CONSTITUTION OF THE UK PLANETARY FORUM

This constitution replaces all previous versions and was approved by the Council of The Geological Society of London on 26th February 2025.

1. *Name*

1.1. The name of the group shall be the UK Planetary Forum.

2. *Definitions*

2.1. In this constitution:

The "*Society*" means "The Geological Society of London" and references are to the Charter and Byelaws thereof.

The "*Council*" means the "Council of The Geological Society of London".

The "*Science Committee*" means the "Science Standing Committee of The Geological Society of London".

The "*Group*" means above mentioned group set out in Section 1.1

The "*Committee*" means the "Committee of the UK Planetary Forum of The Geological Society of London".

"Member" means a fellow or student member of The Geological Society of London who has also opted to join this Group.

"Leadership" refers to members of the Committee who have taken leadership roles within the Group, e.g. Chair, Treasurer, Student or Early Career Representative. These roles are defined in Annex D.

3. *Aims*

3.1. The aims of the UK Planetary Forum (UKPF) shall be to promote the subject of Planetary Science, and particularly to strengthen the relationship between geology and planetary science in the UK, by holding meetings and courses, by encouraging the publication of the results of research and by other means as are deemed appropriate to the group by the parent societies.

The aims of the UKPF shall be to promote the subject of Planetary Science by:

3.1.1. Representing the interest and promoting the study, understanding and public interest of planetary science nationally and internationally

3.1.2. Representing and promoting the demographic diversity of the community interested in UK planetary science.

3.1.3. Representing the diversity of, and strengthen relationships between, disciplines interested in the study of planetary science in the UK.

3.1.4. Holding interdisciplinary meetings, conferences, seminars, workshops and public engagement activities to further the aims of UK planetary science.

3.1.5. Encouraging research and teaching activities and collaborations in planetary science, including with relevant industries and public stake holders.

3.1.6. Such other means as the Committee may think desirable, subject to the approval of the parent societies.

3.2. These aims will be advanced by:

3.2.1. Promoting the Society, especially with regard to 3.1 above.

3.2.2. Promoting the study and understanding of geoscience, especially as it relates to 3.1 above.

3.2.3. Holding meetings, conferences, seminars and/or workshops.

3.2.4. Supporting the publication of papers and other communications resulting from Group events. In the first instance any publication should be offered to the Society's Publishing House for consideration in one of the Society's journals or book series.

3.2.5. Encouraging research and teaching in geoscience, especially as it relates to 3.1 above.

3.2.6. Promoting professional excellence and ethical standards in geoscience, especially as it relates to 3.1 above.

3.2.7. Such other means as the Committee may think desirable, subject to the prior approval of the Council.

4. Membership

4.1. Membership of the Group is open to all fellows and student members of the Society, along with all fellows and student members of the Royal Astronomical Society to which this group is also affiliated.

5. Governance

5.1. The affairs of the Group shall be governed by a Committee.

5.2. The Committee shall comprise eight elected members and up to two members who may be co-opted as necessary; some committee members will serve in leadership roles (e.g. chair, secretary, treasurer).

5.3. The Leadership of the Group shall comprise a Chair, Treasurer, and other roles as defined in Annex D defined by the Committee.

5.4. Leadership, elected members, and co-opted members shall be registered members of the Group, all of whom shall be entitled to vote.

5.5. During the second year of the Chair's term of office, a Vice-Chair shall be elected who shall be the Chair-elect for the following year.

5.5.1. The Vice-Chair is either elected from within the Committee, or should there be no suitable candidates available, then an external candidate may be proposed whose appointment requires the approval of the Committee.

5.6. The standard term for committee members is three years.

5.6.1. Leadership roles shall be appointed by the Committee and shall not normally serve as in post for more than one term (three years) consecutively.

5.6.2. Elected Committee members who are not in Leadership roles shall not normally serve for more than two terms of three years consecutively.

5.7. Nominations for election to the Committee, with the nominee's written consent, shall be supported by two members of the Group in writing.

5.7.1. Election of Committee members to fill vacancies shall be by ballot or vote of the Committee on an annual basis or at a date agreed by the Committee.

5.8. The Committee may co-opt members for specific purpose(s) and period(s) that shall not extend beyond one calendar year.

5.8.1. Co-option can be renewed at the discretion of the Committee but shall not exceed standard committee terms (three years).

5.9. If for any reason a vacancy shall arise among the elected members on the Committee or among the Leadership thereof, the Committee shall have the power to fill the vacancy until the next Annual General Meeting of the Group.

5.10. The quorum for a Committee meeting shall be half of the committee members plus one.

5.10.1. The quorum includes online voting members of the Committee.

5.11. Retiring Committee members shall not be eligible for re-election until one year after the end of their term of office.

5.12. The Committee may co-opt a postgraduate student in a relevant area of research to be the *Student Representative*. This may be in addition to up to two other co-opted members. The Student Representative shall not serve for more than one term.

