

**Clarsach Society - Comunn na Clàrsaich**  
**Scottish Charity Number SC011819**

**Constitution and Rules**

**1.** The Society, which was formed at Dingwall during the National Mod in September 1931, shall be called Comunn na Clàrsaich - The Clarsach Society, hereinafter called the Society, and shall be affiliated to An Comunn Gaidhealach. The Society shall consist of the Parent Body and Branches formed in accordance with section XII below.

**11.** The objects of the Society shall be to advance the education of the public in the music and the playing of the clarsach and in furtherance thereof:

1. to promote and encourage the playing of the clarsach.
2. to preserve its place in the national life of Scotland.
3. to uphold its position as one of the most ancient instruments of Scotland.
4. to promote and encourage its tradition amongst Gaelic speaking people.
5. to collect, produce and distribute music and songs for the clarsach and to arrange demonstrations and workshops.
6. to do all things charitable in law necessary or conducive to the furtherance of the foregoing objects.

**111.** The qualification for membership shall be that the applicant is interested in the clarsach and will further the aims and objects of the Society. The Honorary Secretary and Branch Secretaries are empowered by the Executive Council to accept or reject applications for membership.

**IV.** The Society shall consist of:

1. Ordinary members: who shall pay an annual adult subscription.
2. Concessionary members - 18 years and under in age, students in full-time education, unwaged, disabled or senior citizens: who shall pay an annual concessionary subscription.
3. Family members - open to any family consisting of persons resident in the same household: who shall pay an annual family subscription.
4. Life members - being life members who were admitted to the Society prior to 16 November 1996.
5. Honorary Life members and Honorary Life Associates as defined in Section XIII.
6. Representatives of affiliated bodies as defined in section XV.

All the above shall have a vote at a General Meeting of the Society, except for members under 16 years of age who shall have no voting rights at a General Meeting.

**V.** Subscriptions shall be paid by all members at the start of the Society's financial year, viz 1 July in each calendar year, to Branch Secretaries. Subscription rates will be fixed annually by the Executive Council of the Clarsach Society.

**VI.** Members failing to pay their subscriptions due on 1 July shall not be entitled to take part in the proceedings of the Society until the subscription is paid.

**VII.** The Executive Council or a Branch Committee may, for good reason, suspend temporarily the membership of an individual. The individual concerned shall then have the right to be heard by the Executive Council or relevant Branch Committee, accompanied by a representative, if desired, before any further decision is taken.

**VIII.** The Management of the Society shall be in the hands of the Executive Council, which shall comprise the following, viz:

1. A President and two Vice-Presidents, one of whom shall be the President of An Comunn Gaidhealach ex officio
2. A Convener and Vice-Convener.
3. An Honorary Secretary.
4. An Honorary Treasurer, who shall keep the accounts of the parent body and prepare annual approved accounts covering the Society's financial year.
5. A representative, or his/her substitute, from each Branch.
6. A Gaelic Advisor, who shall advise the Society on Gaelic matters.
7. Up to six elected members.
8. Co-opted members. The Executive Council shall have powers to co-opt additional members, if necessary. These members will not have voting rights and their co-option ceases at the next Annual General Meeting (AGM).
9. Administrator(s), who shall be appointed by the Executive Council and who shall receive an annual honorarium, the amount to be reviewed annually by the Executive Council. The person(s) so appointed shall have no vote at the

Executive Council. As well as carrying out the instructions of the Executive Council, his or her responsibilities shall include the duties specified in the job specification (see Bye-law 1).

Categories 1, 2, 3 and 4 are the office-bearers of the Society. Persons serving in categories 2 to 7 must be members of the Society.

All members under categories 2, 5, 6 and 7 shall retire annually and be eligible for re-election at the AGM for categories 2, 6 and 7, and at a Branch AGM for category 5. In the event of any of these positions in Categories 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7 becoming vacant during the year, for whatever reason, the Executive Council will nominate person(s) to fulfil these roles until the next AGM. The Executive Council will meet not less than twice yearly, any six members shall form a quorum. The Chair of the meeting will have both a deliberative and a casting vote.

Standing Committees of the Executive Council shall be formed to assist in the management of the Society as set out in section IX. The Executive Council and its Standing Committees can appoint ad-hoc subcommittees as set out in section X.

**IX.** Standing committees for Finance and Administration, Music and The Edinburgh International Harp Festival shall be formed from members of the Society as defined in a) to c) below.

- a) **The Finance and Administration Committee** shall consist of the Convener, Vice-Convener, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer and Administrator(s). It shall be responsible for the financial affairs of the Society, including investment of the Society's capital funds. All items of expenditure over £300 shall, before payment, be submitted to and approved by this Committee. The minutes of its meetings shall be included on the Executive Council agenda for ratification. The Society's Convener shall be, ex officio, Convener of this committee but, if unable to attend a meeting, can authorise the Vice-Convener of the Society to be convener of that meeting. Three members of the Committee, who must include the convener of the meeting, and the Honorary Treasurer, shall form a quorum.
- b) **The Music Committee** shall consist of the Convener, Vice-Convener, Honorary Treasurer, Honorary Secretary and Administrator(s), plus members appointed by the Executive Council, who will also appoint a Convener for this committee. Its duties shall include publishing music including test pieces, particularly for the Royal National Mod, arranging competitions, concerts, ceilidhs and other demonstrations of clarsach playing, providing adjudicators, providing prizes, valuing the Society's harps for insurance and other purposes, awarding the Annual Scholarship and nominating an attendee at the Pan Celtic Festival.
- c) **The Edinburgh International Harp Festival Committee** shall consist of a Co-ordinator, Artistic Adviser, Administrator and two members, all appointed by the Executive Council on an annual basis. The Co-ordinator shall be a member of the Executive Council and will be the Convener of the committee. The Committee can nominate additional members as required for the organisation of the Festival, such members will retire automatically when a new committee is elected by the Executive Council. The committee will submit to the Executive Council Meetings, reports on its activities since the last Executive Council meeting, prepare budgets for the forthcoming Festivals and accounts of the last Festival for ratification. The Executive Council will decide whether or not a Festival is to be held.

