



VANGUARD WAY ASSOCIATION

AGM BOOKLET 2024

Annual General Meeting

Saturday 8 June 2024 starting 2.00 pm

St Matthew's Church Hall

Chichester Road

Croydon CR0 5NQ

Followed by an optional walk of up to 6 miles.

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Administrative information

Officers and committee
(as at 8 June 2024)

Chair	Colin Saunders
Vice Chair	John Jefkins
Secretary	Gavin Fuller
Treasurer	Lesley Secker
Membership Secretary	Colin Saunders
Route Manager	John Jefkins
Publicity Officer	Colin Saunders
Route guide author	Colin Saunders
Website Manager	John Jefkins
Rangers Co-ordinator	Daniel Hawksworth
Facebook Co-ordinator	John Pestle
Registrar	Lesley Secker
Vanguard Way Marathon organiser	Gareth Davies
Committee Members	Brian Bellwood Robert Brown

Independent Examiner

John Cockell

AGM AGENDA

Refreshments will be provided before the meeting.

- 1 Chair's welcome
- 2 Apologies for absence
- 3 Minutes from Annual General Meeting, 10 June 2023
- 4 Committee report
- 5 Election of Committee and Independent Examiner for 2024-25
- 6 Resolutions of which due notice has been received
- 7 Any other business

The meeting will be followed by a walk, led by our Secretary Gavin Fuller, of up to six miles from St Matthew's to East Croydon Station and a pub which does food. The route will include Lloyd Park, Croham Hurst (one of the finest viewpoints in this area) and the former Woodside & South Croydon Railway. There will be several opportunities to cut the walk short and return to East Croydon Station (or wait for us at the pub) as it goes close to South Croydon Station and several bus stops.

It would be helpful to know if you intend to go to the pub after the walk.

Minutes of Annual General Meeting, 10 June 2023

Members present: Colin Saunders (Chair), John Jefkins (Vice-Chair & Publicity), Gavin Fuller (Secretary), Alan Smith (Outgoing Treasurer), Angela Bellwood, Brian Bellwood, Bob Brown, Janet Butler, Gareth Davies, Dan Hawksworth, David Lewis, Richard Mascall, Fiona McNicol, John Pestle, David Secker, Lesley Secker, Chris Skingsley, Dave Williams

1. Chair's welcome.

Colin began by welcoming everybody to the meeting and was glad to say the numbers made it sufficiently quorate. He then presented the members of the committee to the rest of the membership present.

2. Apologies for absence:

Kate Ashbrook, Justin Lumley, Keith Mash, Brian Reader, Colin Sefton, Wieslaw Toboleski, Richard Weston, Penny Wiles, David and Linda Wright, Friends of Selsdon Wood

3. Minutes from inaugural meeting, 28 May 2022

These were passed nem con.

4. Financial report

Alan had produced a preliminary set of accounts covering the period from the Association's inception to 31st March 2023, the initial accounting period lasting to 31st March 2024. Expenditure had been relatively low so far, leaflets and waymarking discs being the main expenses so far, as well as a licence to use Ordnance Survey mapping.

Angela Bellwood asked whether the Association's bank account was free. Alan confirmed this was the case.

The interim accounts were approved nem con.

5. Approval of Constitution.

The draft constitution (as sent to members in advance) was presented to the meeting and passed nem con. There was a discussion as to how quoracy was defined as regards individual and joint memberships. Concerns were expressed as to what proportion of the membership should be specified as to make a meeting quorate – if membership rose substantially then the numbers present at an AGM could potentially

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become an issue. A proposal from John Cockell to amend the newly-adopted constitution was then made reducing the quorum to 20%, seconded by John Pestle. This proposal was passed nem con.

6. Committee report.

Richard Mascall commented on how much he had enjoyed the report, which Colin had circulated in advance. There were no other comments or questions over the report.

7. Election of Committee and Independent Examiner for 2023-24.

Colin was happy to continue as Chair and Membership Secretary, John Jefkins as Vice-Chair and Publicity and Gavin Fuller as Secretary. Lesley Secker volunteered to succeed Alan Smith as Treasurer and will remain as Registrar. Brian Bellwood, Bob Brown and Gareth Davies were happy to continue on the committee. Dan Hawksworth volunteered to join the committee as Ranger Co-ordinator. Colin proposed the committee in this format was elected en bloc, and this was passed nem con.