5.13. Through nominations and elections, and in line with the Society's Code of Conduct and EDIA Strategy, the Committee should actively seek to maintain a diverse representation on the Committee.

5.14. The Committee may establish working groups as are deemed necessary to ensure the effective management and administration of the Group's affairs.

5.14.1. The composition of each working group shall include at least one elected Committee member and will have a defined purpose set out in their Terms of Reference, and a finite end point.

5.15. The Committee shall, at least once a year, review its own performance to ensure that it is operating to maximum effectiveness and recommend any changes.

6. Meetings

6.1. Meetings held by the Group include scientific meetings and annual general meetings.

6.2. Scientific Meetings

6.2.1. Scientific meetings will be organised in accordance with the aims of the Group as defined in 3.1, and in line with the Society's overarching Strategy and scientific themes.

6.2.2. Scientific meetings led by the Group benefit from Society support, as outlined in Annex A, provided by the Society's Events and Science teams.

6.2.3. The Society's Science & Funding Officer should be made aware of all

Group activities during the planning stages, whether they are utilising Society support (as per 6.2.2.) or otherwise.

6.3. Annual General Meeting

6.3.1. An Annual General Meeting of the Group shall be held once a year, typically at the beginning of each calendar year.

6.3.2. At least one month's notice of the Annual General Meeting shall be given to all Group members

6.3.3. The Annual General Meeting shall:

6.3.3.1. Receive an Annual Review and Financial Report on the activities of the Group, normally from the Treasurer

6.3.3.2. Ratify the appointment of the Leadership positions

6.3.3.3. Vote on the appointment of new members of the Committee

6.3.4. The quorum for the AGM shall be at least eleven members of the Group, and nominally half of the members in attendance plus one where attendance exceeds the eleven-member minimum.

6.3.4.1. Quorum shall include at least one member of the Group Leadership.

7. *Finance*

7.1. The Group's financial affairs shall be managed within the terms of the Financial Regulations that forms Annex B of this Constitution. The Group shall exercise prudence in its financial dealings to ensure that significant financial commitments are not incurred without previously seeking approval of Council.

7.2. The Treasurer of the Group shall provide a financial report on the activities of the Group to the Group's AGM and submit a financial return to the Society's Finance department on an annual basis for audit purposes upon request, typically in January of each year.

7.3. Members and non-members will normally be asked to pay a fee for attendance at meetings, conferences, seminars, workshops and other activities of the Group.

7.3.1. There will normally be differential fees for different categories of attendees.

7.3.2. A schedule of pre-agreed fees is set out in Annex C and is subject to annual review by the Society's Events team.

8. Third Party Arrangements

8.1. The Committee may opt to co-badge events with other organisations or Specialist Groups of the Society, however, any agreement to do so must not include an arrangement to share any resulting surplus or loss from the meeting.

8.2. Any intention to co-badge events with an external organisation should first be discussed with the Society's Science & Funding Officer to ensure that there are no potential conflicts of interest and must not proceed until approvals are given, which may involve escalation to the Director of Development & Membership if fundraising is involved.

8.3. The Committee may, as part of promotional or co-badging agreements, offer discounted delegate rates in line with the schedule set out in Annex C.

9. Publications

9.1. The Group will encourage the convenors of conferences to propose a Geological Society Special Publication or a thematic collection in a Geological Society journal to the Society's Publishing House.

10. *Committee Member Expenses*

10.1. Committee members are expected to cover their own travel expenses to attend Committee Meetings, the Annual General Meeting and Scientific Meetings as required with the support of the member's employer.

10.2. If employer support is unavailable and the member is unable to cover such expenses personally, reasonable expenses may be reimbursed from the Group's account subject to prior agreement from the Treasurer and Chair, and in line with the Society's Travel Policy.

10.2.1. Such expenses are required to be evidenced in the form of original receipts (including the VAT number).

10.2.2. Public transport should be used wherever a practical option is available.

10.2.3. Subsistence and accommodation expenses are not reimbursable.

11. Awards & Medals

11.1. The Group may choose to make awards and medals to members each year. Details of the relevant awards and medals are defined in Annex E and may vary year on year at the discretion of the Group's committee.

12. General

12.1. The Group shall not take any action that may conflict with the terms of the Charter or the Byelaws of the Society.

12.2. All Group Members agree to adhere to the Society's Code of Conduct and Inclusivity Protocol, and all Group meetings and events are also subject to the and Events Code of Conduct.

12.3. Resources to be provided centrally by the Society are set out separately in Annex A.

12.4. Financial support and regulations are set out separately in Annex B.

12.5. Additional roles and responsibilities within the Group Committee structure are set out in Annex D.

12.6. No amendment to this Constitution may be made without the approval of Council.

13. Dissolution

13.1. The Group may be dissolved by the resolution of the Council.

ANNEX A: SOCIETY RESOURCES & SUPPORT ONLY DSE CAN EDIT/AMEND

The arrangements set out in this Annex do not require Council approval.

