

D1 Constitution

Organization: Democracy and Accountability Committee
Resolution date: 10/29/2020
Agenda item: D Amendments to Constitution/Standing Orders

1 Young Greens Constitution 2020/2021

2 Article 1: Name, Membership and Objectives

3 1.1 The name of the organisation is “Young Greens of England and Wales”.

4 1.2 The accepted abbreviations are “Young Greens” or “YG” and in all
5 publications this name and abbreviations shall be synonymous.

6 1.3 The geographical boundaries of the Young Greens are England and Wales.

7 1.4 The Young Greens aim to encourage young people to become active in politics
8 and within the Green Party of England and Wales.

9 1.5 The Young Greens consists of all members of the Green Party of England and
10 Wales:

11 1.5.1 aged 29 years or less;

12 1.5.2 full-time students regardless of age;

13 1.6 Membership of the Young Greens includes voting rights to all elections in
14 accordance with this constitution.

15 1.7 An individual’s membership of the Young Greens can be permanently terminated
16 by an absolute two-thirds majority vote of the Executive Committee with the
17 agreement of the Chair of the Democracy and Accountability Committee. Where the
18 individual is a member of those committees, they will not be able to vote on or
19 be required to approve the termination and the absolute two-thirds majority will
20 exclude that individual.

21 1.8 Termination of membership can only occur if their membership is considered
22 to be detrimental to the work of the Young Greens. Prior to that, however, the
23 Young Greens Complaints and Disputes Procedure should have been used, as
24 outlined in Article 5.

25 Article 2: Organisation

26 2.1 The Young Greens is composed of individual members, committees and
27 Affiliated Groups, whose constitutions, aims and values should be consistent
28 with those of the Young Greens and the Green Party of England and Wales.

29 2.2 The Young Greens will be run by an Executive Committee, defined in Byelaw 1.

30 2.3 There will be a Democracy and Accountability Committee with responsibility
31 for constitutional affairs and inclusivity, as defined in Byelaw 2.

32 2.4 There will be a Green Students Committee consisting of two Co-Convenors and
33 five Non-Portfolio Officers, defined in Byelaw 4.

34 2.5 The Executive Committee, Democracy and Accountability Committee and the
35 Green Students Committee Co-Convenors will be elected at the Young Greens Annual
36 General Meeting according to the provisions in Section D of the Standing Orders.

37 2.6 Subcommittees may be formed either by a member of the Executive Committee,
38 where a simple majority vote of the Executive Committee has passed, or by a
39 petition of 25 members to a General Meeting.

40 2.7 All other groups outside of the committees defined in sections 2.2-2.5 will
41 be named Affiliated Groups, including Groups for the Regions of England, Wales,
42 Local Groups or Liberation Groups.

43 2.8 Affiliated Group constitutions should state that they are a part of the
44 Young Greens of England and Wales and not contradict the Young Greens
45 constitution in any way.

46 2.9 For a group to be affiliated, they must be accepted by an absolute majority
47 vote of the Executive Committee.

48 2.10 The Executive Committee must keep a list of affiliated groups and review it
49 each year after Convention.

50 2.11 An affiliated group of the Young Greens can be disaffiliated by an absolute
51 two-thirds majority vote of the Executive Committee if they are in violation of
52 this constitution or if their membership is considered detrimental to the work
53 of the Young Greens.

54 **Article 3: Amendment of the Constitution**

55 3.1 This constitution may only be amended by a two-thirds majority vote at a
56 General Meeting.

57 3.2 The byelaws to this constitution which all have the status of parts of this
58 constitution may be amended, created or revoked by a two-thirds majority vote at
59 a General Meeting.

60 3.3 A minor change to the constitution and standing orders, for the purpose of
61 the editing power that is held by DAC, is defined as one where the meaning of a
62 clause, or outcome of a clause, has not been altered (although it may be
63 clarified), nor additional clauses introduced; and the change is for the
64 purposes of correcting errors or inconsistencies in typography, spelling, or
65 grammar; clarifying a meaning, or correcting the numbering of clauses.

