

## The Association of Highland Clans and Societies

### The Constitution adopted at the General Meeting held in Inverness on 12 April 2013

#### 1. NAME

The Association of Highland Clans and Societies, abbreviated to AHCS.

#### 2. OBJECTIVES

To provide a means whereby the Societies, Associations, or Individuals (Chiefs or Commanders) representing the members of Highland Clans can get together to pursue joint aims, such as:

- (i). Sharing experience and expertise relating to the running of clans and clan societies.
- (ii). Organising joint clan-related events in the Highlands.
- (iii). Representing the Highland Clans in discussions with bodies organising joint clan events outwith the Highlands – subject to the rules laid down in Clause 5(viii).
- (iv). Receiving reports from, stimulating discussion about, and requesting action by the representatives of the Highland Clans sitting on other bodies.
- (v). Promoting projects that will benefit all Highland Clans.
- (vi). Supporting research into and the spread of knowledge about the nature and history of clans in the Highlands, and of the society they were and are a part of.

#### 3. MEMBERSHIP

(i). Full Membership will be open to any Society or Association in Scotland or the UK representing the members of any Highland Clan (see Clause 4 for definitions), or to the Chief or Commander of a Highland Clan without a functioning membership body. Each clan holding full membership will be entitled to one vote on the governing Council of the Association, and a full discount on all services and goods provided by AHCS.

(ii). Associate Membership will be open to Societies, Associations, and other bodies interested in or associated with the activities of the AHCS, and accepted as such by the Council of AHCS. Bodies holding Associate Membership may nominate a non-voting representative to sit on the Council of AHCS, and will receive a full discount on all services and goods provided by AHCS.

(iii). Individual Membership will be open to individual members of clans holding full membership. Individual Members will be able to attend and be heard at the AGM of the AHCS; will be eligible for election to an office of the AHCS; and will receive a full discount on all goods and services provided by AHCS.

(iv). Individual Associate Membership will be open to anybody bearing a Highland name not formally associated with a clan that has full membership of the AHCS. It will entitle the Individual Associate Member to attend and be heard at the AGM, and to receive a full discount on all goods and services provided by the AHCS.

#### 4. DEFINITIONS

(i). In the context of the AHCS, “Highland” refers to the *Gaidhealtachd* or the area to the north and west of the *Highland Line*.

(ii). In the context of the AHCS, “Clan” means any family or name recognised as such at any time by the crown, government, or authoritative historical tradition.

(iii). In both cases, any dispute about eligibility to become a member of the AHCS will be settled by a vote of the existing Council of the AHCS.

#### 5. GOVERNANCE

(i). The AHCS will be governed by a Council consisting of one representative of each clan holding Full Membership, plus the elected Officers of the AHCS. The Council’s quorum will be one third of the membership eligible to vote.

(ii). The Officers of the AHCS should consist of a Chairman; a Deputy Chairman; a Secretary; a Treasurer, all of whom will have a vote on the Council of the AHCS. No individual should hold more than two of these offices at the same time. They will be elected at the Annual Business Meeting of the Council [ABM] to hold office for one year, and will normally be eligible for re-election to the same offices for no more than five consecutive years.

(iii). The Annual Business Meeting of the Council should be preceded by an Annual General Meeting [AGM] of the AHCS at which Individual Members and Individual Associate Members of the AHCS can express their opinions and pass motions by a simple majority that the Council will be bound to consider, but not obliged to accept, at the subsequent Annual Business Meeting.

(iv). The agenda for the AGM should be posted on the AHCS website at least two weeks prior to the meeting itself, along with minutes of the last AGM and the annual financial statement.

(v). The Council of the AHCS should meet at least once a year in addition to the Annual Business Meeting, to hear reports from the Officers and consider any matters that Members may wish to raise. The Secretary will arrange to have minutes of these meetings taken and circulated. An Extraordinary Meeting of the Council must be held at the insistence of two thirds of the Full Members.

(vi). The Administration of the AHCS will be carried out by the Officers, who together will constitute the Executive Committee. The Council may elect, or the Committee may co-opt, further Committee Members as and when required; but all such appointments will only be until the next Annual Business Meeting when such Committee Members must be elected or re-elected for the following year.

(vii). Though the routine business of administration may be done using electronic communications, the Committee should meet in person twice a year – in addition to the two scheduled meetings of the Council – the minutes of which should be circulated to the other members of the Council.

(viii). AHCS Officers may only purport to be representing the views of the AHCS where the Council have previously agreed what the AHCS's view is. At no time may the Officers purport to be speaking for all the Clans who are Members of the AHCS.

## 6. FINANCES

(i). The administration of the AHCS, and its means of communication, will be paid for from the proceeds of membership fees approved by the Council at its Annual Business Meetings. Only fully paid up members will be eligible for the benefits of membership at the time those benefits are offered.

(ii). The membership and financial years will run from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December.

(iii). Events organised by the AHCS, and projects promoted by the AHCS, should be costed to pay for themselves, either by means of the revenue generated by them, or from any supporting funds granted by other bodies.

(iv). The Treasurer shall keep a full record of income and expenditure, and draw up annual accounts for submission to the AGM and ABM.

(v). The annual accounts will be scrutinised by an independent auditor appointed by the Council at the ABM.

(v). Cheques up to £50 may be signed just by the Treasurer, but cheques for any sum over £50 must also be signed by one of the other officers who are authorised signatories.

(vi). The Committee should ensure that there are sufficient funds available at any time to cover all likely eventualities, but in the event of unnecessary surpluses being generated by any of the Association's activities, the Council may authorise donations to agreed charities.

## 7. COMMUNICATIONS

The AHCS will maintain a website on which will be posted summary reports of its activities, minutes of the AGM, and annual accounts. An annual Newsletter containing more detailed reports, and other items of interest, will be sent to members towards the end of each year by email (or by post where individual members have no email).

## 8. AMENDMENTS

Proposed amendments to the Constitution must be posted with the agenda two weeks in advance of the AGM and ABM, discussed at the AGM, and then voted on at the ABM of the Council. A two thirds majority of Council members eligible to vote will be required to pass any amendment. Any motion to dissolve the AHCS should follow the same procedure.

## 9. DISSOLUTION

In the event of the Association having to be dissolved, any surplus funds remaining in the Association's account(s) will be donated to the Highland Family History Society, or to another registered charity designated by the Council.