

25th Sep 2006

Amaravati Lay Buddhist Association Constitution

1. The Amaravati Lay Buddhist Association

The Amaravati Upasaka - Upasika Association hereafter referred to as the ALBA do hereby adopt and set forth this "Constitution".

2. The purpose of the ALBA is as follows:

- 2.1 To support lay Buddhist practice
- 2.2 To support a community of lay Buddhist practitioners
- 2.3 To develop a framework for lay Buddhist practice
- 2.4 To disseminate Buddhist teaching
- 2.5 To support contact with the monastic Sangha

2.6 No change to the existing ALBA Constitution may be made without prior publication of the proposed change in the Community Newsletter (at least one month before the change is applied).

3. Membership

3.1 Membership of the ALBA will be open to all who support the ALBA purpose and whose application to join is accepted by the ALBA Committee. Members of the ALBA are described as 'Members'.

3.2 Members will have their contact and personal details recorded by the ALBA Committee Secretary, Membership Secretary or delegate.

3.3 Membership of the ALBA is ceased by the member resigning in writing from the Association.

3.4 The ALBA Committee may also decide to terminate the Membership of any Member.

3.5 A copy of this Constitution will be available to each new Member via the ALBA Web Site.

4. Management

4.1 The Committee of the ALBA, hereafter referred to as "the Committee" will comprise of a maximum of 15 volunteers. Suggested roles are: Chairman; Secretary; Treasurer; Membership Secretary; Publications Co-ordinators; Event Manager.

4.2 Other roles may be identified subject to contributions offered by Committee Members and the need.

4.3 The Committee exists for the purpose of supporting the aims of the ALBA, supporting the Members and liaising with the Monastic Sangha on ALBA matters.

4.4 Specific functions are to:

4.4.1 Agree and evolve the objectives of the ALBA

4.4.2 Formulate ideas and organise activities which support the aims of the ALBA

4.4.3 Canvass opinion from ALBA Members on events; activities and ALBA

4.4.4 Maintain an ALBA Membership Database

4.4.5 Inform Members of events.

4.5 The Committee may appoint or co-opt volunteer Members to serve on sub-Committees or undertake specific activities as appropriate. Co-opted Members will not be eligible to vote at Committee meetings and are referred to as 'Associate Committee Members'.

4.6 All Committee and Associate Committee Members will serve for four years (reforming at the end of May every 4th year) and will be appointed from the Membership.

4.7 The Committee may vote by a simple majority to remove any Committee member (or Associate Member) from the Committee, provided that 8 or more Committee Members are in attendance.

4.7 Recommended Committee Roles

4.7.1 A Chairman may preside at Committee meetings and ensure that rules are impartially observed, oversee activities and attend to other duties which the nature of the post may require.

4.7.2 The Treasurer will be responsible for the financial affairs of the ALBA. He or she will keep records of all money transactions and render periodic reports to the Committee as they may require. A bank account will be maintained in the name of Amaravati Upasaka & Upasika Association (ALBA). The Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary will be signatories (either to sign).

4.7.3 The Secretary will ensure that the ALBA Constitution and Web Site are maintained, that appropriate information is available about the ALBA and that minutes and records are maintained.

4.7.4 The Membership Secretary will maintain a database of Members, mailing lists and associated information

4.7.5 Publications Co-ordinators will prepare and distribute invitations, information and letters to Members on the ALBA mailing list in accordance with Committee decisions.

- 4.7.6 Events Managers will organise events in accordance with decisions made at Committee meetings.
- 4.7.7 The Committee may appoint an examiner to audit the ALBA financial records.
- 4.7.8 The Committee Members will try to assist the Committee whenever called to do so and will ensure that the business is conducted impartially in accordance with the Constitution.
- 4.7.9 Committee Members may resign in writing to the Chairman.
- 4.7.10 If a Committee Member resigns part way through his or her term, a new Committee Member may be appointed for the remainder of the term.
- 4.7.11 A new Committee Member will be identified by the current Committee Members at a Committee meeting.
- 4.7.12 A replacement Committee Member will be introduced at an Annual Community Meeting or other ALBA event at which Members are present.
- 4.7.13 Committee meetings will be quorate if 6 or more Committee Members are in attendance or 8 for changes to the Constitution.

4.8 Committee Formation Procedures

- 4.8.1 At the end of the Committee 4 year tenure the outgoing Committee has the responsibility for identifying the new Committee. The new Committee details will be published in the Community Newsletter.
- 4.8.2 Committee Members and Associate Committee Members will be selected from the ALBA Membership. Full Committee Members will be required to have been Members for at least 2 years, whilst Associate Committee Members will have no ALBA Membership time requirement.
- 4.8.3 ALBA Members will volunteer their services as an Associate Committee Members or a Committee Members. If there is a vacancy (there are 15 Committee Members positions), then the committee will discuss and agree giving the position to a volunteer. In the absence of a full Committee Member's position, volunteers may be offered an Associate Committee Member's position.
- 4.8.4 The tenure of the complete committee (Committee Members and Associate Committee Members) is 4 years. Every 4 years, the Members of the old committee will be able to reconfirm that they wish to continue. Any resultant Committee Member vacancies will be filled from Associate Committee Members volunteers.
- 4.8.5 The Committee Members and Associate Committee Members for the new committee will be published in Community.

4.8.6 Any internal structuring of the Committee (selection for various roles) will be agreed by that Committee, and if thought appropriate be recorded as 'standing orders'. Roles should ideally be kept to a minimum and be adopted when appropriate.

5. Procedures

5.1 If required, procedures defining the conduct of the day to day operation of the Committee will be detailed in the Committee Standing Orders, which will be amended from time to time by the Committee at Committee or Special Committee meetings.

5.2 No existing standing order rule may be amended or a new rule added unless it is approved by a simple majority of Committee Members at a Committee or Special Committee meeting, provided the meeting is quorate.

6. Meetings

6.1 There will be an Annual Community Meeting (ACM) on a date to be decided by the Committee. Notice of this meeting will be displayed at Amaravati or published in the Community Newsletter prior to the meeting. The basic purpose of the ACM is to review the working of the ALBA over the previous year.

6.2 'Special Community Meetings' may be called from time to time. These may form part of other events which are open to all Members.

6.3 There will be approximately 4 Committee Meetings each year on dates to be determined by the Committee. These meetings are open to non-Committee Members of the ALBA by prior agreement with the Chairman.

7. Finance

7.1 Funds may be raised and donations collected to further the aims of the ALBA. Surplus funds may be passed to the English Sangha Trust for the maintenance of the Monastic Sangha or to other good causes subject to agreement by the Committee.

8. Amendment of Constitution

8.1 The Constitution clauses may be amended from time to time by the Committee. Changes may be described at the ACM or at other ALBA events to the Members attending. Prior description of proposed changes will be made in the Community Newsletter or by display at Amaravati for the purpose of informing the Membership and eliciting any feedback. (Clause 2.6 applies here).