The Society offers several resources and support to all constituted Professional & Specialist Groups, including staff support for events, and training to Committee members in Leadership roles.

Events

All PSIGs are entitled to unlimited free hire of the Lecture Theatre, Lower Library, and smaller meeting rooms (Arthur Holmes, William Buckland, Council Room) throughout the year, subject to availability and during core hours. The Group should contact venuehire@geolsoc.og.uk to request availability and to make a reservation.

- Core hours are 09:30-17:00, Monday – Friday
- Early (before 09:30) or evening (after 17:00) access is chargeable at £150/hr +VAT.
- Late access (after 20:30) is chargeable at £200/hr +VAT and includes Security.
- AV Service (including hybrid/remote participation and live streaming): £350 +VAT per day (Lecture Theatre only)
- Catering is provided at exclusive, in-house rates to our Groups from our catering partners. Please contact the Venue Hire team for up-to-date options.

Events assistance is available from the Conference and Science teams where events take place in Burlington House or form part of our core Science programme (under the five strategic themes). This includes pre-event communications, catering liaison, supported use of the Zoom Webinar account, and event management on the day.

Event assistance does not include the management of delegates registrations and payments, the printing of badges or any other materials, Q&A management onsite or remotely, or the management of sponsors, speakers, and rehearsal sessions.

If required, the Society's Conference Office can advise on the planning of a meeting and preparation of its budget.

Science & Funding

The Group are responsible for ensuring that contact details for the Group Leadership and all meeting/event information is kept up to date on the Society's website. Updates can be provided via email to the Science inbox for action: science@geolsoc.org.uk

Please note that website updates will typically take effect within ~10 days from request, and any anticipated delays will be communicated as soon as practicably possible.

Submissions to the Science & Funding newsletter, whether items of general interest or notices of upcoming events, should also be sent via e-mail to the Science inbox.

Digital Communications (incl. Web & Social Media)

Groups are provided with a dedicated webpage within the Society's main website, www.geolsoc.org.uk, which is managed by the Society's Web Team. Requests for changes, or additions, including promotion of Group activities and events can be made via the Science inbox, or directly to the Web Team.

The Society recognises the desire for Groups to actively promote themselves both via the Society's central resources, including our website and social media accounts, and via their own means. As such, the Society has developed a '*Social Media Policy*' along with some guidelines to support Groups, and to ensure that all Groups are still compliant with UK law and Charity Commission guidelines. This policy can be found in Annex F.

Policy & External Engagement (incl. Press & Advertising)

If Groups are approached to make a public or media statement/comment on a matter related to the group's expertise, they must liaise with the Society's Press Office at the earliest convenience, prior to any engagement. Where possible, the Press Office will look to advise and support on press and media engagement. Please note, no statements or comments may be made on behalf of the Society without the involvement of the Press Office.

Alternatively, there may be instances where members of the group are well placed to provide evidence for a public policy inquiry or consultation. The Society's Policy team must be made aware of any such requests, to discuss whether it is most appropriate for the Group to pass the request to the Society for action, to act jointly, or for Group members to respond as individuals privately.

Group members are welcome to make representations as individuals, however, these must be attributed only to the contributors and should not reference the Geological Society unless responses have been developed in collaboration with, and signed off by, the Society. It must be made clear that any views expressed do not necessarily represent those of the Society.

If Groups, or their members, wish to make a policy statement or representation under the name of the Society, they must seek approval first from the Head of Policy and Communications, or Director of Science & Engagement in their absence. Please bear in mind, that this should be done at the earliest possible moment, to allow for sign off procedures to be followed.

PSIGs do not have a veto regarding Geological Society statements.

Advertising is available at a discounted rate to all Groups for their membership and activities via our Society membership magazine, Geoscientist, both in print and online. PSIGs receive a discount on advertising rates; please contact geoscientist@geolsoc.org.uk for the latest rates and copy deadlines.

Health & Safety

All fellows are responsible for their own health and safety whilst conducting Society business, as well as for the safety of others. Each Group should have a Committee member designated as the H&S Lead who will be

responsible for ensuring that policies are followed and that the relevant risk assessments are in place prior to activity commencing.

Risk assessments are required for all Group activity, and templates are provided by the Society via our website. The designated H&S Lead for each Group is responsible for completing a risk assessment prior to an event or activity, and the Chair of the Group responsible for signing off the risk assessment once complete. Risk assessment training will be provided by the Society via their current online training provider to the Group Chair and designated H&S Lead to support this requirement.

If the activity is taking place at Burlington House, or a venue that has its own site-specific risk assessments in place, the designated H&S Lead may request the site risk assessment rather than undertaking another one themselves. However, the review process must still be completed, and should the supplied risk assessment prove inadequate, the Group must undertake a new one in its place.

