



The
Northern Hamster Club
Constitution

REVISED EDITION.

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1. TITLE

The title of the organization shall be the "Northern Hamster Club" which may be abbreviated to "NORTHERN".

2. OBJECTS

The objects of the Club shall be to encourage the keeping, breeding and exhibiting of all species of hamster to a standard or standards defined by the governing body, National Hamster Council "which may be abbreviated to (NHC)". To give particular encouragement to novice breeders, and to foster and safeguard the interests of "NORTHERN" and its members. The "NORTHERN" shall organize activities for the hamster fancy in the Northern Counties of England. The exact area of responsibility to be defined by the (NHC). Also, to encourage and maintain the qualities of the (NHC) recognized colours and to help develop and establish new breeds and varieties of hamster.

3. AFFILIATION

The "NORTHERN" shall be affiliated to the (NHC), the governing body of the hamster fancy and the "NORTHERN" shall adopt and abide by the Rules and how Standards of the (NHC).

Note: - If the "NORTHERN" disaffiliates a vote of the full "NORTHERN" membership is required.

4. MEMBERSHIP

Membership of "NORTHERN" shall be to all persons residing in the area defined by the (NHC). There shall be seven different types of membership:-

1. Adult
2. Partnership (2 or more people).
3. Junior (must be under 16 years of age).
4. Associate (must be a member of another Club affiliated to the (NHC)).
5. Family.
6. School.
7. Honorary.

Note: - "NORTHERN" shall reserve the right to refuse, suspend without reason membership and active participation in "NORTHERN" activities, provided that such a decision is taken by a majority vote by the entire Officers of "NORTHERN" and is in the interests of "NORTHERN".

5. SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscription rates will be set by the AGM. All subscriptions shall be renewed annually from the month of application. Any person or persons who allow their subscriptions to lapse shall automatically forfeit all rights afforded to "NORTHERN" members and shall be expected to return immediately any challenge trophies or other "NORTHERN" property in their possession.

6. MANAGEMENT

Officers

The Officers of the Club shall be: - President, Vice-President (maximum 2 active), Chairperson, Vice- Chairperson, Secretary/Show Manager (combined post which may be split into 3 posts, Membership Secretary, Minutes Secretary & Show Manager). The Show Manager shall organize Judge Training as laid out in the "Judge Training Procedure for "Northern Members"). Treasurer, Publicity Officer, Trophy Manager & Livestock Manager.

President & Vice President(s)

The post of President/Vice President shall be that of a 'figure head' and where possible should be held by a person(s) of stature and fame. This post will be elected by members of the Executive Committee.

Chairperson

The Chairperson shall be responsible for presiding over "NORTHERN" meetings such as the annual A.G.M. and other Executive Committee Meetings to ensure such meetings are conducted in an orderly fashion. Where appropriate the Chairperson will also be called upon to represent the "NORTHERN" as its spokesperson.

Vice-Chairperson

The Vice-Chairperson shall be responsible for serving the "NORTHERN" in the absence of the Chairperson.

Executive Committee

- a) The Executive Committee shall consist of Officers of "NORTHERN", plus a Committee of not more than 4 adult and 2 junior members, plus, if required, up to 4 co-opted adult members. These shall all be elected by a simple majority vote of members present at the AGM.
- b) **Note: - Junior members are not allowed to hold an Executive Position, also junior members and members up to 21 years of age can only vote on items relating to Junior, Novice and Intermediate.**
- c) A Quorum shall consist of at least 50% of the total active Committee at the time of calling the meeting. Of which at least 2 must be Officers.
- d) The business of "NORTHERN" shall be conducted by the Executive committee and decisions binding upon "NORTHERN" shall be decided by a simple majority vote of the Officers and the Chairperson.
- e) The Executive Committee may appoint any sub-committee as and when the need arises.
- f) Executive Committee meetings shall be binding upon "NORTHERN" members and the Committee shall exercise all powers not specified or limited in this Constitution, but within the scope of the objects clause.
- g) Executive Committee meetings shall be held at least 3 times a year.
- h) No member of the Executive Committee shall be a serving officer or committee member of any other hamster club affiliated to the NHC.
- i) No member shall be elected for any office or committee post in "NORTHERN" if they hold an office or committee post on any other hamster club/organization not affiliated to the NHC.
- j) No member of "NORTHERN" shall be elected for any office or committee post for a minimum of 18 months if they have held an office or committee post with any other hamster club/organisation not affiliated to the NHC.
- k) No member of "NORTHERN" shall be elected for any committee post in "NORTHERN" in their first year of membership.
- l) No member shall be elected for any officer post in "NORTHERN" until they have been on the committee for at least 1 year.

