**The Constitution of Way of the Wyrd Border Morris**

**1.   The Name**

The name of the organisation shall be “Way of the Wyrd Border Morris” and shall hereafter be referred to as “the Side”.

**2.   The Side’s Objectives**

2.1. The objectives of the Side shall be:

to dance for pleasure and/or play appropriate music for traditional border morris dances and other similar dances;

to work towards a standard suitable for public performance;

to preserve and develop the border morris tradition by entertaining and encouraging others to be involved.

to create & perform dances celebrating the seasons;

to create & perform dances celebrating Loughborough –contemporary & historical;

to develop community involvement;

to raise money for charity;

to dance at seasonal celebrations.

2.2. The Side may do anything lawful that may be necessary in order to promote its objectives.

2.3. The Side will remain non-party in politics & non-sectarian in religion. It will not discriminate on the grounds of ethnicity, nationality, age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, or religious beliefs.

**3.   Membership**

3.1. Ordinary membership of the Side shall be open to all persons 18 and over who are connected with, or interested in, the objectives of the Side stated in paragraph 2, upon payment of a membership fee and weekly subscription agreed annually at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Side. All members of the side shall be shall abide by the decisions of General Meetings and uphold the Constitution.

3.2. Junior membership of the Side may be offered by the officers to applicants below the age of eligibility but who, in all other respects, would qualify.  They may only attend when accompanied by a responsible adult (usually a parent).  They will have neither voting rights at general meetings nor eligibility for elected office within the Side.  There will be no membership fee for Junior members.

3.3. Apprentice members may attend without payment of the membership fee, until either, taking part in performance, or, after being part of the side for 6 weeks. At which point they join as Ordinary or Junior member.

3.4. Honorary membership may be conferred as appropriate by a decision taken at a General Meeting.  Honorary membership, once conferred, shall be for life.

3.5. Membership is due on January 1st of each year, and is required to be paid within 2 months of this date.

3.6. Membership is open to all irrespective of ethnicity, nationality, age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, or religious beliefs.

3.7. Membership is not transferable to another person.

3.8. An application for membership may be refused if, acting reasonably and properly, a majority of Members consider it to be in the best interest of the Side to refuse the application.

3.9. Membership is terminated if:

3.9.1.            a Member resigns;

3.9.2.            any sum due from the Member to the Side is not paid in full within 2 months of it falling due;

3.9.3 by a vote of the majority of Ordinary Members at a General Meeting.

3.9.4.         a Member dies;

3.10. Members will not practice, condone, facilitate or collaborate with any form of discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, nationality, age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, or religious beliefs.

3.11. Members will treat each other with respect, courtesy, fairness and good faith.

3.12. Members should be aware of how their actions may be perceived by others and be aware of the potential impact that their behaviour may have on others. When wearing side colours members are representing Way of the Wyrd Border Morris and should not behave in a way that would bring the side into disrepute.

3.13. Members should seek to resolve disagreements through open, honest and respectful discussion. Where a disagreement cannot be resolved by members amongst themselves it can be referred to the officers of the side. The officers of the side will discuss the issue, decide on a course of action and communicate their response within a reasonable period.

3.14. Members who act in a seriously disrespectful or discriminatory manner may be asked to leave the side. Any criminal behaviour will be reported to the police.

**4.   Officers**

4.1. The Side shall have seven officers (Squire, Foreman, Bagman, Secretary, Archivist, Webmaster and Music Director), but the duties of any of these may temporarily be delegated to another member of the Side:

4.1.1.            **Squire** shall be an Ordinary Member and shall chair meetings if available.  If not available the members of the meeting may elect a member from among themselves for that particular meeting.  The Squire shall be responsible for upholding the decisions of General Meetings, upholding the Constitution and representing the Side to the public.  If present at Dance-outs the Squire shall normally take a lead in negotiations with other teams who may be dancing at the same venue, and introducing the dances;

4.1.2.            **Foreman** shall be an Ordinary Member and shall be responsible for the Side’s dancing, including teaching dances, writing new dances and organizing the performance of dances;

4.1.3.            **Bagman** shall be an Ordinary Member and shall be responsible for all financial transactions of the Side, and responsible for keeping an up-to-date list of paid-up members;

4.1.4.            **Secretary** shall be an Ordinary Member and shall deal with correspondence to and from the Side (especially with the Morris Federation) and keep records of all Side meetings;

4.1.5.            **Archivist** shall be responsible for maintaining a photographic record of the Side together with annual lists of performances and members (the latter to be supplied by the Bagman), press cuttings, programmes, etc.

4.1.6.            **Webmaster** shall be responsible for maintaining the Side’s web presence.

4.1.7. **Music Director** shall be an Ordinary Member and shall be responsible for the Side’s music, including directing a good standard of performance, providing notation for tunes and organising the performance of tunes between dances.

4.2. All officers shall be elected at the AGM for a term of one year.

4.3. In the event that an officer resigns from post at a time other than the AGM, then a bye-election will be held, and the person elected will remain in post until the next AGM.

4.4. All officers shall be eligible for re-election.

4.5. An Officer shall forfeit their office if they:

4.5.1.            Cease to be a member of the Side;

4.5.2.            Become incapable of fulfilling their responsibilities to the Side;

4.5.3.            Do not perform their role for 3 consecutive months and the majority of Ordinary Members resolve that their office is vacated;

4.5.4.            Receive a vote of no confidence from the majority of Ordinary Members present at a General Meeting.

**5.   Management of the Side**

5.1. The Officers shall administer the Side.  They shall have power to purchase such articles and do all such things, as they may deem necessary for the achievement of the declared objectives of the Side.

