

Gosforth Amateur Dramatic Society

Constitution and Rules of the Society

- 1 The Society shall be called “The Gosforth Amateur Dramatic Society”. Where appropriate, it may be designated by the abbreviation “GADS”.
- 2 Its objects shall be the production of dramatic art and encouragement of theatre appreciation and in the pursuance of such objects to give performances of dramatic works and to promote such other activities as shall conduce to the fulfilment of the above general objects.
- 3 The membership of the Society shall consist of:
 - Full Members and Life Members who shall be entitled without distinction to full rights of voting and active participation;
 - Junior Members who shall be over 14 years of age. If over 18 years of age, they must be in receipt of full-time education. Junior members shall be entitled to rights of active participation and those who have reached the age of 18 shall be allowed to vote;
 - Patrons who support the Society materially although not to the extent of full membership. Patrons will receive newsletters, advice on all Society activities etc and will be entitled to the same booking privileges as Full Members under Rule 14 but not to vote or participate actively in the Society;
 - Temporary Members, who shall be entitled to rights of active participation but not of voting. Temporary membership shall be granted at the discretion of the Executive Committee and may be limited to a specific production or time period.
- 4 The business of the Society shall normally be conducted by an Executive Committee comprising the officers and other members as stipulated in Rule 5 and a Play Reading Committee as specified in Rule 7, both elected annually.
- 5 The Officers of the Society shall be President, Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary. The Executive Committee shall comprise these Officers plus four additional elected members, each elected by a simple majority of the Full Members present at an Annual General Meeting (AGM) or Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) and, if not already among those elected, the leader of the Play Reading Committee, five to form a quorum. In the event of a tie in an election, the vote shall be repeated. If the tie persists it shall be resolved by the drawing of lots. If deemed necessary, the Executive Committee may co-opt up to two additional members to the committee each of whom should have the same rights as the elected members.
- 6 The Executive Committee may appoint members of the Society to the roles of Publicity Officer, Social Secretary, or any other role that it deems necessary from time to time. For each production, it may appoint a Producer to co-ordinate those activities not the responsibility of the Director. The Executive Committee shall specify the terms of reference of these appointments. These appointed members plus the director of any current production shall be invited to Executive Committee meetings to report and to express their views, but may not vote unless they are also elected members as defined in Rule 5.
- 7 The Play Reading Committee shall consist of five members, each elected by a simple majority of the Full Members present at an AGM or EGM, In the event of a tie in an election, the vote shall be repeated. If the tie persists it shall be resolved by the drawing of lots. For all productions that the Society decides to present, the Play Reading Committee shall endeavour to select plays (or other suitable dramatic works) and to appoint directors, subject to approval by the Executive Committee. Together with directors, it shall endeavour to select casts and to appoint stage managers. The choices shall be made in time to avoid undue haste in production. A permanent record shall be kept of all plays etc considered for presentation, together with objective comments as a guide to possible choice in future years.
- 8 The leader of the Play Reading Committee, chosen from and by its elected members, shall represent its collective views to the Executive Committee.
- 9 Should the Play Reading Committee be unable in any way to fulfil its remit, the Executive Committee shall act as it sees fit to resolve the problem.
- 10 The Society’s financial year shall commence on 1st April and the AGM shall take place not later than six weeks thereafter. The Secretary shall call an EGM of the Society if instructed to do so by the Executive Committee or on receipt of a written request signed by ten Full Members of the Society stating the object for which the meeting is called.
- 11 The Chairman, the leader of the Play Reading Committee and the Treasurer shall present reports at the AGM where also the elections to both committees shall be held and the results declared by the Chairman. Only Full

Members, for life or paid up as specified in Rule 12 during the year preceding the AGM, shall be entitled to stand for election and to vote. For each position:

- nominations, to which the nominees' consent must have been obtained, shall be handed to the Secretary before or at the AGM where also oral nominations shall be accepted;
 - all nominations shall participate equally in the election;
 - any vacancy occurring during the year on either committee may be filled at the discretion of the Executive Committee.
- 12 The subscriptions payable by Full Members, Junior Members and Patrons, which shall fall due immediately after the AGM and be valid until the next AGM shall be as decided from time to time by members in AGM. Any new member admitted during the last four months of the Society's year shall pay for that year a sum not less than one third of the current full annual subscription. Any subscription payable by Temporary Members shall be at the discretion of the Executive Committee.
 - 13 New Members and Patrons may be invited to join the Society at any time by any existing Member or Patron. New Members and Patrons will become eligible for the relevant Society benefits on payment of a subscription in accordance with Rule 12.
 - 14 Members of the Society shall be entitled to book seats for a public performance at least one week before the opening of the general booking.
 - 15 Only Full Members and Junior Members of the Society shall be eligible for acting parts in the original cast for a performance but if an emergency should arise during the preparation for a performance the director shall have full discretionary powers. Children of Full Members and Patrons, below the age of 14 years, shall be eligible, at the discretion of the Play Reading Committee and the director, to take part in performances given by the Society.
 - 16 No member of the Society shall receive payment, directly or indirectly, for services to the Society or for other than legitimate expenses incurred in its work. The funds of the Society shall be applied to the stated objects of the Society and other such charitable objectives as shall be decided by the Executive Committee.
 - 17 The Executive Committee shall have power to strike off the name of any member not complying with the Rules or doing anything detrimental to the interests of the Society. Such member shall have the right of appeal to an EGM called by the Executive Committee at the member's request. The Executive Committee should give members of the Society fourteen days' notice of such an EGM.
 - 18 Any member wishing to use the name of the Society must previously make application to the Executive Committee and obtain its permission to do so. Only officers of the Society, directors and stage managers have any power to incur any expenses on behalf of the Society and then only after consultation with another officer.
 - 19 The Executive Committee may, as a special mark of appreciation for services rendered to the Society, elect a number of Honorary Life Members, not exceeding two in any one year.
 - 20 Any alterations of the Constitution and Rules shall be passed at an AGM (or an EGM called for that purpose in accordance with Rule 10) of the Society by 60% majority of those members present and voting. Any member desiring alterations to the Constitution and Rules must give written notice to the Secretary, to allow the Secretary to circulate the proposed amendment to all members at least fourteen days before the meeting concerned.
 - 21 In the event of a proposal to dissolve the Society, the Executive Committee shall invite all remaining Full Members to attend a General Meeting to discuss the matter. Personal written invitations must state the reason for the meeting and be posted at least three weeks prior to the date of the meeting. The meeting shall decide whether the Society shall be dissolved and, if so, how to dispose of the remaining funds and assets (Rule 16 applies.). These should be devoted to objects similar to those of the Society if possible or to other purposes approved by the Commissioners of Customs and Excise. All decisions taken at this meeting shall be passed by a 60% majority of the Full Members at the meeting.

Adopted at the Annual General Meeting, 6th May, 2009

Signed:

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J Richardson (Chair)

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E J Larkham (Secretary)