Completed risk assessments should be submitted to the Society prior to any activity being undertaken in the name of the Group.

Where the Group activity is a fieldtrip, the fieldtrip leader may complete the risk assessment (subject to suitable training) and the Group's H&S Lead should check it before submitting it to the Society's Head of Facilities for sign off. Please note, no fieldtrips can go ahead until a risk assessment is signed off by the Head of Facilities.

Insurance

The Society's insurance covers Specialist and Regional Group events and activities, including field trips, within the UK providing they are onshore, and a full risk assessment has been carried out. The insurance does not cover any activity involving boats or other offshore activities, or where activity is carried out outside of the UK.

If the organiser of a field trip is aware of any activity that may pose a significant risk, the insurers must be consulted via the Society's Head of Facilities to ensure that the appropriate level of cover is in place. This must be done well in advance of the date of the field trip.

For details, please download the guidance documents from our website, which includes, Risk Assessment Guidance Notes and a Field Excursion Risk Assessment and Safety Plan, for Groups to complete where necessary. Also included are Safety Information for Field Excursion Leaders & Participants.

Safeguarding

'Safeguarding' is a term which is broader than 'child protection' and relates to the action taken to promote the welfare of children and adults at risk and protect them and anyone else who encounter the Society from harm. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Having safeguards in place within an organisation not only protects and promotes the welfare of children and adults at risk but also it enhances the confidence of trustees, staff, volunteers, parents/carers and the general public.

Our Safeguarding Policy applies to all those working with or for the Society, in a paid or voluntary capacity, including all Group members. It is the responsibility of the Committee to ensure that everyone has read and will adhere to this Safeguarding Policy.

Groups must also follow the guidelines outlined in the Policy to ensure participants have a safe and positive experience with all Group activity. It is the Committee's responsibility to make event organisers and convenors aware of this Policy, and their obligations under it.

Data Handling & GDPR

GDPR is the General Data Protection Regulation, an EU regulation governing the use of personal data, which first came into effect in 25 May 2018. Despite Brexit, it still applies to the UK as it forms part of UK law under the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018.

Organisations must adhere GDPR's its key principles and obligations to process personal data legally. The regulations are strict and breaching them can result in substantial fines - up to €20M or 4% of an organisation's turnover, whichever is higher. Therefore, Groups must ensure that the activities they undertake are compliant with GDPR.

Please familiarise yourself the Society's GDPR guidelines for Regional and Specialist Groups, found in Annex G. The Society will provide an online overview of GDPR requirements annually to Group committee members.

If you have any questions or issues then please get in touch with the Society's Data Protection Officer, Caroline Lam, at dpo@geolsoc.org.uk. It is always better to contact the DPO early on to seek guidance.

In addition to GDPR, the Society's Archivist should be presented with a digital copy of meeting abstracts after a scientific meeting for archiving; archivist@geolsoc.org.uk

Fundraising & Sponsorship

The Geological Society of London is registered with, and regulated by, The Charity Commission for England and Wales.

The Charity Commission provides guidance to help charitable organisation comply with their legal obligations, including those relating to fundraising. The Society's fundraising activities are further regulated by the Fundraising Regulator. The Fundraising Regulator sets out the responsibilities that apply to fundraising, as outlined in The Code of Fundraising Practice.

The Code of Fundraising Practice states that charities: *"must carry out due diligence, appropriate for the size and nature of the donation, on both the financial and reputational dealings of possible partners before accepting their donations."*

A potential risk to the Geological Society is the acceptance of donations or sponsorship from third parties whose business or personal practices may harm our reputation. The value of a donation or sponsorship payment may not always be worth the cost in terms of a potential loss of trust and confidence, reputational damage or a conflict with the Society's ethics and values.

Any intention to seek sponsorship agreements with or donations from external parties should first be discussed with the Society's Director of Membership & Development to ensure that we are meeting legislative requirements and there are no potential conflicts of interest. Agreements should not proceed until approvals are given in writing.

Finance

Financial regulations and support available from the Society are described in Annex B.

ANNEX B: FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS DFO CAN EDIT/AMEND

The arrangements set out in this Annex do not require Council approval.

The Group is part of the Society and is therefore bound by the same financial rules and regulations, which includes fiscal responsibility and audit reporting requirements. Support will be provided by the Society's Finance team in line with the below items, but budgets and financial oversight remain the responsibility of the Group Treasurer and Chair.

Please note that Groups should seek clarification from the Society's Finance department in advance of agreeing or issuing any fundraising or sponsorship arrangements. This is particularly important to ensure that any proposed arrangements consider regulatory and VAT implications.

A handover to incoming Chair and Treasurer is the responsibility of the outgoing Chair or Treasurer. There will normally be an annual, virtual training session held by the Director of Finance & Operations for Group Treasurers covering audit requirements, VAT treatment, and bank mandates.