**X.** The Executive Council or a Standing Committee may, in exceptional circumstances, appoint one or more ad-hoc subcommittees for the purpose of investigating any topic which, in their view, is outwith the scope of any of the standing committees. All proceedings of a sub-committee must be reported to the Executive Council or standing committee appointing the sub-committee. The Convener of a sub-committee must be a member of the Executive Council and be responsible for its reports.

**XI.** The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Society shall be held annually at a time and place to be fixed by the Executive Council. Twelve members of the Society shall form a quorum at this meeting. This meeting shall elect members of the Executive Council as defined in section VIII.

**XII.** Branches of the Society may be formed subject to the approval of the Executive Council, and must conform in all respects to the Constitution and Rules of the Society. The first Convener of a Branch shall be appointed by the Executive Council, but subsequent conveners shall be elected by the Branch members. Branches will be called upon to pay an annual levy to the Parent Body by a decision of the Executive Council. They may at any time send donations to the Society's Treasurer. All members of a Branch shall receive notification of a properly convened and minuted AGM to be held by the Branch. At this meeting, approved accounts for the previous period dating from 1 July to 30 June shall be presented by the Honorary Treasurer of the Branch. Copies of both the approved accounts and the minutes of the previous Branch AGM shall, after approval and acceptance at the Branch AGM subsequently be forwarded, along with the current membership list, to the Society's Administrator, who shall file them for the information of the Executive Council and for record purposes.

A Branch committee shall include the following positions:- a Convener, a Vice-Convener, an Honorary Secretary, an Honorary Treasurer and a Branch representative to the Executive Council of the Society. If it is possible, it shall also include a Music Adviser.

All members of a Branch Committee, excluding the Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer, shall retire annually and be eligible for re-election at the Branch AGM. All members of a Branch shall be informed of forthcoming meetings, events, courses and other functions organised by the Branch.

Annual subscriptions at the current rate shall be collected from 1 July by the Branch Secretaries. Subsequently a list of fully paid up members of the Branch shall be forwarded by the Branch Honorary Secretary to the Society's Administrator for record purposes. If a Branch has a separate Constitution and Rules, it must conform with the Society's Constitution and Rules and have a dissolution clause.

**XIII.** The Executive Council have power to appoint Honorary Life Members and Associates - those who, over a period of years and in an outstanding degree, have stimulated interest in the clarsach and in the ideals of the Society. Those honoured in this manner shall not exceed six in number at any one time.

**XIV.** No alteration of, or addition to the Constitution and Rules, shall be made except at the AGM of the Society. Proposed alterations or additions must be notified to the Honorary Secretary at least two months prior to the date of the AGM and shall be indicated in the circular calling the meeting. The Executive Council shall have powers to make such bye-laws, consistent with the general rules, as may be found necessary. Alterations to the Constitution and Rules must be carried by a two-third majority at the AGM.

**XV.** Other societies or associations may, if willing to conform to the Constitution and Rules, be affiliated to the Society, and be represented by one member at all its General Meetings where the representative shall have only one vote. The affiliation fee shall be an annual payment determined by the Executive Council and paid to the Society Treasurer.

**XVI.** The Society shall have the power to borrow or raise money, whether by bank overdraft or loan or such other manner as the Society shall think fit and to secure the repayment thereof in such manner as the Society shall think fit. The foregoing power to borrow or raise money shall be exercised only by the Executive Council upon recommendation by the Finance and Administration Committee.

**XVII.** An Extraordinary General Meeting of the Society may be called by a written motion to do so supported by a minimum of 20 members and sent to the Honorary Secretary of the Society not less than 8 weeks before the date proposed for the meeting. Notice of an Extraordinary General Meeting shall be sent to all members in writing not less than 4 weeks in advance of the date set for the Meeting.

**XVIII. Dissolution of the Parent Body of the Society.** In the event of the dissolution of the Parent Body of the Society any assets remaining after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities shall not be paid to, or distributed amongst, the members of the Parent Body, but shall be given or transferred to a recognised charitable organisation having objects similar to that of the Society.

**XIX. Dissolution of a Branch.** In the event of the dissolution of a Branch with a valid dissolution clause in its Branch Constitution and Rules, the clause will be followed. In all other situations, any assets remaining after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities shall not be paid to, or distributed amongst the members of the Branch, but shall be given or transferred to the Parent Body or, in the event of the Parent Body not existing, to a recognised charitable organisation having objects similar to that of the Society.

## **BYE-LAWS**

**1.** The regular duties of the Administrator(s) shall be as defined in an Administrator's Job Specification approved by the Executive Council.

**2.** The rate of hire of the Society's harps will be fixed annually by the Executive Council. Harps will be hired out as available, at the current rate which will be paid directly from the hirer's bank account. A registration fee shall be paid for entry onto the harp hire waiting list, and an administration fee shall be paid on first receipt of the harp. The amounts of the registration fee and administration fee will be fixed by the Executive Council.