John Cockell was happy to continue as an Independent Examiner of accounts, and this was also approved nem con.

8. Any other business.

John Jefkins had produced an updated leaflet, and this has been put in various locations on the route. If members were able to assist him in putting leaflets in suitable places he would be happy to supply them.

There were also plans to put plaques up at the starting/ending points at East Croydon and Newhaven Town stations, providing the rail authorities granted permission.

The website was still a work in progress. The transfer from Brian Bellwood's old site to John's new site had gone smoothly. There were plans to put QR codes on the Vanguard Way signage which could link to this.

John Cockell asked whether there was an accommodation guide on the website. He was informed that the Vanguard Way Companion available on the website covered accommodation, refreshments and other facilities.

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The post at Cernes Farm had been a success with the farmer reporting barely a day went by without people taking selfies at it. Ideally the association would like to erect similar posts on the route if it proved possible.

Gareth Davies had organised a litter-picking walk on the route between Croydon and Chelsham on July 2; all members were welcome to join him. So far two had responded positively.

If any members wishing to put on a walk for the association, Colin would be delighted to hear from them.

Bob Brown queried whether the Association could team up with other associations of a similar nature to create something as a greater whole, with the scope for economies of scale in that regard. Whilst the idea had its attractions, the practicalities of getting this up and running made its realisation somewhat unlikely in the near future.

Colin formally closed the meeting at 15.29

After a refreshment break there was an illustrated talk from Gareth Davies on the Vanguard Way Marathon and other similar events.

Committee Report

During the year, the full committee met three times, the route management sub-committee three times, and the publicity sub-committee twice. All took place online, though one was hybrid.

We think we have been as active as possible, bearing in mind that we are all volunteers, but if you think there are any areas that could be improved please let us know. We aim to keep members up to date in our bi-monthly VGW News, but this is a summary.

We're most grateful to Lesley Secker for taking on the role of Treasurer. Although NatWest's Bankline facility for corporate bodies seemed the best option available, its administration has proved difficult, but Lesley (and her predecessor Alan Smith) have worked wonders in helping us swim through what is often very muddy water.

We now need to concentrate on filling other admin roles covering membership, publicity and our website, which are currently handled by myself and our Vice Chair, John Jefkins. This results in a heavy workload, so if any heroes would like to step forward to take on these areas they will be most welcome.

Thank you for being a member of the VWA. Please do your best to attend the AGM on June 8th and we look forward to seeing you there.

Colin Saunders
Chair, Vanguard Way Association
8 May 2024

Route Management

John Jefkins took over as Route Manager from Colin Saunders, as he is better located to carry out this role. John now holds the entire stock of waymark discs and supporting equipment and has performed a heroic role in maintaining and filling gaps in signage, as well as managing the website, producing and distributing our leaflet and organising circular routes and start/finish plaques.

Our team of ten rangers continues to check their sections of the VGW and report any issues they encounter.

A general issue recently has been the very muddy condition of much of the route after exceptional rainfall, making walking uncomfortable in

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many places. Due to the high cost of surface improvements, it's unlikely that this will improve in the near future, but we have asked the highway authorities to bear in mind. Meanwhile, we take every opportunity to warn potential VGW walkers of the current situation.

Moving north to south along the VGW, these are the other major issues that have been tackled:

Graham Butler Mile. The Vanguard Rambling Club raised some £4,000 to commemorate the original route manager, who died in 2018. Most of this went on metal gates to replace seven very rickety stiles on Nore Hill, near Woldingham, plus commemorative plaques, and a launch ceremony took place on 3 May 2024.

Titsey diversion. We're discussing with the Titsey Estate our proposal to divert the VGW on to a new route away from the M25.

Brook Cottage (footpath SR371 near Crockham Hill). We're discussing with Kent County Council and the landowner an application to divert this footpath on to a slightly longer route.

Kent & Surrey Golf Course (Edenbridge). An application to build a retirement village on brownfield land in a corner of the course is making slow progress, but may have benefits for the VGW.

Shepherds Grove Lane. For many years, we've been trying to remove stretches of the original VGW where traffic has increased to an uncomfortable level since it was launched in 1981. This half-mile stretch is one of the few remaining, but proving difficult to resolve. We're continuing to work on it.

Ashdown Forest. After 43 years since launch, we have finally persuaded the Conservators to allow us to instal signage at several awkward turns. A few gaps still need filling and we continue to work on them.

