

# WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM

## UK Section

### BY-LAWS (CONSTITUTION)

#### Revised at the AGM 2020

*The By-Laws shall incorporate WILPF's Aims and Principles and Code of Conduct, and the Procedure for Upholding the Code of Conduct.*

#### 1. MEMBERSHIP

- a. **Membership**, which includes membership of the UK Section and International WILPF, is open to all persons who accept the Aims and Principles and Code of Conduct of the Section and pay an annual subscription in support of its work. New members will be sent a copy of this document. Any breach of the Code of Conduct shall be dealt with in accordance with the procedure laid down in "Upholding the Code of Conduct".
- b. **Benefits**. Members are entitled to receive the Annual Report, at least one other newsletter a year, notification of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and any Special General Meeting (SGM), and on request to the Secretary, Executive Committee Meetings. They may take part in the AGM and in all the activities of the Section and may nominate members to serve as Officers or on the Executive Committee.
- c. **Finance and Subscriptions**. The financial year is from 1st January to 31st December in each year. Subscriptions are due on 1st January for that calendar year. Subscriptions are paid by members to the Membership Secretary. If members have not paid their subscription by 30th June of that year membership is deemed to have lapsed. The amount of the subscription shall be decided at the AGM.

#### 2. ADMINISTRATION

- a. **Decisions** at all levels mentioned shall normally be by consensus unless specifically mentioned hereafter, or unless the facilitator of the session decides that, on important issues, a vote is needed.
- b. **Branches**. If a group of four or more members wish to form a Branch, they should apply to the Executive Committee prior to one AGM and the Branch status should be subject to confirmation at the following AGM. Each Branch must have a Secretary and a Treasurer and hold an Annual General Meeting. To assist new Branches with their setting up costs a discretionary grant may be made from UK central funds. All Branch members should be individual members of UK WILPF, but Branches may resolve to have additional local subscriptions to cover their running cost and local campaign work. If a Branch has less than four members at the end of the calendar year, then it will be closed six months later if membership does not rise.
- c. **The Executive Committee** shall consist of the Officers as below, one representative appointed

by each branch, and up to nine other members nominated by the Section. A member is not eligible to stand for the Executive Committee, or as an officer, until they have been a member for 6 months. Any member of the League is entitled to attend an Executive Committee meeting, and non-members by invitation.

- d. **The Executive Committee** is directly elected. It includes these Officers: Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, International Representative, a Communications Team and any UK members who are members or officers of the International Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall appoint other roles from its members as it deems appropriate. The Executive Committee shall consult regularly between meetings to discuss the implementation of the policy of the Section agreed at the Annual General Meeting and to take collective decisions by email as required. They may share practical tasks with members willing to help and invite any person with specialised knowledge to a specific meeting. Where possible no individual should hold more than one office
- e. **Length of Service of Officers and Executive Committee members.** It is desirable that tasks should be shared by as many members as are willing to perform them. The Treasurer and Secretary shall be eligible to serve for not more than three consecutive years in that capacity. The Membership Secretary may, because of the particular role, be allowed to continue to serve for a longer period. The International Representative is chosen to serve for a period of 3 years and is eligible to serve for not more than 2 such consecutive three-year periods. However, this may be extended if the total period served does not cover two International Congresses. If the Secretary and Treasurer retire at the same time, one of them may be co-opted by and to the Executive for a further year for continuity. Executive members may not serve for more than 3 consecutive years unless they are chosen as an Officer. All Officers and Executive Committee members are eligible to stand again after a lapse of 1 year. The travelling and other expenses of Officers and Executive Committee members may be reimbursed up to an amount agreed by the Executive Committee.
- f. **Representatives on Outside Bodies.** Where possible members may not represent the Section on more than three outside bodies at any one time, unless some of these bodies are linked and require the same representative. One of the posts of the Executive Committee should be a link person to the WILPF Trust. This should be a WILPF member who is able to attend WILPF Trust meetings and WILPF Executive meetings.
- g. **Nominations for Officers and Executive Committee** may be made by any member of the Section, supported by a seconder, with evidence that the nominee is willing to stand. They should reach the Secretary six weeks before the date of the AGM. If there are two or more people willing to stand for any one office, a decision shall be reached by a postal ballot of all members. Voting papers for such a ballot must be sent to members no less than three weeks before the AGM and must be returned to the Secretary to arrive no later than three days before the start of the AGM.

### **3. DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

- a. The new Executive Committee shall **meet as soon as practicable after the AGM** to suggest roles for its Members during the year, and representatives to other organisations, and

provisionally arrange at least 2 other Executive meetings during the year. In the event of restrictions requiring social distancing members will be able to attend Executive Committees via Zoom or other online platforms.

