



# **ASSOCIATION OF DOGS AND CATS HOMES**

## **CONSTITUTION**

### **Purposes of the Association of Dogs and Cats Homes (ADCH)**

1. The purposes of the ADCH are to:
    - a. Develop good practice and influence others working in the rescue and/or rehoming of dogs and cats.
    - b. Address common problems and issues
    - c. Explore and, where appropriate, negotiate price reductions through economies of scale.
    - d. Exchange information and provide mutual support where practicable, which may include the movement of dogs and cats.
    - e. Combine resources to encourage workable, welfare enhancing legislation.
    - f. Exchange knowledge in construction and refurbishment of facilities.
    - g. Where appropriate and agreed, represent the views of members in furtherance of the work in the dog and/or cat rescue and rehoming community.
- NB: Membership of the ADCH does not imply or provide a 'Quality Mark' and must not be used to imply such.

### **Finances of the Association**

2. The Association is a 'not for profit' organisation, any surplus funds will be utilised for the benefit of animal welfare objectives either within member organisations, or within the animal welfare sector, as approved by the members.

### **Membership**

3. To qualify for membership, an organisation must comply with all of the following:
  - Be a registered charity or a not for profit organisation, or have an appropriate and relevant status and objectives in their country of origin.
  - Be involved in, or actively supportive of, the rescue and/or rehoming of dogs and/or cats.
  - Conform with, aspire to, or actively promote, the Association's Code of Practice and any future 'good standards' publications produced.
  - Comply with all current animal welfare related legislation.

- Have its own premises, rent premises or aspire to have its own premises; or use or promote facilities, or premises, which meet the standards required by the Association.

4. The Association has two levels of membership *Full and Associate*:

- Full Membership is limited to those organisations that can meet the membership qualifications (set out in 3 above) and can commit and demonstrate active participation and involvement in the activities of the Association and are required to maintain a minimum participation of at least 50% of meetings in any 12 month period. Only Full Members have voting rights.
- Associate Membership is open to those organisations that can meet the Membership qualifications (set out in 3 above) but are unable to commit to active participation and involvement in the activities of the Association. Associate Membership is also open to Local Authority Animal Wardens (so as to facilitate better working relationships) but as the Association is primarily about supporting the work of charities and not for profit bodies, they are not able to become full members. Associate Members are not allowed to use the ADCH logo, and can only refer to themselves as Associate members of the ADCH. Associate members do not have any voting rights.

Both categories of membership will have access to the Members Forum and be able to attend the annual ADCH conference. Full members are expected to attend and participate in the quarterly general meetings (with a minimum participation of 50% of meetings in any 12 month period) and Associate members are encouraged to attend the quarterly general meetings, subject to the constraints of space and on a first come first served basis.

5. Applications for either category of membership must be made to the Secretary in the appropriate format and once received will be dealt with as follows:

Full Membership - When the Secretary receives an application for Full Membership, it will be assessed against the criteria set out above and if appropriate a visit will be arranged so that at least two Full Members of the Association, one of whom must be a Member of the Management Committee, can meet with the applicant at their location. The visiting members will assess the applicant organisation against the criteria set out in the New Member Visit Report. The Management Committee will then be presented with a proposal and recommendation and vote on whether or not to approve the application.

Associate Membership – When the Secretary receives an application for Associate Membership it will be assessed against the criteria set out above and if appropriate then put forward to the Management Committee for consideration. The committee shall, at its discretion, request further information, references and/or an inspection if deemed necessary, before determining an application.

6. Members will be required to pay an Annual Subscription, the amount of which will be set by the Management Committee and proposed for approval via an EGM. Invoices for subscriptions will be issued in January each year for payment by the end of February. If a member's annual subscription payment has not been received in full by the Treasurer by 31<sup>st</sup> March each year, that membership will automatically be deemed to have lapsed and the organisation concerned will need to submit a new membership application should they wish to re-join the Association. Fees for new members joining during the year will be charged at the discretion of the Management Committee and on an approximate pro-rata basis.