Any issues or concerns should be raised to the Director of Finance & Operations as soon as practically possible.

Banking:

Under normal circumstances a bank account will be made available for use by the Group by the Society. This will be set up by the Geological Society's Finance Department.

The signatories for the Group bank account will normally be the Group's Treasurer plus one other representative agreed by the Group's Committee. The Committee must agree who its authorised signatories will be, and the decision must be recorded in writing and confirmed in writing to the Society's Director of Finance & Operations.

The banking arrangements will require dual authorisation of expenditure, meaning that expenditure will need to be authorised by two approved members of the Group's Committee. The Mandated Signatory for the Group's account will be a Director of Finance & Operations, Financial Controller, or Accountant employed

by the Geological Society. The term Mandated Signatory refers to a person authorised to open, close, make structural changes or add and remove signatories to an account.

No bank account may be set up in the name of the Group by any person other than an authorised employee working within the Geological Society's Finance Department. The Group must not incur any financial obligation such as credit agreements or loans of any sort, and no such obligation may be incurred by any persons in the group's name or in circumstances that might create financial liabilities or risks for the Group or for the Geological Society.

If funding for a one-off activity is required, an application including a repayment plan should be made to the Director of Science & Engagement for approvals before any commitments are made.

Expenditure:

Invoices for any Group expenditure must be addressed directly to the Group and not centrally to the Society, though the Society's address may be used for invoice purposes.

Unless other arrangements have been previously agreed by the Director of Science & Engagement in writing, the Group will be directly responsible for the costs of refreshments and other catering for scientific and committee meetings, including those held at the Society.

Capital Expenditure, the purchase of any asset above £1,000 with a useful life beyond 12 months, must not be purchased nor any depreciation calculated.

Audit requirements:

At the beginning of each calendar year, the Treasurer and Chair are responsible for submitting the financial return to the Society's Finance department ahead of the specified deadline. A template will be provided in advance, and reporting should focus on the previous calendar year's finances.

Please note that *benefits in kind*, i.e. any non-cash advantage or service provided that would otherwise have a monetary value, must be reported to the Finance team as part of the annual audit.

Surplus & Deficit:

A balance of up to £20,000 can sit in the account year on year for the Group to spend on activity that aligns to Group aims and objectives in line with Society values and policies. Amounts beyond this will be consolidated into central Society accounts annually.

Groups must not have any credit or overdraft facilities. If there is a risk that the account may reach zero, the Group should contact the Director of Finance & Operations at the earliest opportunity. Subject to GSL's rules for internal grant allocations, grants from the Society for specific Group activities may be applied for if balances are below £5,000 within any given year, and requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Director of Science & Engagement alongside the Director of Finance & Operations.

ANNEX C: SCHEDULE OF FEES FOR EVENTS HEAD OF EVENTS CAN EDIT/AMEND

The arrangements set out in this Annex do not require Council approval.

The fee levels are agreed by the Society's Conference Office in line with approved budgets and apply to all Society events, including Group events.

Registration types are defined by membership category against membership numbers (where relevant). The below fees are correct for the 2025 calendar year and may be updated on an annual basis by the Head of Events.

	One Day Event		Two Day Event	
	Virtual	**In-person**	**Virtual**	**In-person**
Fellows	£50	£140	£90	£190
Student Members	£0	£15	£0	£25
Non-Fellows	£80	£275	£130	£325
Student Non-member	£15	£30	£25	£45
Retired Fellows	£50	£140	£90	£190
Low-income Fellows	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc
Corporate Patron/Partner	£60	£145	£110	£225

Fees may only be varied on occasion for specific reasons (e.g. sponsorship offsetting registration costs) and with the express written agreement of the Director of Science & Engagement. Please get in touch as early as possible to discuss any ideas or options for your event(s).

For any enquiries relating to Society or Group events, please contact the Conferences team.

ANNEX D: GROUP ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES GROUPS CAN AMEND/EDIT

The arrangements set out in this Annex do not require Council approval.

The UK PLANETARY FORUM Group maintains a committee that constitutes ordinary members in line with 5.2.

Leadership roles within the Group are:

- Co-Chair (2) - Responsible for chairing or delegating meetings tasks, setting the strategic vision, finalising decisions co-ordinating the other teams.
- Treasurer - Responsible for all activity pertaining to the accounts.
- Secretary - Responsible for recording official meetings (agenda, minutes, actions) and maintaining the calendar (future meetings invites key events).
- Partnership Officer(s) (co-opted) - responsible for communications with RAS/Geolsoc.

