



CONSTITUTION  
AND  
SCHEDULES

January 2011

# National Thatching Straw Growers Association

## Rules and Constitution

1. The Association shall be known as the National Thatching Straw Growers Association (NTSGA)

### **AIMS**

2. The aims of the Association shall be:
- a) To promote the production of top quality straw suitable for either 'Combed Wheat Reed' or 'Long Straw' thatching, grown & harvested according to the tried & tested age old 'First Principles' set out within this constitution. **Schedule A.**
  - b) To support our members in achieving a high standard of consistent thatching straw production through pooling of husbandry advice & records. **Schedule B.**
  - c) To lobby authorities and raise the environmental profile of the production of thatching straw.
  - d) To support regional conservation & vernacular requirements for thatched listed buildings by working with sympathetic conservation and thatching organisations.
  - e) To have a commitment to research the growing of both the old heritage/conservation wheat varieties and possible new cereal varieties for thatching use that doesn't compromise the 'First Principles'.
  - f) To encourage local employment and education of the old traditions of crop husbandry and harvest techniques that has produced high quality thatching straw over the centuries.
  - g) To lobby hard for Long Straw/CWR thatching of new build properties, and bring awareness of the sustainable, carbon negative, super insulation, low carbon embodied, visual and tourist benefits of straw and link in with forward thinking proactive thatching organisations.
  - h) To explore new markets for the grain of the unusual varieties of wheat/cereals grown for thatching.
  - i) To develop alternative new machinery and handling equipment that will eventually be needed to replace the old antiquated harvest machinery without compromising the key harvest principles, and which can be proven to be beneficial or at least benign in affecting the quality and handling characteristics of thatching straw.
  - j) To increase thatching straw production and turn around the growing of thatching straw into a solid profitable business taking into account and based on the 9 previous aims.

### **MEMBERSHIP**

3. Membership is open to any Grower, being a sole business or partnership based and growing thatching straw in the United Kingdom, whether the grower farms the land from 'plough to harvest', or sub-contracts out the crop husbandry & deals with the harvesting husbandry only.

Members must :-

- a) be willing to guarantee their integrity to the Association in their determination to produce quality thatching straw in accordance with the 'first principles', published as **Schedule A** to this constitution.
- b) understand and accept that their guarantee to the Association will remain a condition of membership.
- c) agree to make their thatching straw/husbandry available for inspection by the Standards Sub-Committee.
- d) on application for membership, provide information on present harvesting techniques employed and whether this is intended practice for future years.
- e) provide each year, their crop husbandry records to the NTSGA archives for beneficial research purposes to help growers develop good consistent crops, see **Schedule B**;
- f) agree to accept such rules as the Association may from time to time adopt.
- g) attend at least one meeting per year – General or Annual General.
- h) pay the membership subscription when due.

4. Associate Membership shall be available to professional individuals, bodies, organisations, allied trades and retired growers. Associate members will have no voting rights concerning the workings of the Association.
5. If at any time the Association shall be of the opinion that the interests of the Association require it, it may withdraw the membership of any member. The member shall have the right to appeal in the first instance to an open meeting of the Association. In such an event, the member's subscription for the current year shall be refunded pro rata.
6. Notice of resignation must be given to the Secretary, in writing, at least one month before subscription is due for renewal.
7. The Association shall have the privilege of nominating Honorary and Life Members, who will be elected at the Annual General Meeting. Unless they are in the chair, an honorary member shall have no right to vote.

#### **COMMERCIAL USE OF MEMBERSHIP**

8. Only full members of the Association shall be entitled to use the style and device, (logo) of the Association during the course of their daily business.

#### **APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP**

9. Applications for membership and associate membership shall always be by written application to the Secretary in the form at Schedule C to these Rules.
10. The Association reserves the right to refuse admission to membership but refusal shall be notified in writing to the applicant and the reasons given. In the event of a disagreement the applicant has a right to appeal to an open meeting of the Association.

