

Friends (Worcester)

Constitution

1. Name of the Group

The Group is called Friends (Worcester). The address shall be that of the Chairperson.

2. Aims of the Group

The Group is run primarily to allow people who are unattached to meet together and arrange social activities.

3. Membership and voting rights

Membership is divided as follows:

- a) Honorary members
- b) Full members

Honorary life membership will be granted to those who are proposed and seconded at a general meeting and who gain a simple majority vote of the members present.

Full members are paid up members.

Prospective members will be given one programme and allowed to attend pub nights for a one month introductory period without payment of any membership. After this period they must either sign up as full members agreeing to pay the required subscription or leave the Group. During the introductory period, prospective members may also attend the Group's normal events at the discretion of the event's organiser.

Members shall be unattached at the time of joining the Group. Other people may join subject to approval by the Committee.

The Committee reserves the right to refuse or withdraw membership. Any paid up member has the right to appeal to the full committee against a decision to withdraw their membership, the result of which appeal will be final.

4. Subscriptions

Subscriptions are to be paid monthly in advance. Membership shall be stopped if a member has not paid due subscriptions for two months.

Membership subscriptions shall be decided by a simple majority a General Meeting.

5. Group officials

The Group is run by a Committee of Coordinators. Posts of Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer are by election. Up to 7 further Coordinator posts with committee voting rights shall also be elected by simple majority vote. If there are more than 7 candidates, those with the largest number of votes shall be elected. In the event of a tie, the incoming Chairman shall have a casting vote. Non-voting Co-ordinators may be co-opted by the Committee as required.

The roles of the Committee are as follows:

- **Chairperson** - To have held a minimum of one year full membership status prior to election. Responsible for chairing committee meetings and for the running of the Group in accordance with the Constitution.
- **Secretary** - To have held a minimum of one year full membership status prior to election. Responsible for the day to day administration of the Group and the publication and distribution of the programme and written communications.
- **Treasurer** - To have held a minimum of one year full membership status prior to election. Responsible for the collection of subscriptions from members, the payment of revenue into the Group bank account, the keeping of accounts and inventory and presentation of accounts and inventory to General meetings. The Treasurer will keep the cheque and paying in books, and will make available to the Committee and Members within 7 days of a ~~on~~ request the financial position of the Group, including if requested accounts and the corresponding bank statements completed up to a date no earlier than 40 days before satisfaction of the request, ~~and keep the cheque and paying in books~~. The Treasurer will maintain a database of the membership.
- **Telephone Link Coordinators (2)** - Preferably one male and one female. Responsible for taking telephone calls from prospective new members and their introduction into the Group.
- **Event Co-ordinators** - Responsible for keeping the events diary and assisting members in arranging events for the programme. To liaise with the Secretary for the production of the programme.
- **Committee Members without portfolio**

Access to membership details will be restricted to the Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. Members may request that their contact details be restricted to a single named officer. Both serving and retired members of the Committee are required to maintain confidentiality of all contact details and other privileged information. Contact details are never to be

released outside the committee except with the specific permission of the member. Breaches of confidentiality may result in dismissal from the Committee or the Group as deemed appropriate by the Committee.

6. **Finances**

The Group is run on non-profit lines. Each item of spending must be agreed in advance by the Committee. Subscription fees are used to pay for advertising, stationery, postage, phone calls, committee member's reasonable out of pocket expenses and, subject to approval at a Committee meeting as a substantive decision, for subsidy of events or donations of flowers or similar to members under exceptional circumstances. The Treasurer shall issue a receipt for each cash payment received and shall retain a duplicate for the records. Reimbursement of committee members for expenses incurred on behalf of the group shall always be made by cheque. If a sum due to the Group is larger than the annual subscription and is also larger than £50, it must be given to the Treasurer by cheque payable to the Group, with the exceptions that cash collected at an event may be passed to the Treasurer if he/she is present at the same event, and the Treasurer may accept cash from a person who does not have a cheque account.

The Treasurer shall manage the Group's funds which shall be held in a Bank account. All cheques or other withdrawals shall be authorised by any two of Chairperson, Treasurer or Secretary. The accounts shall be audited annually in advance of the AGM. The auditor shall not be a co-ordinator or member of the Committee.

7. **Behaviour**

All members share a responsibility for the comfort and safety of other members of the Group. They are expected to respect other people's 'space' and help welcome new and prospective members.

Members taking part in an event at someone's house do so as a private guest and should comply with their wishes.

The committee may suspend or withdraw membership from any member who fails to comply with these rules or the spirit of the 'Aims of the Group'.

8. **Meetings**

The Annual General Meeting will be held in April and shall include election of the Committee. The Committee may call an Extraordinary General Meeting. An Extraordinary General Meeting, possibly including re-election of all committee members, may also be called by a petition signed by 20 full members. At least one month's notice will be given to all members of the AGM and at least one week's notice for an Extraordinary General Meeting. The Chairperson shall hold the casting vote at any meeting. Only group members may attend the Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting.

No General Meeting shall be in quorum unless at least 20% of the voting membership and at least two of the Group's officers (ie Chairperson, Secretary or Treasurer) are present.

No Committee meeting shall be in quorum unless at least one of the Chairperson, Secretary or Treasurer and two other Co-ordinators with voting rights are present (i.e. at least three voting members). Meetings of Co-ordinators where substantive issues are to be discussed, must be attended by at least 2 Officers.

Members have the right to request permission from one of the Officers to attend meetings of the Co-ordinators. Permission will be granted at the Officer's discretion provided confidentiality is not an issue.

Every reasonable effort must be made to notify all co-ordinators in advance of a Committee meeting.

All substantive decisions must be recorded in the minutes book.

9. **Amending the rules**

The rules of the Group may be amended at an AGM or EGM provided that all members are notified of proposed changes when the meeting is announced.

10. **Dissolving the Group**

A proposal to dissolve the Group and dispose of its assets may be proposed at an Annual or Extraordinary General Meeting.

Document History

- The Constitution was approved at Friends (Worcester) AGM, 2 June 1998.
- There is no record of any amendments before 1 April 2008.
- The document was retyped for Friends (Worcester) AGM, 1 April 2008 as constitution_2008-02-12.pdf. Typographic errors in the original were preserved. If further errors were introduced, the 1998 document takes priority.
- The documents constitution_2008-04-01.pdf, constitution_2010-04-13.pdf, constitution_2011-04-12.pdf, and constitution_2012-04-10.pdf include cumulatively the amendments passed at the AGMs on 1 April 2008, 13 April 2010, 12 April 2011, and 9th April 2013 respectively.
- The present document is constitution_2013-04-09.pdf and includes all amendments mentioned above and those passed at the AGM on 9 April 2013. These amendments are indicated by struck-through text (which is not part of the Constitution) and underlining. The underlining has no other significance and will be removed, along with the struck-through text, at the next revision.