



Leighton Buzzard Drama Group

Est. 1956

The Constitution

Version 2024.4

November 2024

1 Version Control

| Version | Date | Author | |
|---------|------------|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2024.1 | 24/10/2024 | Dave Miles | Baseline document created from 2020 update, references adjusted to match new layout and numbering. |
| 2024.2 | 24/10/2024 | Dave Miles | Removal of 'Honorary' for many roles. Definition of membership and member types updated. Ex-Officio roles defined. Sub-Committees clarified. Introduction of Insurance and H & S |
| 2024.3 | 25/11/2024 | Dave Miles | Response to review comments. Better definition of performing and non-performing member. Document review |
| 2024.4 | 27/11/2024 | Dave Miles | Additional review comments. Clarification of membership termination. Publicity Officer post renamed from Web (...) |

2 Name

- 2.1 The Group will be called Leighton Buzzard Drama Group (The Group).

3 Object

- 3.1 The object of The Group shall be to encourage and provide opportunity for the enjoyment of the dramatic arts.

4 Membership

- 4.1 Membership shall be open to any person interested in the objects of The Group, subject to the caveat that the Management Committee shall have the power to restrict the entry of new members and the continuation of membership as they may consider necessary or desirable from time to time in the interests of The Group.
- 4.2 Membership is defined as follows for a number of categories of member.
- a. Full Performing membership. Such a member has full rights to perform in or be a part of any of The Group's productions. This membership attracts the Full Performing membership fee.
 - b. Additional Household membership. For a small extra fee, additional members of a household are offered the same rights as the Full Performing membership.
 - c. Honorary membership. Equivalent to Full Performing membership. The Management Committee may appoint any person as an Honorary member, subject to approval at a Management Committee meeting, with the same rights as Full Performing membership. Honorary membership runs in the same temporal period as subscription based membership.
 - d. Temporary membership. The Management Committee may appoint any person as a temporary member for a defined period of time, subject to approval at a Management Committee meeting. Temporary membership carries the same rights as Full Performing membership **with the exception that a Temporary member has no voting rights at an AGM or EGM**. Temporary Membership ends automatically at the end of the membership year or at the end of the prescribed time, whichever is sooner.
 - e. Non-performing membership. For a reduced fee, non-performing membership affords the same rights as Full Membership but a non-performing member may not audition for or take part (as a cast member) in any of The Group's productions. There is one exception to this rule, whereby a non-performing member can be called by the director as an 'extra', where appearances are 'fleeting' or 'one off', an example being a janitor in a brown coat sweeping the set, or where the stage crew are required to be 'in costume' for aesthetic purposes.

- f. Additional non-performing membership. For a small additional fee, additional members of a household are offered the same (limited to non performing roles) rights as the Non-performing membership.
- g. For clarification please note that an additional household member cannot perform under a linked non-performing member membership.
- h. From November 2024, Non-Performing membership is available immediately. Existing members who have already paid the 2024 fee but wish to become non-performing members, will be offered the same level of membership for the year commencing in 2025 at no charge.
- i. With effect from November 2024 and until 31st August 2025 all other existing fee-paying membership arrangements and remain as-is with a single category of fee-paid membership. From 1st September 2025, the additional categories and fee structures will apply.

5 Financial Year

- 5.1 The financial year of The Group shall be the calendar year as from 1st June to 31st May.

6 Annual Subscription

- 6.1 The Membership year will run from 1st September to 31st August.
- 6.2 The annual subscription to The Group will be that which is determined by the management committee.
- 6.3 Annual subscription rates for all categories of membership will be made available in a separate document available on request.
- 6.4 This subscription will be payable on or before a date specified by the management committee. New members in their first year will be charged an equivalent rate based on the number of months of membership in that year. All subsequent years will be at the full annual rate.
- 6.5 Failure to pay said subscription or to resign on or before this date will result termination of membership of The Group.
- 6.6 Non payment will also result in the said member not being eligible for any Committee, Administrative or Theatre related post within The Group, and removal from mailing lists, social media and other group related outlets.

7 Management Committee

- 7.1 The affairs of The Group shall be directed by a Management Committee consisting of the following Officers:

- Chair
- Vice Chair
- Group Secretary
- Group Treasurer
- Four other members of The Group

- 7.2 These being those members elected to the following posts:

- Membership Secretary
- Play Selection Committee Chair
- Publicity Officer
- Social Secretary

