

Belfast & District Beekeepers' Association Constitution

1. NAME

The name of the Association is the Belfast & District Beekeepers' Association (BDBKA).

2. FEDERATION

The BDBKA will be federated with the Ulster Beekeepers' Association (UBKA). It shall accept the constitution and rules of the UBKA and pay the prescribed fees.

3. PURPOSE

BDBKA's membership will be drawn from all those with an interest in honey bees, irrespective of race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, political affiliation, age, disability, or other protected characteristics. The purpose of the association is to promote the development and advancement of beekeeping through the following activities:

- Providing education and support for beekeepers at all levels;
- Promoting bee health and disease diagnosis and treatment;
- Advancing pest awareness, especially regarding invasive species;
- Showing of bee products;
- Creating awareness of honey bees through meetings, demonstrations and events;

- Providing a forum for beekeepers, designed to encourage friendship and mutual support; and
 - Promoting a bee and pollinator-friendly environment in Northern Ireland in collaboration with the UBKA and other associations.
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4. FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS

A bank account will be kept on behalf of the association at a bank agreed by the BDBKA committee. There will be at least two signatures on the account (one of whom will be the BDBKA Treasurer). Authorised signatories can be the BDBKA Treasurer, Chairperson, and Secretary or any other committee member as agreed by the committee. Each transaction will require two signatories. In the event that **if** the Treasurer is unavailable, the committee may approve the Chairperson and Secretary to issue payments.

Records of income & expenditure will be maintained by the Treasurer, who will provide an up-to-date financial statement at each committee meeting. The committee shall ensure proper and sufficient books of account are kept. These shall cover the sums of money received and expended by the BDBKA, and all sales and purchases of goods or equipment.

A verified copy of BDBKA's annual audited accounts for the preceding financial year will be presented for approval at the association's AGM.

5. MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION

Membership runs from 1st January to 31st December each year and is open to all on payment of the annual membership fee. The subscription fees for members shall be determined annually at the AGM and take effect the following year. As an affiliate of the UBKA, an annual compulsory capitation fee payable to UBKA will be included as

part of the agreed association subscription. Membership of the BDBKA includes product and public liability insurance.

If an annual subscription is unpaid by 31st December the individual's membership for the following year will automatically lapse.

Subject to the approval of the membership at an AGM, the committee shall have the power to vary the annual membership fees.

6. MEMBERSHIP

A register of current members, detailing full name, address, and date registered will be maintained in line with the BDBKA Record Management & Data Handling Policy.

Every member shall observe the BDBKA Code of Conduct and the UBKA Safeguarding Policy. These set out standards of behaviour expected from members, whether functioning in a specific role or capacity and/or in participating in events or programmes, either run by or where they are representing BDBKA.

In the event that any member, irrespective of their status in the association, brings the name of the BDBKA into disrepute or acts in breach of the BDBKA Code of Conduct, they may, at the discretion of the committee, be suspended for a limited duration or expelled permanently from membership of the association. Any disputes or complaints which may arise will be dealt with in line with the BDBKA Complaints & Disciplinary Procedure.

Honorary Life Member: Members with distinguished service may be proposed by the committee or paid-up members, prior to the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The proposal will subsequently be brought to the membership at the AGM for ratification. An Honorary Member is exempt from paying membership fees.

7. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Committee members must disclose any personal, financial, or professional interests that could potentially compromise their impartiality in decision making and must recuse themselves from discussions or votes where conflicts of interest may arise.

8. LIABILITY OF MEMBERS

Members have no liability to pay any sums to help to meet the debts (or other liabilities) of the association if it is wound up. Accordingly, if the organisation is unable to meet its debts, the members will not be held liable.

9. AUDITOR

An auditor shall be appointed each year at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

10. OFFICERS

The Officers shall consist of the Chair, Deputy Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. These officers will each hold office for one year and shall be eligible for re-election in the same office for a maximum of three consecutive years. On completion of three consecutive years in the same office, a member cannot be elected to that office for a further two years.

11. MANAGEMENT

The management of the association shall be vested in a committee (which shall consist of the officers listed under Rule 10 (together with the Membership Secretary). The Membership Secretary may serve in the role for more than three years. An individual member may hold more than one committee position and in such a case, may only cast a single vote.

The committee may co-opt additional members as considered necessary. Additional committee members may be elected at the AGM and may include:

- Safeguarding Officer
- Education Coordinator
- Honey Show Manager
- Apiary Managers for each of the association apiaries
- Summer & Queen Rearing Programme Managers

The committee shall not exceed 15 members.

12. COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The committee shall meet a minimum of three times each year to manage and oversee all aspects of the association. The Secretary, in consultation with the Chairperson, shall call meetings of the committee, as they consider appropriate. Committee members will be given 14 days' notice, by telephone or email, or in writing.

