

THE JOSEPHINE BUTLER SOCIETY

PREFACE

The Josephine Butler Society is directly descended from The Ladies National Association started by Josephine Butler at a meeting on 31 December 1869 to campaign for the repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts. The name was changed to the Association of Moral and Social Hygiene and then to The Josephine Butler Society. The Society is linked with the Josephine Butler Educational Trust, which is registered as a charity in the United Kingdom (no 250355). The Trust is concerned with educational and research work.

The Josephine Butler Society is not committed to any political party, religious creed or philosophical concept and is open to all people who support its objects. Its basic principles are social justice and equality of all citizens before the law. The Society's members come from diverse backgrounds and reflect a variety of perspectives: the Society isn't led by any one community or by members with any one viewpoint.

CONSTITUTION

1. TITLE

The Society shall be called The Josephine Butler Society.

2. OBJECTS

(1) To oppose laws that have a direct negative impact on the lives of those involved in sex work, to combat the traffic in persons and to expose and prevent any form of exploitation of sex workers by third parties.

(2) To examine any existing or proposed legislation in matters associated with sex work or related aspects of public order and to promote social, legal and administrative reforms in furtherance of object (1).

3 MEMBERSHIP

Persons expressing approval of the Society's objects and principles, and paying the annual subscription as set by the Executive Committee shall be regarded as ordinary members and entitled to vote at General Meetings.

4. HONORARY OFFICERS

There shall be a President, up to four Vice-Presidents and a Treasurer elected at an Annual General Meeting for a three year term, which may be renewed. The President and Treasurer shall be ex-officio members of the Executive Committee.

5. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The affairs of the Society shall be managed by the Executive Committee, no more than fifteen members of which shall be elected at an Annual Meeting. They may co-opt, as voting members, not more than three additional people for their particular expertise for a two year term, and may fill casual vacancies on the Executive Committee or among the Honorary Officers until the next Annual Meeting. Prior to the 2024 Annual Meeting, election to the Executive Committee was for a renewable period of two years. With effect from the 2024 Annual Meeting the period will normally be three years. Exceptionally, immediately following the 2024 Annual Meeting lots will be drawn so that one-third (rounded to the nearest whole number) of the elected members of the Executive Committee will hold office for one year, one third for two years and one third for three years. All Executive Committee members are free to stand for re-election at the end of their agreed term of office.

The Executive Committee shall elect a Chairperson, a Vice-Chairperson and a Secretary at its first meeting after the Annual Meeting. The Executive Committee shall meet at least four times a year. The quorum shall be one third of the Executive Committee.

6. RESIGNATIONS

(i) The Executive Committee may, by resolution communicated to the member in writing and stating concisely the grounds for which it proposes to act, call upon any individual to resign from the Society and if the member does not so resign within forty-eight days after being so called upon, the Executive Committee may by resolution, terminate their membership.

(ii) Before coming to any decision the Executive Committee shall give the member affected proper facilities for stating their case to them either orally or in writing as the Committee may determine.

(iii) The member shall have right to appeal to the Annual Meeting against the decision of the Executive Committee.

7. ANNUAL MEETING

An Annual Meeting of the Society shall be summoned on a day fixed by the Executive Committee. An annual report and an independently examined statement of accounts shall be presented at this meeting.

Not less than six weeks notice shall be given of the Annual Meeting to members. The notice shall invite nominations for the Executive Committee and resolutions for the agenda of the Annual Meeting.

8. NOMINATIONS

Candidates for election to the Executive Committee may be nominated either (a) by two members of the Society or (b) by the Committee of an affiliated Society. The names of candidates willing to serve must be sent to the Secretary not later than fourteen days before the Annual Meeting.

9. SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

A Special General Meeting may be called either by the Executive Committee or at the requisition of twelve members at not less than twenty-one days notice, the notice to specify the nature of the business to be brought before it.

10. AFFILIATED SOCIETIES

Other Societies in general sympathy with the objects and principles of the Josephine Butler Society may be affiliated on payment of such sum as the Executive Committee shall decide. An affiliated Society may be represented at the Annual Meeting, but only one nominated member may vote on their behalf.

11. ALTERATIONS

This constitution may be added to, repealed or amended by resolution at any Annual or Special General Meeting, provided that the nature of the proposed change has been specified in the notice convening the meeting and that no such resolution shall be deemed to have passed unless it be carried by a majority of at least two-thirds of the members voting thereon.

[This revised Preface and Constitution was approved at the Special General Meeting of the Josephine Butler Society held on 8 July 2024.]