A22 Holmes Hill (Golden Cross). Crossing this very busy road at a blind bend is probably the most potentially hazardous situation along the VGW. We're trying to persuade East Sussex CC to (a) improve visibility for both walkers and drivers by removal of vegetation, and (b) to instal warning signs for drivers.

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A259 East Dean Road (Exceat). We're trying to persuade East Sussex CC to improve the intimidating footpath on a narrow embankment beside this busy main road. We're also awaiting the replacement of the narrow road bridge beside the Cuckmere Inn.

Newhaven. We extended the southern end of the VGW by 700 metres from the Harbour to the Town Station. This was mainly because the train service to Harbour was severely reduced, but has several other advantages: (a) passing the Engineer pub to celebrate completion, (b) better facilities and (c) close to the ferry terminal.

Circular routes. We're experimenting with a number of circular trails along the VGW, which may be considered an extension of the route but should also provide much publicity for it. The first, at Tidemills, is already functioning. This and others proposed at Seaford Head and Exceat Bridge include parts of the King Charles III England Coast Path. Other potential locations include Oxted, Crockham Hill, Forest Row and Buxted.

Links. We're considering the installation of signage along selected links with stations.

Publicity

Our website and leaflet continue to be our main publicity tools. The website functions well on the whole but could do with revamping. Some 10,000 copies of the leaflet have been distributed so far to dozens of outlets along the route by John Jefkins and Bob Brown. They need constant restocking and the leaflet will need to be updated and reprinted at some stage during the next year.

In April we installed 'start and finish' plaques at both East Croydon and Newhaven Town Stations, with the full co-operation of train operators GoVia.

We continue to receive favourable reviews and mentions in the Ramblers' South East Walker, online news publications and social media platforms such as YouTube.

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Our Facebook page has been set up and is currently developing its reach. Everyone is welcome to 'like' and 'comment' (search Vanguard Way Association).

The route guides might be considered publicity. They are published in two formats: PDFs, which can be downloaded free from the website, and the Vanguard Way Photoguide for smartphones, obtainable from Google Play and Apple Store. The south-north version was updated by Colin Saunders during 2023 and is currently being finalised for publication. The 'Introduction to the route' has been updated, and a revised Companion is being worked on.

Incidentally, as a result of updating the Companion, it has become clear that most bed and breakfast establishments along the VGW have closed over the last few years: this is partly due to Covid, but it also seems likely that the proliferation of Premier Inns and Travelodges, offering low cost deals, has made independent establishments unprofitable.

Membership

Our membership has steadily risen but we could do with more. As at 30 April 2024 we had 112 individual members (including 15 life members) but quite a few had still to renew their subscription so this may fall in the near future. 72 are male and 40 female.

The geographical spread is: Greater London 62 (including 21 in LB Croydon), Surrey 9, Kent 6, East Sussex 16 and elsewhere 19.

We have 93 affiliated members, which includes county, district and parish councils, pubs, landowners and other corporate bodies with an interest in the route.

We have published nine editions of the bi-monthly VGW News, keeping members up to date with developments along and affecting the VGW. We have organised nine walks since the VWA was established, and would like to offer more, but this depends on more volunteers coming forward to lead.

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The Vanguard Way Association

Income and expenditure account for the accounting period
from date of inception 28th May 2022 to 31st March 2024. See note 2

Income & Expenditure Account	Notes	Period ended 31-Mar-24	£	£
Income				
73 Ordinary subscriptions <i>(includes one renewal in advance for 2024/25)</i>		511.00		
15 Life memberships	3	90.00		
Donations		1,697.00		
Sale of badges		261.00		
Interest from savings account		0.44		
Total income for period		<hr/>		2,559.44
Expenditure				
Waymark disks	10/2/23; 13/9/23; 16/11/23	905.40		
Insurance 2 years	14/2/23; 18/1/24	305.38		
OS Licence 2 years	22/2/23; 26/2/24	136.62		
Sundries	30/3/23; 17/11/23; 5/2/24	51.54	4	
Leaflets	3/4/23; 18/9/23	410.04		
AGM Room Hire	17/07/2023	180.00		
Domain Names	12/5/23; 17/5/23	46.76		
Badges	30/01/2024	646.80		
		<hr/>		<u>2,682.54</u>
Deficit expenditure over income for the period transferred to the General Reserve				-123.10

