

CONSTITUTION OF THE WESTERN COUNTIES YOUNG LIBERALS

Ratified: 06/02/21

Amended:

Article One - Name

- 1) The full name of the organisation shall be Western Counties Young Liberals.
- 2) The names WCYL and WC Young Liberals may be used where appropriate.
- 3) The Executive may, after seeking the agreement of the English Young Liberals Executive, adopt additional names, abbreviations and variant branding without prejudice to the formal name.

Article Two - Disambiguation

- 1) 'Young Liberals' or 'Federal Young Liberals' shall be taken to refer to the specified Youth and Student organisation of the Liberal Democrats.
- 2) 'English Young Liberals' shall be taken to refer to the English branch of the specified Youth and Student organisation of the Liberal Democrats.

Article Three - Affiliation

- 1) Western Counties Young Liberals shall be the official representatives of the youth and student members of the Western Counties Liberal Democrats as specified by the Article Five of the Constitution of the English Liberal Democrats.
- 2) The Chair and Executive of Western Counties Young Liberals shall represent Western Counties Liberals within the state and federal structures of the Young Liberals.

Article Four - Mission and Objectives

- 1) Western Counties Young Liberals shall exist to serve two purposes to represent the Western Counties Liberal Democrats at universities, schools and colleges and to all young people across the Western Counties of England, and to in turn represent the views of those young people to the wider party. This can be a difficult balance, but the leadership should, in general, serve its members first and foremost.
- 2) Western Counties Young Liberals shall;
 - a) Promote Liberal Democrat policies to young people and students in the Western Counties of England,
 - b) Represent the interests of young people and students in the Western Counties of England to the Western Counties Liberal Democrats,
 - c) Represent the interests of young people and students in the Western Counties of England within the English Young Liberals and Federal Young Liberals structure.

- 3) Western Counties Young Liberals shall be the official representatives of the youth and student members of the Western Counties Liberal Democrats within the framework of the membership rules of the Constitution of the Western Counties Liberal Democrats.

Article Five - Membership

- 1) Membership of the Western Counties Young Liberals is automatic for any member of the Federal Young Liberals who is also a member of a Liberal Democrat local party in Western Counties.
- 2) Any member of the Federal Young Liberals who resides, studies or has employment in Western Counties, or is a member of a Young Liberals affiliated branch or society in Western Counties, but is a member of a local party outside of the region, may opt into membership through contacting the Chair of Western Counties Young Liberals.
 - a) Members of Young Liberal affiliated University societies shall have automatic opt-in membership.

Article Six - Executive

- 1) The Executive shall be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the organisation as well as carrying out the instructions of General Meetings with regards to the long term direction of Western Counties Young Liberals. The term of office shall be from election or appointment, until the 31st of December of the same year.
 - a) The election or appointment of the Western Counties Young Liberals Chair shall be undertaken under the relevant articles of the Constitutions and regulations of the English Young Liberals and Federal Young Liberals.
- 2) The Executive shall consist of the Chair, the Vice Chair, the Access and Diversity Officer, one representative from each branch (Dorset YL, Gloucester YL, Somerset YL, WECA YL, Wiltshire YL) and two Non-Portfolio Officer
- 3) Each Young Liberals affiliated branch or society within the borders of Western Counties may also send a representative. They shall be non-voting members.
- 4) Each local party Campaign Organisers and Campaign Assistants may also attend. They shall be non-voting members.
- 5) Two individuals shall be permitted to jointly hold any executive role:
 - a) The individuals in question may cast only one vote between them during any vote of the Executive, and must be in agreement in order for that vote to be counted.
 - b) Where two individuals jointly hold a role, but one individual is absent from the meeting in question, the other individual shall be permitted to cast a vote.
 - c) Where two individuals jointly hold a role, and one individual resigns from the role, both individuals shall be deemed to have resigned and the role shall be vacated until filled by co-option.
- 6) As per the constitution of the English Young Liberals, the Chair shall:
 - a) Convene and chair all and any General Meetings of the Western Counties Young Liberals;
 - b) Be the principal executive officer;

- c) Be responsible for organising, establishing and supporting Young Liberals branches and student societies within the Western Counties of England,
 - d) Represent youth and student members to the executive of the Western Counties Liberal Democrats;
 - e) Be the primary point of contact in the Western Counties for the Federal Young Liberals executive on a number of issues, including but not limited to campaigns, events, membership and media coverage;
 - f) Be the principal public representative and chief spokesperson for the Western Counties Young Liberals, including but not limited to representing it to the media, youth and student organisations, other political parties and their respective youth and/or student wings, and other Liberal Democrats;
 - g) Organise and co-ordinate such activities as are necessary and appropriate to:
 - i) Recruit new members to the region;
 - ii) Develop the skills and experience of members in the regional;
 - iii) Contribute to Regional Party campaigning priorities;
 - iv) Contribute to Federal Organisation campaigning priorities.
 - h) Present a report to Western Counties General Meetings with particular emphasis on activities undertaken in accordance with subsection g of this article.
- 7) Members of the Executive besides the Chair and representatives from other bodies shall be co-opted as soon as possible at the start of a Chair's term by the Western Counties Young Liberals Chair and English Young Liberals Chair .
- 8) Vacancies to the Executive after the initial co-options shall be filled by a co-option by the Executive.
- a) The exception to this is the Chair, which shall be co-opted under the relevant articles of the Constitutions and regulations of the English Young Liberals and Federal Young Liberals.
- 9) Members of the executive must be members or opt-in members of the Western Counties Young Liberals.
- 10) The Executive must meet a minimum of three times within the term of the Chair, either in-person or online.
- a) Any member or opt-in member of the Western Counties Young Liberals may attend Executive meetings. Their ability to speak will be at the discretion of the Chair.
 - b) The Executive must publish minutes of every meeting within 14 days of the meeting concluding.
 - c) The Executive may, by majority vote, designate an item of business as closed business, meaning only members of the executive may be present and that discussion of the item may not be included in the released minutes.
- 11) The Executive may create sub-committees, where positions shall be filled by members of the Executive, in response to events, issues, and circumstances.

