



HEART OF ENGLAND ALPACA GROUP CHARTER

INTRODUCTION

1. The group is a regional group of the British Alpaca Society and shall be called the **HEART OF ENGLAND ALPACA GROUP**. This charter outlines the objectives and operating procedures of the Group, rather than a strategy or plan, for the future.

ROLE

2. The Heart of England Alpaca Group was created to promote and protect the interests of alpaca owners and breeders in Central England by:

- Sharing information and experience
- Keeping up-to-date with best practice
- Facilitating practical self-help
- Representing members' interests.
- Providing training where necessary
- Promote Alpacas to the benefit of the members and the British Alpaca Society as a whole.
- To provide lines of communication to and from the British Alpaca Society

MEMBERSHIP

3. Membership of the group should be open to alpaca owners, breeders and enthusiasts, resident within Central England, defined as the counties of Oxfordshire, Warwickshire, Northamptonshire, Buckinghamshire, Shropshire, + others who have paid the full subscription for that year. **Payment of fees shall be effected within one month of 1st April** and those joining during the second half of a year shall only pay one half of the fee for that year. Applications for membership of HoEAG can only be made by completing the application form in full together with the requisite fee. Members can be expelled for the following reasons:

- Non payment of fees
- Bring the Breeders Club into disrepute.

All decisions on expulsion will be made at a special meeting with a majority verdict on the decision. There must be a minimum of one third of the membership present.

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

4. Although initially envisaged that HoEAG would be an informal group, run by its members, for its members, without a formal committee structure, the size of the group has necessitated the formation of an informal organising committee. The Committee will comprise:

- A Chairman
- A Secretary
- A Treasurer
- A minimum of two committee members.

There will also be members representing the group on the following BAS Committees. These representatives can be committee members or ordinary HoEAG members.

- o Welfare
- o Fibre
- o Communications
- o Marketing
- o Training and Education
- o Shows
- o Regional Organisers

5. Members of the Committee will normally serve for a minimum period two/three years, with changes in the committee membership usually occurring immediately post an AGM. Once per year, prior to the AGM, members will be invited to express an interest in serving on the Committee. The Chairman, advised by members of the current Committee, will form a new management group as appropriate.
6. The Chairman will be appointed by the members of the Committee. The Committee will meet a minimum of twice per year, with the Secretary maintaining full minutes which will then be circulated to the entire membership.
7. HoEAG will hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM), normally in April, to which all members are invited. The date of the AGM is to be publicised well in advance. A full agenda is to be circulated to all members prior to the AGM to encourage attendance and discussion as appropriate. Members who are unable to attend the AGM are encouraged to express their views in writing to a member of the Committee in advance of the AGM. Full minutes will be recorded and circulated by email to all members.
8. If voting is necessary on any issue it will be on the basis of one vote per member, no block representation. A proxy vote may be submitted to the secretary in a sealed envelope and opened at the time of meeting.

FINANCIAL STATUS

9. HoEAG is a non-profit making organisation, which is run for the benefit of the members, who will pay an annual subscription, payable on 1st April each year. The level of subscription is to be reviewed annually at the AGM, based on a presentation by the Treasurer summarising the balance of income and expenditure over the previous year, concluding with a recommendation of a suitable annual subscription rate by the Committee. The HoEAG account is not subject to formal audit but the report is to be furnished to the Chairman prior to the AGM. The Treasurer is to provide a statement of financial affairs at all committee meetings.
10. The Group should seek to maintain sufficient funds to allow the organisation to be financially self-sufficient and to underwrite the financial risk associated with the organisation of a major event, a meeting with an international speaker, a show, sale or auction. In the event of surplus funds being available in excess of 18 months of turnover or £15,000 a year, the cash flow is to be adjusted by:
 - An adjustment in the subscription rate.
 - A donation to a suitable charity or foundation directly associated with the alpaca industry.
11. HoEAG funds are to be held in a dedicated bank account, with the signatories being the Chairman and/or the Treasurer.
12. Delegated authority for expenditure per event is as follows:
 - Treasurer/Secretary in support of administrative costs or refunds to members hosting events, to a maximum of £500.
 - Chairman to a maximum of £1000.
 - Committee following the agreement of a minimum of 3 members to a maximum of £1500.

EVENTS

13. The Group will hold an annual programme of events to meet the needs of members. Events will include a range of training days, hosted by members who have facilities appropriate to the event or local facilities, which may include the hire of venues. Training days will cover such subjects as basic husbandry, breeding for quality, fibre management, halter training and showing alpacas, pasture management and veterinary issues. Member's views on suitable subjects and the demand will be assessed each year via the AGM.
14. Notification of training events will be via email and the HoEAG website. Attendance at training events will normally be limited to members only, although guests may attend when space permits, but there will be an attendance charge. Maximum attendance at each event will be published, as part of the promulgation of details and attendance will be on a first come/book basis. Costs for guests or non-members may be charged at a premium rate. Refunds for non-attendance at training days will only be applicable if cancellation is received not less than 4 days prior to the event. Events should normally be self-funding.

15. Training days where appropriate will include hands on experience and when subjects do not lend themselves to participation, the programme may cover more than one subject including topics of a more general nature.

16. HoEAG will organise two shows per year, the Spring Alpaca Fiesta on behalf of the British Alpaca Society and The Heart of England Alpaca Group Fleece Show. Two separate subcommittees will be formed to organise The Fiesta and The Fleece Show.

17. HoEAG will endeavour to assist members in the sale or purchase of alpacas, which may be in the form of an annual auction or a sales day when animals are gathered at a central location for private sale. Such days will be held with the welfare of the alpacas being the paramount concern and will normally include the opportunity to provide further information of all aspects of the industry.

COMMUNICATION

18. The Membership Secretary will be responsible for the maintenance of a database containing the member's details. This database is to be maintained in accordance with the Data Protection Act and all members will be invited to reconfirm annually that they are content for their contact details to be publicised to members. This will be in the form of a contact list, updated twice per year, which will be formatted in such a way as to prevent the list being used by a third party for a multiple mailing. Full contact details will only be available to committee members and may not be reproduced or released to other parties.

19. E-mail distribution will be used whenever possible for ease and to reduce administrative costs. However, members may choose not to be included on multiple mail shots and on notification of their wishes, the Secretary will ensure that use of their e-mail address will be restricted in accordance with their wishes. HoEAG events will also be publicised via the group's web site; www.heartofenglandalpacagroup.co.uk

20. Distribution of information from third parties, e.g details of shows etc will be co-ordinated by the Secretary in such a way as to insure that the integrity of the members database is maintained. In such circumstances third parties may be invited to meet additional postage costs incurred through the distribution. The use of the website or membership list for private member initiatives will incur a small administrative charge.