

# Standing Orders

---

**animals count**



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

---

London, 19 September 2009

## **STANDING ORDERS – GENERAL**

Animals Count's standing orders govern rules and conduct with regard to:

1. Membership
2. Conference & other meetings
3. Election of National Officers

No alterations shall be made to the rules and standing orders of this organisation except at an annual or special meeting called for this purpose and carried with the support of two-thirds of the members present.

## 1. Membership

1. Members can join Animals Count at any time, by filling out the membership form and by paying the annual membership fee.
  - a. Acceptance into membership will be determined by the Committee of National Officers.
  - b. Membership of Animals Count shall include voting rights in all Committee elections, and policy referendums, and all other voting rights in accordance with the Constitution.
  - c. Lapsed membership will result in loss of voting rights.
2. Applications for membership, or renewal of existing memberships, may be rejected by the Committee of National Officers, if the Committee are of the opinion that the (prospective) member is unable to comply with the aims of Animals Count and its Constitution, or has a conflict of interests.
  - a. The (prospective) member will receive notification of this decision within 15 working days upon submission of the application form.
  - b. The (prospective) member will be able to appeal by submitting, within four weeks of receiving the rejection decision, a written statement, outlining why the member is a suitable member. The Leader of Animals Count will assess the statement, and make a final decision within 15 working days upon receiving the statement. Following this decision, no further appeal will be considered, unless the circumstances of the individual change to the extent that he/she is able to comply with the Constitution, Principles and Standing Orders of Animals Count.
3. Expulsion or suspension of any member will occur if a successful complaint is brought before the Committee of National Officers, showing that the member has acted, or is, in the opinion of the Committee, likely to act, contrary to the values and/or tenets of Animals Count's Constitution, Principles or Standing Orders, and if the Committee vote that the member shall be expelled or suspended.
  - a. The member will receive notification of this decision within five working days of the Committee vote.
  - b. The member will be able to appeal by submitting, within four weeks of being expelled or suspended, a written statement, outlining any measures the member has taken or will take to reverse the actions or positions that led to their expulsion or suspension. The Leader of Animals Count will assess the statement, and make a final decision within 15 working days of receiving the statement. Following this decision, no further appeal will be considered, unless the circumstances of the individual change to the extent that he/she is able to comply with the Constitution, Principles and Standing Orders of Animals Count.

## **2. Conference and other meetings**

### **Procedural rules**

Procedural rules are designed to provide a framework for well-ordered party meetings.

### **1. Annual General Meetings and conferences**

An Animals Count Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held once per year. In addition, other meetings or Conferences may be held. A formal notice of the annual meeting shall be sent by the Secretary to all party members entitled to attend, at least 28 days prior to the meeting.

### **2. Ordinary meetings**

Ordinary, or general, meetings shall be held on a regular basis. Notice of all meetings shall be sent out by an Animals Count Officer to all those entitled to attend, at least fourteen days prior to the meeting. Such notice shall as far as possible include an indication of the business to be transacted at the meeting. A record of attendance at meetings shall be kept.

### **3. Entitlement to attend**

Only fully paid up members shall be entitled to attend non-Committee meetings, and to vote at such meetings. Members whose membership has lapsed for more than two months may attend such meetings but may not vote. Only those members who have been elected to the Committee of National Officers may attend and vote at meetings of the Committee, although other members may attend for all or part of Committee meetings at the invitation of the Animals Count Chair.

When an annual or special meeting is cancelled for any reason or is abandoned without completing the business on the agenda, such meeting must be reconvened in order for any necessary outstanding business to be transacted. Only those eligible to participate in the meeting as first convened, whether or not held, shall be entitled to participate in any further reconvened meeting.

### **4. Chair**

The elected Chair shall preside at all meetings, except where otherwise provided for in the rules of Animals Count. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall preside, and in the absence of both, the Secretary or other officer shall call on those present to elect a member to take the Chair of the meeting. At the Annual General Meeting the Chair shall preside until a successor is elected, except where the Chair is not a duly elected and appointed Committee member; in which case the election of Chair shall be taken as the first item on the agenda. The new Chair shall take over the conduct of the meeting forthwith and proceed to the election of other officers and further business.

### **5. Party business**

The prime function of party meetings is to provide delegates and members with the opportunity to participate in party activities through political debate and policy discussion; planning and reviewing projects and campaigns; the development of party organisation; the promotion of links with sympathetic individuals and bodies within the wider community, and social contact between members.

Nomination for representatives should be sought as widely from among party members as possible. Wherever practicable, any vacancies to be filled shall be advertised to all

members as they arise, and any party member who has indicated willingness to accept nomination shall be considered for any post, unless otherwise stated in the rules.

Party business shall in general have precedence at all party meetings. As far as possible Committee members should deal with routine items of correspondence, finance and reports outside ordinary meetings, provided that the members at the meeting shall have the opportunity to question, amend and/or ratify any recommendations put to them.

#### **6. Notice of motion**

Original motions for the general meeting shall be accepted only from members entitled to attend and participate in the meeting, and must be received by the Secretary in writing not less than 10 days prior to the meeting for which they are intended. Motions for discussion shall be made available to those entitled to attend with the notice and agenda of the relevant meeting, except for emergency motions which must be sent in writing to the Secretary as soon as the nature of the emergency allows, before the commencement of the meeting. Emergency business may be accepted by the majority of the meeting on the recommendation of the Chair who shall interpret the term 'emergency' in a bona fide manner.