7. SECRETARY/ SHOW MANAGER.

The Secretary's duties consist of:-

- a) Enrolling new members to "NORTHERN", renewing existing subscriptions, collecting all such monies and keeping a record of all business conducted by "NORTHERN".
- b) Keeping a record of the minutes of all "NORTHERN" meetings.
- c) Informing other Officers of "NORTHERN" and all members of the Executive Committee of matters affecting general business
- d) Supplying the Editor of the (NHC) Journal with regular monthly news of interest to "NORTHERN" members for inclusion in the said Journal.
- e) Supply each member of "NORTHERN" with a copy of the current (NHC) handbook.
- f) Ensure that each "NORTHERN" member receives a copy of the "NORTHERN" Constitution on joining or as soon after as possible.
- g) Informing all "NORTHERN" members of any forthcoming general meetings including the A.G.M., at least 35 days (from the date of posting) before such a meeting.
- h) To call for any items for the Agenda of that meeting and in the case of the A.G.M., nominations for Office.
- i) Ensuring that every member of the "NORTHERN" shall receive a copy of the minutes of any general meeting, including the A.G.M., within 60 days of the meeting.
- j) The Secretary, where possible. Should be one of the 3 (NHC) Delegates.
- k) Be responsible for the organization of venues, show secretaries, judges, book and pen stewards for every Show, whether they are arranged at the Club's A.G.M. or not.
- l) Furnish each show secretary with the necessary prize cards and stationery for their particular Show.
- m) Ensure that there is a sufficient stock of prize cards and show stationery, and to arrange for such items to be printed when required. These items shall be obtained at a reasonable price and quality.
- n) Be responsible for organizing Judge Training as laid out in the "Judge Training Procedure for the "NORTHERN" Members".

Note: - The duties of the Minutes Secretary will consist of sections b, c, and h; the duties of the Show Manager will consist of sections j, k, l and m as above..

8. TREASURER

The Treasurer's duties consist of:-

- a) Having charge of all monies belonging to "NORTHERN", which shall be deposited with a Bank, apart from petty cash which the Secretary, treasurer & gift shop requires for "NORTHERN" duties. The Bank chosen shall be one in which the Bank charges shall be kept to an absolute minimum.
- b) Producing copies of the Annual Audited Account for the A.G.M., and on request.
- c) Giving brief financial statements for any Executive Committee if required.
- d) If a Treasurer resigns they shall produce a final statement to the Executive Committee, audited by a duly appointed auditor.
- e) All cheques should be signed by two out of three named Officers, wherever possible, these being the Treasurer, Secretary and Chairperson. If two of these signatories occupy the same household then another Officer shall be appointed as the third signatory.

9. TROPHY MANAGER

The Trophy Manager shall:-

- a) Be responsible for arranging of vouchers/trophies, cups and rosettes for all
- b) the “NORTHERN” Shows.
- c) Be responsible for keeping a record of all members who win “NORTHERN” trophies and ensure that they are returned on or before the date on which they are due to be issued again.
- d) Be responsible for keeping records of all officers/ committee badgers.
- e) Be responsible for the recovery of any trophies & badgers belonging to the “NORTHERN” and in the possession of any person whose membership has lapsed.

10. PUBLICITY OFFICER

The Publicity Officer shall:-

- a) Inform all interested parties within “NORTHERN” area of all matters directly involving “NORTHERN” or keeping, breeding, exhibiting and welfare of all species of hamsters.
- b) Provide name & address of any interested party to the “NORTHERN” secretary which request, with any information directly involving the “NORTHERN” or keeping, breeding, exhibiting and welfare of all species of hamsters.
- c) Provide all show secretaries with any assistance they require in order to obtain the maximum publicity for and from their Show.
- d) Issue press releases to all media in the area of each Show.

11. LIVESTOCK MANAGER

The Livestock Manager shall:-

- a) Organising & supervising the sale of all hamsters for and on behalf of “NORTHERN”. None of these shall be sold without the permission and approval of the livestock manager.
- b) The Livestock Manager shall have the right to refuse the sale of livestock if in their opinion the livestock falls short of accepted “NORTHERN” standards.
- c) Keep full and accurate records of all transactions.