66 **Article 4: The Standing Orders**

67 4.1 The Standing Orders is a document which governs any elections within the
68 Young Greens and the processes of Convention and a General Meeting.

69 4.2 The Standing Orders must be followed at all times. They can be amended by a
70 two-thirds majority at a General Meeting.

71 4.3 Where there is a perceived contradiction between the Constitution and
72 Standing Orders, the Democracy and Accountability Committee shall rule on the
73 correct interpretation with precedence given to the Constitution.

74 Article 5: Complaints and Disputes

75 5.1 There shall be a Complaints and Disputes Subcommittee (C&D) of the Democracy
76 and Accountability Committee.

77 5.2 C&D will be constituted of a permanent representative from the Democracy and
78 Accountability Committee (hereby known as the DAC Rep), who will chair the
79 group, as well as four volunteers from the Young Greens membership, to make five
80 total members. Two of these four spaces should be advertised first to the Young
81 Greens Liberation Group Co-Chairs, with priority given to Young Greens of Colour
82 and Young Greens Women of Colour, before being opened to the wider membership if
83 no volunteers step forward who are Liberation Group Co-Chairs. Where there are
84 too many volunteers, selection will be made by DAC; candidates may be put on a
85 reserve list that would be used when other members are recused (see 2.). Where
86 there are too few volunteers, the remaining membership will be drawn by lots
87 from: Co-Convenors of Groups of the Regions of England, and Wales; Green
88 Students Committee members; and Young Green Liberation Group Co-Chairs. At least
89 two members of C&D should not be self-defining men.

90 5.3. C&D should have 5 participating members for every case dealt with. A
91 reserve list of members may be created by DAC in order to ensure that this is
92 possible, as members may be taking leave of absence. It may also be that members
93 have personal interests in the outcome of a case, or possess personal or
94 professional relations, amicable or otherwise, with those involved in a case.
95 Applications for recusal may be made by members of C&D, DAC, EC any Young Green
96 directly involved within a case, and are submitted to DAC, and may be done so by
97 or on the behalf of a member of C&D. A majority vote from DAC determines if a
98 member is recused. If the DAC Rep is recused, C&D is to vote on an acting Chair
99 for a case, who must be a member of C&D. Recusal should happen before the point
100 of formal intervention (the implementation of Section B.3).

101 5.4 C&D membership will be from its initiation until the following Young Greens
102 Convention, after which C&D will be re-formulated following Article 5.2. It is
103 permissible to re-volunteer. Complaints and Disputes will be dealt with by a
104 single C&D only and will not be passed on between re-formulations (except in the
105 case of resignations). This may lead to persons carrying out C&D duties for as
106 long as a complaint of dispute takes to judge on.

107 5.5 Members are to submit complaints based on breaches of the Young Greens
108 Constitution, Young Greens Standing Orders, Green Party Constitution, Green
109 Party Standing Orders, Green Party Code of Conduct or any other organisational
110 policies of the Green Party of England and Wales and Young Greens, including
111 anti-harassment and Safe Space policies.

112 5.6. Any complaints about another member of the Young Greens, or disputes that a
113 member feels they need help resolving, should go in the first instance to the
114 C&D. If for whatever reason a member does not feel comfortable approaching any
115 C&D member, they may go to Young Greens Staff, Young Greens Non-Portfolio
116 Officer with the Equality and Diversity Portfolio or to the Democracy and
117 Accountability Committee.

118 5.7 In the first instance when a complaint is lodged, a member of the C&D will
119 speak to involved parties and attempt to resolve the issue informally whilst
120 maintaining clear records, in accordance with Article 5.14.

121 5.8 Where any involved parties feel that hasn't worked, or where any parties
122 refuse the informal intervention, the complaint should be made in writing. All
123 involved parties will have equal chance to state their own case.

124 5.9 C&D Subcommittee will consider the complaint and make a judgment, in
125 writing, to all parties. Judgements should include a ruling on whether there
126 have been breaches of the Young Greens Constitution, Young Greens Standing
127 Orders, Green Party Constitution, Green Party Standing Orders, Green Party Code
128 of Conduct or any other organisational policies of the Green Party of England
129 and Wales and Young Greens, including anti-harassment and Safe Space policies.