At each meeting of the committee, a quorum will comprise a minimum of six members (including office holders). The Chair or Deputy Chair should preside at all meetings of the committee. In the event of a committee member standing down during the year, a replacement may be temporarily co-opted by the committee and the position will be open to all members by election at the next AGM.

Any committee member not attending three consecutive committee meetings and unresponsive to communications shall be deemed to have resigned..

13. SPECIAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

At the request of the Chairperson, or at least three other members making a written request to the Secretary and stating the reason for their request, a special committee meeting will be called. Such meetings are called to address a single topic or issue that requires the committee's attention before the next scheduled normal committee meeting. All committee members will be given 14 days' notice of such a meeting, giving the venue, date, time and agenda. In exceptional circumstances the notice period may be reduced. The notice may be by telephone, email or post.

14. COMMITTEE MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES /DUTIES

The responsibilities of the committee members are as shown in these rules and may be amended from time to time in accordance with the association's needs and good practice. The duties of the committee shall be to:

- Manage the affairs of the association and to determine and decide all questions relating to the activities of the association;
- Promote the objectives of the association;
- Ensure proper minutes are made of all committee meetings, or any other meetings for which a record is required;
- Appoint sub-committees, advisory groups or working parties of their own members and other persons that may from time to time be necessary, to further the aims of the association. The committee shall determine their terms of reference. All such groups will make regular reports on their work to the committee.
- Continue to review, amend and or formulate new policies and or codes in keeping with the aims and objectives of the association. If such changes in

policies or codes are substantive, they will be ratified at a general meeting prior to being accepted as official policy and practice of the association.

15. GENERAL MEETINGS

(i) Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The AGM will be held in April, normally the second Monday. The Secretary shall give 21 days' notice of the meeting, to every member entitled to attend, together with a copy of the following documents for approval:

- Minutes of the previous AGM
- A verified copy of the association's annual audited accounts
- Office holders' reports

All officers and committee members must automatically stand down from office and the new officers and committee members for the coming year shall be (re)-elected by the association members present. Any items relating to the management of the association will be discussed and resolved at the AGM or passed to the new committee for consideration.

The order of business at the AGM, after taking apologies for absence, shall be, where applicable:

- Minutes of last general meeting;
- Matters arising;
- Amendments to the constitution;
- Officers' reports;
- Presentation of the previous year's accounts;
- Election of office holders and committee; and
- Election of an independent financial examiner/auditor.

(ii) Special General Meeting (SGM)

The Secretary shall call a SGM within 21 days of the receipt of a written request signed by at least 30% of members of the association, stating the nature of the business for which the meeting is to be called.

A SGM is reserved for extraordinary decisions affecting the constitution, structure and/or long-term direction of the association. In the event of the Secretary being unable to call such a meeting, the Chair shall act in their place.

The quorum will be 15% of the membership for a SGM. Any resolution proposed at such a meeting shall require approval by 75% of members present.

16. PROCEDURE AT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

No business shall be dealt with at any Annual General Meeting (AGM) unless a quorum of 15% is present. If a quorum is not met or if, during a meeting, a quorum ceases to be present, the meeting shall be formally adjourned by the Chair and rescheduled to a later date (within 2 months), to deal with the business (or remaining business), as set out on the agenda.

All decisions at members' general meetings will be made by majority vote. Every member present at the meeting shall have one vote. A resolution put to the vote at a members' meeting will be decided on a show of hands, unless the Chair (or at least two other members present at the meeting) ask for a secret ballot. In the case of an equality of votes, the Chairperson shall have a casting vote.

17. ALTERATION – MISSION STATEMENT OR CONSTITUTION OR RULES

These rules shall not be altered except by 75% of the members present at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) or at a Special General Meeting convened for the purpose. Any proposed alteration shall be lodged with the Secretary not later than 28 days before the AGM. In the case of a resolution to alter the constitution, the proposed alteration(s) must be set out in full within the notice summoning the meeting.

18. RULES

Rules for the conduct of the normal business of the association may be made, amended or deleted by the committee, and will be notified to members at the Annual General Meeting. No rule may be approved that would have the effect of amending this constitution or be in conflict with any of its provisions. Changes to the rules shall not be interpreted as an amendment to this constitution. Changes to this constitution shall not necessarily invalidate the rules.

19. DISSOLUTION

In the event that the association is no longer able to operate effectively and is deemed by the committee to no longer be viable, the association may be dissolved by a resolution passed by 75% majority of members present and voting at a Special General Meeting convened for the purpose. Such a resolution may give instructions for the disposal of any assets held in the name of the association. Should any property remain after the satisfaction of debts and liabilities, such property shall be given or otherwise transferred to the Ulster Beekeepers' Association for the furtherance of beekeeping in Northern Ireland.

ACCEPTANCE & SIGNING

Presented and formally accepted at AGM on: 13th April 2026

Duly Signed: BDBKA Chairperson: Georgina Devine

Witness: BDBKA Secretary: Grania Mackie

Signed by E-signature 13.4.26