

The Community of Hopeweavers

Structure, Membership, Trustees

The Community of Hopeweavers is an independent organisation which registered as a charity in 2020 and is a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO). Hopeweavers has adopted the Charity Commission's model association CIO constitution. The rules set out below expand the way in which the constitution is operated and must not contradict anything in the constitution.

1. The Community in context

Hopeweavers is a community acknowledged by the Church of England, and in fellowship with that tradition through an Episcopal Visitor, it continues as a contemplative place of prayer, attentive to God's call and discerning God's will for ministry.

- 1.1. The Community is rooted in the Anglican tradition however its ministry is ecumenical
- 1.2. The Community is accountable for its way of life to the Episcopal Visitor. The Episcopal Visitor is appointed by the Trustees after consultation with the Advisory Council for Religious Communities and with the approval of the diocesan Bishop. The Visitor must be a person who is in episcopal orders and holds ecclesiastical office in the Church of England or in another Church which is in communion with the Church of England; and who is not a member of the community or otherwise involved in its regular life.
- 1.3. The Episcopal Visitor encourages the Community to keep spirituality as its highest calling and supports the Community as it enables its Members to grow in their discipleship.
- 1.4. The Episcopal Visitor must visit the community at least once every five years and this may be at the Visitor's initiative. It is current practice that the Visitor is present for the Gathering of Promises, an annual event where members of the community make and renew their promises and rule of life.

2. General structure

The structure of the Community shall consist of:

- 2.1. The TRUSTEES have legal responsibility for the organisation as set out in the constitution and hold the financial responsibility for the Community. The Trustees provide policy, governance and strategic direction of the Communities ministry and also initiate, control and supervise the activities of the Community.
- 2.2. The MEMBERS - who have the right to attend the annual general meeting (and any special general meeting) and have important powers under the constitution. The Members elect the Trustees and take decisions in relation to changes to the Constitution.
- 2.3. The GUARDIAN(S) – The Guardian(s) are elected from the Trustees and take the role of (joint) chair of the Trustees. The Guardian(s) provide leadership to the community. The office of Guardian may be carried out by one or more of the Trustees. When there is more than one Guardian, the same rules of retiring by rotation (section 13 of constitution) apply.
 - 2.3.1. No person who has served a continuous period of 7 years as a Guardian shall stand for immediate re-election to the Guardian role, save in exceptional circumstances; such circumstances are to be agreed by the Trustees.
- 2.4. The WARDEN – The Warden is appointed by the Trustees for a negotiated period of time. The Warden shall discern their continuing role with the Community on an annual basis in October/November as the Members review their Membership. The role of the Warden to the Community is to be a guide and friend to the Community, encouraging but being critical if necessary, within the following expectations

- 2.4.1. the Warden shall be available for consultation by the Guardian on Community matters, contributing his/her wisdom, experience and knowledge to the discernment process.
- 2.4.2. the Warden may be consulted concerning the admission of a new member to the Community, and a separation of a Member from the Community.
- 2.4.3. the Warden shall visit the Community at least quarterly to meet the Trustees and Members.
- 2.4.4. the Warden shall be present for at least one of the Trustee meetings each year.
- 2.4.5. every Member shall have free access and right of appeal to the Warden
- 2.5. ENQUIRERS – are people who wish to join the community and have begun the process of discernment described in 3.1

3. Membership of the Community

3.1.Criteria for Membership of the Community

In clarification of section 9.1 of the constitution. New members may join the community by becoming Enquirers. This entails a commitment to meet to explore membership with a Guide. over a period of time suitable to the situation and experience of the Enquirer.

Membership is based on the following criteria.

- 3.1.1. Agreement with the Statement of Faith.
- 3.1.2. Agreement with the Community's stated values and charism. (See Purpose, Values, Statement of Faith & Charism).
- 3.1.3. The formation of their own Rule of Life under the seven headings that comprise the Community's Rule of Life.
- 3.1.4. An expectation that Members annually review their own Rule of Life and to make an annual renewal of their promises in front of a Bishop at the Gathering of Promises service
- 3.1.5. Agreement to use the Community of Hopeweavers Daily Office.
- 3.1.6. As dispersed Community members, commitment to participate in a regular local or online members group.
- 3.1.7. To contribute to the on-going life and ministry of the Community through the sharing of prayer, ideas and projects.
- 3.1.8. Participation/involvement in Community events throughout a year – e.g. Quiet Days, gatherings, H@H or regional days.
- 3.1.9. Within the context of Hopeweavers events to agree to follow the community's policies such as Safeguarding, Data Protection, Health and Safety, etc.
- 3.1.10. Commitment to resourcing the Community's ministry – primarily through prayer. All contributions are seen as of equal importance whether reclaimed materials for creative work, practical service leading Quiet Days, cooking, financial giving, administration, planning sessions or leading members groups.

