

# CONSTITUTION AND RULES OF THE COTTESMORE HUNT

**Adopted by resolution at an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Hunt on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2005 and brought into effect on and from 18<sup>th</sup> February 2005**

## **1. DEFINITIONS**

### **(i) 'The Hunt'**

The members' association known as 'The Cottesmore Hunt', formed for the purpose of carrying on the Objects defined below and governed by these rules.

### **(ii) 'The Country'**

Those parishes in Leicestershire, Rutland and Lincolnshire forming what was traditionally known as The Cottesmore Country, where the Cottesmore Hounds traditionally met at least once a year immediately prior to February 2005.

### **(iii) 'The Objects'**

The objects of the Hunt are:

- (a) to keep the Hunt in being as a recognisable and independent entity;
- (b) to work for the re-introduction of hunting with hounds generally and in the Country;
- (c) to breed foxhounds in order to retain their bloodlines;
- (d) to carry on any activity described as 'Exempt Hunting' within Schedule 1 to the Hunting Act 2004;
- (e) to carry on all lawful hound and equestrian activities, and all other lawful activities associated with the former activities of the Hunt prior to 18<sup>th</sup> February 2005, as the Committee shall from time to time decide;
- (f) to take all such steps as the Committee shall from time to time consider practicable to maintain and preserve the Country and its biodiversity in its traditional form;
- (g) to maintain and staff an establishment as a kennel in which to keep foxhounds and horses as required by the Hunt, and to act as a centre for the activities referred to in (c) to (e) above
- (h) to promote support for the above objectives and for the Hunt among the local and wider community.

### **(iv) 'The Activities'**

The activities referred to in (iii) (d) and (e) above.

**(v) 'Landowner'**

A person owning at least 50 acres in the Country regularly hunted over or a covert regularly drawn by the Cottesmore Hounds in the years immediately preceding February 2005.

**(vi) 'Farmer'**

A person whose main livelihood is derived from farming land within the Country.

**(vii) 'Subscriber'**

A participant in or supporter of the Activities of the Hunt who pays by 1<sup>st</sup> October in each year such subscription as may from time to time be determined by the Committee.

**(viii) 'Member of the Hunt'**

Landowners and Farmers who regularly allow the Hunt to carry on the Activities on their land and Subscribers as above defined.

**2. GOVERNMENT**

- (i)** The Government of the Hunt is vested in the Committee.
- (ii)** The duty and responsibility of the Committee is to take all such steps as it reasonably considers necessary for maintaining and furthering the Objects.
- (iii)** The Masters shall be appointed by the Committee and are to be responsible for the organisation of the Activities, the kennels and the direction of the Hunt staff, as set out in 14 below.

**3. COMMITTEE**

- (i)** The Committee shall consist of nine elected members, three of whom shall be Subscribers, three Landowners and three Farmers and that so far as it is practical to achieve nominations from such Groups they shall be drawn in equal proportion from each of the designated Hunt countries, recognised and known as Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday Country.
- (ii)** Three members of the Committee ie one Subscriber, one Landowner and one Farmer shall normally retire annually by rotation and shall not be eligible for re-election for one year.

- (iii) The election of Committee Members shall take place at the Annual General Meeting. Any Member of the Hunt wishing to offer himself or herself for election must have his or her name proposed and seconded by two members of the Hunt and forwarded to the Secretary in writing not less than 14 days before the Annual General Meeting.
- (iv) The Committee shall have power to co-opt up to four extra members (including one from the Cottesmore Hunt Supporters Club) who shall serve on the Committee for the ensuing year, but who shall not be entitled to vote on resolutions of the Committee.
- (v) The Committee shall elect the Chairman of the Hunt who shall be a member of the Hunt but need not be a member of the Committee. The Chairman shall be the Chairman of the Committee and shall have a second or casting vote at the proceedings of the Committee. The Chairman shall be elected for a term of three years and may be re-elected by the Committee for two further terms of one year each. At the end of his term of office or early retirement he shall not be eligible for re-election as Chairman for a period of five years without the approval of the General Meeting.
- (vi) The Secretary and the Treasurer shall be appointed by the Committee but shall not be entitled to vote on resolutions of the Committee.
- (vii) The Chairperson of the Hunt Supporters' Club and a Representative of the Cottesmore Hunt Pony Club shall be invited to be ex-officio members of the Committee.
- (viii) The Committee shall meet at least twice during the Hunt Year which shall run from the 1<sup>st</sup> day of May to the 30<sup>th</sup> day of April.
- (ix) The Master(s) shall normally be invited to attend all Committee meetings to speak but not to vote.
- (x) Seven members shall form a quorum.

