

Amended at Annual General Meeting on 25th May 2022

Amended at Special General Meeting 6th July 2022

Signed: *Linda Harley*

Dated: 6th July 2022

Linda Harley, Chairman

CONSTITUTION

I.	NAME	1
II.	ASSOCIATION WITH THE ROYAL SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY	1
III.	OBJECTS	1
IV.	MEMBERSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTIONS	1
V.	OFFICE BEARERS	2
VI.	COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT	3
	(a) Memberships/Meetings	3
	(b) Powers and Duties of Committee	3
VII.	DUTIES OF OFFICE-BEARERS	3
	1. Chairman:	3
	2. Honorary Secretary:	3
	3. Honorary Treasurer:	4
VIII.	LOCAL ASSOCIATION MEETINGS	4
	1. General Meetings	4
	2. A Special General Meeting	5
IX.	SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION OF MEMBER	5
X.	DISBANDMENT	5
XI.	REPRESENTATION IN THE SOCIETY	6
XII.	ALTERATION OF CONSTITUTION	6
	RULES	7
	1. Committee of Management	7
	2. Classes	8
	3. Payment of Subscriptions	8
	4. Class Fees	8
	5. Class Teachers	9
	6. Visitors	9
	7. Demonstrations and Competitions	9
	8. Honorary Members	10
	9. Scroll of Honour	10
	10. Alteration of Rules	10
	11. Definition of “Year”	10

THE ROYAL SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY BELFAST BRANCH

CONSTITUTION

As adopted 24 May 2011, amended 27 May 2015, 30 May 2018, 7 July 2021, 25 May 2022 and 6 July 2022.

I. NAME

The name of the Local Association shall be "The Royal Scottish Country Dance Society Belfast Branch" (hereinafter called "the Local Association").

II. ASSOCIATION WITH THE ROYAL SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY

The Local Association is an autonomous body consisting of members of the Royal Scottish Country Dance Society (hereinafter called "the Society"). While it has similar objects to and associates with the Society, it operates and carries out its administration and management independently from the Society.

III. OBJECTS

The objects of the Local Association shall be:

- (a) To preserve and further the practice of traditional Scottish Country Dancing;
- (b) To provide or assist in providing instruction in the dancing of Scottish Country Dances;
- (c) To promote the enjoyment and appreciation of Scottish Country Dancing by any suitable means;
- (d) Generally to do such other things as are or may be considered by the Local Association to further the foregoing objects of the Society in the district or area to which it relates.

IV. MEMBERSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

1. Membership of the Local Association shall be open to all persons over the age of 16 interested in the objects of the Local Association. Every person who is a member of the Local Association must be a member of the Society.

2. Persons under the age of 16 may become Junior Associates of the Local Association and the privileges accorded to such Junior Associates shall be regulated from time to time by the Committee of Management of the Local Association.
3. The Rates of Subscription for members, Class Fees and Visitors Fees, shall be such as may be determined from time-to-time by the Local Association in General Meeting.

V. OFFICE BEARERS

1. The Office Bearers of the Local Association shall consist of **the Chairman**, the **Honorary Secretary** and the **Honorary Treasurer** who shall all be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Local Association in the manner hereinafter provided. The **Chairman-elect** will also be an Office Bearer during his/her term elected to that post at the relevant Annual General Meeting as described below in V section 2.

The **Chairman** shall hold office for two years and on completion of his/her term of office shall be eligible for re-election for one further consecutive two year term. Elections for the Chairman will be biennially. Where possible the Chairman should give due notice one year in advance of his/her intention to retire or not stand for re-election to allow a Chairman-elect to be appointed for that year at the relevant Annual General Meeting.

2. The **Chairman-elect** should normally be elected by the members at the Annual General Meeting preceding the final year of office of the Chairman. The Chairman-elect will serve one year as Chairman-elect then be eligible for election for two years as Chairman, followed by a second term as Chairman if so re-elected.

Should the Chairman stand for re-election and not be re-elected then the office of Chairman-elect will remain in abeyance until the Chairman appointed by that meeting gives notice as above, under the conditions of this Article V section 2 and Rules of Association

3. The **Honorary Secretary** and **Honorary Treasurer** shall hold office for two years and shall be eligible for re-election for one further consecutive two year term. Elections for the Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer will be biennially.
4. The Committee of Management shall have the power to appoint an interim Chairman, Honorary Secretary and/or Honorary Treasurer to fill vacancies in such offices occurring between Annual General Meetings but any Office Bearers appointed shall serve only until the next Annual General Meeting when he/she shall be eligible for re-election when their terms of office will follow the above as in Article V sections 2 and 3.