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The Vanguard Way Association

Balance sheet for the accounting period
from date of inception 28th May 2022 to 31st March 2024

Balance Sheet	Notes	Period ended 31-Mar-24	£	£
CAPITAL AND RESERVES				
General reserve				491.36
Current assets				
Cash at NatWest Bank	(Current Account)		1,486.46	
Cash at NatWest Bank (Savings Account)			100.44	
Stock of badges	5		614.46	
			<hr/>	2,201.36
Less current liabilities				
Life memberships received in advance	3	1,710.00		
			<hr/>	1,710.00
Net assets				491.36

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The Vanguard Way Association

Notes to the accounts

for the accounting period

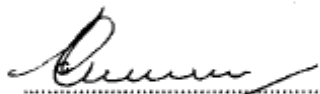
from date of inception 28th May 2022 to 31st March 2024

- 1 **The Vanguard Way Association** is a voluntary organisation established to define the main route, links and alternative routes of the long distance walking route called the Vanguard Way, act as its custodian, ensure the route is maintained and waymarked, and to promote the route. The Association is a non-profit making organisation relying on membership fees and donations for its income. All income and profits from sales is devoted to the aims of the Association.
- 2 **The end of the Association's financial year** is the 31st March. But since ordinary membership fees carry membership through to 31st March 2024 and the Association didn't become economically active until its bank account was set up in September 2022, the committee decided that the first full accounting period should carry through from 28th May 2022 to 31st March 2024 (approximately 22 months). As a result, there are two insurance premiums and two OS licence fees.
- 3 **Life Membership.** For accounting purposes, life membership has been deemed to last 20 years. Therefore 1/20th of the amounts paid has been included under income.
- 4 **Sundries comprise** stationery; postage; AGM refreshments
- 5 **The interim accounts,** showed a Note 4 relating to the value of the discs, badges and Vanguard Way website domains gifted by the Vanguards Rambling Club. The Vanguard Way Association will not in future include the value of waymark discs or domain names in its balance sheet.

Report of the independent Examiner

I have examined the financial statements of the Vanguard Way for the period from the date of its inception, 28th May 2022 to 31st March 2024, together with the financial records maintained by the Honorary Treasurer and obtained all explanations necessary for the purposes of my examination. In my opinion, the figures fairly reflect the Association's funds as at 31st March 2024 and the Income and Expenditure for the period from 28th May 2022 to 31st March 2024.

Date 2.5.24



John Cockell
Honorary Examiner

Signed Lesley Jane Secker

Lesley Jane Secker
Honorary Treasurer

Resolutions of which due notice has been received

Resolution 1 (from the Committee). With reference to Clause 4.4 in the Constitution, the Committee proposes to increase the amounts of the existing membership subscriptions in order to cover the increased financial demands on its activities, with effect from 1 January 2025. The annual subscription would rise from £7.00 to £10.00 and the life subscription from £120.00 to £170.00.

Resolution 2 (from the Committee). To insert in the Constitution a new clause 5.5: “Individual members who join the Association on or after 1st January in any year will be entitled to an extension of their membership until 31st March of the following year.”

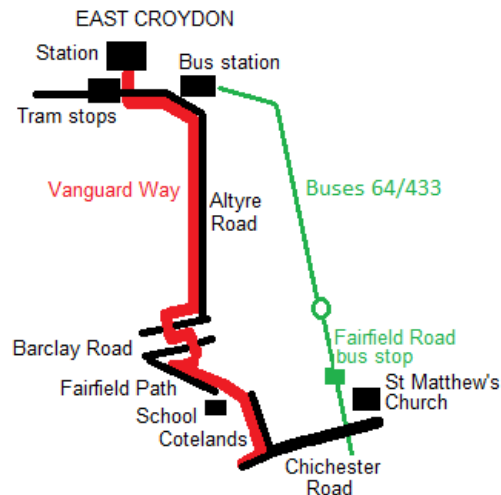
Subsequent Clauses 5.5 and 5.6 will become 5.6 and 5.7 respectively.

Resolution 3 (from the Committee). To insert in the Constitution a new clause 5.8: “The Committee may decide to offer free membership to individuals who it believes, by means of special knowledge or skill, will enable the Association to more effectively carry out its Powers (as described in Section 4 of this Constitution).”