#### **SUBSCRIPTION**

11. Upon joining the Association all members shall be required to pay a membership subscription in proportion to the remaining months of the year and thereafter an annual membership subscription.
12. The membership subscription, which shall be payable annually on 1<sup>st</sup> January in advance, shall be a sum such as the Association shall from time to time determine.
13. There shall be a penalty for late payment calculated as 10 per cent of the annual subscription for every calendar month overdue, up to a maximum of three calendar months.
14. In the event of a member failing to pay his dues by the end of the second calendar month, he shall be sent by the Treasurer a notice drawing attention to these Rules. If there is no payment by the end of the third calendar month, and there are in the Executive Committee's opinion no extenuating circumstances, then membership shall cease and the Secretary shall so notify the ex-member in writing.
15. Restoration of Membership. Membership withdrawn under this section shall be restored at the discretion of the Association, provided it be upon terms not unfavourable to other members.
16. Office holders shall pay one half of the annual subscription in recognition of the time they are required to devote to the day to day administration of the Association.
17. Associate members: Professional individuals, bodies, organisations, allied trades and retired growers etc., shall pay an annual subscription of one half of the full membership fee.

#### **OFFICERS**

18. The officers of the Association shall in all cases be honorary. They shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Association to hold office for the forthcoming year. They shall retire at the A.G.M. following their election but shall be eligible for re-election.

Expenses and honoraries shall be paid at the discretion of the Association.

The officers shall be as follows:

- a) a President.
- b) a Chairman.
- c) a Vice-Chairman
- d) a Secretary
- e) a Treasurer.
- f) a Web officer.
- g) a publicity officer.
- h) Branch regional Chairmen, who may also hold one of the above posts.
- i) Branch regional Secretaries, who may also hold one of the above posts.

**See schedule D for terms of reference and functions of the committee.**

## COMMITTEES AND SUB COMMITTEES

19. There shall be an Executive Committee and it shall consist of the officers of the Association and have the power to co-opt. It shall also have the power to fill casual vacancies in either of the offices of Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer.

20. Subject to any direction which may be given from time to time by the Association, the Executive Committee shall provide for the conduct, administration, management and control of the affairs of the Association.

21. This will always include the establishment of standing sub committees to safeguard standards of thatching straw growing and all aspects of financial planning. It will be normal for any sub-committee to include a member of the Executive Committee, who will act as secretary. **(To be promulgated in due course).**

22. The Standards Sub Committee will include wherever possible up to three Members or Life Members. It will investigate, at the request of the Executive Committee: **(To be promulgated in due course).**

- a) applications for membership where it is found necessary to inspect straw.
- b) complaints against the integrity of members which are brought to the notice of the Association.
- c) complaints against the integrity of other growers which are referred to the Association for expert opinion.
- d) expert advice or evidence to professional and other bodies regarding standards of thatching straw growing where the Association as such needs to be represented during normal working hours;

It will also act on behalf of the NTSGA in all or any of the foregoing when authorised by the Executive Committee to do so. The travelling and reasonable out of pocket expenses of members of the sub-committee shall be paid by the Association.

23. The Finance Planning Sub Committee will consist of up to five members. It will be responsible for the progressive planning and implementation of measures to improve the Association's financial base. It will meet independently and elect a Chairman. **(To be promulgated in due course).**

## MEETINGS

24. General Meetings. There shall be a minimum of one General Meeting per year, called by the Secretary of each branch of the NTSGA. The Secretary shall give wherever possible fourteen clear days notice of a General Meeting and this shall be by telephone if written notice is impracticable.

25. Annual General Meeting. There shall be an Annual General Meeting of the National Thatching Straw Growers Association, where the Chairman and Secretaries shall give a report of proceedings and the Treasurer shall present a statement of account. The Secretary shall give to each member and associate member not less than twenty-one days notice of the date, time and place of the meeting

26. Special Meetings. Special Meetings may be convened at any time by the Executive Committee, or by the Secretary upon receipt of a written request signed by not less than three members of the Association. Not less than fourteen days notice of the date, time and place of any Special Meeting shall be given to each member and associate member and the notice shall state the object of the meeting. The only business that may be transacted at a Special Meeting is that specified in the notice.

