

**The Native Irish Honey Bee Society**  
**(*Apis mellifera mellifera*)**  
**Constitution**  
**(February 2013)**

**1. Name**

The Society shall be called The Native Irish Honey Bee Society (*Apis mellifera mellifera*) Irish strain, hereafter called the NIHBS.

**2. DEFINITIONS**

**The Society:** The Native Irish Honey Bee Society  
**The Committee:** Office Bearers and or Trustees of the Society and those elected or co-opted to run the affairs and management of the Society  
**Apiculture:** The study or keeping of Honeybees

**3. INTERPRETATION**

In these Articles of Association and any Appendices aligned thereto unless the context indicates the contrary intention, an expression which denotes:

- a) any gender includes the other gender;
- b) a natural person includes a juristic person and *vice versa*;
- c) the singular includes the plural and *vice versa*.

**4. AMENDMENTS**

No article in this Constitution shall be rescinded, added to, or otherwise varied, except by Special Resolution at an Extraordinary or Annual General Meeting.

**5. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

***Aims***

- i. To promote the conservation, study, improvement and re-introduction of *Apis mellifera mellifera* (Native Irish Honey Bee), throughout the island of Ireland.
- ii. To establish areas of conservation throughout the island for the conservation of *Apis mellifera mellifera*, the native Irish honey bee.
- iii. To promote the formation of Bee Improvement groups.
- iv. To provide education on Bee improvement and to increase public awareness of the native Irish honey bee.
- v. To act in an advisory capacity to groups and individuals who wish to promote it.
- vi. To co-operate with other Bee-Keeping organisation's with similar aims.
- vii. To seek the help of the scientific community and other stake holders in achieving our aims and objectives.

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**Objectives**

In pursuit of Aim III, “To promote the formation of Bee Improvement groups.”

- a) To liaise with beekeepers with a view to establishing bee improvement groups.

In pursuit of Aim IV, “To provide education on Bee improvement and awareness to the public of the values of the native Irish honey bee.”

- a) To establish a website which promotes our aims and objectives with links to organisation’s that promote similar aims and objectives.
- b) Where possible to provide information, leaflets, press releases etc.

In pursuit of Aim V, “To act in an advisory capacity to groups and individuals who wish to promote the native Irish honey bee.”

- a) To advise and encourage beekeepers to promote our aims and objectives.
- b) To provide information as to where local improvement groups are established.
- c) To provide information about ongoing events.

**6. PERSUASIONS**

- 6.1 The Society shall not align itself with any political, cultural or religious organisation.
- 6.2 The Society shall act in a non discriminatory manner in respect of all its Policies, Practices and Public Relations Affairs.

**7. MEMBERSHIP**

- 7.1 All persons who are concerned, interested, or engaged in or who intend to become concerned, interested, or engaged, directly or indirectly, in the keeping of bees, may apply to join the Society. A person whose application has been accepted by the Society and who has paid the current membership fee shall be a member of the Society for that year.
- 7.2 Membership of the Society shall comprise those categories as may be determined by the Committee from time to time to suit the needs of the Society and its activities.
- 7.3 Associate membership is reserved for those who wish to help further the aims and objectives of the society. An associate member shall not have voting rights
- 7.4 Subject to the approval of the Society in an Annual General Meeting, the Committee shall have the power to nominate as an

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**Honorary Life Member** any person whom the Committee considers to be deserving of such honour by reason of their outstanding contribution to the Society's activities and / or to the Apicultural sector in general. A Honorary life member will not have voting rights.

- 7.5 Each member shall have one vote on any question being considered at any meeting of the Society except that the Chairperson of any meeting shall in addition have a casting vote.
- 7.6 The rights and privileges of every member shall be personal to him/herself and shall not be transferable or transmissible by his/her own act or by operation of the law.
- 7.7 Any person, whose interests would better be served by another beekeeping body, may be encouraged to join that body but nothing shall prevent a member from belonging to another Beekeeping Organisation or body associated with the Apicultural Sector.