### **Termination of Membership**

7. In addition to resignation, Membership of the Association may be terminated as a consequence of a material breach of the membership criteria or the conduct of a member that is prejudicial to the best interests of the Association.

8. In the event that a situation arises that causes the Management Committee to consider invoking the power to terminate membership it (the Management Committee) shall undertake an appropriate investigation into the causes for concern, and invite the member affected to make representations as part of that investigation. Following the conclusion of the investigation a panel of three Management Committee members shall consider the outcome of the investigation and determine the level of sanction (such as temporary suspension or termination of membership).
9. The member concerned shall have the right of appeal, which must be made within 28 days to the Secretary, and the appeal will be held by a panel of Full Members (who were not involved in the original investigation and decision). The decision of the appeal panel will be final.

### **Management Committee Membership**

10. The day to day management of the Association will be overseen by a Management Committee, consisting of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Webmaster and five other members.
11. Election to the Management Committee, or appointment as an Officer of the Association, is vested in the individual and not the organisation they represent.
12. Membership of the Management Committee is limited to Full Members and will be elected by Full Members.
13. The Management Committee will work within Terms of Reference, which shall be agreed by Full Members and shall have the power to:
  - Appoint new ADCH members, either Full or Associate.
  - Co-opt a further three members to the Management Committee.
  - Terminate Membership of the Association in line with the provisions set out above.
  - Agree the programme of events of all meetings.
  - Propose the level of subscription to be ratified at an EGM.
  - Approve expenditure.
14. The Full Membership shall have the power to call for an election of the Management Committee, within their three year term of office, by submission of a motion to that effect signed by 20% of the Full Membership. Upon receipt of such a motion the Management Committee will make arrangements for an election to be held within 28 days.
15. All voting is on the basis of one member one vote. A simple majority is required to carry or reject any proposal. In the event of a tie the Chairman shall have a second and/or casting vote.
16. If any Management Committee Member is absent for 2 consecutive meetings, the Secretary will make enquiries. If, subsequently, a Management Committee Member is absent from a further meeting, that member may, subject to a vote by the Management Committee, be removed from the Management Committee but will be eligible to stay as a Member of the Organisation if all fees are duly paid..

### **Meetings**

#### **General Meetings**

17. There will be three General Meetings per year, which will normally be held in January, July and October.

18. General Meetings will be open to all Full Members, and subject to constraints of space and on a first come first served basis will be open to attendance by Associate Members.

### **Annual General Meeting**

19. There will be one AGM per year which will normally be held in April.

### **Extraordinary General Meeting**

20. The Management Committee may call an Extraordinary General Meeting provided at least 21 days' notice is given to Full Members. The EGM may be held by online means at the discretion of the Management Committee in which case voting will also be undertaken online.

### **Voting**

21. All voting at General Meetings, Annual General Meetings and Extraordinary General Meetings is on the basis of one full member one vote. A simple majority is required to carry or reject any proposal. In the event of a tie the Chairman shall have a second and/or casting vote.
22. At the discretion of the Management Committee, voting on urgent matters may be carried out electronically using the Forum voting system or an alternative, suitable online system approved by the Management Committee.

### **Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Webmaster**

23. The Chairman and Secretary may come from the same organisation.
24. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman will serve a term of one year and be elected annually at the AGM, and may not come from the same organisation. The Secretary, Treasurer and Webmaster will be appointed by the Management Committee; there is no designated length of term for either post but other candidates may offer their services in which case an election will be called by EGM or AGM.
25. The Association may have a President or Presidents who, having been elected at an AGM, could be invited to chair AGMs and represent the Association at formal occasions.

### **Amendments to the Constitution & Code of Practice**

26. Changes to this Constitution and the ADCH Code of Practice will be presented to, and agreed by the Full Membership at an AGM.

ENDS