5.2. The Bagman shall receive monies on behalf of the Side and keep such accounts as the Officers may require.  He/she shall render all returns as may be required by statute.  She/he shall, when required, render to the Officers an account of monies received and expended by her/him.  She/he shall also make the accounts available for inspection to any member at reasonable notice.

5.3. The Side shall have power to raise money by means of affiliation fees from participating authorities and organisations, subscriptions from individuals, donations or legacies, grants in aid from Statutory Authorities, loans, fees for performances and other sources.

5.4. The Side shall pay an annual membership fee to ‘The Morris Federation’ and annually pay public liability insurance.

5.5. The income and property of the Side, whencesoever derived, shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the declared objectives of the Side and no portion thereof shall be transferred directly or indirectly by way of dividend, bonus, or otherwise by way of profit to any member of the Side provided that nothing herein shall prevent the payment in good faith of reasonable and proper remuneration to any servant of the Side, or the repayment of out of pocket expenses.

5.6. The financial year shall run for the calendar year.

5.7. The accounts of the Side shall be inspected once every financial year by a member of the Side other than the Bagman appointed at the foregoing AGM.

5.8 The Squire, Foreman, Bagman, and Secretary will form a committee empowered to make decisions on behalf of the Side, so long as the decisions are consistent with the aims of the Side and unanimous within the committee, but such decisions should be reported to other members of the Side at the earliest possible opportunity, by email, phone call, or at the next practice.

5.9 The officers may co-opt onto this committee any other member of the Side it deems necessary for the achievement of the declared objectives of the Side.

**6. Performance Participation**

6.1. Participation in the activities of the Side shall be limited to paid up Ordinary, Junior, Apprentice and Honorary Members and their guests.

6.2. Apprentice members may attend without payment of the membership fee until taking part in performance, or, being part of the side practice for 6 weeks.

6.3. All members who wish to take part in performances with the Side shall be responsible for providing their own "Way of the Wyrd" costume.  The design for this, or any redesign of this, shall be agreed at a general meeting.

6.4 Participation in performances shall be limited to: Dancers who are proficient with some dances in the current and up-to-date repertoire and have attended practices regularly in the period leading up to each performance; and musicians’ proficient in tunes and playing for dances in that repertoire.  In case of any queries in respect of this, the Squire’s decision shall be final. Those dancers and musicians deemed by the Side not to be of sufficient proficiency to perform shall still be welcome to attend at performances and to assist with leafleting the audience, ‘passing the hat’, guarding the kit, taking photographs, and doing other tasks that might be helpful to the dancers or musicians.

6.5. The format of the normal weekly practice shall be a focus on choreographing, learning and developing new dances not currently in the repertoire and rehearsal of current repertoire to preserve and improve standards.  Constructive criticism and reflection is encouraged from all participants. There will be a short time for notices and administrative matters, and a short break for socialising.

**7.   General Meetings**

7.1. The Squire shall preside at all general meetings.  If the Squire is not present, then the members present shall choose one of their number to preside over the meeting.

7.2. The chairman's ruling on any matter of behaviour at that meeting shall be final.

7.3. A quorum at any general meeting shall be at least one half of the current Ordinary Members.

7.4. Except where stated otherwise decisions will be made by simple majority vote of Ordinary Members present.

7.5. The Squire shall have a casting vote in the event of split decision.

7.6. If a quorum is not present within an hour after the time appointed for the start of the meeting, the meeting shall be adjourned to such time and place as the Officers shall determine, giving 7 clear days notice of the reconvened meeting.

**8.   Annual General Meeting**

There shall be an AGM of the Side, to be held the first Sunday in October or nearest possible.  Members shall receive at least 14 days notice from the Secretary of such a meeting.  The business of the AGM shall include:

8.1.  The consideration and, if approved, the acceptance of the Squire's and/or Secretary's report of the previous year's work, together with a statement of the accounts and a balance sheet;

8.2. Nominations for the officers and auditor which may be accepted from members attending the AGM subject to the consent of the nominee.  If there are two or more nominees for a specific post, then the Secretary shall arrange a secret ballot to be held at the AGM;

8.3. The election of the officers for the ensuing year;

8.4. The setting of the rates for the annual subscription for Ordinary Membership;

8.5. The setting of rates for public performances;

8.6. A decision on Side dress for public performances;

8.7. An opportunity for Members to raise any matter they think fit connected with the activities of the Side.  If, however, time does not permit a full discussion, the matter shall be placed on the agenda as part of ordinary business at the next general meeting

 **9.   Extraordinary General Meeting**

An EGM shall be called by the Secretary within 21 days in the following cases:-

9.1. Upon a request, signed by four Ordinary Members, stating the special objects thereof being received by the Secretary.  At least 14 days notice of such a meeting shall be given by the Secretary to the members and shall include details of the agenda.

9.2. A two thirds majority of the Ordinary Members present and voting at an EGM shall be required to rescind any resolution previously passed by a GM, amend the constitution, or to remove any of the elected Officers from their post.

**10. Changes to the Constitution**

Any changes to this constitution shall require a vote of two thirds majority of Ordinary Members present at a General Meeting

**11. Dissolution.**

The Side may at any time be dissolved by a resolution passed by the majority of Ordinary Members present at a General Meeting of the Side, or if the membership falls below 3 Ordinary Members.  On dissolution, any assets held by the Side after all debts and liabilities have been settled, shall be transferred to an association with similar aims and objectives.

**12. The right of inspection of the constitution by members.**

If requested by any member the Secretary must make a paper or electronic copy of the Constitution and Minutes of any General Meeting available for inspection at reasonable notice.