#### **PROCEEDINGS AT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS**

27. At every Annual General Meeting the chair shall be taken by the President or in his absence by the outgoing Chairman or outgoing Vice-Chairman, in that order.

28. Two thirds of the voting membership shall constitute a quorum.

#### **VOTING**

29. At all meetings of the Association every question shall be determined by a show of hands, except that if not less than one third of the entitled persons present demand a ballot then the voting of that question shall be by ballot. A member unable to attend will be permitted to render a postal vote or appoint another member to vote on his behalf.

30. At meetings of the Executive Committee and sub committees every question shall be determined by a show of hands.

31. The person presiding at a meeting of the Association, the Executive Committee or of any sub-committee shall, in addition to his being entitled to vote in the first instance, have a second or casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.

#### **MINUTES**

32. The Secretary shall keep a Minute Book and make proper entries therein of all business transacted at every meeting of the Association.

#### **FINANCIAL YEAR**

33. The financial year of the Association shall run from 1st January to 31st December.

#### **AUDIT**

34. The books and accounts of the Association shall be audited annually by an independent person acceptable to the membership, who shall make a written report thereon.

#### **REPRESENTATION**

35. The Executive Committee may from time to time nominate one or more members to represent the Association at conferences, meetings or exhibitions where the interests of the membership make it desirable.

36. The Executive Committee may invite any member to represent the Association in situations where the expert opinion of the Association has been requested. In matters of dispute regarding straw husbandry it will be normal to invite a member of the Standards Sub Committee to represent the Association.

37. Except where the costs of representation are met by a third party, the Association will pay all travel and reasonable out of pocket expenses.

## ALTERATION OF THE CONSTITUTION

38. No alteration, amendment of, or addition to this Constitution shall be made, except in pursuance of a resolution supported by at least two thirds of those present and voting at an Annual General Meeting or Special Meeting of the NTSGA. A member voting by post or proxy shall be deemed to be present.

39. Notice of any motion for any such alteration, amendment or addition, other than a notice given pursuant to a resolution of the Executive Committee, shall be given in writing to the Secretary not less than twenty eight days before the meeting.

40. A copy of every such notice, including a notice given pursuant to a resolution of the Executive Committee, shall be sent by the Secretary to every member and associate member of the Association at least fourteen days before the meeting at which the motion is to be considered.

## AFFILIATION

41. The Joint Executive Committee may negotiate with any organisation with a view to membership or affiliation. No such affiliation shall be made until approved by a Meeting of the Association.

## INSTITUTION

42. The foregoing Rules and Constitution were agreed and adopted at a meeting at Laxfield on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2011.

43. A resolution to dissolve the NTSGA shall only be proposed at an Annual General Meeting and shall be carried by a majority of at least three quarters of the members present who are entitled to vote. A specific date for the dissolution shall be included in the resolution. The dissolution shall take effect from the date specified in the resolution and the members of the committee shall be responsible for the winding-up of the assets and liabilities of the NTSGA. Any remaining assets to be divided equally between members.

## SCHEDULES TO THE CONSTITUTION

The following shall be deemed to comprise part of these Rules:

- a) Schedule A. First Principles of Harvesting husbandry.
- b) Schedule B. Collation of crop husbandry and sales records.
- c) Schedule C. The form of application for membership.
- d) Schedule D Terms of reference and functions of the Executive Committee.
- e) Schedule E Terms of reference and functions of the Standards Sub Committee. **(To be promulgated in due course)**
- f) Schedule F Terms of reference and functions of the Finance Sub Committee. **(To be promulgated in due course)**
- g) Schedule G Liabilities. **(To be promulgated in due course)**