- 7.3 In addition from October 2024 onwards The Group recognises the following ex-officio (non-voting) officers.
- Property Manager
 - Electrical Properties Manager
- 7.4 Members of the Management Committee shall be elected for a nominal three year term, and at each subsequent AGM, at least 4 of the members and not more than 5 of the members shall resign, and 2 of those resigning shall be Officers. The resignations shall be rotated in such a way that each post shall be eligible for election at least once in a three year period. Those members resigning shall be identified in the notice calling the AGM. The retiring members may stand for re-election providing they continue to meet the criteria for election to the Management Committee.
- 7.5 The signatories of The Group cheques will be any two from the four officers of The Group, with the exception that only one member of any household can become an authorised signatory in any one financial year. In addition, the Officers shall have the right to appoint by majority vote, one additional signatory in any one financial year from the ordinary committee members, to facilitate ease of access to signatories where not all of the Officers can become signatories.
- 7.6 With the increased use of Electronic Banking, The Group Treasurer will make use of this where possible. Authorisation for expenditure is to be tracked through the use of Social Media Messaging (as of 2024, this is WhatsApp)
- 7.7 The Management Committee may, from time to time, fill any casual vacancy within its body and in the case of need, co-opt other members to assist them.
- 7.8 Meetings of the Management Committee shall be called as deemed necessary by the Chair or Group Secretary or on a motion by two of its members. Seven days notice shall be given in writing by the Group Secretary, except in the case of urgency when a minimum of 24 hours notice may be given to all members of the committee.
- 7.9 The quorum for such meetings of the Management Committee shall be 50% +1 of the elected members and must include 2 officers. The Chair at these meetings will be taken by the Chair. In the absence of the Chair, then the Vice Chair will chair. In the absence of both, the chair will be another officer. Minutes shall be taken at all such meetings.
- 7.10 In the absence of a unanimous agreement being reached, then decisions will be by vote with a simple majority needed. The Chair will have the casting vote.
- 7.11 No item of business shall be carried forward more than three meetings without a vote being taken unless exceptional circumstances prevail.
- 7.12 The Management Committee shall be responsible to The Group for all productions and organised activities. It shall however have the authority to delegate its responsibilities to other nominated and elected posts.
- 7.13 The Management Committee shall be responsible to The Group for the appointment of - directors and except where employed by The Group for the purpose of directing the production, the director will be an ex-officio non-voting member of the Management Committee during the period of his or her productions. If the director is employed for the purpose of directing, then he or she shall be answerable to the Management Committee for their work. They may be asked to attend Management Committee meetings for the purpose of reporting on the production.

- 7.14 Any member having business before the Management Committee shall have the right to address the committee after a decision has been taken.
- 7.15 The Management Committee may from time to time set up sub committees to consider specific items of business. All such committees will have an appointed Chair who will be responsible for arranging and control of all meetings held by that committee and for the appointment of a Secretary to take minutes of such meetings.
- 7.16 At the time or writing in October 2024, the following sub-committees are extant:
- Publicity Committee
 - Play Selection Committee

Separate documents defining the roles and responsibilities of such sub-committees will be available on request.

8 Health and Safety Policy

- 8.1 The Group will maintain a Health and Safety Policy comprising a number of documents and workbooks held as separate documents from this Constitution. Health and Safety is the responsibility of the Management Committee. It is incumbent upon all members the The Group to follow these policies wherever possible and to be mindful of the Health, Safety and Welfare of group members and members of the public.

9 Group Insurance

- 9.1 The Group will maintain insurance cover for all The Group's activities and for its members.
- 9.2 Non-members of the The Group will not be covered by The Group insurance policy.

10 Annual General Meetings

- 10.1 The Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall take place within sixteen weeks of the end of the financial year at a time and place to be determined by the Management Committee.
- 10.2 A minimum of 14 days notice, in writing, shall be sent by the Group Secretary to every member of The Group to their accustomed address as recorded by the membership secretary. This notice shall specify the business to be transacted at the meeting.
- 10.3 The business at these meetings shall include the following:
- a. Consideration of the Management Committee Report
 - b. Consideration of the Statement of Accounts for the preceding year
 - c. Consideration of the Management Committee members reports
 - d. Election of officers and members of the Management Committee
 - e. Appointment of an auditor for the ensuing year
- 10.4 Ten members of The Group, including three Management Committee members, shall form a quorum at such meetings and minutes shall be recorded.
- 10.5 Voting at general meetings shall be by ballot unless otherwise decided by those members present and a simple majority shall decide any issue other than as laid down in Section12, Alteration of Rules

11 Extraordinary general meeting

- 11.1 The Management Committee may call an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) of the members when - A question of urgent importance arises and shall be bound to do so within seven days of the receipt, by the Group Secretary, of a written request setting out the proposed resolutions and signed by not less than 10 members.
- 11.2 The notice of the meeting shall be dispatched to all members as laid down in rule 10.2 at least seven days before the date of the proposed meeting. This notice shall contain a copy of the resolutions to be moved and no other business shall be transacted at this meeting.
- 11.3 The quorum shall be the same as the AGM and minutes shall be recorded
- 11.4 Voting at such meetings to be the same as in Rule 10 Annual General Meetings

12 Alteration of rules

- 12.1 No rule of The Group shall be repealed or altered and no new rule made save by a two thirds majority of the members present and voting at the AGM. Notice of the intention to propose any new rule or alteration shall be given to the Group Secretary, in writing, not later than the end of the financial year. Such notice to be communicated to the members along with the notice convening the meeting.
- 12.2 Where a rule change is deemed necessary at a time which is not conveniently close to the AGM, rule 11.1 applies and an EGM can be held. Note that the EGM rules allow only a single motion to be discussed.

13 Dissolution of The Group

- 13.1 In the event of The Group being dissolved, any funds, monies or assets standing to the credit of The Group shall be disposed of as the Management Committee may determine. Subject to the approval of The Group members at an AGM. Voting to be by a simple majority.

14 Document Review

- 14.1 This document will be subject to annual review. The review must occur prior to the AGM, with adequate time allowed so that any proposed changes can be incorporated into the AGM agenda.