## **8. MEMBERSHIP FEES**

- 8.1 The annual membership fee shall be determined by the Committee on an annual basis, but no such determination involving an increase in the membership fees will be effectual unless and until confirmed by the Society at the Annual General Meeting.
- 8.2 Annual subscriptions shall be payable in advance on the 1st day of January in each year or on such dates as may be determined by the Executive.
- 8.3 Members shall be issued with an invoice/letter indicating the payment of fees for that year or part of such year and proof of payment of such invoice shall remain proof of membership for that Society Year.
- 8.4 Subject to the approval of the Society in an Annual General Meeting, the Committee shall have the power to vary the annual membership fee of members who fall into those categories, (such as members who are pensioners or belong to the same family unit or are unemployed etc.) which the Committee shall from time to time determine.

## **9. TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

- 9.1 Any member may resign his/her membership by giving the Secretary of the Society notice, in writing, to that effect. There will be no reimbursement of any fees already paid for the remainder of the year.
- 9.2 In the event that any member, irrespective of his/her status, brings the name of the Society into disrepute, acts in any manner in disregard of the Aims and Objectives of the Society (Article 5 above), or acts in any other unethical manner in the course of his/her beekeeping activities may at the discretion of the Committee be suspended for a limited duration or expelled permanently from membership of the Society. Before any such action may be taken by the Committee such member shall be afforded the opportunity to respond before the Committee to such allegations.

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9.3 Every member shall be bound to further, to the best of his/her ability, the objectives, interests and influence of the Society and shall observe the Society's Code of Conduct and Policy on Ethics in Beekeeping. He shall not abuse his/her connection with the Society to further his/her business interests. Anyone being considered by the Committee to have contravened this article may be subject to censorship as per item 9.2 above.

## **10. THE SOCIETY YEAR**

10.1 The Society's financial year shall run from 1<sup>st</sup> January to the following 31<sup>st</sup> December each year.

## **11. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND EXTRA-ORDINARY MEETINGS**

11.1 An Annual General Meeting of the Society shall be held within (3) months of the end of the financial year.

11.2 The Secretary shall despatch, by email or post, the notice and agenda of the AGM to all members at least (30) days before the scheduled date of the meeting.

11.3 The business to be dealt with at the AGM shall be:

- a) To receive and approve the Annual Report of the Committee of what has taken place during the year under review.
- b) To receive and approve the Annual Financial Statements for the year under review.
- c) To elect new Committee members or re-elect those Committee members who retire by rotation.
- d) To appoint an independent auditor or such other duly competent person or persons to audit the Financial Statements of the Society during the forthcoming Society year.
- e) To transact any other business of which due notice has been given.

11.4 The Committee are obliged to convene an Extra-Ordinary General Meeting and shall do so within (21) days of receiving a written request stating the purpose for which the meeting is required and signed by no less than one-quarter of the total number of members.

11.5 The Committee may also convene an Extra-Ordinary General Meeting and shall do so within (21) days of such a decision been taken.

11.6 The Secretary shall give at least (14) fourteen days notice of an Extra-Ordinary General Meeting to all members by e-mail or by post. Only requests or motions specified can be discussed at Extra-Ordinary General Meeting.

11.7 A Quorum at the Annual General Meeting or Extra Ordinary General Meeting shall consist of no less than one-quarter of the members, excluding the Committee members.

11.8 If a Quorum is not present one half hour after the appointed time of the meeting then, if those members present together with the members of the Committee can make up the numbers, the meeting

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shall proceed with each detail. If the Quorum cannot be attained at this juncture a new date within no more than three (3) weeks shall be made to hold the meeting and all members shall be given at least two weeks notice of the new date, time and place at which the meeting will be held. Should this second meeting not reach the Quorum the Committee, with those members present, shall decide the fate of all items on the agenda.

## **12. THE COMMITTEE**

- 12.1 The General Affairs of the Society shall be run by the Committee. There shall be a minimum of four Committee Members elected by the members of the Society at Annual General Meetings. All elected Members of the Committee shall take up office from the date of the Annual General Meeting at which they are elected.
- 12.2 Only Members of the Society may serve on the Committee.
- 12.3 The Committee may, from time to time, co-opt any members of the Society on to the Committee to fill vacant positions. Co-opted members shall take up office immediately upon co-option and shall retain their positions only until the next Annual General Meeting but shall be eligible for re-election.
- 12.4 Each member elected to the Committee shall, for continuity, serve on the Committee for a period of two (2) years.
- 12.5 No person shall remain on the Committee with the same portfolio for a continuous period exceeding four (4) years.
- 12.6 The retiring Chairperson shall hold an ex-officio office for the proceeding year.
- 12.7 If a member of the Committee is absent from (3) three or more consecutive committee meetings, without apology, his/her place shall be declared vacant.
- 12.8 Any member of the Committee or the entire Committee may be dismissed by a resolution passed by the members at a General or Extra Ordinary Meeting convened for such purpose. In such an event the meeting shall immediately elect a new Committee.
- 12.9 The Committee may, notwithstanding any vacancy in their body, continue to act in terms of their duties provided always that in case that the Members of the Committee shall, at any time, be reduced in number to less than (4) four, it shall be lawful for them to act as the Committee for the purpose of filling up vacancies in their body, or of summoning a General Meeting, but not for any other purposes.

