

WORTHAM AND BURGATE TWINNING ASSOCIATION

CONSTITUTION

1. Background

An initial meeting to establish a Twinning link between Wortham and Burgate, Suffolk UK and Hédé/Bazouges, Brittany, France took place in December 1990. Since that date, regular visits in each direction have taken place and the Wortham and Burgate committee has organised frequent fundraising activities. Events, including the covid epidemic and problems related to Brexit have interrupted our links with Hédé and have led to a need to consider our Constitution. This document is intended to capture the key aims, objectives and operational practices that have been developed over time and will lead the group into the future.

2. Aims and Objectives

The overall aim of Wortham and Burgate Twinning is to promote international understanding and friendships, and a wider appreciation primarily of France but also of other European Twinning Associations we may develop links with in the future.

In support of this aim the Association will:

- Organise regular visits to and from Hédé/Bazouges or other towns or villages with whom we have developed links.
- Actively encourage young people to become involved with the Twinning Association
- Promote links between appropriate schools, clubs and other relevant organisations
- Facilitate modern language learning where possible
- Communicate with both members and non members through appropriate media
- Elect a committee, on an annual basis, to manage the Association
- Raise funds to ensure the aims and objectives can be met

3. Membership

Membership is open to everyone interested in the aims and objectives of the Association who live in Wortham, Burgate and the surrounding area.

Members, other than honorary members, will pay an annual subscription. The rates of subscription will be recommended by the committee and put to the AGM for approval each year. The committee may recommend differential rates for individuals, families, youth members, groups or clubs, as appropriate. 'Child' members, who will normally be part of family membership, are those who are under 16 on the date of the AGM.

Any member whose subscription is not paid by such date as the Committee shall decide each year, shall be considered to have resigned their membership.

The committee has the right to appoint honorary members, who do not have to pay membership fees, on the basis of outstanding contribution to the Association. Appointment of honorary members must be declared at the AGM.

The committee retains the right to expel a member when, in its opinion, the words or action of that member may bring the Association into disrepute. Before final action is taken, the member shall be given notice of the committee's intention and allowed to state their case. Any person ceasing to be a member has no right to the return of any part of their subscription, except in circumstances where the committee feels it appropriate.

4. The Committee

The committee shall be elected each year at the AGM and shall comprise a Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and at least four other members. Additional committee members may be co-opted during the year.

The Secretary shall invite nominations from all members for the election of the committee. Persons nominated must be paid up members of the Association and must be proposed by a paid-up member of the Association. Any nomination must be received by the Secretary at least 24 hours before the start of the AGM.

If there is only one candidate nominated to fill any particular position, that candidate can be declared elected unopposed for that vacancy at the AGM. If there is more than one candidate for any particular post, there shall be an election at the AGM. In the event of a tie, the outgoing Chair shall have a casting vote.

5. Committee Meetings

Meetings shall be held as often as the Committee thinks fit, provided that there are not less than three meetings each year. The quorum for meetings shall be four, with at least two of the Chair, Secretary or Treasurer being present. Dates for meetings will normally be set at the previous meeting. For extraordinary meetings, a minimum of one week's notice will be given.

The Chair will manage committee meetings. In the absence of the Chair, committee members present will agree the Chair for the meeting.

Decisions of the committee shall be made by a simple majority and in the event of a tie of votes the Chair of the meeting shall have a casting vote.

Minutes of each meeting will be made. Members may see committee minutes on request.

6. Annual General Meeting

The AGM of the Association shall be held within 13 months of the preceding AGM and by 31st March at the latest. Notification of the AGM will be given to all members by e-mail or letter at least 21 days before the date of the meeting.

The Meeting shall:

- Receive the Chair's report of the activities of the Association during the previous year.
- Receive and consider the Treasurer's report and Examined Accounts for the previous year.
- Elect the committee.
- Agree the membership fees for the coming year
- Consider any special matters which the committee wishes to put to the membership.

Notice of any resolution proposed by members, to be considered at the Annual General Meeting, shall be given in writing to the Secretary at least 24 hours prior to the start the meeting.

The quorum for the AGM shall be eight Members, to include two of the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

The Chair shall preside at Annual General Meetings but if not present another committee member shall chair the meeting.

Each paid up individual member present shall have one vote per resolution. Paid up Family members shall have one vote per resolution for each adult family member present at the meeting. Clubs or groups which are paid up members of the Association shall have one vote per resolution provided there is a representative of the club or the group present at the meeting. Resolutions will be passed by a simple majority vote. The chairman of the meeting shall have a casting vote.

In the absence of the Secretary, an elected member shall take minutes of the meeting.

7. Extraordinary General Meeting

An EGM may be called at any time by the committee. An EGM may also be called within 21 days of receipt by the Secretary of a request in writing signed by not less than 10 members stating the purposes for which the meeting is required and the resolution[s] proposed.

Members will be given a minimum of two weeks' notice of an EGM. The meeting shall be organised according to the rules set out for the AGM and resolutions to be agreed by 60% of the members present.

8. Adoption of/Alteration to the Constitution

The Constitution may only be adopted and altered by resolution at an AGM or EGM by a 60% majority vote of members present.

9. Finance

All monies payable to the Association shall be received by the Treasurer or paid by internet banking into a designated bank account in the name of the Association. The Association may hold both current and deposit accounts. Any sum drawn from any Association account shall either be by cheque signed by two of three signatories who shall normally be the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer or by internet authorisation of the Treasurer. All cheque signatories will have access to the internet accounts in order to monitor payments drawn on the Associations accounts.

The Committee shall have the power to authorise the payment of expenses to any member of the Committee or Association member and to any other person or persons for services rendered to the Association.

Accounts of the financial affairs of the Association shall be prepared each year and duly examined by an appropriately experienced person. The examiner may be a member of the Association but may not be a member of the committee. These accounts shall be made available to every member at the AGM.

10. Dissolution of the Association

A resolution to dissolve the Association shall be proposed only at an EGM and shall be passed only if carried by a majority of at least 75% of the paid-up Members present or who have voted in advance by proxy.

The dissolution shall take effect from the date of the resolution and the members of the committee shall be responsible for the winding-up of the assets and liabilities of the Association.

After all due liabilities have been settled, any remaining funds shall be donated to an organisation(s) able to put the funds to a use closely related to the benefit of the community, as decided at the dissolution meeting.