

# Brockwatch: Constitution

## 1. Name

The name of the organisation shall be Brockwatch: the Northampton and South-West Northants Badger Group, or Brockwatch for short; hereinafter referred to as Brockwatch or the Group.

## 2. Geographical area covered

The area covered by Brockwatch shall be the Borough of Northampton, and those parts of the county of Northamptonshire lying south of the A5119 and A428. Work affecting or carried out in other areas shall be by agreement with the relevant badger group(s) and/or the Badger Trust as appropriate.

## 3. Objects

**a.** The objects of Brockwatch shall be to enhance the welfare and conservation of badgers, through action that will:

- i.** deter people from persecuting badgers.
- ii.** encourage tolerance of badgers in situations where they cause problems, and the use of control measures which cause least harm to badgers when problems cannot be tolerated.

**iii.** ensure that, wherever necessary and possible, modifications to safeguard the needs of badgers are incorporated into housing developments, new roads, and other land developments.

**iv.** ensure that where other human activities are found to have adverse effects on badgers, steps are taken to minimise the impact of those activities wherever possible.

**v.** ensure that when badgers are found to be trapped, sick, injured or orphaned, their lives are saved and/or their suffering relieved; and that if and when appropriate they are returned to the wild as soon as possible.

**vi.** further our understanding of the distribution, behaviour and requirements of badgers.

**vii.** foster greater support for the protection of all animals, wildlife, and the environment, including badgers and the habitats they depend on.

**b.** Brockwatch shall educate, advise, work with or otherwise assist any other group or individual where this will further the Group's objectives.

**c.** Brockwatch shall not actively campaign against any activities which do not adversely affect badgers.

## 4. Membership

**a.** Any person (or group of persons) who (i) supports the objects of Brockwatch, (ii) pays the appropriate subscription to the Group, and (iii) agrees to abide by the rules of this constitution, may become a member of the Group.

**b.** There shall be 4 categories of membership, as follows:

**i.** Individual; individual members shall be entitled to cast one vote in any elections, votes or ballots held by the Group.

**ii.** Household (covering all members of a household); each household may elect a representative who shall be entitled to cast one vote in any elections, votes or ballots held by the Group.

**iii.** Group (for non-profit making groups / organisations including schools, and covering all members of such groups); each group may elect a representative who shall be entitled to cast one vote in any elections, votes or ballots held by the Group.

**iv.** Corporate (for business and profit-making organisations, and covering all employees of such businesses); corporate members shall not be entitled to vote in any elections, votes or ballots held by the Group.

**c.** If a member's or group's subscription falls more than six months in arrears, that person or group shall cease to be a member of Brockwatch unless the committee decide otherwise.

**d.** A person or group shall cease to be a member of Brockwatch if their conduct is considered to be directly detrimental to the objectives of the Group by more than 50% of the Group's committee. Such a person or group will be given reasonable notice in writing of a meeting convened by the committee to discuss such a matter and may in person or in writing submit an explanation of their conduct before a vote is taken.

**e.** The word "group" in paragraphs c and d above includes household and corporate memberships.

## 5. Subscriptions

**a.** The minimum annual subscription rate applicable to each membership category shall be as determined by the committee.

**b.** Increases of subscription rates shall be notified to members at least 1 month prior to coming into force.

**c.** Subscriptions shall be due on May 1st each year. Any person or group of persons joining Brockwatch during the months of February, March or April shall be deemed to have paid their subscription for the following year.

## 6. Management

**a.** The affairs of Brockwatch shall be managed by a committee consisting of a minimum of five Group members.

**b.** All committee members shall be elected at the Group's Annual General Meeting.

**c.** The committee shall elect from within its membership a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer, at the AGM or at the first Committee meeting thereafter.

**d.** The committee shall have the power to co-opt extra members as necessary for temporary or permanent duties, and such co-opted members shall have full voting rights at committee meetings. The committee shall also have the power to co-opt other individuals in an advisory capacity, but these individuals shall not have voting rights.

**e.** The committee shall have the power to form sub-committees to deal with specific tasks. The membership and duties of such sub-committees shall be as decided by the main committee.