## **13. COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE**

- 13.1 The Committee shall comprise of such portfolios as are required for the efficient functioning of the Society and shall include the following prerequisite titles:
  - a) Chairperson
  - b) Secretary
  - c) Treasurer
  - d) PRO
  - e) 4 Regional organisers

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f) 2 -5 Regional reps for each province

13.2 Further portfolio positions such as Membership Officer, Programmes Co-Ordinator, or Newsletter Editor may be included as well as any other position, including non specified portfolio holders as decided by the Committee, necessary to achieve the aims and objectives of the Society.

13.3 Any one member of the Committee may hold two portfolios provided that all other members of the Committee hold at least one portfolio.

13.4 Subject to the ratification of the Committee acting as a body, the duties of the portfolio holders shall include but not be limited to:

Chairperson: To attend functions in his/her capacity as Chairperson of the Society: To ratify matters of importance: To call for business meetings of the Committee when required. The Chairperson shall have the casting vote.

Secretary: To keep all business records of the Society. To send out notification of meetings, field days or whatever is deemed necessary. To draw up agenda for Meetings, etc.

Treasurer: To keep the Accounts as stated in these Articles.

PRO: To act as spokesperson of the Society in any media forum.

#### **14. DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE**

14.1 The affairs of the Society shall be managed by the Committee and shall include the following functions:

- a) managing the finances of the Society;
- b) determining issues relating to membership of the Society;
- c) determining the Society's programme of events;
- d) dealing with communications, public relations and the marketing of the Society through local and electronic media forums;
- e) discussing and determining issues affecting the Society in relation to the beekeeping industry in general;
- f) any other matters which the Committee is required or entitled to determine in terms of this Constitution.

14.2 The Committee may delegate any of their duties and obligations to a sub-Committee as they think fit, and/or any special forum formed for any purpose consistent with the aims and objectives of the Society. However, such delegated duties or obligations would not absolve or transfer the existing responsibilities of officers democratically elected at the AGM and as already defined 13.4.

14.3 The Committee may from time to time formulate Policies or Codes which, in their opinion, shall be in keeping with the aims and objectives of the Society. Such Policies or Codes shall be placed before the membership to be ratified at any General Meeting prior to being accepted as official policy and practice of the Society.

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- 14.4 The Committee may from time to time introduce any administrative or general practice on their own cognisance which shall not be in conflict with this Constitution and which, in their opinion, shall be for the better running of the Society.
- 14.5 The Committee shall cause proper minutes to be made of all Committee meetings, or any other meetings for which a record is required.
- 14.6 The Committee shall meet as often as is necessary, no less than 3 times per calendar year. The meeting will run as per agenda. A minimum of one week notice should be given to hold such a meeting.

## **15. ACCOUNTS**

- 15.1 The Committee shall cause proper and sufficient books of account to be kept with respect to:
- a) The sums of money received and expended by the Society and the manner in respect of which such receipts and expenditure take place (i.e.) in terms of Income Statements;
  - b) The assets and liabilities of the Society (i.e.) in terms of a Balance Sheet;
  - c) All sales and purchases of goods by the Society.
  - d) All assets of the Society.
- 15.2 The books of account shall be kept at the registered office or at such other place or places as the Committee shall think fit, and shall always be open to inspection to the Members of the Committee.
- 15.3 At each Annual General Meeting the Committee shall cause to be prepared and to be laid before the Society an income and expenditure account and balance sheet made up to the end of the immediately preceding financial year.
- 15.4 The Annual Financial Statements of the Society shall be subject to perusal and audit by such person or persons duly appointed in terms of Item 11.3.e.
- 15.5 All Society cheques will bear two signatures; authorised signatures are the Honorary Treasurer, Honorary Chairperson, and Honorary Secretary. All banks accounts will be setup to accept either two. However, as an internal control measure one of these must be the Honorary Treasurer. In the event of the Honorary Treasurer been unavailable the committee can approve the Chairperson and Secretary to issue cheques.