12. NATIONAL HAMSTER DELEGATES

The “NORTHERN” shall provide three Delegates. Where possible one shall be “NORTHERN” Secretary and the others shall be elected from the Executive Committee.

13. GENERAL MEETINGS (GM)

These may be called through the Secretary by the Executive Committee or by a written request to the Secretary of not less than eight adult members of “NORTHERN”. Notice of such a (GM) shall be published by the Secretary in the (NHC) journal to provide 35 days notice between the date of the dispatch of the journal to the members and the date of the meeting. Each adult member shall be allowed one vote. Memberships that include more than one adult member shall be entitled to two votes only.

Note: - junior members and members up to the age of 21. Can only vote on items relating to Junior, Novice and Intermediate.

14. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

The (AGM) shall be held at a date and venue to be decided by the Executive Committee, not more than 14 months after that last (AGM). The Secretary and Treasurer shall submit an audited financial balance sheet. The (AGM) shall elect the Club’s Officers, Executive Committee and (NHC) Delegates. The Secretary shall ensure that every member of

“NORTHERN” shall receive a copy of the Minutes of the (AGM) within 60 days of the meeting.

15. EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING (EGM)

These may be called through the Secretary by the Executive Committee in extreme emergencies. The Notice of such a (EGM) shall be sent by the Secretary to members. To provide 14 days notice between the dates of the dispatch to the date of the meeting. Each adult member shall be allowed one vote. Memberships that include more than one adult member shall be entitled to two votes only.

Note: - Junior members and members up to 21 years of age can only vote on items relating to Junior, Novice and Intermediate.

16. ELECTIONS

- a) Nominations for Officers, Executive Committee and (NHC) Delegates shall be received by “NORTHERN” Secretary on or before the date of the (AGM) All such nominations must be accompanied by a statement from the proposed stating that he/she is willing to accept office if elected. All Officers, Executive Committee members and (NHC) Delegates shall be elected by a simple majority vote. The three Delegates shall be members of the Executive Committee. “NORTHERN” Secretary, where possible, shall be one and the others will be elected by a simple majority vote of the “NORTHERN” Members present at the (AGM). The Officers of “NORTHERN” plus the N.H.C. Delegates shall be elected bi-annually, maximum of 26 months. The Committee members only shall be elected annually, maximum of 14 months.
- b) No member of “NORTHERN” shall be elected for any committee post in “NORTHERN” in their first year of membership. & No “NORTHERN” member shall be elected for any officer post in “NORTHERN” till they have been on the committee for at least 1 year.
- c) No member will be allowed to stand for any position on the Committee unless they are proposed and seconded by different memberships.

17. SHOWS

- a) Major Shows shall be defined at the (AGM). Other Shows and Displays may be arranged by consultation with the Executive Committee. “NORTHERN” shall ensure that all Shows are run in accordance with the (NHC) Rules and any accepted Standards.
- b) Entry into the Pet Class shall be open to non-members. “NORTHERN” members who have entered up to three hamsters in the Main Classes may also show hamsters in the Pet Class. Other small furry animals may also be shown in the Pet Class. All entrants must be present at the show.
- c) Dogs may only be brought into show venues if they are confined to a suitable cage or carrier and may only be removed for walking and feeding (outside the venue). The “NORTHERN” reserves the right to refuse entry to any dog at its discretion.

18. JUDGES

- a) Judges for “NORTHERN” Shows should have either completed “NORTHERN” Training Procedures, as set out in the document “Judge Training Procedure for “NORTHERN” Members” or be a recognised judge or any other (NHC) affiliated Club.
- b) Judges can claim expenses for the day.

19. HAMSTER CIRCLES

“NORTHERN” shall support the formation of Hamster Circles, which will operate within the “NORTHERN” and its Constitution. These Hamster Circles shall be solely responsible for all their financial affairs.

20. COMPLAINTS

Complaints will be dealt with “NORTHERN” Complaints procedure, copies of which can be obtained from the Secretary, Chairperson.

21. DISSOLUTION

- a) “NORTHERN” may only be dissolved by a unanimous vote of the full entire committee and all its members.
- b) Upon dissolution, the asset of “NORTHERN”, after clearance of all of “NORTHERN” debts shall be distributed among the “NORTHERN” fully paid-up members.