130 5.10 After a judgement, C&D Subcommittee will make a recommendation of action to
131 either or both complainants. In cases where there is a need for disciplinary
132 action, to DAC or another relevant body where appropriate. These disciplinary
133 actions may include, but are not limited to:

134 5.10.1 Ban from Young Greens Events/Spaces, for a period of up to 12 months

135 5.10.2 Suspension of Young Greens membership, for a period of up to 12 months

136 5.10.3 Censure from holding a position within the Young Greens, for a period of
137 up to 12 months

138 5.10.4 Permanent termination of membership, as outlined in Article 1.7

139 5.11 Where the case is deemed to be serious enough, C&D Subcommittee may
140 recommend a suspension for the period of the investigation and which must be
141 agreed by the Chair of the Democracy and Accountability Committee.

142 5.12 If the recommended action(s) following a judgment are not followed by the
143 involved parties, C&D should make recommendations of action to the EC or DAC.

144 5.13 If an individual; wishes to appeal a judgment made by C&D, they may do so
145 by communicating to DAC. The grounds for an appeal are if new evidence emerges,
146 or if C&D broke procedure. DAC should look over the evidence presented by the
147 appellant and may make a ruling on whether the appeals process should be
148 initiated. In this case, appeals will be heard by a new group formulated on the
149 same basis as C&D in 5.3 but excluding C&D members that made the original
150 judgment. This may be drawn from the list of reserve members.

151 5.14 There should be clear minutes and records of actions kept of all C&D
152 meetings. These may be disclosed beyond C&D at the discretion of C&D
153 Subcommittee, and a need for confidentiality and fair treatment must be
154 considered. C&D are to submit reports of each case to DAC. DAC will then include
155 a general, anonymous summary of these in their annual report.

156 5.15 A response to all initial complaints should be made to the initiator of the
157 complaint within 48 hours of receiving the complaint, in which the standard
158 process is outlined to them and how C&D intend to carry out the informal
159 mediation.

160 5.16 Informal mediation should start within 5 days of a complaint or dispute
161 being lodged.

162 5.17 A judgment should be made within 3 weeks of a complaint or dispute being
163 lodged in writing following informal mediation failing or where the written
164 statement refuses informal mediation.

165 5.18 Any requests for updates from any involved party should be responded to
166 within 72 hours.

167 5.19 Extensions to these deadlines should be sought from DAC in extenuating
168 circumstances

169 5.20 Malicious complaints made against a Young Greens member are serious and a
170 breach of the principles outlined in the Constitution as well as the GPEW Code
171 of Conduct. C&D Subcommittee will dismiss malicious complaints and may notify
172 relevant parties that a malicious complaint has been made.

173 **Article 6: The Young Greens Record of Policy** 174 **Statements**

175 6.1 There shall be a Young Greens Record of Policy Statements (hereafter YG
176 RoPS) that contains contemporary policy statements from the Young Greens of
177 England and Wales.

178 6.2 Actions from Young Green bodies should not contradict statements in the
179 RoPS.

180 6.3 Statements may be submitted to the YG RoPS by a simple majority vote of a
181 motion submitted to Convention. Alternatively, statements may be submitted to
182 the YG RoPS by a simple majority vote of the Executive Committee, with the
183 consent of SPC. All statements added between Conventions are to be reported to
184 the following Young Greens Annual General Meeting by DAC and recorded in DAC
185 monthly reports.

186 6.4 Statements may be removed from the YG RoPS by a simple majority vote of a
187 motion submitted to Convention. Alternatively, statements may be removed from
188 the YG RoPS by a simple majority vote of the Executive Committee, with the
189 consent of DAC. All statements removed between Conventions are to be reported to
190 the following Young Greens Annual General Meeting by DAC and recorded in DAC
191 monthly reports.

