



The Constitution of The Friends of Rochester Churchfields and Esplanade

1 Name

The name of the group shall be 'The Friends of Rochester Churchfields and Esplanade' (FoRCE), hereafter referred to as 'the Friends'.

2 Aim

To preserve, enhance and promote Rochester Esplanade and Churchfields (also known Backfields) for the enjoyment and well-being of local residents and visitors.

3 Scope

The Friends will protect and promote the full length of the Esplanade from Rochester Bridge to the edge of Borstal, where this Friends group will abut the Friends of Baty's Marsh, known as BOSS (Borstal Open Spaces).

4 Objectives

The Friends will:

- I. Encourage all local people who have an interest in the Esplanade and Churchfields to work together to enable it to provide opportunities for relaxation, recreation, education, biodiversity, community development and other activities of a positive social nature.
- II. Engage with advocacy groups, businesses and other bodies which have an interest in the preservation, enhancement and promotion of the Esplanade.
- III. Consult local residents, interested parties and visitors on the priorities for the Plan for the Esplanade, and from time to time publish a Plan (see Annex A).
- IV. Act as a voice for local residents and visitors by working with Medway Council and other official bodies to enhance the range of facilities provided along the Esplanade and Churchfields for the enjoyment of all.
- V. Work in partnership with Medway Council and other organisations and Friends' groups to exchange information and advice, and to receive donations and raise funds for projects identified and agreed to by the Friends.

5 Powers

The powers shall be exercised by the executive committee and/or by working groups or volunteers approved by the committee to act on behalf of the Friends.

- I. To raise funds by any lawful means for use in furtherance of the objectives of the Friends.
- II. To disseminate and collect information:
 - A. about the Esplanade and Churchfields, including but not limited to history, future development and events and attractions; and
 - B. about the Friends including information aimed at recruiting more members.
- III. To do all such lawful acts as are incidental to the attainment of the objectives of the Friends and, so far as may be necessary, to do them in collaboration with any person, body, authority or otherwise.

6 Membership

- I. Membership of the Friends shall be open to all who support the objectives of The Friends.
- II. Membership shall run from 1st April to 31st March for all members. Members who join between January and March of any year shall have valid membership until 31st March the following year.
- III. Every member shall have one vote at any general meeting they attend.
- IV. Categories of membership:
 - A. Individual membership
 - B. Life Membership
 - C. Corporate membership, without voting rights
- V. Membership of the Friends shall be terminated:
 - A. if a member's annual subscription remains unpaid three months after the date when it is due; or

- B. if a member resigns in writing (including by email) to the Secretary; or
 - C. if the executive committee considers, in respect of any member, that that person's or organisation's continued membership would be harmful to the objectives of the Friends.
- VI. The rates of subscription shall be as recommended by the executive committee and approved by a majority of members present at an annual or special general meeting.

7 Management

- I. The Friends will be administered by a committee, to consist of a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and up to 8 other members, who may be elected at the AGM or co-opted during the year and ratified at the AGM.
- II. An annual general meeting shall be held on a date appointed by the executive committee each year, to receive the executive committee's report and accounts and to elect members of the executive committee. The executive committee shall decide when ordinary meetings of the Friends shall be held. Special general meetings of the Friends shall be held at the request of the executive committee or of ten per cent or more of members. The committee shall give at least 10 days' notice of general meetings to the members. A quorum for general meetings shall consist of at least half the committee members and at least 5 other members.
- III. The committee may create such sub-committees and working groups as it deems expedient for the efficient running of the Friends, including co-opting members of the Friends who have special interests or skills which may be of benefit to the Friends.
- IV. The committee may co-opt up to two members in the event that: a. a member leaves the committee before the end of the Friends' year, or b. fewer than four members are elected to the committee at a general meeting.
- V. Upon the recommendation of the executive committee, and subject to the approval of members present at a special or annual general meeting, the Friends may appoint a Patron, President and Vice-Presidents.

8 Finance

- I. The Friends shall have power to accept and make donations for any lawful purpose not inconsistent with its objectives.
- II. The committee shall, out of monies received by the Friends, pay all proper expenses for the administration and management of the Friends, and shall use the residue of such monies for or towards the furtherance of the objectives of the Friends.
- III. All monies at any time belonging to the Friends and not required for immediate application for its objectives shall be invested by the committee upon such investments, securities or property as it may think appropriate and as may be lawful.

9 Winding up

Should it become necessary for the Friends to dissolve, a Special Public Meeting shall be set up to discuss the matter and make decisions on the disposal of any assets which the Friends may have. The available funds of the Friends shall be transferred, by the decision of the meeting, to one or more charitable bodies having objectives similar or reasonably similar to those of the Friends of Churchfields and the Esplanade.

10 Adoption of the constitution

- I. This constitution was adopted by the members present at the AGM held on 28th January 2020.
- II. This constitution may be amended with the approval of a majority vote at any general meeting, provided that at least ten days' notice of the proposed amendment has been given to all members and provided that nothing therein contained shall authorise any amendment permitting the expenditure of funds of the Friends on any object which is not a charitable object at law.