#### **4. TRUSTEES**

- (i) The Trustees are elected by the Committee. Once elected, they shall each hold office until death, resignation or revocation of their appointment at a General Meeting.
- (ii) The Trustees stand possessed of all the freehold, leasehold, monetary and other property, securities and assets of the Hunt, including the Hounds.

- (iii) The Trustees shall hold the said property and assets on trust for the Hunt for the purpose of maintaining and furthering the Objects and in accordance with the terms of the Trust Deed.

## **5. HOUNDS**

All hounds bred in the Hunt kennels or by the Hunt are held by the Trustees for the benefit of the Hunt in accordance with 4 above.

## **6. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

- (i) There shall be an Annual General Meeting of the members of the Hunt to be held before the 30<sup>th</sup> November in each year.
- (ii) All members of the Hunt shall be given notice of any Annual General Meeting not less than 28 days before the date appointed for such meeting, provided always that any advertisement of such meeting published in two newspapers circulating in the Country shall be deemed to be sufficient notice.
- (iii) The business of the Annual General Meeting shall be:
  - (a) Minute of the last meeting;
  - (b) To approve the appointment or re-engagement of the Master(s) as agreed and proposed by the Committee;
  - (c) To consider the report of the Treasurer and pass the annual accounts;
  - (d) To elect members of the Committee;
  - (e) To receive the report of the Master(s);
  - (f) To receive a report of the decisions made by the Committee;
  - (g) To consider and, if agreed, to pass resolutions submitted by Members of the Hunt;
  - (h) Any other business.
- (iv) In the event of the Annual General Meeting not approving the Committee's recommendations the following options are open:
  - (a) The Committee may accept a reference back for further consideration;
  - (b) The Committee should resign and a new Committee be appointed forthwith.
- (v) Only Members of the Hunt shall be entitled to vote, and those members owning land or farming in partnership shall appoint one of their number to attend and vote.

## **7. EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING**

- (i) An Extraordinary General Meeting may be convened: (a) by the Committee; or (b) on the written requisition of not less than 20 Members of the Hunt; such written requisition must state the object of the meeting and must be signed by the requisitioners and be delivered to the Secretary.
- (ii) All Members of the Hunt should be given notice of any Extraordinary General Meeting not less than 28 days before the date appointed for such meeting provided always that an advertisement of such meeting published in two newspapers circulating in the Country shall be deemed to be sufficient notice.
- (iii) In the event of this Extraordinary General Meeting not approving the Committee's recommendations the following options are open:
  - (a) The Committee may accept a reference back for further consideration;
  - (b) The Committee should resign and a new Committee be appointed forthwith.
- (iv) Only Members of the Hunt shall be entitled to vote, and those members owning land or farming in partnership shall appoint one of their number to attend and vote.

## **8. RESOLUTIONS**

Any resolutions for consideration at the Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting shall be signed by the proposer and seconder and submitted to the Secretary not less than 14 days before the date of the Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting.

## **9. MAJORITY**

- (i) At any Annual General Meeting or Extraordinary General Meeting a resolution put to the vote at the meeting shall be decided on a show of hands except:
  - (a) on the removal of members of the Committee;
  - (b) where the majority of those present resolve otherwise by a show of hands;in which cases voting shall be by ballot.
- (ii) Any alteration to this constitution at a General Meeting must be carried by a three-quarters majority of those voting thereon. Save as otherwise provided below, other resolutions must be carried by a simple majority.

## **10. ACCOUNTS**

- (i) The Treasurer shall keep and maintain full and proper books of account of the income and expenditure of the Hunt.

- (ii) At the end of each financial year the Treasurer shall prepare or cause to be prepared a set of Accounts comprising: (a) an Income and Expenditure account; (b) a Balance Sheet to include reference to the Hunt's assets.
- (iii) The Treasurer shall present to the AGM an annual report and the accounts.
- (iv) The Committee shall cause the accounts to be certified by a certified or chartered accountant or some other fit and proper person as it shall select.
- (v) The Committee may appoint an Auditor.
- (vi) The Chairman may appoint financial advisers.