## SCHEDULE A to the Constitution

### 'First Principles' of thatching straw husbandry/production.

1. Cutting of the crop at the appropriate time when the nodes are still green, thus ensuring that the straw is cut at its prime for strength & durability in the threshing, combing and thatching that follows.
2. Be wary of a crop for thatching where the crop has lodged for a period of time more than 2/3 weeks? Which would affect the strength & durability of the straw, this would become self evident in the handling, (carting, threshing, combing and thatchers preparations)
3. Carting of the intended thatching straw (sheaves) should be carried out in such a manner that the individual straw stems are not crushed flat for the whole length of the stem. No excessive crushing, not suitable for either long straw or combed wheat reed.
4. Combing process? Open for discussion from experienced growers/producers of combed wheat reed. This section to be filled. . (To be promulgated in due course) Threshing by 'Drum', 'Barn worker' with a full concave (circumference not width) set up correctly not to damage, crush & break the stems, leaving the straw only slightly bruised.
5. Threshing by a machine (stationary combine harvester) with less than the full concave set up correctly not to damage; crush and break the stems, leaving the straw only slightly bruised.
6. Flailing and Hand Combing is clearly acceptable for those with time on their hands!
7. Packaging for storage/transport of threshed/combed straw carried out in a manner that does not break, crush the individual stems.
8. Careful large round/square straw pressing of bunched and trussed straw:
10. Maintaining a small stock of good quality clean seed, separate and secure from the main seed, from a crop to act as a safety backup in case of unforeseen eventualities

## SCHEDULE B to the Constitution

### Thatching Straw 'Crop' Husbandry Notes

Husbandry regimes for growing thatching straw are not written in stone as some may try to make us believe, this can bring about passionate debate on 'how' things should be done.

The detailed 'Thatching straw production record' and 'sales record' should over a period of years flag up worst and best practice in whatever husbandry system is employed.

There are probably only three defined husbandry systems to follow after first choosing the variety most suitable for the land type/fertility available:

- High input; ( max 70 units/87kg Ha N ) using higher concentrations of top dressing manures with the more modern medium length varieties (using carefully timed applications of growth regulators) and an armoury of pesticides, herbicides & fungicides to keep the crop healthy.
- Low inputs; (max 40 units/50kg Ha N) using lower applications of top dressing manures or muck spreading with the taller older varieties using judicious applications of pesticides, herbicides & fungicides.
- Organic; using crop rotations, muck spreading with older taller varieties.

*There is some evidence that mixing the constituents of different systems together leads to disappointment, with poor weather being then blamed for ensuing failure of the crop.*

## **Collation of crop husbandry & sales records**

### **Preface**

All too often when our industry is hit by a crisis, it is made worse through lack of coordinated data to which one can refer in order to inform the debate. As individual growers we are all required to keep our own records. It might not be immediately obvious, but the pooling and collation of this information is an activity to which members can easily contribute, in helping to develop a unique data resource. Over time, this will develop into a key resource for the Association and like the general census the data collected will be used to establish a baseline of current materials, operations and practices. This can, in time can be used to look at changing trends, as well as having the potential for more detailed analysis into climatic change, or differing soil types through data mapping.

The use of a common format for these records helps to standardise these returns, resulting in less missing or ambiguous data.



# Thatching Straw Production Record

Harvest year \_\_\_\_\_

Grower's name & address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Variety \_\_\_\_\_

Seed History \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Field name/map reference \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Field size \_\_\_\_\_

Soil description \_\_\_\_\_

Field history \_\_\_\_\_

Crop previous year \_\_\_\_\_

Crop 2 years back \_\_\_\_\_

*Crop 3 years back* \_\_\_\_\_

Seed bed preparations \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Seed dressing \_\_\_\_\_

Drilling date \_\_\_\_\_

Drilling rate \_\_\_\_\_

Weather during cultivation/drilling period \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Contractor used? \_\_\_\_\_

Fertilizer/manure treatments \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Quantity/dates applied \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Herbicides \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Fungicides \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Weather during Spring growing period \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Contractor used? \_\_\_\_\_

Average height of standing crop \_\_\_\_\_

Prior to cutting; was an area cleared of rogue varieties for seed purity reasons or selected desired varieties picked out for multiplying up? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Dates of lodging in crop \_\_\_\_\_

Cutting date \_\_\_\_\_

Percentage of crop standing \_\_\_\_\_

Binder/other? \_\_\_\_\_

Weather during cutting/stooking or shocking \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Contractor used? \_\_\_\_\_

