

HELFDORD MARINE CONSERVATION GROUP

CONSTITUTION AND RULES

Name and Object

1. The name shall be Helford Marine Conservation Group.
2. The object of the Group shall be to promote a wide understanding of marine conservation issues linked to the sustainable use of the Helford River or Estuary within the Helford Voluntary Marine Conservation Area.

Powers

3. For the pursuit and fulfillment of the Group's objects its powers shall include involvement, discussion and liaison on conservation matters, publication, the arrangement of lectures, outdoor events and activities for members of the Group and the general public, the arrangement of suitable insurance for the foregoing, the raising and utilisation of funds.

Membership

4. The Group shall be divided into two complementary sections which shall be known as the Advisory section and the Members section. Each section shall have its own committee comprising four officers, namely Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary/Coordinator, Treasurer, and any other members considered necessary for the efficient administration of the relevant section.
5. The Chairman of the Advisory section shall be the Chairman of the Annual General Meeting or any other joint meetings of the two sections.
6. The Advisory section shall be composed of professional people and organisations whose concern is the protection of the marine environment together with the harmonious use of the river. Membership of the Advisory section shall be by invitation only.
7. The Members section shall be composed of any member of the general public with an interest in marine conservation on the Helford Estuary. Membership of the Members section shall be by subscription. Every member on joining either section implicitly undertakes to comply with these rules.

Subscriptions

8. For those joining the Members section there shall be five categories of membership: single membership, family membership, community group membership, corporate membership and corporate sponsorship. The annual subscription for each category of membership shall be such sum as the officers of the Members Committee may from time to time prescribe. The annual subscription shall be payable on joining and thereafter on the 1st day of January in each year. Any member failing to make payment of his or her annual subscription before the 1st March shall be deemed to have resigned their membership.

Officers and Committees

9. Subject to the provisions of these rules, the officers and committees shall have the general control and management of the Group. The officers and committees of each section shall be members of their relevant section. Each committee shall manage the affairs of its section and administer its funds. Officers and committees shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting and shall hold office for one year, retiring at the AGM and shall be eligible for re-election or election to another office. Election shall be by a show of hands unless the number of candidates duly proposed and seconded for election shall exceed the number of vacancies in which case the election shall be by ballot. Any casual vacancy occurring through death or resignation may be filled by any one of the remaining officers, committee members, or other member of the Group, the person so co-opted holding office until the next AGM. Any members of the Group shall be eligible for election as officer or committee member provided that, with reference to the Members section, he/she is a fully paid up member.

Accounts and Accounting

10. The officers shall apply the funds of the Group in such manner as they think fit for the benefit of the Group and the furtherance of its aims. It shall be the responsibility of the respective treasurers to keep a complete and accurate account of their section's finances. For the purpose of the preparation of each section's annual

accounts, the financial year of the Group shall be deemed to end on 31st December each year. At the AGM each year there shall be appointed an independent financial examiner whose duty it shall be to verify the accuracy of both sets of accounts for the current year.

General Meetings

11. An Annual General Meeting shall be held in the month of March or April in each year on a date to be set by the Chairman. No business (except the passing of the accounts, the election of officers and committees, the appointment of the Auditor and any business that the officers may order to be inserted in the Notice convening the meeting) shall be discussed at such meeting unless notice thereof, proposed and seconded, be given to either Secretary in writing at least 28 days prior to such meeting.
12. The secretaries of each group shall, at least 14 days before the date of the Annual General Meeting or any General Meeting, post, or e-mail or deliver to each member written Notice thereof and the Agenda of the business to be brought forward thereat.
13. The Officers may at any time call an Extraordinary General Meeting for any special business. The discussion at such general meeting shall be confined to the business sent to the members in the Notice.
14. 20 members (or if the total membership of the Group is less than 100 one fifth of said total) may join together to summon, or cause either Secretary to summon, by notice as herein mentioned an Extraordinary General Meeting. Resolutions to be considered, signed by the proposer and seconder, shall be given in writing to either Secretary and on receipt of these a meeting shall be convened within 28 days. The Chairman shall decide the date, time and place of the meeting and the order of business.
15. At the Annual General Meeting or *any* General Meeting each member or organisational representative from the Members section or member or organisational representative from the Advisory section present shall have one vote. Postal or proxy votes shall not be permitted. Subject to Rules 9 and 17 voting shall be by a show of hands and by simple majority except under Rule 19 where an increased majority is required. In the case of equality of votes (abstentions not constituting a vote) the chairman of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.
16. The quorum for General Meetings shall be 30 members (or if the total membership of the Group is less than 100 one fifth of said total).
17. A General Meeting may at any time remove any member from any office which he or she may hold within the Group by majority vote taken by ballot.

Miscellaneous

18. No money or property of the Group or any surplus arising from the carrying on of the Group shall be applied otherwise than for the furtherance of the aims of the Group.
19. These rules may be amended by a written Resolution, of which due notice has been given in accordance with Rules 11 and 14, passed at a General Meeting by at least two thirds of the votes cast by the membership present.
20. If at any time the conduct or action of a member of the Group is, in the opinion of the Officers of the Group or of a General Meeting, deemed to be injurious to the Aim or Object of the Group, they shall be liable to expulsion from the Group, provided that, before expelling any members, the Officers of the Group shall call upon them for an explanation of their conduct and shall give them an opportunity of explaining themselves or resigning their membership.
21. In the event of the Group ceasing to exist, any remaining assets shall be distributed to suitable not-for-profit bodies so as to benefit the causes of marine conservation in the Helford Estuary or the neighbouring marine area.
22. The Data Protection Act states that we have to inform you that members' information may be held on a computer. Members' details will be processed fairly and lawfully and in accordance with the Group's legitimate activities. The Group does not and will not sell, rent or exchange its e-mail list.