192 6.5 After five years of a statement being entered into the YG RoPS, it is
193 considered to be in grace as recorded by DAC. This means that it will be
194 reported to be in grace to the following Young Greens Annual General Meeting by
195 DAC, who will give Convention the chance to vote on whether it should stay in
196 the YG RoPS, which requires a simple majority. This restarts the five-year
197 placement of that statement into the YG RoPS.

198 6.6 The YG RoPS should be publicly available.

199 **Article 7: The Young Greens Record of** 200 **Organisational Statements**

201 7.1 There shall be a Young Greens Record of Organisational Statements (hereafter
202 YG RoOS) that contains organisational policies from the Young Greens of England
203 and Wales.

204 7.2 Actions from Young Green bodies should not contradict statements in the
205 RoOS.

206 7.3 Statements may be submitted to the YG RoOS by a simple majority vote of a
 207 motion submitted to Convention. Alternatively, statements may be submitted to
 208 the YG RoOS by a simple majority vote of the EC, with the consent of SPC. All
 209 statements added between Conventions are to be reported to the following Young
 210 Greens Annual General Meeting by DAC and recorded in DAC monthly reports.

211 7.4 Statements may be removed from the YG RoOS by a simple majority vote of a
 212 motion submitted to Convention. Alternatively, statements may be removed from
 213 the YG RoOS by a simple majority vote of the EC, with the consent of DAC. All
 214 statements removed between Conventions are to be reported to the following Young
 215 Greens Annual General Meeting by DAC and recorded in DAC monthly reports.

216 7.5 Each year EC will review the RoOS and bring a list of statements they judge
 217 to be out of date to Convention for a vote of retention or removal.

218 7.6 The YG RoOS should be publicly available.

219 **Article 8: Safe Spaces Policy**

220 8.1 The Young Greens are committed to providing an environment free of racism,
 221 sexism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia, religious discrimination or any other
 222 types of oppression, including, but not limited to, oppression against non-
 223 binary identities and sex workers.

224 8.2 The Young Greens are committed to providing an environment free of bullying,
 225 name-calling or any forms of abusive behaviour.

226 8.3 The Young Greens are committed to challenging these types of oppression
 227 whenever they occur in Young Greens spaces.

228 8.4 The Young Greens are committed to having a victim centred approach when safe
 229 spaces are jeopardised.

230 8.5 The Young Greens will follow guidance regarding safe spaces in the RoOS.

231 8.6 When it comes from outside of the Young Greens but within the Green Party,
 232 individuals in the Young Greens are encouraged to report all forms of oppression
 233 or discrimination including hate crime to the Green Party of England and Wales
 234 through the standard complaints procedures for further investigation into these
 235 matters. Individuals may contact the Young Greens Complaints and Disputes
 236 Committee to receive support in doing so.

237 **Article 9: Safeguarding**

238 9.1 Young Greens EC shall appoint a Safeguarding Officer and Deputy Safeguarding
 239 Officer.

240 9.2 The Safeguarding Officer and their Deputy have the duty to:

241 9.2.1 Lead on the development of safeguards for the Young Greens.

242 9.2.2 To promote the safety and welfare of children and young people in the
 243 Young Greens.

244 9.2.3 Receive and record information from anyone who has concerns.

- 245 9.2.4 Assess the information promptly and carefully, clarifying or obtaining
246 more information where necessary.
- 247 9.2.5 Consult initially with a statutory child protection agency, such as the
248 local children's social care teams or the NSPCC with any doubts or concerns.
- 249 9.2.6 Make a formal referral when required to a statutory child protection
250 agency or the police.
- 251 9.3 It is not their job to decide whether a child or a young person has been
252 abused or not. These roles can be shared with other roles within the Young
253 Greens.
- 254 9.4 Young Greens will follow the guidance regarding safeguarding in the RoOS.

