

The Parish of St Mary the Virgin, Whickham

The care and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults involved in our church is the responsibility of all members. All people working with children, young people and vulnerable adults are subject to an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check and appropriate training in safeguarding.

CONSTITUTION OF THE FRIENDS OF THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN, WHICKHAM, IN THE BOROUGH OF GATESHEAD.

NAME

1 The name of the Society shall be the Friends of the Parish Church of St Mary the Virgin, Whickham, in the Metropolitan Borough of Gateshead (hereinafter referred to as “the Friends”).

OBJECTS AND POWERS

2 The main objects of the Friends shall be to promote support for the Church of St Mary the Virgin, (hereinafter referred to as “the Church”) as the historic centre of Whickham amongst all sections of the community, and to act as a focus for that support.

3 In particular, the friends will encourage community use of the Church by local schools and other organisations, and will produce guides and newsletters for the benefit of both local people and visitors. The Friends will also promote interest in the maintenance, repair and care of the of the physical fabric of the Church and installation of ancillary equipment and apparatus for use in the Church for the benefit of the congregation and visitors, and will support the Parochial Church Council of the Parish of St Mary the Virgin, Whickham (hereinafter referred to as the “Parochial Church Council”) in fund raising for these functions. Fund-raising mean the Friends may obtain, collect and receive money and funds by way of contributions, donations, subscriptions, covenants, legacies, grants and appeals or by applications to any person, body or organisation and by organising events.

4 Nothing in this constitution shall be interpreted as in any way affecting the powers and duties of the Rector, the Church Wardens of the Church and the said Parochial Church Council, and their primary responsibility for the Church and churchyard.

MEMBERSHIP

5 Membership of the Friends will be open to any person interested in the objects of the Friends on payment of an annual subscription of not less than £5.00 per household. Any member who has not attained the age of sixteen years will not be eligible to vote at meetings, for election to office or for election to any committee of the Friends. Organisations may affiliate on payment of an annual fee of not less than £5.00 and may appoint a representative to act on their behalf as a full member of the Friends.

MANAGEMENT

6 The affairs of the Friends will be managed by a committee of not less than 12 members comprising a Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer and six other members elected at the Annual Meeting of the Friends, together with the Rector and two Church Wardens of the Church ex officio. The elected members will serve until the following Annual Meeting when they will be eligible for re-election.

7 Dates, times and places of meetings of the Committee will normally be fixed by the Committee itself but, exceptionally, meetings for a specific purpose may be called by the officers on their own initiative or in response to a formal request addressed to the Chairman or Secretary and signed by three members. Notices of meetings and agendas will be prepared by the Secretary in consultation with the Chairman and Rector and circulated to members at least seven days prior to the meeting.

8 The quorum at meetings of the Committee will be 5. In the absence of the Chairman or Secretary from any meeting, the members present will choose from among their number a person or persons to carry out the functions of these officers. Each member will have one vote and decisions will be made by a simple majority, with the stand in Chairman having a second or casting vote in event of a tie.

RECORDS AND ACCOUNTS

9 The Secretary will prepare written minutes of every committee meeting which will be submitted for approval as a correct record by members and signed by the Chairman at the following meeting.

10 The Treasurer will receive money and expend money in accordance with the Committee's instructions and maintain appropriate records of such transactions. Bank accounts will be opened in the name of the Friends, with the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer as authorised signatories, and all cheques and other documents relating thereto shall require the signatures of any two of these officers.

11 The Friend's financial year will run from 1st May to 30th April and an annual statement of account will be prepared by the Treasurer each year for audit by two members of the Society, other than Committee members, with appropriate knowledge and experience.

ANNUAL AND OTHER MEETING

12 An annual meeting of members will be held in May each year at which the Committee will present an annual report and the audited statement of account for the previous financial year. The Committee may convene special meetings of members for a specific purpose and must convene a special meeting for a named purpose upon request from 10 or more members. Not less than 14 days' notice, in writing, of any meeting of members shall be given by the Secretary to all members of the Friends.

13 The Chairman will act as Chairman at all meetings of the Friends. Each member (or representative of an organisation) will have one vote and a quorum will consist of 10 voting members. Except as provided in paragraph 14 below, decision will be made by a simple majority with the Chairman having a second or casting vote in the event of a tie.

AMENDMENTS AND DISSOLUTION

14 Amendments to this constitution or a proposal to dissolve the Friends will require approval by three quarters of those voting in person or by proxy at a Special Meeting convened for that specific purpose. In the event of a proposal to dissolve the Friends being passed, the Friend's assets (if any) will become the property of the Parochial Church Council.

July 2012, amended 2014