THE BY-LAWS OF THE
ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Adopted by Special Resolution at the
Anniversary Meeting of 26 November 2021

A company incorporated by Royal Charter (RC000478)
A registered charity (charity number: 206888)

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Gower Street,
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I. The Society shall consist of Ordinary Fellows, Retired Fellows, Emeritus Fellows, Associate Fellows, Members and Postgraduate members. References to Members of the Society shall include all categories of membership, including those now closed to new members, unless the content otherwise requires. References to Ordinary Fellows shall also refer to Retired Fellows.

II. Every person desirous of admission into the Society as an Ordinary Fellow or Associate Fellow shall make application on the appropriate form, together with (in the case of Ordinary Fellows) a recommendation from a Fellow to whom he/she is personally known and who is familiar with his/her historical work. Ordinary Fellows alone shall be entitled to adopt the style FRHist after their name. Each application shall be submitted, with the supporting recommendation, to the next meeting of the Council at which elections are to be held.

III. Any individual who declares a genuine interest in history in a broad sense may apply to join the Society as a Member. Each application shall be submitted to the next meeting of the Council at which elections are to be held.

IV. Postgraduate students are eligible to apply for Postgraduate Membership upon receipt of evidence of their student status, at a subscription that shall be determined by Council. Each application shall be submitted to the next meeting of the Council at which elections are to be held.

V. Fellows and Members shall be elected by the Council by a simple majority of the members of Council present. The names of Fellows and Members duly elected shall be announced at the next General Meeting of the Society, and via other Society media channels as appropriate.

VI. No Fellow or Member shall be entitled to any of the privileges deriving from their fellowship/membership of the Society, nor shall his/her name be printed in the list of Ordinary Fellows of the Society (if appropriate), until he/she shall have paid his/her first year's subscription, as hereinafter provided; and unless this payment be made within sixty days from the date of election, such election will be declared void by the Council.

VII. The Council may nominate distinguished Ordinary or Emeritus Fellows of the Society to be Honorary Vice-Presidents, who shall be elected by the Ordinary Fellows at the Anniversary Meeting and shall retain the title so long as they are Fellows of the Society. They shall not be required to pay a subscription.

VIII. The Council shall be empowered to transfer Ordinary Fellows on their retirement from full-time salaried employment to the class of Retired Fellows at their request. The Council shall also be empowered to transfer Ordinary/Retired Fellows who have attained forty years membership of the Society or who have reached the age of seventy-five years to the class of Emeritus Fellows at their request.

IX. The Council shall be empowered to admit Libraries as subscribers for the publications of the Society, and to define from time to time the conditions of such admission.
X. Any Fellow or Member who shall appear to the Council to be no longer a fit and proper person to remain in the Society may have their membership terminated in accordance with the ‘Procedures for Expulsion from the Society’ appended to these By-laws.

XI. The annual subscription for Ordinary Fellows, Associate Fellows, Members and Postgraduate Members respectively shall be such as the Council may from time to time determine, subject, in the case of the subscription for Ordinary Fellows, Associate Fellows and Members, to the notification of the Ordinary Fellows given either at the Anniversary Meeting or at a Special Meeting. The annual subscription for an Honorary Vice-President or Emeritus Fellow shall be nil. In order to collect such amounts or any other amounts due to the Society, the Society may participate in the Direct Debiting Scheme as an Originator and may enter into any Indemnity required by the Banks upon whom Direct Debits are to be originated.

XII. No Ordinary Fellow, Associate Fellow, Member or Postgraduate Member, with the exception of Emeritus Fellows and Honorary Vice-Presidents shall be entitled to any of the privileges of membership of the Society unless and until his/her subscription for the current year and /or any outstanding debt to the Society has been paid via the payment methods outlined on any invoice/request for payment.

XIII. If an Ordinary Fellow, Associate Fellow, Member or Postgraduate Member fails to pay his/her subscription of the current year (reckoned from 1 July to 30 June), application shall be made to him/her in writing. After one year of non-payment of the due subscription, his/her name shall be automatically removed from the lists of members of the Society.

XIV. Every Ordinary Fellow, Associate Fellow and Member during the term of his/her subscription, shall be entitled to receive free of additional expense a copy of the Society's Transactions and to buy at a preferential rate such copies as are available of the publications of the Society. Emeritus Fellows shall be entitled to buy at a preferential rate a copy of the Society’s Transactions.