5. The Local Association may appoint an **Honorary President** and **Honorary Vice-Presidents**.

VI. COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

(a) Memberships/Meetings

1. The affairs of the Local Association shall be administered by a Committee of Management, who will be the Trustees in terms of the Charities Act (hereinafter referred to as the "Committee") composed of the Chairman, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer, any other Office Bearers appointed, (other than the Honorary President and Honorary Vice-Presidents), six Ordinary Members and one representative from each class organised by the Local Association.
2. In terms of the Charities Act, the Chairman, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer, any other office bearers appointed (other than the Honorary President and Honorary Vice-Presidents) and the six ordinary members will be Trustees of the Charity.
3. The Ordinary Members and Class Representatives of the Committee shall be elected annually at the Annual General Meeting of the Local Association. On completion of their year in office they shall be eligible for re-election to the Committee.
4. All members of the Committee must be members of the Local Association and be at least 18 years old.

(b) Powers and Duties of Committee

1. A Quorum of the Committee shall be eight members.
2. The Committee shall have power to constitute Sub-Committees and entrust them with such duties as it considers necessary for the efficient working of Local Association affairs.

VII. DUTIES OF OFFICE BEARERS

1. Chairman:

The Local Association Chairman is the executive officer of the Local Association. He/She shall preside at Local Association meetings and at meetings of the Committee. In the absence of the Chairman from a meeting, a temporary Chairman shall be appointed from among those present. The Chairman of any meeting, whether a Local Association or Committee meeting, shall have a casting as well as a deliberative vote.

2. Honorary Secretary:

It shall be the duty of the Honorary Secretary to see that regular meetings are held and that proper minutes of such meetings are kept and also to

conduct the correspondence of the Local Association. Additionally, the Honorary Secretary shall:

- (a) prepare an Annual Report of the activities of the Local Association during the preceding year;
- (b) keep a register of members of the Local Association.

3. Honorary Treasurer:

It shall be the duty of the Honorary Treasurer to ensure the banking of and accounting for all the monies collected by whatever agency from members of the Local Association or from other sources. Additionally, the Honorary Treasurer shall:

- (a) cause proper account books to be kept and ensure that the annual accounts of the Local Association are properly examined or audited as required by law.
- (b) make the annual Local Association accounts available for inspection at reasonable times and present the accounts for adoption by the Local Association at the Annual General Meeting.

- 4. The Chairman-elect**, when elected, will shadow the work of the Chairman for the year prior to his/her completion of the Chairman's term of office.

VIII. LOCAL ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

1. General Meetings

- (a) An Annual General Meeting of the members of the Local Association shall be held within six months after the end of its financial year at such place and at such time as may be determined by the Committee.
- (b) Exceptional circumstances may arise where it is not possible to hold such a meeting within the required 6 month period e.g. a national emergency which results in government prohibiting or restricting public gatherings. Examples of such emergencies could include war, terrorism, pandemics, earthquakes. In such circumstances, an Annual General Meeting should be held as soon as practically possible after the event and when it is declared legal and safe to do so.
- (c) All members shall be given 14 days written notice of a General Meeting. Every notice shall contain a statement of the business to be discussed at the meeting.

- (d) Members under the age of 18 years may attend and, with the permission of the Chairman, speak at a General Meeting but may not vote.
2. **The order of business at an Annual General Meeting** shall, as nearly as may be, be the following:-
- (a) Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting and of any Special General Meetings held in the course of the year.
 - (b) Honorary Secretary's Report on the year's working of the Local Association.
 - (c) Honorary Treasurer's Report and accounts.
 - (d) Appointment of Office Bearers and Committee.
 - (e) Motions.
 - (f) Any other competent business.
3. **A Special General Meeting** may be called at any time by the Chairman or shall be called on a requisition signed by not less than one tenth of the membership of the Local Association when such membership does not exceed 500. Where membership of the Local Association exceeds 500 a minimum of 50 or one sixteenth, whichever is the greater, of the membership must sign the requisition calling a Special General Meeting.
4. **Quorum:** One eighth of the membership or thirty five members of the Local Association, whichever shall be the lesser, shall constitute a quorum.
5. The Local Association in General Meeting may enact such rules (hereinafter referred to as the "Rules") as it may determine for the proper working of the Local Association.