## **11. INSURANCE**

The Committee shall be responsible for ensuring that adequate insurance cover is in place to insure the Hunt property and assets, to insure the Hunt and its staff against public liability and to enable the Activities to be carried out.

## **12. MASTERS OF FOXHOUNDS ASSOCIATION**

- (i) The Committee shall ensure that any person appointed a Master will become a member of the MFHA if not so already and will abide by the rules and take note of the recommendations of the MFHA.
- (ii) The Committee shall abide by the rules and take note of the recommendations of the MFHA.

## **13. SEASON**

The Hunt's year shall run from 1<sup>st</sup> May to 30<sup>th</sup> April.

## **14. MASTER(S)**

- (i) The Master(s) shall be appointed from 1<sup>st</sup> May to 30<sup>th</sup> April.
- (ii) The Master(s) shall normally be entitled to attend and speak at, but may not vote at, any meeting of the Committee.
- (iii) A Master shall not be entitled to be a member of the Committee or a Trustee or Officer of the Hunt.
- (iv) The Master(s) shall be responsible to the Committee for:
  - (a) employment, discipline and supervision of the Hunt staff;
  - (b) managing the Hunt staff, kennels, hounds and horses;

- (c) maintaining relationships with Farmers and Landowners;
- (d) organising all Activities involving hounds in the country throughout the year;
- (e) discipline of the Hunt staff and Members of the Hunt while participating in the Activities involving hounds;
- (f) maintaining and furthering the Objects.

## **15. SUSPENSION AND WINDING UP**

- (i) If, in the opinion of the Committee, it becomes impossible to carry on the Objects the Committee shall call a General Meeting to consider and, if thought fit, to pass a resolution to place the Hunt in suspension.
- (ii) Upon the passing of a resolution to place the Hunt in suspension:
  - (a) the Committee and the Trustees shall realise such property and assets as required (i) to settle all outstanding debts, liabilities and obligations of the Hunt therefrom and (ii) to support the Hunt during the period of suspension;
  - (b) it shall be the duty of the Committee to administer the residual assets of the Hunt so as to resume the Objects at the end of the period of suspension;
  - (c) it shall be the duty of the Trustees to hold the residual assets of the Hunt pending further decision by the Committee or the Hunt in General Meeting.
- (iii) If, after a resolution has been passed to place the Hunt in suspension, in the opinion of the Committee it is practicable to resume the Objects, the Committee and the Trustees shall take all necessary action for this purpose.
- (iv) If, after a resolution has been passed to place the Hunt in suspension, in the opinion of the Committee the Hunt should be merged with another hunt or dissolved, the Committee shall call a General Meeting to consider and, if thought fit, to pass a resolution to merge or dissolve the Hunt. Such a resolution shall not be valid unless it shall be passed by a three-quarters majority of the members voting thereon.
- (v) If, at a General Meeting of the Hunt, a resolution to merge or dissolve the Hunt is passed by a simple majority and such resolution is confirmed at another General Meeting by a three-quarters majority of the members voting thereon, the Hunt shall be dissolved.
- (vi) If a General Meeting is called for the purpose of considering and, if thought fit, passing a resolution to place the Hunt in suspension or to merge or dissolve the

Hunt, the Committee may, at its discretion, make arrangements for votes to be given by proxy.

- (vii)** If a resolution to merge the Hunt with another hunt is passed at a General Meeting pursuant to (iv) above, or confirmed at a General Meeting pursuant to (v) above, the assets of the Hunt shall, after satisfaction of all debts, liabilities and obligations of the Hunt therefrom, become the property of the merged hunt.
- (viii)** If a resolution to dissolve the Hunt is passed at a General Meeting pursuant to (iv) above, or confirmed at a General Meeting pursuant to (v) above, the Hunt shall be dissolved and its affairs wound up by the Committee and the Trustees.
- (ix)** Upon dissolution and winding up of the Hunt as aforesaid, any monies and assets remaining after satisfaction of all debts, liabilities and obligations of the Hunt therefrom shall be dealt with and disposed of by the Trustees at their discretion in accordance with the terms of the Trust Deed as amended.
- (x)** In no case shall any Member of the Hunt receive any direct or indirect benefit from the suspension, merger or dissolution of the Hunt.