

S. D. A. G.

C O N S T I T U T I O N

1. NAME:

The Group will be known as :-

SOCIALIST DISABILITY ACTION GROUP

2. OBJECTS:

"The Group recognises that there are people with physical, mental and sensory impairments, who are disabled by society from participating fully in the social, economic and cultural life of the community. The Group's aims are to encourage their political expression within the context of Socialist ideals in order that they may gain control in directing every aspect of their lives and to initiate and participate in campaigns on all issues affecting disabled people."

3. MEMBERSHIP:

(i) There shall be two classes of Members

(a) Individual Members.

(b) Affiliated Organisations.

(ii) Individual membership is open to any person over the age of 15 years, disabled or able-bodied, who subscribes to the conditions of Membership.

(iii) AFFILIATED ORGANISATIONS:

(a) Organisations of disabled people, socialist organisations and other organisations whose views are consistent and compatible with the group.

(b) Trade Unions or Branches thereof who are affiliated to the Trade Union Congress.

(c) Constituency Labour Parties or Branches of the Labour Party.

(d) Co-operative Parties, Branches of the Co-operative Party and other Co-operative Organisations.

(e) Trades Councils.

Affiliations may be at Branch, Regional or National level and applications must be accepted by National Group.

4. CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP:

(a) On application for membership, individual members should indicate whether they are disabled.

(b) Each individual member and affiliated organisation must conform to the Constitution and Standing Orders of the Group and accept the agreed programme of and the principles of the Group.

5. ENROLMENT OF INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS:

Application to become a Member, shall be made on an Application Form, and be handed to the Secretary of a local Branch and, when approved, a Membership Card will be issued on payment of an agreed subscription. Membership shall be for the calendar year January to December.

(Note: Of course, until Branches are set up, alternative arrangements will have to be made, e.g. Officers of Steering Committee to receive applications and put members in local areas in touch with each other, and assist in inauguration of Branch).

6. METHOD OF ORGANISATION:

- (a) There shall be established throughout the country, local Branches, Regional Committees and a National Steering Committee.
- (b) The National Steering Committee shall also be empowered to set up a postal branch for those Members who have not a branch locally.

7. SETTING UP OF BRANCHES AND REGIONAL COMMITTEES:

- (a) Setting up of Branches - Branches may be established on the approval of the National Steering Committee, and shall consist of individual Members in their own locality and delegates of local affiliated organisations.
- (b) Regional Committees shall be established by the National Steering Committee.

8. MANAGEMENT OF THE GROUP:

- (a) Management of the Group shall be in the hands of the individual members through the Branches, Regional Committees and National Steering Committee.
- (b) Each Branch, Regional Committee and National Steering Committee shall have three Officers, a Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer, who shall be persons with disabilities, and an Executive Committee of whom at least two-thirds shall be persons with disabilities.

9. APPOINTMENT OF DELEGATES:

- (a) Appointment of Delegates from Branches to Regional Committees, shall be from amongst their approved Members.
- (b) Appointment of Delegates to National Steering Committee shall be by ballot on a Regional basis; the ballot to be carried out at the same time as for National Officers, each Regional Committee shall appoint a named deputy at the first meeting after the declaration of the results of the ballot. National Steering Committee to consist of disabled persons only.

10. SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Subscriptions of individual Members shall be:

£3.00 per Member per Annum.

£1.00 per Unwaged Member per Annum

and thereafter as determined by the A.G.M. of the National Group.

11. AFFILIATION OF GROUPS/ORGANISATIONS

(a) National Organisations and Groups can affiliate to the National Steering Group at a minimum of £15.00 per annum, and thereafter as determined by the A.G.M. of the National Group.

(b) Local Organisations and Groups can affiliate to local Branches at a minimum of £5.00 and thereafter as determined by the A.G.M. of the Regional Committee.

12. (a) Two-thirds of all Members subscriptions and affiliation fees shall be forwarded to Central Funds.

(b) Local Branches shall affiliate to Regional Committees at a rate to be determined by the A.G.M. of the Regional Committee.