Carting date \_\_\_\_\_

Method used for carting \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Weather during carting period \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Contractor used? \_\_\_\_\_

Threshing/Combing date \_\_\_\_\_

Contractor used? \_\_\_\_\_

Storage arrangements \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Tonnage of good quality straw produced per acre/hectare \_\_\_\_\_

Price per ton of straw\_\* \_\_\_\_\_

Tonnage of grain per acre/hectare \* \_\_\_\_\_

Price per ton of grain \_\_\_\_\_

Cost of production minus machinery set-up and maintenance\_\* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Success of production; I-10 \_\_\_\_\_

Mistakes made /Lessons learned \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\* Answers to these questions are optional but this information could be part of a valuable historical record in the future.

Thatching Straw Sales Record

Harvest year \_\_\_\_\_

Field harvested from \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Purchaser \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Thatcher \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Long Straw/Combed Wheat Reed \_\_\_\_\_

Variety sold \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Average cut length \_\_\_\_\_

Describe quality of straw \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Purchase date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Quantity \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Price per ton \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Property of address where used \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Does thatcher belong to a trade association? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Does thatcher recognise & work to a published specification of thatching \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Type of thatching (if known) e.g. Brawtch/Spar on/new to rafters/stack thatching. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Thatcher's comments on the straw \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## AIMS

2. The aims of the Association shall be:

- a) To promote the production of top quality straw suitable for either 'Combed Wheat Reed' or 'Long Straw' thatching, grown & harvested according to the tried & tested age old 'First Principles' set out within this constitution. **Schedule A.**
- b) To support our members in achieving a high standard of consistent thatching straw production through pooling of husbandry advice & records. **Schedule B.**
- c) To lobby authorities and raise the environmental profile of the production of thatching straw.
- d) To support regional conservation & vernacular requirements for thatched listed buildings by working with sympathetic conservation and thatching organisations.
- e) To have a commitment to research the growing of both the old heritage/conservation wheat varieties and possible new cereal varieties for thatching use that doesn't compromise the 'First Principles'.
- f) To encourage local employment and education of the old traditions of crop husbandry and harvest techniques that has produced high quality thatching straw over the centuries.
- g) To lobby hard for Long Straw/CWR thatching of new build properties, and bring awareness of the sustainable, carbon negative, super insulation, low carbon embodied, visual and tourist benefits of straw and link in with forward thinking proactive thatching organisations.
- h) To explore new markets for the grain of the unusual varieties of wheat/cereals grown for thatching.
- i) To develop alternative new machinery and handling equipment that will eventually be needed to replace the old antiquated harvest machinery without compromising the key harvest principles, and which can be proven to be beneficial or at least benign in affecting the quality & handling characteristics of thatching straw.
- j) To increase thatching straw production and turn around the growing of thatching straw into a solid profitable business taking into account and based on the 9 previous aims.

## MEMBERSHIP

3. Membership is open to any Grower, being a sole business or partnership based and growing thatching straw in the United Kingdom, whether the grower farms the land from 'plough to harvest', or sub-contracts out the crop husbandry & deals with the harvesting husbandry only.

Members must :-

- a) be willing to guarantee their integrity to the Association in their determination to produce quality thatching straw in accordance with the 'first principles', published as **Schedule A** to this constitution.
- b) understand and accept that their guarantee to the Association will remain a condition of membership.
- c) agree to make their thatching straw/husbandry available for inspection by the Standards Sub-Committee.
- d) on application for membership, provide information on present harvesting techniques employed and whether this is intended practice for future years.
- e) provide each year, their crop husbandry records to the NTSGA archives for beneficial research purposes to help growers develop good consistent crops, see **Schedule B;**
- f) agree to accept such rules as the Association may from time to time adopt.
- g) attend at least one meeting per year – General or Annual General.
- h) pay the membership subscription when due.

Schedule C , application form page two.

Name .....

Address.....

.....

.....

Telephone.....

Email.....

Acres/ Ha. Grown.....

Type of straw produced, long straw or combed wheat reed.....

Varieties grown.....

.....