22. RE-HOMING RULES

1. The Northern Hamster Club recognises each Northern Hamster Club membership or Associate membership as a single entry, referred to in this document as a ‘member’.
2. Only members may re-home hamsters at Northern Hamster Club events, although members may not re-home animals at the first show they attend. The Northern Hamster Club retains the right to refuse any hamster for re-homing from any member at any of their events. The decision of the Northern Hamster Club Livestock Manager, or their appointed deputy, is final.
3. The Livestock Manager is the person whom the Northern Hamster Club has designated its responsibility for the welfare of all hamsters being re-homed, by whatever means at its events. For this reason, they or their appointed deputy must be informed of any animals that are being re-homed directly by members at events, in addition to the animals being offered for re-homing via the Club.
4. It is the responsibility of the each member to inform the Livestock Manager or their deputy about any hamsters the member intends to offer for re-homing at a Northern Hamster Club event. The member is responsible for ensuring that the information is received before the agreed closing date for that event. The Livestock Manager will supply the member with booking forms if required. The information required for each pen of animals the member intends to offer is as follows: species, description, sex, date of birth or age, number of individuals.
5. At each event, hamsters for re-homing will only be accepted from members who are regular attendees at shows.
6. At Northern Hamster Club events, a hamster may only be confined to a container that is adequately ventilated and at a minimum, allows it space to stand up and sit on its haunches in a normal position, turn around comfortably and lie at full length.
Pens for animals offered for re-homing at Northern Hamster Club events, while meeting these standards and allowing for sufficient space for the number of animals they contain, must not exceed a base size of 15” by 12” (35cm by 30cm). If constructed of plastic, pens must include at least one transparent side to enable the hamster(s) to be examined by prospective new owners without being disturbed.
Every container containing hamster(s) must be supplied with sufficient of the following for the needs of the hamster(s): a suitable absorbent substrate, appropriate hard food, and piece(s) of moisture containing fruit or vegetable.
When hamsters are being re-homed through the Northern Hamster Club, the club is responsible for providing a pet carrier meeting these standards for each animal.
7. Hamsters offered for re-homing at Northern Hamster Club events must be between five weeks and ten months of age, fully weaned and in good health. Each animal must be accompanied by two documents: a re-homing record to be retained by the club and an individual record to be given to the new owner. Both documents must state the name and contact details of the

- member who is re-homing the animal, together with species, sex, description and date of birth or approximate age of the hamster. The hamster and the documents will be checked by the Livestock Manager or deputy before the animal is offered for re-homing.
- 8 Each pen of hamsters offered for re-homing must contain only animals of a single sex and species. Where individuals in a single pen have different birth dates, the animals must be clearly distinguishable.
- 9 Hamsters offered for re-homing at Northern Hamster Club events must meet all of the above criteria. 'Young' (five weeks to four months old) hamsters offered for re-homing must:
- a. Be a maximum of four months of age
 - b. Be of a recognised species of hamster (not a cross species or hybrid) and have, as far as can be determined, no other species in their ancestry. Where there is uncertainty, the breeder must be prepared to vouch for the animal's ancestry and the opinion of a suitably qualified judge should be sought. If after discussion with the judge the breeder, the Livestock Manager or their deputy still has reasonable doubt as to the ancestry of the animal(s) s/he should refuse to offer the animal(s) for re-homing.
 - c. Be free from actual or suspected hereditary disease or deformity.
 - d. Be free from physical injury or deformity.
- Be accompanied by a birth certificate or pedigree detailing the ancestry of the animal (where known) to at least two generations i.e. parents and grandparents.
- 10 Animals failing to meet the required criteria for re-homing may still be offered for re-homing at the discretion of the Livestock Manager or their deputy. In this eventuality, the new owner will be required to make a minimum donation of £5.00 to club funds. The minimum value of the donation required for re-homed hamsters will be set by the Northern Hamster Club Committee and reviewed annually.
- 11 The number of hamsters for re-homing on each day of an event may not exceed twenty per member. At the discretion of the Livestock Manager or their deputy, the member may bring a maximum of three 'older' (four to ten months old) additional hamsters for re-homing. Either of these quotas may be increased at the discretion of the Livestock Manager or their deputy for any individual event.
- 12 The hamster re-homing fee for 'young' hamsters will be set at a minimum of £8.00 per hamster. £3.00 of the fee to be allocated to the Northern Hamster Club and the remainder to be allocated to the member re-homing the hamster. This fee will be reviewed annually by the Committee.