- b. The responsibility of the Executive Committee is to **uphold the by-laws** (constitution) and to carry out the programme agreed by the AGM in accordance with WILPF aims.
- c. The Executive Committee shall **administer the funds** of the Section. In order to comply with our banks' requirements, all members of the Executive Committee of WILPF UK must be resident in the UK and must share details of their date of birth and address with the Secretary and Treasurer of the Section.
- d. **All projects** involving WILPF funds shall be costed beforehand, agreed by the Committee and carefully monitored.
- e. The Executive Committee may appoint sub-committees of other members for specific projects and shall encourage them to seek outside funding. Should a Trust be set up, one of the Trustees shall be co-opted as a member of the Executive. Should the Editorial Board not be represented on the Executive then a member of the Board may be co-opted until the next AGM.
- f. The Executive Committee shall be able to **co-opt members** to fill vacancies but not if this conflicts with 2(e) above.
- g. The Executive Committee shall be able to appoint or dismiss **paid officials**.
- h. **On all matters on which the rules are silent**, the Executive Committee may decide, subject to appeal to the AGM or SGM.
- i. **A quorum** at meetings of the Executive Committee shall be one-third of its members.

#### **4. AFFILIATIONS**

- a. The Executive Committee has the right to affiliate WILPF to other groups with similar aims. It also has the right to affiliate to itself other groups which support the aims of the League and are willing to pay an agreed affiliation fee. Such affiliated organisations will be entitled to send 2 delegates to the AGM.
- b. **Branches shall similarly have the right to affiliate** to or accept affiliation from local organisations with similar aims. The Section and Branches shall be free to co-operate both nationally and locally with other groups for ad hoc purposes.

#### **5. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

- a. **The AGM** shall consist of all members who are present in person and delegates of affiliated organisations.

- b. **The agenda** shall include the Minutes of the previous AGM, a Statement of Accounts and Budget for the coming year. Details of the agenda shall be decided by the Officers. Branches and members may submit proposals for subjects for discussion and action. Resolutions should reach the Secretary 3 weeks before the date of the AGM. The final agenda should reach all members who have registered their intention to be present, one week before the date of the AGM. Suggested changes to the agenda may be made by agreement of those in attendance. The AGM shall also announce the names of new Officers and Executive Committee members and decide, if necessary, any changes relating to subscription levels, and affiliation fees. Such changes for the current year shall be publicised in one of the mailings. In the event of restrictions requiring social distancing members will be able to attend the AGM via Zoom or other online platforms.

## **6. ADDITIONAL RULES**

- a. **WILPF is a non-profit making organisation.** Neither the Officers nor the members will obtain any assets or monetary gain from the organisation.
- b. **The archives** of the UK WILPF Section are the property and responsibility of the UK Section and are located in publicly funded secure institutions on condition that they are kept and cared for and made available to the public.
- c. **The accidental omission** to give notice of a meeting or non-receipt of notice by any member shall not invalidate any proceedings or decisions.
- d. **The Rules of the Section** may be altered at an Annual General Meeting by resolution stating the proposed change or changes. Changes of the clauses shall be considered one by one and agreed by consensus if possible, but if not by majority vote. The final version of the renewed By-Laws as a whole shall be decided by a vote of those present at least two-thirds of those voting at the meeting being in favour of the proposed change. A quorum for such a meeting shall be 10 members.
- e. In the case of matters requiring urgent review between AGMs, the Officers shall be able to call a **Special General Meeting**, the agenda for which shall be sent to all members at least one week before the date of the meeting. A quorum for this meeting shall be 10 members.

## **7. CLOSING THE SECTION**

- a. If it should prove advisable or necessary to end the Section as set up in these By-Laws, this should be done by the decision of a **two-thirds majority of members at 2 consecutive meetings** (AGM and/or SGM), counting in a required postal vote. In that case:
- b. All individual members shall be **encouraged to become direct members of International WILPF**, paying an agreed subscription to the Geneva office.
- c. In the UK, members shall be encouraged to **support any national project**, group or Trust set up to support the aims and policy of International WILPF.

- d. **Financial assets**, including legacies received and gifts and shares, if any, shall be the property of International WILPF at Geneva.
- e. **Assets of equipment** shall be offered to one or more organisations pursuing similar aims and policies to WILPF.
- f. **Three administrators** shall be appointed to wind up the Section's financial and other affairs, including establishing that the archives will be properly cared for.

**Further copies of the International Constitution and UK By-Laws may be obtained from WILPF.**

**Amended November 2020 by Paula Shaw (Secretary WILPF UK)**