

Draft Constitution

This draft is designed to form the basis of discussion of a constitution for a group in Harlaxton focussed on studying and celebrating it's history.

Items highlighted are sections that are likely to warrant particular discussion and consultation before an inaugural meeting can be called to formally adopt a final version, but everything in the document below is draft pending formal adoption.

1. Name

The name of the group shall be **The Harlaxton History Society**

2. Aims

The aims of The Harlaxton History Society will be:

- To promote interest in and understanding of the History of Harlaxton Parish and it's surrounding area.
- To facilitate the collection, preservation and research of historical information or items relating to the History of Harlaxton Parish and it's surrounding area.
- To hold open events to encourage community engagement and discussion about the History of Harlaxton Parish and its surrounding area amongst the village community.
- To raise funds in pursuance of the aims set out above.

3. Membership

Membership is open to anyone who:

- Supports the aims of The Harlaxton History Society
- Is prepared to abide by the rules of the Harlaxton History Society.

Membership will run from April to March and will begin as soon as the membership form and first annual payment has been received.

There will be an annual membership fee of £10 payable by all members. This membership fee will be reviewed and agreed annually at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

There will be no pro-rata membership fee for members joining later in the year.

A list of all members will be kept by the membership secretary and members will receive a membership card.

Members will gain free admittance to all meetings, events and activities organised by The Harlaxton History Society.

Non-members will be welcome to attend all events organised by the Harlaxton History Society. The fee for non-member attendance at a regular monthly meeting will be £2. The Committee will retain the option to set alternative fees for non-members for other special events and activities.

Ceasing to be a member

Members may resign at any time in writing to the secretary. There will be no refund of membership fees.

Any member who has not paid their membership fee within a month of renewal will be deemed to have resigned.

Any offensive behaviour, including racist, sexist or inflammatory remarks, will not be permitted. Anyone behaving in an offensive way or breaking the equal opportunities principles listed in section 4 of the constitution may be asked not to attend further meetings or to resign from the group if an apology is not given or the behaviour is repeated. The individual concerned shall have the right to be heard by the management committee, accompanied by a friend, before a final decision is made.

4. Equal Opportunities

The Harlaxton History Society will not discriminate on the grounds of sex, race (including colour, ethnic or national origin), sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, religious or political belief, pregnancy or maternity, marital status or age.

5. Officers and committee

The business of the group will be carried out by a Committee elected at the Annual General Meeting. The Committee will meet as necessary and not less than four times a year.

The Committee will consist of 8 members and be composed of 4 officers and 4 committee members, one of whom shall have responsibility for the Society web site and

another for its Facebook page. Up to 2 additional members may be co-opted onto the committee at the discretion of the committee.

The four officers' roles are as follows:

1. Chairperson, who shall chair both general and committee meetings
2. Secretary, who shall be responsible for the taking of minutes and the distribution of all papers
3. Membership secretary, who shall be responsible for keeping records of members
4. Treasurer who shall be responsible for maintaining accounts

Note: to offer a fair distribution of work, specific tasks such as taking minutes of meetings and Chairing non-society aspects of meetings and events may be undertaken by other members.

In the event of an officer standing down during the year a replacement will be elected by the next General Meeting of members.

Any committee member not attending three consecutive meetings without apology will be contacted by the committee and asked if they wish to resign.

6. Meetings

6.1. Monthly Meetings

The Harlaxton History Society will aim to meet on a monthly basis with the option of also holding other special events in pursuance of its stated aims.

Normal monthly business will predominantly focus on talks, guest speakers, demonstrations and sharing of historical information about Harlaxton.

Within these monthly meetings however a short section of proceedings will be set aside for administrative discussion and decisions by the Committee with reference to the members present. At its briefest, this may be no more than to report on membership and financial status and to confirm future activity.

All Committee discussions relating to the running of the Society at any meetings are to be minuted and the minutes published on the Society's web site and Facebook Page.

6.2. Annual General Meeting

One of the twelve monthly meeting dates will be used for an Annual General Meeting (AGM) which must be held within fifteen months of the previous AGM (Ideally the AGM will be on the anniversary of the inaugural meeting in April).

All members will be notified at least 3 weeks before the date of the meeting, giving the venue, date and time.

Nominations for the committee may be made to the Secretary before the meeting, or at the meeting.

The quorum for the AGM will be 10% of the membership or 10 members, whichever is the greater number.

At the AGM:-

- The Committee will present a report of the work of The Harlaxton History Society over the year.
- The Committee will present the accounts of The Harlaxton History Society for the previous year.
- The officers and Committee for the next year will be elected.
- Any proposals given to the Secretary at least 7 days in advance of the meeting will be discussed.
- The AGM may be associated with a talk or presentation as long as time allows.

6.3 Special General Meetings

The Secretary may call a Special General Meeting at the request of the majority of the Committee or at least eight other members giving a written request to the Chair or Secretary stating the reason for their request.

The meeting will take place within twenty-one days of the request.

All members will be given two weeks notice of such a meeting, giving the venue, date, time and agenda, and notice may be by telephone, email or post.

The quorum for the Special General Meeting will be 10% of the membership or 10 members, whichever is the greater number.

6.4 Committee Meetings

Additional Committee meetings outside the normal monthly schedule may be called by the Chair or Secretary. Committee members must receive notice of meetings at least 7 days before the meeting.

The quorum for Committee meetings is three Committee members. A report on any business conducted must be submitted at the next monthly meeting of the Society.

7. Rules of Procedure for meetings

All questions are to be directed through the Chairperson.

All questions that arise at any meeting will be discussed openly and the meeting will seek to find general agreement of members present.

If a consensus cannot be reached a vote will be taken and a decision will be made by a simple majority of members present (Non-members attending may contribute to discussion and ask questions but may not vote). If the number of votes cast on each side is equal, the Chairperson of the meeting shall have an additional casting vote.

8. Finances

An account will be maintained on behalf of the Society at a bank agreed by the committee. Three cheque signatories will be nominated by the Committee (one to be the Treasurer). The signatories must not be related nor members of the same household.

All payments will be signed by two of the signatories.

- For cheque payments, the signatories will sign the cheque.
- For other payments (such as BACS payments, cash withdrawals, debit card payments or cash payments), a requisition note will be signed by two signatories, and held by the treasurer.

Records of income and expenditure will be maintained by the Treasurer and a financial statement given at each meeting.

All money raised by or on behalf of The Harlaxton History Society is to only be used to further the aims of the group, as specified in item 2 of this constitution.

9. Amendments to the Constitution

Amendments to the constitution may only be made at the Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting.

Any proposal to amend the constitution must be given to the Secretary in writing. The proposal must then be circulated with the notice of meeting.

Any proposal to amend the constitution will require a two thirds majority of those present and entitled to vote.

10. Dissolution

If a meeting, by simple majority, decides that it is necessary to close the Society it may call a Special General Meeting to do so. The sole business of this meeting will be to dissolve the group.

If it is agreed to dissolve the Society, all remaining money and other assets, once outstanding debts have been paid, will be donated to a local charitable organisation. The organisation will be agreed at the meeting which agrees the dissolution.

This constitution was agreed at the Inaugural General Meeting of The Harlaxton History Society on:-

Date 11/04/2022