Article Seven - Honorary Officers

- 1) There shall be an Honorary President and up-to three Honorary Vice Presidents, chosen by the Executive for a two year term. They shall collectively be known as the Honorary Officers.

- 2) Honorary Officers shall:
 - a) Be a liaison between the Executive and the Western Counties Liberal Democrats.
 - b) Provide advice to the Executive.
 - c) Be entitled to attend meetings of the Executive with full speaking privileges.
- 3) Honorary Officers need not be members of Western Counties Young Liberals but must be members of Western Counties Liberal Democrats. In the event that any Honorary Officer ceases to be a member of the Liberal Democrats they shall be considered to have resigned their post.
- 4) Honorary Presidents shall be co-opted by the executive and serve a term of two years, and then until the co-option of their successors.
- 5) Should a vacancy arise, a replacement shall be co-opted by the Executive to serve the remainder of the term.

Article Eight - General Meetings

- 1) The General Meeting (GM) of the Western Counties Young Liberals shall be the highest governing body of the Western Counties Young Liberals and may overturn any action of the Executive.
- 2) General Meetings of the Western Counties Young Liberals shall occur at least once a year, with an aim for them to occur twice a year.
- 3) The General Meeting shall be convened and chaired by the Chair of the Western Counties Young Liberals. In their absence, another member of the Executive shall chair the General Meeting.
- 4) The General Meeting shall:
 - a) Vote on the executive positions to be opted-in for the next term. All members will be able to vote on executive positions, except in the case of;
 - i) Branch Representatives which are elected by the membership of the branch. Except in the case of less than 2 branch members attending, then it's opened up to all members.
 - ii) Vice Chair which is voted on by the executive in the first executive meeting and has to be a voting member of the executive.
 - b) Debate and vote on motions submitted by members and opt-in members of the region.
 - c) Debate and vote on constitutional amendments submitted by members and opt-in members of the region. These shall require a two-thirds majority of those present and voting to pass.
 - d) Receive and vote upon the reports submitted by each member of the Executive.
 - e) Be able to table a proposal to hold a binding Motion of No Confidence in any member of the Executive. These shall require a two-thirds majority of those present and voting to pass. Where the Motion of No Confidence is held in the person chairing the meeting, another member of the Executive shall Chair.
- 5) The quorum for a General Meeting shall be 1% of the total recorded members of the Western Counties Young Liberals, or six members; whichever is lower.

- 6) Although any member of the Liberal Democrats may attend General Meetings, only members and opt-in members of the Western Counties Young Liberals shall have voting rights and count towards the quorum.
- 7) General Meetings shall be held in person or online.
- 8) General Meetings shall be advertised to members and opt-in members of the Western Counties Young Liberals at least fourteen days in advance of the meeting starting.

Article Nine - Constitutional Amendments

- 1) Amendments to this constitution may be proposed by the Executive or three individual members.
- 2) Amendments must be submitted to the Chair at least 48 hours prior to the expected date of the General Meeting.
- 3) Amendments can only be passed by a 2/3 vote of a General Meeting which maintains quorum throughout the debate and votes on the amendment in question.
- 4) Any amendment to the Constitution shall take effect at the end of the Chair's term, unless otherwise specified in the text of the motion proposing the amendment.

Article Ten - Miscellaneous

- 1) This is the sole authoritative constitution of the Western Counties Young Liberals. Any constitution or other governing document not previously repealed is hereby superseded by this Constitution.
- 2) The Constitution shall bear the date of the General Meeting at which it was adopted or subsequently amended in order to clarify which is the current version of the Constitution
- 3) With regard to interpretation, where this constitution is silent the Constitution of the Western Counties Liberal Democrats, the Constitution of the English Liberal Democrats, the Constitution of the Federal Party, the Constitution of the English Young Liberals and/or the Constitution of the Federal Young Liberals shall apply. In case of conflict between this constitution, and the constitution of the Federal Young Liberals, the English Young Liberals, the Western Counties Liberal Democrat, the English Liberal Democrats, and/or the Liberal Democrats, those constitutions shall take precedence over this.
- 4) The Chair, in consultation with the Honorary Officers, shall in the first instance rule on matters of interpretation brought to their attention by any member seeking clarification. This decision may be appealed to the Chair of the English Young Liberals.
- 5) A decision of the Chair (of this and/or the English Organisation) may be appealed to the relevant procedure of the English Liberal Democrats.