Appendix 1: How to reach St Matthew's Church Hall

The easiest way for most should be to go to East Croydon Station then walk 1 km (0.6 miles) along the Vanguard Way:

1) From East Croydon Station forecourt, go left of Tramlink platforms (across tram lines - **look both ways**).



2) Cross George Street on 2-stage light-controlled crossing (with bus station on your left, **look both ways**) then turn left past the AIG building.

3) Shortly turn right along Altyre Road to its end.

4) Turn right and cross the dual carriageway A232 Barclay Road at 2-stage pedestrian crossing.

5) Turn right and immediately turn left along Fairfield Road (Fairfield Path) continuing along walled footpath at the end.

6) At Stanhope Road/The Avenue keep ahead along footpath between grass and Park Hill Infants School, continuing beside road to junction with Chichester Road.

7) **At this point, leave the Vanguard Way** by turning left along Chichester Road for 75 metres. At Park Hill Road, turn left to go over the zebra crossing, then turn right and immediately left, back in Chichester Road. St Matthew's Church is on your left.

By frequent bus from East Croydon Station. Take the 64 or 433 bus from stop E2, then it's just two stops. Alight at the Fairfield Road stop, walk forward 100 metres, then turn left along Chichester Road. St Matthew's Church Hall is on your left.

By car. The postcode of St Matthew's Church Hall is CR0 5NQ.

If you intend to drive, please let us know as we may need to make special arrangements with the hall.

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Appendix 2: Constitution for Vanguard Way Association

This Constitution was adopted on the 10th June 2023 at the Annual General Meeting of the Association.

1. NAME

The name of the Association shall be Vanguard Way Association (the Association).

2. AIMS

The Aims of the Association shall be to

- 2.1 define the main route, links, and alternative routes of the Vanguard Way long distance path;
- 2.2 act as the custodian of the of the Vanguard Way long distance path;
- 2.3 ensure that the route is maintained and clearly waymarked;
- 2.4 promote the Vanguard Way, including the provision of route description(s), in media approved by the Committee.

3. ORGANISATION

The Association shall be composed of individual members and affiliated organisations. It shall not affiliate to any political party, and it shall be non-sectarian.

4. POWERS

In furtherance of the Aims but not otherwise the Committee may exercise the following powers:

- 4.1 To raise funds and invite and receive contributions.
- 4.2 To maintain a presence on the internet and other publicity media.
- 4.3 To seek improvements to the route by working with statutory authorities and other interested parties.
- 4.4 To exercise discretion to levy an annual subscription subject to approval at an Annual General Meeting.
- 4.5 To do anything that is lawful and necessary in pursuance of the Aims.

5. MEMBERSHIP

- 5.1 Individuals who support the Aims of the Association and are aged 18 or over may apply to become a member. All applications for membership are subject to approval of the Committee.
- 5.2 The Committee may decide to offer joint, family and/or life membership options.

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5.3 Members who pay annually will be invited to renew their membership on April 1 each year with payment sent via any suitable method within one month of the renewal date.

5.4 The Committee will keep an up-to-date membership list with contact details, subject to the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation.

5.5 Affiliated organisations may comprise statutory or amenity organisations willing to work with the Association in the furtherance of its Aims, for example (but not by way of limitation) highway authorities, the South Downs National Park, the Surrey Hills AONB, the High Weald AONB, the Ashdown Forest Conservators, the National Trust, the Ramblers Association, the Long Distance Walkers Association, friends groups, residents associations, tourist boards, media organisations, landowners and accommodation and refreshment establishments.

5.6 The Committee may remove a person's individual membership if they believe it is in the interests of the Association. The member has the right to be heard by the Committee before the decision is made and can be accompanied by a friend in a non-professional capacity.

6. COMMITTEE

6.1 The Association shall be managed by a Committee to be elected annually at the Annual General Meeting.

6.2 The Committee shall consist of Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Membership Secretary, Treasurer ('the Officers') plus a minimum of three other elected members but not more than five other elected members. Roles may be combined if necessary.

6.3 If vacancies occur among the Officers, the Committee shall have the power to fill them from among its members.

6.4 The Committee may co-opt up to three additional members of the Association to serve on the Committee until the next Annual General Meeting.