**f.** All committee members shall retire at the Annual General Meeting and shall be eligible for re-election.

**g.** If, during the period of office of the committee, a vacancy occurs, the committee shall have the power to fill the vacancy.

**h.** A quorum at a committee meeting shall be more than 50% of the full committee.

**i.** The Chairperson shall have the casting vote at all meetings if required.

## **7. Meetings**

**a.** Ordinary General Meetings shall be held as the Committee see fit.

**b.** Extra Ordinary General Meetings shall be convened at the request of the Committee or of not less than 10 members and/or representatives of groups of members, who shall submit their request to the Chairperson in writing. This to be request shall set out the business to be discussed at the meeting, and shall be signed by all 10 members / representatives. Such meetings shall be convened within 28 days of a valid request, and the business to be discussed at that meeting shall be set out in the notice under which it is convened.

**c.** Annual General Meetings shall be held within six months of the end of the Group's financial year for the purpose of:

**i.** Receiving the officers' reports and the Treasurer's balance sheet.

**ii.** Considering any amendments to the constitution.

**iii.** Electing the committee.

**iv.** Dealing with any other business.

**d.** Nominations for officers of the committee may be submitted in writing to the Chairperson or Secretary before the meeting or verbally at the meeting, and must be supported by a proposer and a seconder.

**e.** Notice of any General Meeting must be posted to all members at least 14 days before the date on which the meeting is to take place.

**f.** Any resolutions that are to be put forward at a meeting must be signed by at least two members and must be received by the Chairperson or Secretary at least 28 days before the meeting at which they are to be considered. Any resolutions received after this time will be considered at the discretion of the committee.

**g.** To be adopted by the Group, resolutions must receive the support of not less than two thirds of the members present and voting at the meeting at which they are discussed.

**h.** The Chairperson of the Group shall preside at General Meetings. In their absence the Vice-Chairperson shall preside. If both are absent a committee member, as agreed by the committee, shall preside.

## **8. Finance**

**a.** All monies raised by or on behalf of the Group shall be applied in furthering the objects of the Group.

**b.** The Treasurer shall maintain a bank account in the name of the Group, all cheques to be signed by any two of the following officers: Treasurer, Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary.

**c.** The purchase of any item costing £50 or more, and any single payments from the Group's account of £50.00 or more, shall require prior approval by more than 50% of the committee.

**d.** The Treasurer shall keep proper accounts of the finances of the Group, and shall report on them to the Group at its A.G.M., and to the committee as required.

**e.** At the end of the Group's financial year (April 30th) the accounts will be audited and an Accountant's Report prepared for the Group by a qualified accountant who is not a member of the committee.

**f.** The Accountant's Report shall finish with the statement: "In accordance with instructions given to me I have examined the income and expenditure account and balance sheet of Brockwatch, the Northampton and South-West Northants Badger Group, for the year ended 30th April [year] and can confirm that the figures contained therein are in accordance with the books of account and with information and explanations supplied to me.

This statement shall be signed and dated by the accountant.

## **9. Constitution**

**a.** Alterations to this constitution may be proposed by the committee or by a minimum of 10 members and/or representatives of groups of members of the Group, who shall submit their proposals to the committee in writing, and sign the same.

**b.** The Chairperson shall convene a General Meeting of Brockwatch for the purpose of discussing and voting on a proposal to alter the constitution, within 3 months of a proposal being made or received by the committee.

**c.** Ballot papers, giving full details of proposed alterations to the constitution, shall be posted to all members of Brockwatch at least 14 days prior to the General Meeting at which the proposals are to be discussed. Members may vote by returning these ballot papers to the Chairperson at or before the meeting. Votes shall be counted immediately after the proposed alteration has been discussed. If more than two thirds of members voting vote in favour of the proposed alteration, that alteration shall be implemented immediately.

**d.** A copy of the constitution shall be provided by the Chairperson or Secretary for examination on the request of any member.

## **10. Dissolution**

**a.** Brockwatch may be dissolved by a resolution to that effect being passed at a General Meeting of the group.

**b.** If such a resolution is passed, the Group's assets will, after discharge of any debts or liabilities, be donated to the Badger Trust.