

REGIONAL FURNITURE SOCIETY

Constitution adopted at the 2017 AGM;

With minor amendments made to paragraphs 10,11 and 13 at the 2022 AGM

Rules adopted 29th June 1986, amended 17th May 1987 and 17th July 1994 and 20 June 2015.

1. The name of the Society shall be the Regional Furniture Society.
2. In these rules the Society shall be taken to mean the Regional Furniture Society.

OBJECTS

3. The objects of the Society shall be to advance the study of the history, design, production, distribution and use of regional furniture in the British Isles and areas under British influence, and of Continental and other overseas influences on British regional furniture; and to further public knowledge and appreciation of it.

In furtherance of the foregoing objects, but not further or otherwise, the Society shall have the following powers:

- a) To encourage the conservation and preservation of examples of all such furniture and related archives both in museums and in other collections, and their current use as sources for study.
- b) To encourage research in all aspects of regional furniture, and to promote the development of interest in regional furniture in relation to social and economic life and history and in the relationship between regional furniture design and architecture and other arts and crafts.
- c) To publish material selected by its Editorial Board, to organise exhibitions and meetings alone or in conjunction with other bodies, and to record and store information in appropriate institutions.
- d) To raise funds and to invite and receive contributions from any person or persons whatsoever by way of subscription, donation or otherwise, provided that the Society shall not undertake any permanent trading activities in raising funds for its charitable objects.

MEMBERSHIP - Subscriptions and Benefits

4. Membership of the Society shall be open to individuals, institutions and organisations, and anyone actively interested in furthering the objects of the Society.
5. The annual subscription paid by a member of the Society shall be fixed by the Society at the Annual General Meeting from time to time and shall be due on the first day of January in each year. The Society shall reserve the right to determine a special rate of subscription for overseas members and institutions. Payment of the subscription so fixed shall entitle a member to all publications of the Society issued in that year. A member joining before the first of October shall be liable to pay the subscription for that year. A member joining after the first of October shall not be liable for payment for the remainder of that calendar year, nor shall they be entitled to receive the publications issued in that year.

6. The spouse/partner and children of a member may be deemed Associate Members by virtue of one Family Member paying the Family Membership fee. Payment shall entitle Associates to all the privileges of membership except those of receiving the Society's publications. Only two Family Members, the payer and one other nominated by them, may vote at the Annual or Extraordinary General Meetings, and only two may apply for places on each Society event, unless there are subsequent vacancies.

7. No publication of the Society shall be issued to a member until the subscription for the current year has been paid. If the annual subscription of any member be two months in arrears the Membership Secretary shall make application for it. If the said subscription be still unpaid at the expiration of one year from the time when it became due, it shall be in the power of the Council to remove the name of the member from the list of the Society, and in that case the Membership Secretary shall inform them of the fact. The Council may, at any time if they think fit, discontinue the membership of any individual or affiliated group.

8. The Society shall publish annually a Journal, a copy of which shall be sent free of charge to every paid-up membership. The Council may offer copies of the Journal to the general public at a price to be fixed by the Council. The Society shall also circulate free of charge to each membership one or more Newsletters each year, and sell them to the general public at a price to be decided on by the Council if it chooses. Members shall also have free access to all information on the Website.

9. The Council shall encourage applications for membership from libraries and other institutions approved by the Council and from societies or groups of individuals whose objects are substantially similar to those of the Society, and may approve any such applications on terms or conditions to be agreed in each case. No affiliated society or group shall be entitled to more than one copy of the Society's publications, nor may they apply for more than two places on events unless there are subsequent vacancies.

10. The Council may recommend to the Annual General Meeting the appointment of an Honorary Emeritus President in recognition of exceptional service to the Society and to regional furniture studies over a substantial number of years. Honorary life membership may be awarded by the Council in recognition of outstanding service to the Society and to regional furniture studies. Both categories shall enjoy free membership. They will not be members of Council because of these awards.

COUNCIL - Membership and Procedures

11. The affairs of the Society shall be managed and its funds administered by a Council consisting of the following Honorary Officers: a Chairman, a Treasurer, a Secretary, a Membership Secretary, a Journal Editor, a Newsletter Editor, a Website Editor, a Publications Secretary, a Bursary Secretary, an Events Organiser and an American Secretary, and up to five Ordinary Members. All Honorary Officers and Ordinary Members of the Council shall be elected annually at the Annual General Meeting, but no Honorary Officer shall serve for more than ten years and no Ordinary Member shall serve as such for more than five consecutive years. The Council may, however, at any time co-opt further members, up to a maximum of four. In particular, the Council may appoint an Archivist to carry out archiving work related to Regional Furniture Society records and other data or photographs about regional furniture; the Archivist will not be a member of Council or a Trustee.

12. The property of the Society shall be vested in its Trustees who are the elected members of the Council, subject to the terms of clause 21.

13. The Council may recommend to the Annual General Meeting the appointment of an Honorary President and an Honorary Vice-President expected to take over from the President when the latter retires. The Honorary President and the Honorary Vice-President shall be appointed for a term of up to five years, which appointments may be renewed on terms that the Annual General Meeting shall deem appropriate. In addition, the Council may recommend to the Annual General Meeting the appointment of other Honorary Vice-Presidents to provide advice to Council for an unlimited period. However, both Presidential and all Vice-Presidential appointments may be terminated at the wish of the appointees, or by a resolution carried at an Annual General Meeting. The President and the Vice-Presidents may attend Council but shall not have a vote. Neither President nor Vice-Presidents shall be Trustees of the Society.