XV. Every Associate Fellow (Online) and Postgraduate Member shall be entitled go receive free of additional expense online access to the Society’s Transactions published in the year of their subscription.

XVI. Every Ordinary Fellow, Associate Fellow, Member or Postgraduate Member shall notify the Society of his/her postal and email address for communications and of any change therein and all notices, packets or electronic communications posted or sent to the address last notified shall be deemed to be duly delivered.

XVII. All Ordinary Fellows, Associate Fellows and Members shall be entitled to access to the Society's Library under such regulations as may appear to the Council to be necessary.

XVIII. The elected Officers of the Society shall be the President, the Treasurer, two Vice-Presidents, and Four Secretaries.

XIX. The President shall be elected by the Council and, following a period of twelve months as President-elect and ex-officio member of Council, shall hold office normally for a term of four years from 1 December. A subcommittee of Council, chaired by a Vice-President, and consisting of at least one other Member of Council and the Honorary Secretary, shall be appointed at the November meeting at the end of the second year of a Presidency. The
subcommittee shall nominate one candidate for election by Council at its May meeting or as soon thereafter as possible. The name of the President-elect shall be sent to all members of the Society in October. Past Presidents shall normally be ex-officio Honorary Vice-Presidents of the Society.

XX. The Vice-Presidents shall be elected by Council for a term of two years in the first instance with possibility of renewal to up to four years. Vice-Presidents who have not attended any meeting of Council for a consecutive period of nine months shall normally be deemed to have resigned from Council. Vacancies for Vice-Presidents will be openly advertised and applications from the Fellowship invited. Applications shall reach the Society's office no later than 1 September. Members of Council shall be circulated with the list of candidates, together with a ballot paper, and invited to vote for up to two candidates in order of preference. Completed ballot papers shall be returned no later than the day of the September Council Meeting.

XXI. The Treasurer and the Secretaries shall be elected by Council for a term of two years in the first instance with possibility of renewal to up to four years. Vacancies for the Treasurer and Secretaries will be openly advertised and applications from the Ordinary Fellowship invited. Applications shall reach the Society's office no later than 1 September. Members of Council shall be circulated with the list of candidates, together with a ballot paper, and invited to vote for up to two candidates in order of preference. Completed ballot papers shall be returned no later than the day of the September Council Meeting.

XXII. The Council of the Society shall consist of the President, the Vice-Presidents, the Treasurer, four Secretaries with specialist portfolios to be determined by Council, and twelve Councillors. The President shall be ex-officio a member of all Committees appointed by the Council. The Editors and Board Chairs of the Society’s publications will be ex officio members of the Publications Committee.

XXIII. The Councillors shall hold office normally for a term of four years. Three of them shall retire by rotation, in order of seniority in office, at each Anniversary Meeting and shall not be eligible for re-election before the Anniversary Meeting of the next year. Councillors who have not attended any meeting of Council for a consecutive period of nine months shall normally be deemed to have resigned from Council.

XXIV. All Ordinary Fellows shall be invited in October of each year to nominate Ordinary Fellows for election as Councillors. Nominations of those willing to serve, together with the names of a proposer and at least four seconders (all of them Ordinary or Emeritus Fellows) and no more than 100 words of biographical information, should reach the Society's office no later than 1 March. The list of candidates and supporting details shall be circulated to all Ordinary Fellows in May, together with a ballot paper. Ordinary Fellows shall be asked to vote for up to three candidates, and to return completed ballot papers no later than 1 July. In the event of a tie, the President shall have the casting vote. The results shall be communicated to all members of the Society in October.

XXV. On a vacancy occurring in the office of the President, or other office, or in the Council, the Council shall have the power to supply such vacancy until such time as an election can be arranged, and in any case for not more than twelve months.

XXVI. At all meetings of the Council five shall be quorum, and all questions shall be decided by a show of hands unless a ballot be demanded.
XXVII. The Council shall determine the papers, lectures and addresses to be read at the Society's meetings, and shall arrange the business of the Society generally; The Council shall have the authority to appoint all editors and board members for its publications and to define the duties to be performed by them and nothing shall be published in the name of the Society or under its auspices, or inserted in the Society's Transactions or other publications, without the authority of the Council.