## **16. PROPERTY AND DONATIONS**

- 16.1 Any donation may be accepted by the Committee of the Society.
- 16.2 All books, memorabilia or trophies donated or bequeathed to the Society shall be housed at a suitable secure venue as determined by the Committee. A detailed list of publications shall be maintained at all times and be presented at the Annual General Meeting.
- 16.3 The Committee shall endeavour to secure for the Society the copyright of Papers presented to the Society.

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16.4 Should funds permit fixed property may be acquired for educational, administrative and meeting purposes.

**17. INSURANCE AND LIABILITY OF SOCIETY**

- 17.1 The Society shall not be liable for any accidents which may occur to participants whether members of the Society or other persons at Meetings, or on Field Days, Field Trips or any other Outing organised by the Society. All persons attending such functions or outings shall be responsible for their own dress and safety. If however should a person by what ever means or conduct be a hazard to other persons he may be instructed to leave the area by a member of the Committee.
- 17.2 The Society shall also be required to have in place Officers Liability Insurance Cover and is accounted for under the Society's annual subscription.
- 17.3 Every member is required to have as a minimum Public Liability. This insurance cover will be provided by an appropriate insurance body as approved by the Central Bank of Ireland and is accounted for under the Society's annual subscription. The Society shall not be held liable for any public liability claims made by any third party against any member arising out of his beekeeping activities.
- 17.4 The Society may seek out the availability of insurance in the interests of all members. It may also seek representation with insurance companies in the preparation and formulation of policies, but the Society will not bear any surety whatever in this regard.
- 17.5 The Society may give guidelines in the management of beekeeping but will not accept responsibility for any accidents which may occur, due to their beekeeping activities or product. Each member must seek out their own insurance/legal advice for such activities.

**18. REPRESENTATION AND AFFILIATION TO OTHER BEEKEEPING BODIES**

- 18.1 The Committee may nominate one or more of its members to represent the interests of the Society at relevant apicultural forum or other body to act in accordance with these articles of Society.
- 18.2 A representative from the Society shall remain on the proposed forum for the duration of that forum's Constitution, unless by decision of the Committee the representative is requested to relinquish his/her position as representative of the Society on such forum. Any representative who is nominated by the Committee to stand on any forum may, during his/her term of office, formally approach the Committee in writing to resign such position, which request should not be unreasonably denied by the Committee.
- 18.3 Nothing shall prevent any individual member of the Society from accepting nomination to any formal beekeeping body, in his/her own personal capacity for the purposes of promoting apiculture within Ireland or internationally.

**19. TERMINATION AND WINDING UP OF THE SOCIETY**

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- 19.1 The Society shall be dissolved and its affairs wound up if the members should, by special Resolution at a General Meeting, so direct.
- 19.2 If upon the winding up or dissolution of the Society there remains after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, any financial assets or property whatsoever, the same shall not be paid to or distributed amongst the members of the Society, nor the Committee, but shall be held in Trust by the relevant legal entity so appointed, until such time as the Society may be re-established.
- 19.3 All books of accounting records shall be kept in Trust by the relevant legal body until such time that the Society is re-established.
- 19.4 Any capital remaining shall be held in Trust by the relevant legal entity so appointed and such body may utilise any interest earned for the purposes of administering the Trust.

**20. ACCEPTANCE AND SIGNING**

IT is hereby recorded that these articles were presented before the General Meeting held on the 3rd February, 2013 and the contents were formally accepted by the membership in the majority.

**THEREFORE** these articles having been agreed to, shall be binding upon the Society as the **CONSTITUTION** from the date hereunder.

In formalising these articles they were duly signed by the Chairperson on the 3rd day of February, 2013. As Witness thereto, the document was co-signed by members of the duly elected Committee on the same date.

This therefore being a true record of the accepted articles, it is signed by the Chairperson hereunder.

**CHAIRPERSON:** PAT DEASY   
Signature & Name in Full

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS:**  
  
Signature & Name

MICHAEL GILES   
Signature & Name

P. J. CURRAN   
Signature & Name

  
Signature & Name

GERARD COYNE   
Signature & Name

  
Signature & Name