3.2. Membership of other communities

Where potential Members of the Community of Hopeweavers are already members of other communities, e.g. Third Order Franciscans, they must decide whether to continue to follow their current Orders or to make a new commitment to the Community. There is provision for those who want to support the Community, but cannot be Members, by receiving Newsletters, attending Quiet Days, joining in with online prayers and supporting us financially if wanted.

3.3.Safeguarding

All members of the community must accept, comply and abide by the House of Bishops Policy for Safeguarding in Religious Communities currently in force, for safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults. The community will make local arrangements for the delivery of this policy, which sets out how the policy is implemented for the particular needs and context of the community. This local policy will be reviewed annually.

Hopeweavers Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance will be reviewed annually at the first Trustees meeting following the AGM, where changes to documents must be approved by trustees.

The Visitor shall adhere to the provisions in the current edition of the House of Bishops Safeguarding Policy for Religious Communities. The Visitor should:

- 3.3.1. Check that safeguarding policies and arrangements are in place.
- 3.3.2. Maintain a record of the safeguarding aspects of each Visitation and share the outcome with the diocesan safeguarding advisor and the diocesan bishop.
- 3.3.3. Inform the DSA and the diocesan bishop if he/she has any safeguarding concerns.
- 3.3.4. Be available to deal with any appeal subsequent to the formal complaints procedure.
- 3.3.5. Develop a sense of whether the Community has a safe and healthy culture.
- 3.3.6. The Visitor must be informed about any safeguarding concerns that relate to the Guardian or the designated safeguarding person.

3.4. Leaving the Community

- 3.4.1. When people believe their time as a Member is coming to an end, they shall discuss this with a members group leader, Trustee or Guardian(s) and will not renew their annual promises.
- 3.4.2. If a Member violates or misuses their position, it is expected that the members group leader and another - usually the Guardian - will meet with that individual to seek a way for reconciliation. If this is not possible, the Member will be requested to withdraw from Community life in accordance with section 9.4 of the constitution. If the issue relates to a safeguarding matter, then the procedures outlined in the safeguarding policy will be followed.
- 3.4.3. Should a member fail to renew their promises, either at the Gathering of Promises or at a later date with a Guardian present in a small group setting it will be taken that the person has not renewed their membership for the year. This will be noted at the AGM. If membership is disputed it will be dealt with in accordance to section 9.4 of the constitution.

4. The Trustees

4.1. Responsibilities and roles

The governance of the Community is the responsibility of the Trustees who elect from among themselves Guardian(s) to chair Trustee meetings and to take on leadership responsibilities for the Community.

The Trustees are members elected at the AGM who:

- 4.1.1. are responsible for maintaining the charism and direction of the Community, guided by the Holy Spirit.
- 4.1.2. supervise the finances of the Community.

- 4.1.3. ensure that all leaders of Quiet Days, Soul Days, H@H, group days etc., receive appropriate on-going support individually, or in groups, as necessary.
- 4.1.4. help to sustain the Community ecumenically, with Christ at the centre.
- 4.1.5. develop a special area(s) of responsibility and interest within the ministry of the Community through the appointment of sub-committees.
- 4.1.6. listen to the needs and dreams of Members, through members groups leadership and in other places.
- 4.1.7. establish and supervise the implementation of the policies of the Community.
- 4.1.8. model a discipline of prayer and practice – for example through obedience to the community Rule of Life and safeguarding policy.
- 4.1.9. review the activities of the Community annually
- 4.1.10. Trustee meetings will be held at least four times a year, with proviso for extraordinary meetings to be held when necessary, and with the expectation that Trustees will attend a minimum of fifty per cent of meetings.

4.2.Register of Trustees

The Trustees shall maintain a register of members, setting out the full name and address of each, the date on which each such person became a Trustee, and the date on which any person ceased to hold office.

4.3.Officers

- 4.3.1. The Trustees shall elect from among themselves Guardian(s) (joint) chair, and a Secretary, and such other officers (if any) as they consider appropriate.
- 4.3.2. A Treasurer shall be appointed. If necessary, the person appointed as Treasurer need not be a Member of the Community.

4.4.Accounting records and annual accounts

- 4.4.1. The Trustees are responsible, through the Treasurer, for the keeping of accounting records for the Community and the preparation of annual statements of account for the Community. An annual budget will be set and approved.
- 4.4.2. The signatures of two of the signatories appointed by the Trustees shall be required in relation to all operations (other than lodgement of funds) on the bank and building society accounts held by the Community.
- 4.4.3. at least one out of the two signatures must be the signature of a Trustee.
- 4.4.4. At least one signatory should be an Officer, i.e. the Guardian, the Vice Chair, the Secretary, or the Treasurer.
- 4.4.5. no expenditure may be incurred on behalf of the community except in accordance with a budget previously agreed with the Trustees.