255 Byelaws of the Young Greens of England and Wales

256 Byelaw 1: The Young Greens Executive Committee

- 257 1.1 There shall be an Executive Committee (hereafter referred to as "the
258 Executive Committee" or "EC") which shall consist of:
- 259 1.1.1 Two Co-Chairs, of which at least one must be not a self-defining man.
- 260 1.1.2 Treasurer.
- 261 1.1.3 Six Non-Portfolio Officers, one of whom shall be responsible for the
262 Equality and Diversity portfolio.
- 263 1.2 EC Elections shall be carried out according to Section E of the Standing
264 Orders, following the procedures, timescale and gender balance rules described
265 therein.
- 266 1.3 The aim and responsibility of the EC is to:
- 267 1.3.1 Provide an overall direction and strategic planning.
- 268 1.3.2 Support all members and bodies within the Young Greens.
- 269 1.3.3 Represent the Young Greens externally, including running the website and
270 social media and representing the Young Greens at events.
- 271 1.4 EC members shall individually provide a quarterly report to the membership
272 which is made available for all members. A quarterly online question and answer
273 session hosted by DAC should follow and be promoted to all members with a call
274 for questions.
- 275 1.5 EC Members shall provide an end of year report to the Young Greens Annual
276 General Meeting
- 277 1.6 Vacant positions may be co-opted at any time throughout the year following
278 the procedure outlined in Section D6 of the Standing Orders.
- 279 1.7 The quorum for EC decisions is 50% + 1 of all EC members.

280 Byelaw 2: The Democracy and Accountability Committee

281 2.1 There shall be a Democracy and Accountability Committee (hereafter known as
282 “the Democracy and Accountability Committee” or “DAC”) which shall consist of:

283 2.1.1 Five members, where one member is selected within as Chair.

284 2.1.2 The Chair shall be selected at the first meeting of DAC after the Annual
285 Ballot.

286 2.1.3 The position of Chair may also be taken as a job-share between two members
287 of DAC who will then be Co-chairs.

288 2.1.4 If the Chair or Co-chairs resigns, DAC shall select a new Chair or Co-
289 chairs at their next available meeting.

290 2.2 Elections will be carried out according to Section E of the Standing Orders,
291 following the procedures, timescale and gender balance rules described therein.

292 2.3 The aim and responsibility of the Democracy and Accountability Committee is
293 to:

294 2.3.1 Uphold this Constitution, Byelaws and Standing Orders.

295 2.3.2 Oversee updates and clarifications to these, including through elections
296 and the Annual General meeting.

297 2.3.3 Make rulings on interpretations of this Constitution and to declare acts
298 constitutional or otherwise.

299 2.3.4 Make minor changes to the Constitution and the Standing Orders to ensure
300 it is standardised and accurate, as outlined in Article 3.3 of this
301 Constitution.

302 2.3.5 As part of this role, the Democracy and Accountability Committee will run
303 a General Meeting as described in Sections B and C of the Standing Orders.

304 2.3.6. Additionally, the Democracy and Accountability Committee is responsible
305 for ensuring accountability of the Young Greens at large.

306 2.4 The Chair of the Democracy and Accountability Committee has the right to
307 attend all meetings of the Executive Committee, but not vote, as a
308 representative of the Democracy and Accountability Committee and should be
309 consulted on major decisions.

310 2.5 The Democracy and Accountability Committee members shall individually
311 provide a quarterly report to the membership, which is made available to all
312 members, and an end-of-year report to the Young Greens Annual General Meeting.
313 These shall detail any minor changes made to the constitution and standing
314 orders.

315 Byelaw 3: The Green Students Committee

316 3.1 The Green Students Committee shall be led by two Co-Convenors, of which at
317 least one must not self-define as a man.

318 3.2 The Co-convenors shall be elected in line with Section E of the Standing
319 Orders following the procedures, timescale and gender balance rules described
320 therein.

321 3.3 The aim and responsibility of the Green Students Committee is to:

322 3.3.1 Encourage Young Greens to stand for positions in their student unions, in
323 the National Union of Students (NUS), and as National Union of Students
324 delegates as well as support Young Greens holding those positions.

325 3.3.2 Involve Young Greens in National Union of Students campaigns and
326 activities.

327 3.3.3 Liaise with relevant external bodies.