IX. SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION OF MEMBER

- 1. The Committee may suspend temporarily or terminate the membership of any person whose conduct is, in their opinion, prejudicial to the interests of the Local Association. Suspension or termination shall not alter the rights or status of the person concerned as a member of the Society.
- 2. Before suspending or terminating any person's membership, the Committee shall notify, in writing, the person concerned stating the reasons for the proposed suspension or termination and giving that person the opportunity of replying and of appearing before the Committee, if the member so wishes, to seek revocation of the termination or suspension.

3. The person whose membership has been suspended or terminated shall have the right of appeal at a Local Association General Meeting when a two-thirds majority of those present and entitled to vote shall be necessary to confirm the suspension or termination.
4. Where suspension or termination has occurred or, where appropriate has been confirmed as in 3 above, the matter shall be notified to the Society.

X. DISBANDMENT

1. Notice of intention to disband the Local Association shall be given to the Secretary of the Society at least two months before the date proposed for such disbandment.
2. The balance of the funds, after all liabilities have been met, and all property belonging to the Local Association must be given to a charity with similar purposes to this one and must be applied for charitable purposes only, as the members in General Meeting, whom failing, the Committee shall decide.

XI. REPRESENTATION IN THE SOCIETY

1. Any member of the Local Association may nominate any other member for election as a member of any of the Committees of Management of the Society. Any such nomination shall comply with the requirements for nomination contained in the Constitution of the Society.
2. Subject to any restriction on numbers and any procedures contained in the Society's Constitution, the Local Association in General Meeting (which failing, the Committee) may appoint a delegate or delegates to attend a General Meeting of the Society and represent the Local Association at such meeting. In the event of an appointed nominated delegate being unable to attend such meeting, an accredited substitute shall be allowed.

XII. ALTERATION OF CONSTITUTION

The Constitution of the Local Association shall only be altered by Resolution passed by the Local Association in General Meeting and only after receiving the vote of not less than two-thirds of the members present and entitled to vote. No change can be made that would make the organisation no longer a charity.

GENERAL

The Local Association shall be governed in accordance with this Constitution and with the Rules made by the Local Association in General Meeting.

THE ROYAL SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE SOCIETY BELFAST BRANCH

RULES

As adopted 24 May 2011, amended 27 May 2015, 30 May 2018, 29 May 2019, 7 July 2021, 25 May 2022 and 6 July 2022.

1. Committee of Management

- (a) Office Bearers as outlined in Article V of the Constitution, namely Chairman, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer will be elected biennially. The Chairman-elect will be elected at the annual meeting prior to the end of term of office of the Chairman. All ordinary members of the Committee shall retire annually and be eligible for re-election. They shall not serve more than three consecutive years, after which they shall be ineligible for election for one year. However, should a person already serving on the Committee as a **Non-Office Bearer** be elected as Chairman or Honorary Treasurer or Honorary Secretary the maximum of two terms or four year rule for offices shall apply as and from the date of such election.
- (b) At least seven days' notice of Committee Meetings shall be given in writing by the Secretary to all Committee members.
- (c) At least one Committee meeting shall be held during October to December, one during January to March and two during April to September in each year. In the event of special circumstances arising as described in the Belfast Branch Constitution, Section VIII, paragraph 1(b), which result in temporary suspension of meetings, these should resume as soon as practically possible and when it is declared legal and safe to do so.
- (d) For the furtherance of the work of the Local Association, the Committee shall have the power to make necessary appointments from its number or, were essential, by co-option.

Co-opted members may attend Committee meetings but shall have no voting powers.
- (e) The Committee shall at the first meeting following the Annual General Meeting, appoint an Honorary Minute Secretary to assist in the administration of meetings and a Ticket Secretary to assist in the administration of events.
- (f) The Committee shall at the first meeting after the Annual General Meeting, appoint delegates to the Society's Annual General Meeting.

- (g) The Committee shall have the power to approve a grant towards the travelling expenses of the delegates appointed to attend the Annual General Meeting of the Society.