#### **7. Discussion of motion**

No motion shall be discussed at a meeting until it has been moved and seconded. Where a motion has been submitted by a party unit or organisation it must be moved by a delegate from that party unit or organisation. Speakers shall address the Chair and shall only speak once on any motion except by permission of the Chair, providing that the mover of a motion or an amendment may reply to the discussion without introducing new matter for debate; such reply shall close the discussion. No speaker shall be allowed more than five minutes, unless agreed by the meeting to be 'further heard' for a specified period.

Amendments to any motion may be moved and seconded from the floor of the meeting. Amendments shall be taken in order with one amendment being disposed of before another is moved. If an amendment is carried, the amended motion becomes a motion to which further amendments may be moved.

#### **8. Motion to rescind resolution**

No motion to rescind a resolution shall be valid within three months from the date on which the resolution was carried. Notice of rescinding motion must be given in writing and made available to those entitled to attend the relevant meeting.

#### **9. Voting on motions**

Voting shall be by show of hands except where the Constitution of the party provides for a ballot vote, or where decided otherwise. In the event of there being an equality of votes on any matter decided by a show of hands, the Chair may give an additional casting vote. If the Chair does not wish to give a casting vote, the motion is not carried.

#### **10. Chair's ruling**

Any breach of or question to the rules or standing orders may be raised by a member as a point of order. The Chair's ruling on any point arising from the rules or standing orders is final unless challenged by not less than four members; such a challenge shall be put to the meeting without discussion and shall only be carried with the support of two-thirds of the members present.

## **11. Conduct at meetings**

Party meetings and events shall be conducted in a friendly and orderly manner and organised in such a way as to maximise participation from members.

### *Ground rules*

- a) Members shall indicate to the Chair if they want to speak, who will acknowledge with a nod. Members will be invited to speak in the order in which they put up their hands, with priority to those who have not yet spoken. If none of the members has spoken, the Chair may ask them if they have anything to add.
- b) Members are requested to be concise and on topic, and preferably use less than two minutes to speak.
- c) Interruptions are not permitted.
- d) Harassment or intimidation of any member is unacceptable as is any form of discrimination on the basis of gender, sexuality, disability or race.
- e) Attacks on other people or organisations, present or not, are not permitted, although rational criticism is acceptable if such criticism is obviously relevant to Animals Count business under consideration.
- f) The Chair should aim to be impartial, and speak last on a motion, if at all.

Smoking is not permitted within meeting rooms.

### *Disruptive behaviour*

Any member acting in an unruly or disruptive manner, or in contravention of the standing orders, may be removed from the meeting by action of the Chair. The Chair shall put such a motion to the meeting, which to be carried shall require the support of two-thirds of those present and voting. Any member who has been removed from two meetings during a 12-month periods, shall, with the approval of the Committee Officers, be ineligible to attend meetings for the next 12 months.

### 3. Election of Committee National Officers

1. There shall be a Committee of National Officers, which shall be responsible for developing and implementing business, policies and decisions, and shall consist of the Officers elected in accordance with the Constitution. Animals Count Committee Officers shall be: Leader/Chair, Deputy Leader, Treasurer, Nominating Officer, Secretary, and any other Officers/members who may be required and who will be elected at an AGM.
2. Ballot votes shall be held at meetings to elect Officers and where otherwise provided for in the Constitution; and where requested by any member supported by at least two others; otherwise, in order to vote, a show of hands will suffice. In the event of a tie in a preferential ballot the tie shall be broken by establishing which candidate had the highest number of first preference votes.
3. Officers of the Committee of National Officers shall be elected at the AGM by a full member ballot using the Single Transferable Vote electoral system<sup>1</sup>.
4. Elections shall be announced to all members and nominations opened in advance of the AGM.
5. Hustings may be held at the AGM.
6. Voting will commence at the end of the AGM. Results must be announced as soon as possible after voting is closed.
7. All Officers and Committee members will hold office for one year, unless they fall to a vote of no confidence at a Committee meeting. A minimum of three Committee members' votes is required to call for a vote of no confidence of a Committee member. If a Committee member has fallen to such a vote, they will immediately cease to hold their office. Paid up members will be notified of the Committee's decision. Nominations shall reopen within one week of that date and the electoral process will commence from then, with close of nominations being one month from the opening of nominations. All Officers can be re-elected by the members.
8. Members of the Committee may be nominated for no more than one post on the National Committee at any one time.
9. The Committee may decide to create or abolish additional Committee Officer/member posts as required, following the same procedure as for creating new Regulations (see Byelaws).
10. Elected members who run as candidates for the Committee of National Officers will be representing Animals Count in their role, and are bound by the Constitution, Principles and Standing Orders.

---

<sup>1</sup> The **Single Transferable Vote** (STV) is a system of preferential voting designed to minimize wasted votes and provide proportional representation while ensuring that votes are explicitly expressed for individual candidates rather than for party lists. It achieves this by using multi-seat constituencies (voting districts) and by transferring all votes that would otherwise be wasted to other eligible candidates. STV initially allocates an elector's vote to his or her most preferred candidate and then, after candidates have been either elected or eliminated, transfers surplus or unused votes according to the voter's stated preferences. (Source: [www.Wikipedia.org](http://www.Wikipedia.org), October 2008)

11. The Committee of National Officers may disaffiliate (suspension or expelling from the Committee) by straight ballot an elected Officer, if a successful complaint demonstrates that the said official is in violation of the Constitution, Principles or Standing Orders.
12. In the case of premature resignation of an elected National Officer, an interim position will be created. Appointment of an interim National Officer will require the approval of all remaining National Officers. In case of any disputes related to the appointment of an interim National Officer, a special meeting will need to be convened within 28 days, and members will be able to elect a nominated or alternative candidate.
13. Each Officer shall be encouraged to assemble and coordinate a working group of Animals Count members covering his/her area of responsibility, and act as a liaison between this working group and the Committee.