Method of harvesting/threshing.....

.....

Years of experience.....

Organic producer or not.....

Other useful information.....

Full membership fee £25.00 per year, Associate membership fee £12.50. (*Professional individuals, bodies, organisations, allied trades and retired growers*).

Please make cheques payable to; NTSGA and send to, The Acting Secretary, Laurel Farm, Skinners Lane , Starston, HARLESTON, Norfolk, IP20 9PX.

I have read the conditions of membership, signed ..... . date.....

## SCHEDULE D to the Constitution

### Terms of Reference and Function of the Executive Committee

#### Composition

1. The Executive Committee of the Association shall consist of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Web/Publicity Officer and have the power to co-opt.  
It shall also have the power to fill casual vacancies in either of the offices of Secretary and Treasurer.
2. The President shall be notified of all Committee meetings and be entitled to attend them.

#### Terms of Reference

3. The terms of reference of the Executive Committee are twofold:
  - a. To implement the policies and decisions of the membership as agreed and recorded at open meetings of the Association.
  - b. To provide for the open conduct, administration, management and control of the affairs of the Association.
4. This will always include the establishment of standing sub-committees to safeguard standards of straw production and all aspects of financial planning. **(To be promulgated in due course).**
5. The Executive Committee shall ensure that the Association is represented at appropriate conferences, meetings or exhibitions where the interests of the membership make it desirable. It shall, where necessary, have the power to nominate one or more members to this end.
6. The Committee may invite any member to represent the Association in situations where the expert opinion of the Association has been requested.

#### Functions

7. **The Chairman.** The Chairman shall be responsible for:
  - a. The overall planning and direction necessary to implement the policies of the membership.
  - b. Liaise at chair level with organisations and bodies relevant to the Association.
  - c. The decision to hold meetings of the Association and the Executive Committee.

To that end they will take the chair following their election at the Annual General meeting, chair Special Meetings and all meetings of the Executive Committee for the following year or appoint the Vice-Chairman to act on his behalf if he is unable to attend.

He shall also render a report of proceedings at the Annual General Meeting.

The regional branch Chairmen shall take the chair at regional branch General Meetings and assist & liaise with the Chairman as may be agreed upon.

8. **The Vice-Chairman.** The vice-Chairman shall be responsible for:
  - a. In the first place, acting as deputy to the Chairman in all matter pertaining to planning, policy and liaison.
  - b. Assisting the Chairman in practical ways as may be agreed with the Chairman.
  - c. Taking the Chair at any meeting the Chairman is unable to attend.  
He shall also:
    - d. Act as Chairman of the Standards Sub Committee, (see Section 22 of the Constitution) and hold a watching brief to ensure that the provisions of the Association's constitution are kept.

9. **The Secretary.** The primary function of the Secretary is to assist the Chairman to discharge his responsibilities to the membership. To this end he shall be responsible to the Chairman for the day to day running of the Association's affairs. More specifically, he shall:

- a) Receive and act upon all communications addressed to the Association.
- b) Transact all routine correspondence on behalf of the Association.
- c) Transact specific correspondence as directed by the Chairman and the Executive Committee.
- d) Ensure that all essential business is brought before the Executive Committee without unnecessary delay.
- e) Maintain an adequate and efficient system of files and records including an up to date list of the names and addresses of all Honorary, Life, Full and Associate members.
- f) Maintain a record of expenditure for postage, telephone, copying, printing and stationary.
- g) Liaise with any organisation or body relevant to the affairs of the Association.
- h) Convene all meetings of the Association and the Executive Committee as directed by the Chairman, giving a time, a place and an agenda of the business to be discussed.
  - i) Assisted where possible by a Minutes Secretary, maintain a record of all business transacted at every meeting of the Association and the Executive Committee.
  - j) Circulate a record of proceedings of the above in the form of Minutes to every member of the Association.
  - k) Maintain a stock of Association stationary for official use or sale to members.
  - l) In conjunction where possible with a Public Relations/Publicity Officer:
    - (i) Liaise with the printers to maintain stocks of Association publications, including an annually updated membership list.
    - (ii) Co-ordinate the campaign to circulate Association publications.
    - (iii) Co-ordinate the campaign to keep the Association in the public eye, including press releases.
- m) Produce and circulate newsletters as time and circumstances permit.
- n) Render a report of proceedings at the Annual General Meeting.