2. Classes

- (a) The Committee shall organise and make arrangements for classes for Scottish Country Dancing in accordance with the objects of the Local Association.
- (b) The Committee shall have the power to limit, if necessary, the membership of any class.
- (c) Membership of the Society and the Local Association is a condition for class membership.
- (d) Membership of a Local Association class may be terminated by the Committee if considered to be in the best interests of the class.

3. Payment of Subscriptions

The Local Association subscription year shall run from 1st September to 31st August of the following year. On joining the Local Association a member shall pay his/her first annual subscription, which shall become renewable each year.

4. Class Fees

- (a) The annual class fees shall be determined by the Local Association in General Meeting and shall be due and payable by the Local Association members to the Treasurer each year at the commencement of the class. Class representatives shall notify the Local Association Secretary of any overdue fees. If such fees are not paid by the end of November in each year the Committee reserves the right to take any necessary action.
- (b) The Committee shall have the power to reduce class fees for members joining for less than two full terms. The first term runs from September to December and the second term from January to April. Members however must pay the Society subscriptions following the Society's rulings. Currently this is as follows:

Half yearly rate for Adult (over 25 years) **NEW MEMBERS ONLY**
joining January - June;

80% of full rate applies for two members of the same branch living at the same address;

50% of full Adult rate for Youth members (12-17) and 80% of full Adult rate for Young Adult (18-24).

Belfast Branch subscriptions also allow **similar percentage reductions for young persons** as defined above.

(Each reduction is rounded to the nearest £stg)

Belfast Branch members, including life and long term members of the Society are required to pay only one membership subscription to the Branch annually regardless of the number of Belfast Branch classes joined.

5. Class Teachers

- (a) The Committee shall appoint Local Association teachers annually. Such appointments shall be made from the Local Association list of teachers who hold either a full teaching certificate or who have successfully completed the Core Training for Instructors Course.
- (b) No teacher shall instruct more than one Local Association class unless
 - There is no other teacher available at the time of appointment.
 - Special circumstances arise which result in the absence of the appointed teacher for a limited period of time and a substitute teacher is required.
- (c) If any Local Association class is operated normally on the basis of a rota of teachers, Rule 5(b) will not apply to the teachers on the rota.

6. Visitors

- (a) Any member of the Local Association who is a fully paid up member of one class may visit other classes on payment of a visitors' fee.
- (b) Non-members of the Society, participating in the dancing, may, on payment of a visitor's fee, attend a Local Association class **up to a maximum of four times** without being required to join the class. If after four or fewer classes such a person decides to join the class, then the fees already paid as visitor's fees should be deducted from the class fee for that year.

No fee shall be payable by non-dancing visitors.

- (c) All visitors' fees shall be paid to the class representative, or deputy on the occasion of the visit.

7. Demonstrations and Competitions

The Local Association may provide teams for demonstrations and competitions. It shall be the responsibility of the Demonstration Secretary to organise such teams. Members of the Demonstration Team may not claim expenses from the Local Association funds.

However, should any donations be received by either the Demonstration Team or the Local Association, as a result of giving a demonstration, then such sums may be used to defray the expenses of the Demonstration Team.

8. HonoraryMembers

- (a) The Local Association by resolution in General Meeting may elect as an Honorary Member, any person who has rendered exceptional service to the Local Association and to the promotion of Scottish Country Dancing in general.
- (b) Nominations for Honorary Membership must have the recommendation of the Committee. Honorary members shall not be required to pay the Local Association subscription or class fees. However, Members shall be required to pay the Society subscription.

9. Scroll of Honour

The Local Association by resolution in a Committee meeting may nominate to the Society, any person who has rendered exceptional service in promoting Scottish Country Dancing, for consideration of the award of the Scroll of Honour.

10. Alteration of Rules

The Rules of the Local Association shall only be altered by resolution passed in General Meeting and only after receiving the vote of not less than two-thirds of the members present and entitled to vote. Any member of the Local Association who wishes to propose an alteration to the Rules must submit the proposed alteration to the Local Association Secretary at least 28 days before the meeting. The Secretary shall cause details of the proposed alteration to be sent out in the notice convening the meeting.

11. Definition of “Year”

- (a) The word "Year" in these Rules shall mean the period from one Annual General Meeting until the next.
- (b) The Financial Year shall be the period from the 1st of April until the 31st March of the following year.