

CONSTITUTION

animals count



**A political party to help create a better world for
people and animals**

London, 19 September 2009

Article 1: Name

The name of the organisation shall be “Animals Count”.

Article 2: Address

The address shall be the Animals Count Headquarters, currently at: PO BOX 51250, London SE11 4UN.

Article 3: Geographical area

Animals Count shall be active in England, Wales, and Scotland.

Article 4: Guiding Ethos

The Constitution of Animals Count is based on an ethos respectful of sentient life. Accordingly, Animals Count recognises that, like human beings, all animals have an interest in being alive and experiencing pleasure, and an interest in avoiding suffering and death, and that, as ethical human beings, we have an obligation to respect and protect their interests. Doing so, we believe, will lead to a more compassionate, ethical and healthier society, which will benefit humans and the environment too.

Animals Count shall pursue its aims by means of peaceful and lawful political activity, democratically organised by members of the party freely associating together according to the provisions of this Constitution.

All Animals Count’s activities shall be conducted in a manner consistent with the principle of opportunity for all members, with respect for different traditions and cultures and the equal worth of all individuals, whatever their race, nationality, gender, colour, creed, sexuality, age, ability or social background.

Article 5: Aims

1. Encouraging animal, environmental and social justice advocates to become active within politics, by taking action within the political arena which is supportive of Animals Count’s principles, and by acting as ambassadors of Animals Count.
2. Promoting the central tenets of Animals Count: raising the perceived moral and recognised legal status of animals, furthering respect for all life, reducing and replacing harmful animal use, promoting sustainable development, and promoting healthy living.
3. Liaising with other political parties regarding the advancement of animal issues.

Article 6: Objectives

Animals Count has the following objectives:

- a. To win seats at elections.
- b. To develop and implement policies consistent with the philosophical basis of Animals Count as expressed in the Principles.
- c. To encourage its members to take part in policy development for Animals Count.
- d. To support and assist in the self-educating process which is necessary to develop an understanding of animal issues.
- e. To undertake research towards proactive development of policy.
- f. To contribute towards expanding the membership of Animals Count.

- g. To organise activities which publicise and further the aims of Animals Count.
- h. To encourage its members to participate in activities of their local and regional working groups, and the National Party.
- i. To engage with other forms of public governance including educational institutions and other relevant organisations.
- j. To build and strengthen links with other groups that follow some or all of our aims.

Article 7: Membership

1. Procedures governing applications to become a member of Animals Count and the renewal of membership for those legally entitled to be members of political parties in the United Kingdom are described in the Standing Orders for Membership.
2. The following principles shall govern those Standing Orders:
 - a) Each member agrees to support the aims of Animals Count as described in the Constitution, and to support the principles and position statements.
 - b) Each member agrees to submit at any time to a screening process in order to identify any members who profit from or otherwise support animal abuse in any form. Those members that have been so identified may be expelled from the party without refund of fees.
 - c) No member shall be a member of any other political party.
 - d) Each member agrees to abide by the Constitution and Standing Orders of Animals Count.
 - e) Each member shall pay the annual membership fee as determined by the National Officers and the members present at Conference.
 - f) Each member shall have been accepted into membership by the appropriate body as defined in Standing Orders.
3. Any applicant for membership or for renewal of membership who is denied such membership shall have the right of appeal as described in Standing Orders for Membership.
4. Disciplinary measures may be taken by the appropriate body defined in Standing Orders for Membership against a member whose behaviour is considered to be damaging to Animals Count or the promotion of animal protection.
5. Any member so disciplined shall have a right of appeal as described in Standing Orders for Membership.

Article 8: Conference

1. The Conference shall be the highest authority of the party and shall be responsible for:
 - a) Discussing Animals Count's policy, making recommendations, and voting for any changes in Principles. The National Officers are responsible for day to day policy and political manifestos.

- b) Electing National Officers as defined by the Standing Orders for the Election of National Officers.
2. The conduct of the Conference is described in the Standing Orders for the Conference.

Article 9: National Officers

The Animals Count Committee of National Officers shall have the following National Officers, elected according to the rules laid down in Standing Orders for the Election of National Officers, in order to fulfil the functions described in the National Officers' Job Descriptions.

- a) Leader. The Leader shall be the registered Leader of Animals Count.
- b) Deputy Leader. The Deputy Leader will deputise for the Leader.
- c) Treasurer. The Treasurer will ensure all incoming funds and expenditure are registered in the Statement of Accounts, complying with Electoral Commission regulations and guidelines.
- d) Nominating Officer. The Nominating Officer will ensure compliance with Electoral Commission regulations and guidelines at elections.
- e) Secretary. The secretary will be the first point of contact for enquiries and will support the other National Officers.
- f) Any other Officers who may be required and who shall be elected at Conference.

Article 10: Amending the Constitution

1. This Constitution may only be revoked or amended by the National Officers before the first elections Animals Count enters, and thereafter only by a vote of at least two-thirds of the delegates present and voting at the Conference.
2. The following Byelaws to this Constitution may be amended or revoked, or new Byelaws adopted, by means of a resolution carried by a simple majority of members voting at the Conference.

Byelaws

1. Organisation of local groups

1. All local working group Constitutions shall include a statement that the local group is a constituent part of Animals Count, and shall lay out democratic decision making procedures.
2. A local working group shall elect at least one local working group representative who shall be a full member of Animals Count, plus any other officers as they see fit, and shall make themselves known to the Committee of National Officers. The representative officer of a local working group has to be re-elected every year at their Annual General Meeting (AGM).
3. A local working group shall advertise all its meetings to all its members, and shall hold at least two meetings per year. One of these shall be the local working group's AGM, at which the above representative shall be elected.

4. The Committee of National Officers reserves the right to suspend or disaffiliate (by a two-thirds majority vote) a local working group, if it appears to be in violation of the Constitution or Standing Orders.
5. Local working groups shall endeavour to ensure all associate members of their groups become full Animals Count members.

2. Agreement of regulations

1. Regulations governing the operation of Animals Count shall be agreed by the Committee of National Officers using the following procedure:
 - a) Draft regulations or draft amendments to existing regulations shall be put forward by Committee members for discussion at a Committee meeting.
 - b) Following discussion, if desired, the meeting shall agree on a final draft to be voted on at a subsequent meeting.
 - c) The final draft must be circulated to all Committee members at least 10 days in advance of voting.
 - d) If further changes are to be made to the final draft, it must be discussed again at a Committee meeting and resubmitted for voting at a subsequent meeting, according to b) and c) above.