

BASE (BIODIVERSITY, AGRICULTURE, SOIL AND ENVIRONMENT) UK

ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION

Background

Originally founded in 2000 as the Brittany, Agriculture, Soil and Environment Association, BASE has developed from a small group of enthusiastic growers and agronomists into a 1200plus member organisation with over 21 linked groups across France.

Independent of all businesses or organisations, BASE provides a forum for members to share information, experience and ideas on minimum tillage, direct drilling, cover cropping and other techniques offering more sustainable agriculture by working in harmony with soils and the wider environment.

Keen to achieve a similar sharing of locally-focused expertise, a number of UK farmers and specialists have come together to establish a parallel UK group committed to the same principles.

Name

The Association is called Biodiversity, Agriculture, Soil and Environment (UK) abbreviated, for convenience, to BASE UK.

Aims and Objectives

The Association aims to champion all practical approaches, techniques and opportunities offering to improve the social, economic and environmental sustainability and resilience of UK farming, particularly through tillage and cropping systems generally associated with soil conservation and conservation agriculture.

Its primary objectives are to:

- Facilitate the exchange of more sustainable and resilient farming practice information, ideas and techniques between members;
- Help members to improve the sustainability and resilience of their own farming through better training and information;
- Promote more sustainable and resilient farming as widely as possible across the farming industry; and,
- Support or develop studies or trials which increase the understanding of more sustainable and resilient farming.

Independence

In all its organisation and activities, the Association remains completely independent of all companies, businesses, associations and interest groups.

With the agreement of its members, however, it may collaborate with such organisations in pursuit of its aims.

The Association maintains close links with BASE in France to take maximum advantage of its established contacts and expertise.

Membership

Membership of the Association is open to all within the UK committed to its aims and who are prepared to share their knowledge and experience freely with other group members.

Membership is restricted to individuals. While they may belong to businesses or organisations, no corporations, associations or other entities will be entitled to join in their own right.

The Association is at all times to be made up of a minimum of 80% farmers.

A farmer is defined as someone who sells combinable commodities.

All future membership applications will be approved by a 3 man membership committee. These 3 persons will be drawn from members of the committee by the chairman as and when required

Members at any time are those who have paid the agreed annual subscription by the due date.

Associate Membership – this is open to employees/relations of full farmer members - has no voting rights or count towards the 80% farmer membership requirement. The fee for Associate membership is to be charged at 50% of full membership. It is the full member's responsibility to pay the Associate Members fees. If the full member's membership ends then the Associate Members ends automatically.

Student Membership – defined individuals in full time education. This level of membership has no voting rights or count towards the 80% farmer membership requirement. Fee of £20 per year for student members

Meetings

All Members are invited to attend and vote at a General Meeting of the Association held annually to elect a management committee, appoint any officers, consider a report of activities, formally adopt the accounts and transact any other business that may be required for its smooth running and development.

Members may be convened for an Extraordinary General Meeting at the request of the Chairman or by three quarters of the paid-up Members in writing.

At all General, AGM's and Extraordinary General meetings each member has a single vote and decisions are made by a simple majority, with the Chair having a casting vote in the event of any failure to agree.

Changes to the Articles of Association can only be made by a majority vote of the farmer members at the AGM.

Notice of any motion to change the Articles of Association must be given to the membership one month before the AGM

The office of President is to be elected each year at the AGM and is purely an honorary position.

Management committee

The Association is run by a Management Committee elected from Members at its Annual General Meeting.

Comprising of a minimum of 8 farmer members – including the Chairman and vice Chairman – this Management Committee is responsible for all activities, administration and finances through a dedicated bank account into which all membership fees are paid and from which all disbursements are made.

Management Committee members are authorised to represent the Association in public and on other groups with which it may become involved, being accountable to the Members through the AGM for all their actions in these capacities.

All decisions of the Management Committee are by a simple majority, with the Chairman having a casting vote in the event of any failure to agree.

Only farmer members can have voting rights on the Management Committee

Secretariat

The secretary is to be elected by the membership at the AGM and whose primary function is to provide secretarial support to the Management Committee.

The elected secretary's address will be the registered address of the Association

The secretary also acts as treasurer until the Management Committee decide otherwise when a member of the Management Committee will be selected to undertake this role.

The Treasurer will provide up to date accounts which will be for annual adoption at the AGM

Committees

The Management Committee may, from time to time, establish any Committees or Task Groups it considers necessary for the efficient functioning of the Association, co-opting willing Members to serve on these, as required.

Income and Expenditure

Membership fees – agreed annually by members at the AGM – and the takings from events provide the main income of the Association. It may also receive subsidies from European, state, regional or local government and donations from individuals or organisations.

The membership year runs from 1st January to 31 December in any year.

For 2014 the year will run from 28th February to 31 December 2014.

Members joining during the year will be charged on a quarterly basis

The Association is entitled to make payments relating to expenditure, works, studies and analyses undertaken to meet its objectives as well as such payments as necessary for its functioning and any allowances and expenses agreed by the Management Committee.

Guests

Each member may invite one guest to a meeting. For meetings where any costs are incurred for speakers, refreshments, room hire, etc then a fee level for guests will be decided by the organiser of such a meeting. It is the member's responsibility to pay their guests fee.

Dissolution

The Association may be dissolved at any time by decision of the Management Committee or by a resolution in writing supported by three quarters of paid-up Members.

In the case of dissolution, any funds remaining after all financial responsibilities have been discharged will be divided equally between paid-up Members at the time.

ADDENDUM:

At the AGM held on the 7th February 2018 David White proposed that the annual general meeting is held on the 1st Wednesday in February. Alastair Brittain seconded, and the motion was carried.