Communication roles within the Group are:

- Communications Co-ordinator - Responsible for co-ordinating and leading the Group communications strategy.
- Webmaster - Responsible for the maintenance of the website (hosted by Weebly) i.e., implementing updates requested by committee members in a timely manner.
- Social Media Officer - Responsible for taking the initiative in keeping the Group's social media content (currently Instagram and LinkedIn) updated and current i.e., implementing updates requested by committee members in a timely manner.
- E-mail Master - Responsible for monitoring the Group email inbox (run on JISC mail), dealing with list membership requests and forwarding requests and incoming emails to the appropriate committee members.

Representation roles within the Group are:

- EDIA Representative (2) - Responsible for constructively examining all activities of the Group and contributing practical amendments to better support commonly excluded or underrepresented sections of the population.

Operational roles within the Group are:

- Meetings and Sponsorship Co-ordinator - Responsible for the long-term continuity and BPSC/ECM location and local organizing committee selection. Option to support the arrangement of ad hoc meetings as needs of community see fit. To work with the chair/treasurer/representatives to draft applications and seek out opportunities.
- ECM Representative (2) - Responsible for working with the ECR local organising committee.
- Awards Officer - Responsible for administration of travel funds and other awards (advertisement, collating applications organising application reviews and collecting impact information).
- Outreach Officer

1. *Duties of the Co-Chairs*

1.1. The duties of the Group Co-Chairs include:

1.1.1. Prepare or approve the Agenda for each Committee meeting, ensuring that both regular business and additional items are dealt with appropriately.

1.1.2. Chair Committee meetings.

1.1.3. Ensure the good working of the Committee, that it understands the objectives and deliverables of the Group, and that it promotes the values of the Group and the Society.

1.1.4. Ensure the appropriate induction of new Committee members.

1.1.5. Respond on behalf of the Committee when required to enquiries or proposals from third parties, subject to the guidance provided on External Communications in consultation with the Society's Press Office, as defined in Annex A.

1.1.6. Represent the Group at events if required.

2. *Duties of the Treasurer*

2.1. The duties of the Group Treasurer include:

2.1.1. Regularly review the Groups finances, and prepare reports where required

2.1.2. Provide an Annual Review and Financial Report and present these to the

AGM

2.1.3. Review of the finances of each Group event, e.g. scientific meetings

2.1.4. Present an annual review of all Group income and expenditure together with recommendations to assist future events planning

2.1.5. Prepare an annual budget for the approval of the committee at the AGM

2.1.6. Approve expenses claims for the Student Representative and Committee members where they meet Society requirements, in line with 10.2

2.1.7. Liaise with the Society's Finance department on budgets and annual reporting in line with audit requirements

3. Duties of Committee Members

3.1. Attend the AGM and Committee meetings, via remote options or in person where available.

3.2. Convene or co-convene a scientific meeting or other event (where appropriate) during term of service.

3.2.1. There must be an active member of the Committee on the convening group for each Group event to assist with event planning, liaise with the Treasurer on budgets, and to provide feedback to the Committee after the event.

3.3. Ensure that sufficient appropriate nominations are made for new members of the Committee, giving regard to the desirability of a balanced and diverse Committee with the skills, discipline knowledge, experience, industrial and academic background to keep the Group at the forefront of its field, whilst also respecting the Society's aims to be an inclusive and welcoming home for all.

ANNEX E: AWARDS & MEDALS GROUPS CAN EDIT/AMEND

The arrangements set out in this Annex do not require Council approval.

A member of the Group's Committee shall assist the Society in finding nominations for its Medals and Awards, particularly those that are most relevant to the discipline focus of the Group.

More information on the Society Awards and Medals, and the years in which they are awarded, online.

[INSERT GROUP-SPECIFIC MEDALS AND AWARDS HERE IF RELEVANT]

ANNEX F: SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY & GUIDANCE HEAD OF POLICY & COMMS CAN AMEND

The arrangements set out in this Annex do not require Council approval.

This policy and guidance below are designed to support Groups in navigating their social media and online presence in a way that is compliant with UK law and Society rules and regulations. Any queries or concerns should be addressed to the Society via their Press Office or Comms team, whichever is most relevant.

Social Media Guidance (Groups)

This guidance applies to all social media channels managed by groups and networks of the Geological Society of London.

This guidance exists to ensure that the quality and nature of social media content associated with the Geological Society promotes positive reputation, minimises risk, drives engagement, and contributes to a welcoming and inclusive online presence.

Guidance on style has been developed to ensure the Society's online presence has a consistent appearance, tone and voice which contributes to the recognition, strength and trustworthiness of The Geological Society brand.

Content Principles

You should only post relevant and appropriate content on social media channels associated with The Geological Society. Examples of relevant and appropriate content include;

1. *Up to date* – social media can effectively communicate news-based content such as interesting and important events, announcements and updates relevant to the geoscience community and our followers.
2. *Exciting* – social media can share exciting, pioneering, cutting edge and fun content that a community can engage with and connect over. This content can encourage, inspire and engage both those with geoscience expertise and the interested layperson.