(c) The Steering Group will make financial allocations to Regional Committees as necessary for them to carry out their activities.

13. FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS:

(a) The National Steering Group shall meet at least four times each year - dates of ordinary meeting to be determined at the first meeting of the Steering Group.

(b) Regional Committees shall meet at least four times each year, determined by each Committee, one of which shall be the A. G. M.

(c) Branches shall determine frequency of their meetings, but at least four meetings shall be convened each year, one of which shall be the A.G.M.

14. ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

(a) Election of Officers to the Steering Committee shall be every two years by National Postal Ballot.

(b) Nomination papers shall be sent to all Branches and affiliated organisations three months prior to the date fixed for the National Ballot, and the results declared within three weeks of the closing date of the Ballot. Elected persons shall take office at the first meeting of the Steering Committee following the declaration of the Ballot.

- (c) The election of Officers of the Regional Committee shall be taken at their A.G.M. Nomination Papers will be sent to Branches three months before the A.G.M. and received back into the hands of the Regional Secretary one month prior to the A.G.M.
- (d) Branches shall elect their Officers from amongst their own Members at their A.G.M.
- (e) Branches, Regional Committees and the National Steering Committee shall elect its own Executive Committee from amongst its Members or Delegates.

15. FUNCTION OF GROUP:

- (a) Branches shall organise and recruit Members to carry out activities in their local areas to promote the Objects of the Group, to discuss and help formulate policies in line with the Objects of the Group, and to participate in Regional and National activities.
- (b) Regional Committees shall co-ordinate the activities of the Branches, assist in recruitment and publicity, and assist and participate in National Campaigns etc.
- (c) The National Steering Committee shall co-ordinate all National activities and Campaigns, prepare and submit Nationally agreed policies of the Group, organise meetings, Seminars and Conferences, where and when appropriate.

16. The National Steering Committee shall seek affiliation to the Labour Party as set out in Clauses III and IV of the Labour Party Rules.

17. VOTING RIGHTS:

- (a) Each individual Member shall have a vote on all matters, including Elections.
- (b) Affiliated organisations shall have voting rights at the level they have affiliated through their delegates on the basis of one delegate per affiliated organisation and one vote per delegate.

18. REPRESENTATION:

- (a) Representation on Regional Committees shall be three delegates from each Branch within its Area for the first 50 Members or part thereof, and one additional Delegate for each further 50 Members or part thereof, up to a maximum of 6 Delegates.
- (b) Where Regional Organisations are affiliated to a Regional Committee of the Group, they shall be entitled to nominate one Delegate to serve on the Regional Committee.
- (c) Representation on the National Steering Committee shall be one Delegate from each Regional Area, plus the three Officers.

19. REGIONAL AREAS:

There shall be twelve Regional Areas, which will be:

Southern, South-West, Greater London, North Eastern, Scotland, Wales, North-West, East Midlands, West Midlands, Northern, Eastern, Northern Ireland. The boundaries to be determined by the National Steering Committee.

20. BRANCH AREAS:

Branch Areas shall, where possible and practicable, be based on Parliamentary Constituency boundaries.

21. EXTRAORDINARY MEETING:

An Extraordinary Meeting of Members can be called by the National Steering Committee, or at the written request of 40% of Registered Branches.

22. AMENDMENT TO CONSTITUTION:

Amendments to Constitution shall be taken at the General Meeting, and shall be carried by a two-thirds majority.

23. DISSOLUTION OF GROUP:

Should the Steering Committee propose that the Group be dissolved, an Extraordinary Meeting shall be called of all Members. A Motion shall be put dissolving the Group, and arranging the distribution of any monies left after settlement of all outstanding financial commitments of the Group.

24. The financial affairs of the National Group shall be entrusted to the Treasurer and two Trustees, who shall be elected by National Ballot. They shall bank all monies of the National Group with Co-operative Bank PLC. and shall withdraw all monies by cheque with two out of the three signatures of the Treasurer and two Trustees as directed by the National Steering Committee.