XXVIII. The Council shall have the authority to appoint all salaried officers and other employees of the Society; to define the duties to be performed by them; to regulate their salaries and other conditions of service; and, at the absolute discretion of the Council, to suspend or discharge any such salaried officer or employee, within the confines of applicable legislation and best practice, if there shall seem to them to be proper occasion for so doing.

XXIX. The meetings of the Society are of three kinds: Anniversary, Special and Ordinary.

XXX. The Anniversary Meeting shall be held on a date to be determined by Council as near as may be convenient to 23 November in each year. At the Anniversary Meeting the results of all elections shall be declared, the vacancies in the Offices and Council shall be filled, and a report shall be presented by the Council on the affairs of the Society in general during the preceding year.

XXXI. The Council may call a Special Meeting of the Society whenever it considers it necessary, and shall convene a Special Meeting on a requisition to this effect by not less than ten Fellows. A Special Meeting convened in response to such requisition shall be held not more than three calendar months after the receipt of the requisition.

XXXII. Not less than a fortnight's notice of the date, time and business of every Special Meeting of the Society shall be sent to every Fellow residing in the United Kingdom, and no other business than that of which notice has thus been given shall be entered upon or discussed at such meeting.

XXXIII. At the Anniversary Meeting and at any Special Meeting of the Society twenty Ordinary Fellows shall form a quorum.

XXXIV. Ordinary Meetings of the Society shall be held as the Council may from time to time determine. At the Ordinary Meetings papers and other communications shall be read and discussed, but nothing relating to the regulation and management of the Society shall be brought forward.

XXXV. All Ordinary Fellows, Associate Fellows, Members and Postgraduate Members of the Society shall be entitled to attend the Anniversary Meeting and the Ordinary Meetings of the Society and to take part in the discussion of the papers or other communications read thereat. Honorary Vice-Presidents, Emeritus Fellows, Associate Fellows, Members and Postgraduate Members shall not be entitled to participate in the regulation and management of the Society, and shall not be entitled to attend Special Meetings of the Society.

XXXVI. Visitors may be admitted to the Anniversary Meeting and to Special and Ordinary Meetings of the Society, subject to such regulations as the Council may determine.
XXXVII. At meetings of the Society and of the Council the President shall normally be Chairman. In the President's absence, one of the Vice-Presidents, or, if no Vice-President be present, one of the Councillors, shall be elected Chairman for the occasion.

XXXVIII. At all meetings of the Society and of the Council, except where these By-laws or charity law provide otherwise, the decision of a simple majority of the Fellows voting shall be considered as the decision of the meeting. In cases of an equality of votes, the President or Chairman will have an additional casting vote.

XXXIX. Annual appropriations shall be made by the Council for the cost of the Society's publications and for its administrative and other foreseeable expenses. Any surpluses arising from appropriations made for earlier years shall be reviewed annually and may be reallocated as the Council shall think fit.

XL. The Treasurer shall be responsible for ensuring that a proper account is kept of all receipts and payments. Cheques and other warrants for payment must be signed by two Trustees, or one Trustee and the Chief Executive Officer as appointed by the Council. The Council may delegate authority to initiate payments via other methods to the Chief Executive Officer. Thresholds on the limitations of this authority will be set by the Council from time-to-time as is appropriate to ensure continuity of the Society’s business.

XLI. The accounts of the Society shall from time to time be examined by the Council, who shall at the Anniversary Meeting lay before the Fellows accounts for the year ending on 30 June immediately preceding which have been prepared and independently examined by professional auditors in accordance with Charity Commission requirements.

XLII. The Auditors shall be appointed by the Fellows at the Anniversary Meeting each year, with the exception of occasions at which an Independent Examination has been authorised by the Council, if compliant with related company and charity legislation.

XLIII. No dividend, gift, division, or bonus in money shall be made by the Society unto or between any of its members.

XLIV. Admission to the Society’s Fellowship (Ordinary, Emeritus, Associate) and Membership, including Postgraduate, equates to acceptance to abide by these and subsequent revisions to the By Laws, and will be counted as clear consent for the processing of any data required to provide Fellows and Members with the services of the Society, administer the collection of related subscription payments, and provision of print or access to online content in the Society’s publications.