3. *In touch* – social media can offer a unique and valuable listening tool you can use to learn and understand more about our community. Pay attention to what your followers are posting about and use that to guide your content strategy.

Visuals

Make sure to consider whether visuals you post on social media:

- Meet the aspect ratio requirements of the platform you are posting to, and are therefore of sufficient quality
- Meet minimum accessibility and EDIA requirements. Please refer to The Geological Society's Social Media EDIA Checklist for further guidance.

Regarding image rights:

- Only use images that you have the rights to post on social media, have purchased via a stock image service, or are out of copyright.
- Images under a Creative Commons license must include the credit line exactly as specified in the license.
- Where possible aim to embed any credit line into the image itself.

Tone of Voice

What we sound like – Aim to speak like the people you want to reach online. Avoid formal language, whilst remaining polite and clear.

Who we are - We are relatable, reassuring, accessible, and trustworthy. We support and encourage a community of like-minded individuals to interact with us and each other.

Who we are not – A source of misinformation, abuse, hatred, or misconduct. We do not aim to advise or consult via social media and although we are often considered to represent the geoscience community, we do not speak on their behalf.

Write like you would speak. Using less complex language is important for accessibility and reach. We want our community to understand what we are talking about, especially if they are not experts.

Tagging

Tagging individuals or institutions in relevant posts is a great way of boosting the reach and overall engagement of a post. It is better to tag a few choice accounts rather than spam tagging a long list. Be cautious to tag the right accounts or people and always remove a tag if requested to. Examples of when tagging may be useful:

- Conference contributors
- Authors
- Collaborators

Hashtags

On most platforms one or two hashtags will have more impact than many (except on Instagram feed posts where more tend to lead to greater reach and therefore engagement). Only use hashtags where they add value – there is no need to use them in every post.

Keep hashtags short, simple and memorable. Very broad hashtags such as #Geology or #Geoscience will tend to be less effective than more specific keywords such as #Volcanology or #Contamination as our content will get lost in broader search terms.

Check that hashtags are recently active and contain relevant content before posting.

Be aware that for some, hashtags make the post less legible and for those using screen readers or other assistive technology hashtags can be an impediment to clarity.

GSL Social Media Policy (Groups)

This policy covers use of any social media accounts representing or used by groups of The Geological Society and personal use of social media when acting as a representative of the Geological Society. This policy sets out what you need to be aware of when using social media and has been designed to support users to raise our profile and engage with their online communities, whilst protecting the Society, its reputation, and minimising any legal or safeguarding concerns.

What is social media?

Social media is the term given to web-based tools and applications which enable users to create and share content (words, images, audio and video), and network with each other through the sharing of information, opinions, knowledge and interests. Examples of social media include Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), LinkedIn and Instagram.

Why use social media?

Groups of The Geological Society may use social media to communicate with their followers and promote or advertise opportunities or activities. Social media can be a valuable communication tool when looking to raise the profile of activity with non-member audiences, driving engagement with events and activity.

Why do we need a social media policy?

There is a difference between personal and professional use of social media, particularly if you're engaging with issues relating to The Geological Society's work. While the Society permits groups to use social media in support of our aims, it should be noted that publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary in the public domain.

Point of contact for social media

The management of social media is the responsibility of the Geological Society's Communications Team which consists of our Head of Policy and Communications, supported by our Policy and Communication Officer.

If you have questions about this document, your use of social media, or would like advice, support, or to request training, the Communications Team should be your first point of contact who can be reached via email [outreach@geolsoc.org.uk].

Using social media channels to represent The Geological Society (Groups)

Conduct

Users are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner online and always follow principles of best practice. Generally;

- Be an ambassador for our brand. Users of all social media channels associated with The Geological Society should reflect the Society's values in what they post. For guidance on the recommended style and tone of voice to use when representing The Geological Society on social media, users should consult the Social Media Guidelines.
- Make sure that all content has a purpose and ultimately contributes to the aims and purpose of The Geological Society. Channels operated by groups should only be used for group activity and business.
- Bring value to our audience(s). Answer their questions, help and engage with them. Please remember to act as a professional and respectful and responsible ambassador for the Geological Society when doing so.
- Take care with the presentation of content. Make sure that there are no typos, misspellings or grammatical errors. Check the quality of images and refer to our Social Media EDI Checklist to ensure that content is meeting minimum accessibility requirements.

Partner Content

- Users should not post content about individuals or organisations without their permission. This content should be clearly labelled (i.e. with partner logos) so our audiences know it has not come directly from The Geological Society.

Safeguarding, Legal and Permissions

- If using content that contains identifiable features of a child or young person, Users must ensure they have the consent of a parent or guardian.
- Never use social media channels to encourage others to risk their personal safety or that of others.

- Users should not break the law to supply material for social media, such as using unauthorised photographs, excerpts or videos. All relevant rights for usage must be obtained before posting.