The regional branch Secretaries shall assist and liaise with the Secretary as may be agreed upon.

10. **The Treasurer.** It shall be the responsibility of the Treasurer to:

- a) Implement the financial policies of the Association through the medium of the Executive Committee.
- b) Maintain conventional accounting and financial records, including a separate record of subscriptions paid.
- c) Maintain current and deposit accounts at a nominated bank and ensure that the current account is kept in credit.
- d) Pay all bills drawn on the Association once he is satisfied they are properly authorised.
- e) Bring before the Executive Committee any financial matter he deems appropriate, including monies or subscriptions overdue.
- f) Balance the account as at the end of each financial quarter (31 March, 30 June, 30 September and 31 December) and acquaint the Executive Committee with the running balances at its next meeting.
- g) Prepare the account for audit, including a statement of profit and loss, as at 31 December and present it for audit by 31 January following.
- h) Be prepared to acquaint any meeting of the Association with the current bank balance.
- i) Maintain as far as possible a forecast of income and expenditure so that impending crises can be anticipated and brought to the notice of the Executive Committee.
- j) Maintain an analysis so that expenditure can be summarised under specific headings and pre-planned accordingly.
- k) Present a financial report, a current statement of account and the audited Profit and Loss sheet at the Annual General Meeting.

He shall also:

- l) Act as the Secretary of the Finance Sub Committee, (see section 23 of the constitution)
- m) Co-ordinate all fund raising activities.

11. **The Web Officer.** The Web Officer shall maintain and update the website including responding to all email enquiries.

12. **The Publicity Officer.** Shall prepare and distribute press releases, deal with the media and other publicity where necessary.

### **Co-opted Members.**

13. It will be normal for the Executive Committee to co-opt volunteer members to assist in the following areas of activity:

a) **Standards Sub-Committee.** Any member co-opted to inspect straw production shall do so as part of a Standards Sub-Committee.

b) **Finance Sub-Committee.** This shall include liaison with insurance agencies where there is a financial benefit to the Association.

c) **Public Relations Assistant.** To assist the Publicity Officer, also, consumer relations and the production and dissemination of material designed to enhance the status and reputation of the Association, other than technical publications.

d) **Liaison and Representation.** Any member representing the Association shall do so as a member of the Executive Committee.

e) **Procurement of Materials .**

f) **Research and Development .**

g) **Entertainment .**

### **Rules of Procedure.**

14. **Voting.** At meetings of the Executive committee and Sub-Committees every question shall be determined by a show of hands.

15. **Casting Vote.** The person presiding at a meeting of the Executive Committee or any Sub Committee shall, in addition to his being entitled to vote in the first instance, have a second or casting vote in the case of an equality of votes.

16. **Lines of Communication.** It shall be recognised that the office of Secretary is the normal and proper entry and exit point for all routine correspondence transacted by the Association. Attempts by outside agencies to by-pass this will be discouraged.

17. Where officers other than the Secretary are obliged to transact Association business it shall be their duty and responsibility to acquaint him with the transaction and lodge documents or copies with him for incorporation into the Association's files. This will normally be at the next Executive Committee meeting.

18. The same rule shall apply to co-opted members acting, for example, as the Association's representative, where there is a tendency to correspond with the representative rather than the Executive Committee.

19. It shall be a primary duty of every member of the Executive Committee to ensure that no one is kept in the dark regarding activities.

20. **Expenses.** Except where the costs of representation are met by a third party, the Association will pay all travel and reasonable out of pocket expenses incurred on its business. A rate/mile for the use of a private vehicle will be allotted by the Executive Committee and updated annually on 31 December.

21. Every member of the Executive Committee shall keep a record of his postal, telephone and other costs and submit it to the Treasurer quarterly (up to 31 March, 30 June, 30 September and 31 December) for payment.