14. The Chairman, or in their absence, one of the Honorary Officers, shall take the chair at all Council meetings. In the absence of any Honorary Officers, the meeting may elect a chairman from among those present.

15. All business transacted at Council and General Meetings shall be recorded by the Secretary in a Minute Book, and this shall be available for inspection by members at any reasonable time. All minutes shall be signed by the meeting chairman after adoption at the appropriate meeting next following.

16. The Council shall meet at least twice in every year. A total of seven Honorary Officers or Ordinary Members of the Council shall constitute a quorum. The Council may appoint sub-committees and delegate any of its powers to them. Sub-committees shall have the power to co-opt persons, whether members or not, to a maximum of half their appointed numbers; with the proviso that decisions made by sub-committees are subject to ratification by the Council. The Council has the power to ask for further information, and ultimately to reverse any decision made by a sub-committee, if it should deem this desirable. Any such sub-committees shall make full and regular reports back to the Council.

COUNCIL SUB-COMMITTEES

17. The Editorial Board shall consist of up to four members of the Council who shall have the power to co-opt two further persons who need not be members. It is responsible for supporting the Editor in producing the Journal.

18. Any question of Copyright in the Society's publications shall be a matter to be decided between the contributor and the Council/Editorial Board, in line with current legislation.

19. The Bursary Committee shall consist of up to four members of the Council and shall have the power to co-opt two further persons who need not be members. It is responsible for all aspects of Bursaries and such additional matters as are allocated to it.

FINANCIAL CONTROL

20. The funds of the Society shall be held in the name of the Society in such banks as the Council may decide. Cheques drawn on the Society's account shall require the signatures of the Treasurer and one of two other signatories agreed by the Council. The Council may also decide to place part of its funds in investments, suitable for a charity, having taken appropriate financial advice. The funds of the Society shall only be used to further the declared aims of the Society, and for the expenses in its administration. The Accounts of the Society shall be presented by the Treasurer to the Annual General Meeting, having been approved by an auditor/independent examiner appointed by the Council.

21. Members of the Society or Trustees may receive reimbursement of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses, or reasonable and proper remuneration for services rendered to the Society, contractually agreed beforehand. However, no member of the Council shall receive any remuneration for their work as a Trustee or under a contracted employment, unless authorised by the Charity Commission.

GENERAL MEETINGS

22. An Annual General Meeting shall be held each calendar year at a time and place decided by the Council, at which the Report and Accounts for the previous year shall be presented. The AGM Notice, Accounts and Reports will be made available by placing them on line 28 days prior to the AGM. Precise arrangements will be publicised each year in advance. Members will be able to send a large A4 stamped addressed envelope to the Secretary requesting printed copies of the documentation. Honorary Officers and Ordinary Members of the Council shall be elected for the following year and any general or special business of the Society transacted.

23. The Council may at any time call an Extraordinary General Meeting and shall be bound to do so, on written request of fourteen members. Notice of such a meeting and any resolutions shall be provided in the same way as for AGMs.

24. At all General Meetings, twenty-one members shall form a quorum. If after one hour from the advertised time a quorum be not present, the meeting may transact such ordinary business as necessary for the continuance of the Society, but no special resolutions shall be carried.

25. The President, or in their absence, one of the Vice-Presidents shall take the chair at General Meetings

26. All decisions and resolutions shall be decided by a simple majority and voting shall be by show of hands. In all matters the Chairman of the meeting shall have the casting vote.

CLOSURE OF SOCIETY

27. If at an Extraordinary General Meeting it be decided by a majority of two thirds of those present to wind up the affairs of the Society, the Treasurer shall realise so much of the assets as may be necessary to discharge the liabilities of the Society and shall give the remaining assets to one or more charities having objects similar to those of the Society. In no circumstances whatever shall any of the assets or income of the Society be given or refunded to any members, except in accordance with paragraph 21.

AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION

28. Amendments to this Constitution must receive the assent of two-thirds of the members present at an Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting. A resolution for the amendment of the Constitution must be received by the Secretary of the Society at least 28 days before the meeting at which the resolution is to be brought forward. At least 14 days' notice of such a meeting must be given by the Secretary to the membership and must include notice of the amendment(s) proposed. No amendment shall be made to clauses 3, 11, 13, 15, 20, 24 or 28 until the approval in writing of the Charity Commissioners or other authority having charitable jurisdiction shall have been obtained; and no amendment shall be made which shall have the effect of causing the Society to cease to be a charity in law.

MISCELLANEOUS

29. The name of the Society shall not be used by any members for the purposes of trade or profit, and members may not use the privileged access to private collections afforded by membership to further trading interests.

30. A copy of this Constitution shall be placed on the Society's Website.

Fully Revised Constitution approved by Charity Commission on 10 August 2016 and adopted at the 2017 AGM on 9 July.

Minor amendments approved by the 2022 AGM on 26 June and by the Charity Commission on 1 February 2023. As these amendments are minor, the Charity Commission do not accept a consolidated new version but relevant sections of the 2022 AGM Minutes were submitted showing we had approval for the changes and these minor changes were accepted. Please note that the Charity Commission website version of the Constitution will have the 2017 version of paragraphs 10,11 and 13.