Accuracy, Error and Opinion

- Always check facts. Users should not assume that content is accurate and should take reasonable steps where necessary to seek verification, for example, by checking data/statistics and being wary of image manipulation.
- If you've made a mistake, don't be afraid to admit it, and liaise with the Communications Team directly about how to resolve.
- Users should avoid sharing personal opinions via channels associated with The Geological Society either directly by commenting and responding to posts or indirectly by 'liking', 'sharing' or 'retweeting'.
- The Geological Society is not a political organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties. Social media users may not express views on policy, including the policies of parties, and we do not lobby nor should we ever advise people how to vote.

Complaints and Feedback

If a complaint is made on a social media channel, users should notify and seek advice from the Head of Policy and Communications. Feedback received via social media should be shared with the Head of Policy and Communications so it can be directed to the relevant department and recorded.

Crisis Response

Sometimes issues can arise on social media which can escalate to a crisis because they are sensitive or risk serious damage to our reputation. Examples might include: accusations against the Society or its members, breaches of code of conduct, safeguarding issues, or risks to reputation through unauthorised posting of video or photo content. The nature of social media means that issues are visible and can escalate quickly. Not acting can be detrimental so it is imperative that all crises are reported quickly and accurately. Users

should notify the Head of Policy and Communications in the instance of a crisis, who will enact the Society's *Social Media Crisis Management Plan*.

Use of personal social media accounts — appropriate conduct

This policy does not intend to restrict or inhibit personal use of social media but instead aims to minimise areas in which conflict or concerns might arise.

1. Be aware that any information you make public could affect how people perceive The Geological Society. You must make it clear when you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of The Geological Society. If you are using your personal social media accounts to talk about The Geological Society's work, we request that you use a disclaimer such as: "Views expressed are my own."

2. Use common sense and good judgement. Be aware of your association with The Geological Society and ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself to the public, colleagues, partners and funders.

3. Please don't approach people from your personal social media accounts to discuss the work of The Geological Society. This includes asking for retweets about the Society's work, requesting financial or voluntary support, or seeking contributions or collaborations.

4. If any user of social media is contacted by the press about their social media posts that relate to or may be associated with The Geological Society, they should talk to the Press Office immediately and under no circumstances respond directly.

5. The Geological Society is not a political organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties. When representing The Geological Society, users are expected to hold The Geological Society's position of neutrality. Users who are politically active

must clearly separate their personal political identity from The Geological Society and avoid conflicts of interest.

6. Never use The Geological Society's logos or trademarks unless approved to do so. Permission to use logos should be requested from the Geological Society's Brand Group.

7. Always protect yourself and the Society. Be careful with your privacy online and be cautious when sharing personal information. What you publish online is widely accessible and will be around for a long time, so do consider the content carefully. When you are using social media, it is important that you do so safely.

8. Think about your reputation as well as the Society's. Express your opinions and deal with differences of opinion respectfully. Don't insult people or treat them badly. Passionate discussions and debates are fine, but you should always be respectful of others and their opinions. Be polite and the first to correct your own mistakes.

9. We encourage groups and their members to share posts that the Society makes from its main social media channels. When online in a personal capacity, you might also see opportunities to comment on or support The Geological Society and the work we do. Where appropriate and using the guidelines within this policy, we encourage you to do this as it provides a human voice and raises our profile. However, if any content is controversial or misrepresented, please highlight this to the Communications Team.

Additional legal and safety guidelines

Libel

Libel is when a false written statement that is damaging to a person's reputation is published online or in print. Whether social users are posting content on social media on behalf of the group or in a personal capacity, they should not bring The Geological Society into disrepute by making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups.

Copyright law

It is critical that all social media users abide by the laws governing copyright, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. Never use or adapt someone else's images or written content without permission. Failing to acknowledge the source/author/resource citation, where permission has been given to reproduce content, is also considered a breach of copyright. The Geological Society will not be responsible for breaches of copyright by groups.

Confidentiality

Any posts that users make must not breach confidentiality. For example, information meant for internal use only or information that The Geological Society is not ready to disclose yet. For example, a news story that is embargoed for a particular date.

Discrimination and harassment

Users should not post content that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, on either a group social media channel or a personal account. For example:

- making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief
- using social media to bully another individual
- posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such content

Under 18s and vulnerable people

Young and vulnerable people face particular risks when using social media. They may be more at risk of being bullied, publishing sensitive and personal information on their profiles, or from becoming targets for online grooming.

When communicating with people under 18-years-old via social media, users must ensure the online relationship follows the same format and conduct as any offline 'real-life' relationship. As social media users may not always know the age, or vulnerability, of those they are communicating with, they must ensure that any posts or messages are appropriate for any ages permitted to use the social media channel in question.

ANNEX G: GDPR GUIDELINES FOR GROUPS SOCIETY DPO CAN EDIT/AMEND

The arrangements set out in this Annex do not require Council approval.