6.5 The Committee shall appoint suitable persons to act as Route Manager, Website Manager, Registrar, Publicity & Social Media Co-ordinator, sectional rangers and any other positions deemed necessary for the efficient management of the Vanguard Way. These positions may be included in the 'other members' and 'co-opted members' mentioned at items 6.2 and 6.4 above.

6.6 All members of the Committee shall retire from Office at the Annual General Meeting following the date on which they came into Office but they may be re-elected. If the current Chair is standing for re-election, another member (possibly a President to be appointed) should be asked to take the chair until the current Chair has been re-elected or a new Chair elected.

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7. COMMITTEE MEETINGS

7.1 The Committee will meet as and when required but at least three times a year in addition to the Annual General Meeting. Meetings may be held physically or by electronic means.

7.2 The quorum for Committee meetings is five with a minimum of two members (who are not Officers) being present. If a meeting is inquorate, any issues requiring a quick decision can be referred as soon as possible by email to the full Committee for approval.

7.3 Every matter shall be determined by a majority of the members of the Committee present and voting. In case of equality of votes the Chair shall have a second or casting vote.

7.4 If any member of the Committee has a conflict of interest they must declare it and leave the meeting while the matter is discussed or decided.

7.5 The Committee may appoint one or more Sub-Committees providing that all acts and proceedings of the Sub-Committees shall be fully and promptly reported to the Committee. Any Sub-Committee shall have at least three members of the Committee and may in addition co-opt up to two further people who are full members of the Association.

7.6 Other interested parties can be invited to the meetings but with no voting rights.

7.7 Minutes shall be kept as a record of the proceedings of the meetings of the Committee and any of its Sub-Committees.

8. ANNUAL AND SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS

8.1 There shall be an Annual General Meeting which shall be held as soon as practicable but within three calendar months after the end of the Association's financial year. Meetings may be held physically or by electronic means.

8.2 Members shall be given at least 28 days' notice of the date of the Annual General Meeting, and papers for the Annual General Meeting shall be distributed to members at least 14 days before the meeting.

8.3 There shall be a quorum when 20% of individual members, with a minimum of 10 members, are present.

8.4 Each individual member has one vote. Every matter shall be determined by a majority of members present and voting. In case of equality of votes the Chair shall have a second or casting vote.

8.5 The Committee shall present the Annual Report and Accounts of the Association for the preceding year.

8.6 Nominations for election to the Committee must be proposed and seconded at the Annual General Meeting.

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8.7 The meeting shall elect Officers and members of the Committee to serve for the next year.

8.8 The meeting shall appoint the Independent Examiner of the Annual Accounts.

8.9 A Special General Meeting can be called on written request from one third of individual members, with at least 28 days' notice before the meeting.

8.10 Minutes shall be kept as a record of the proceedings of General Meetings.

8.11 Any resolution must be received by the Secretary at least 21 days before the Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting at which the resolution is to be brought forward.

9. FINANCE

9.1 All monies raised by or on behalf of the Association shall be applied to further the Aims of the Association.

9.2 The funds of the Association including all donations, contributions and bequests shall be paid into an account in the name of the Association and deposited at such bank as the Committee shall from time to time decide.

9.3 All cheques / bank transfers drawn on the Account must be signed or authorised by two appointed signatories

9.4 The Treasurer shall:

- keep accounting records
- prepare the Annual Accounts

9.5 The Association's financial year will end on 31st March.

10. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

10.1 Any amendment to the Constitution shall require the approval of a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at the Annual General Meeting at which it is discussed.

10.2 Any resolution for the amendment of the Constitution must be received by the Secretary at least 21 days before the Annual General Meeting at which the resolution is to be brought forward.

11. DISSOLUTION

11.1 The Association may be dissolved at a Special General Meeting called for that purpose and must be advertised to all individual members and affiliated organisations at least 28 days before the Meeting.

11.2 Such proposals to dissolve the Association shall take effect only if agreed by a two-thirds majority of members present and voting at the Meeting.

11.3 Surplus funds of the Association, if it is dissolved, shall be given or transferred to such other charitable institution or voluntary organisation having

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similar objects as the members of the Association may determine, or failing that shall be applied for some other charitable purpose.

12. DATE OF ADOPTION

This Constitution was adopted on the date mentioned above in accordance with the resolution passed at the Annual General Meeting held on that date and formally recorded by the person whose signature appears below:

Name (Block capitals): **GAVIN FULLER**

Signature: 

Position: Secretary