328 3.3.4 Direct Young Greens to chosen student campaigns and organisations.

329 3.4 Green Students Committee Co-Convenors shall individually provide a quarterly
330 report to the membership, to be published on the members' website, and an end-
331 of-year report to the Young Greens Annual General Meeting.

332 3.5 Vacant positions may be co-opted at any time throughout the year following
333 the procedure outlined in the standing orders.

334 Byelaw 4: Liberation Groups

335 4.1 Liberation Groups shall represent individuals who face current and historic
336 oppression, discrimination and/or are marginalised in wider society due to a
337 shared characteristic.

338 4.2 Liberation Groups shall ensure that the voices and perspectives of people in
339 marginalised groups are well represented and heard within the structures and
340 policies of the Young Greens and the wider Green Party.

341 4.3 Young Greens members are free to join any Liberation Group which they self-
342 identify as a member of. As such, these groups shall be organised and led by
343 self-identifying members.

344 4.4 The current list of Liberation Groups is as follows:

345 4.4.1 Disability.

346 4.4.2 LGBTIQ+.

347 4.4.3 People of Colour.

348 4.4.4 Sex Workers.

349 4.4.5 Trans.

350 4.4.6 Under 18.

351 4.4.7 Women.

352 4.4.8 Women of Colour.

353 4.5 A new group can be set up if the criteria in both 4.5.1 and in 4.5.2 are
354 met:

355 4.5.1 The proposed group face current and historic oppression, discrimination
356 and/or are marginalised in wider society based around a shared characteristic.

357 4.5.2 The proposer can demonstrate that at least 5 members will actively join
358 the group.

359 4.6 EC shall use their discretion in approving the creation of new Liberation
360 Groups between General Meetings and shall bring a paper of ratification to the
361 next Annual General Meeting, or to an Emergency General Meeting if this happens
362 to occur first.

363 4.7 Each Liberation Group shall elect from their membership at least two Co-
364 chairs, where no more than one self-defines as a man.

365 4.8 The election should be organised by said Liberation Group using a system of
366 Single Transferable Vote, for which advice can be sought from DAC, to ensure
367 that the rules in 4.7 are satisfied.

368 4.9 Liberation Groups may be additionally led by a committee, with the number of
369 positions and the election or co-option timescale at the discretion of the
370 Liberation Group members.

371 4.10 The Liberation Group Co-Chairs, or Committee where appropriate, are in
372 charge of moderating any online spaces they group holds, organising training
373 days and meet-ups, upholding the Safe Space policy at all times, and
374 representing their Liberation Group concerns to the EC Non-Portfolio Officer
375 holding the Equality and Diversity portfolio.

376 Byelaw 5: International Affiliation

377 5.1 The Young Greens of England and Wales is a full member organisation of the
378 Federation of Young European Greens (FYEG).

379 5.2 The Young Greens of England and Wales is a member of the Global Young Greens
380 (GYG) by virtue of its membership of FYEG.

381 5.3 As a member of both organisations, the Young Greens will endeavour to send
382 at least one delegate to the FYEG General Assembly or GYG Congress each year.

383 5.4 The first international delegate shall be a member of EC.

384 5.5 If there are to be any further delegates, they should be appointed from the
385 general membership by EC.

386 5.6 Additional observers for the General Assembly may be appointed by EC.

387 5.7 In the event of the Global Young Greens Congress being held the same year as
388 the FYEG General Assembly, this election shall occur twice - all members,
389 despite any prior delegate status, are able to be a candidate in this election,
390 in line with Section E of the Standing Orders.

391 5.8 At the FYEG General Assembly, the first delegate and the elected
392 international delegate shall be given one vote each (as permitted by the FYEG
393 Constitution). The first delegate shall consult EC for advice on how to vote on
394 motions, but further delegates may vote independently; they can seek advice from
395 EC and indeed agree with the EC delegate vote.

396 5.9 If any member of the Young Greens of England and Wales wishes to run for
397 election to any roles within FYEG or GYG, they must consult and seek the
398 nomination of the EC.