

THE FRIENDS OF HISTORIC ESSEX

Supporting the Essex Record Office

Registered Charity No. 235270

CONSTITUTION

1. NAME: The Society shall be called The Friends of Historic Essex.

2. OBJECT: (a) The Object of the Friends shall be the promotion of the education of the public in the history of the County of Essex as constituted in 1954 (the extent of which County is as set out in the Annex). (b) In furtherance of that Object but not further or otherwise the Executive Committee of the Friends shall have the following powers:-

- i. to acquire or accept historic records, books and such other artefacts as the Executive Committee decide as loans, gifts or bequests for preservation;
- ii. to publish or assist in the publication of material relating to the history of the said area;
- iii. to co-operate with such institutions, local authorities and charitable institutions as may be appropriate to further the Object of the Friends;
- iv. to do such other things as shall further the Objects of the Friends as the Executive Committee shall decide.

3. PRESIDENTS and VICE-PRESIDENTS: There shall be a President, and may be Vice-Presidents, who shall be elected at an Annual General Meeting, being members of the Friends. Upon election such persons, except as provided below, shall hold the office for life, or until resignation. It shall be proper for the Friends at a General Meeting to agree to remove a Vice-President from Office for sufficient reasons, if he or she has previously been asked to resign and has not agreed to do so.

4. HONORARY OFFICERS: The Officers of the Friends, all of whom shall be honorary, shall include a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary or Secretaries, and Treasurer. Other Officers may be added at the discretion of the Executive Committee. All shall be members of the Friends. All shall retire annually, but shall be eligible for election or re-election at the Annual General Meeting.

5. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: The affairs of the Friends shall be managed by an Executive Committee, who shall also be corporately the Trustees of the charitable status of the Friends. This shall consist of:- (a) the Honorary Officers of the Friends as appointed under the foregoing section, (b) the chief archivist of the Essex Record Office, or their nominee, and any other permanent appointments as may be made by or with the agreement of the Annual General Meeting, (c) not less than five or more than ten other members, who shall be members of the Friends and shall be elected by the Annual General Meeting.

In the event of a casual vacancy arising, the Executive Committee shall have the power to appoint, subject to the approval of the next following Annual General Meeting, a new member.

The Executive Committee shall hold not less than three meetings every year. A quorum shall consist of two officers and four members.

6. SUB-COMMITTEES: The Executive Committee shall have the power to appoint such sub-committees as it may consider necessary, to prescribe their powers (including if desired authority to expend the Friends' monies up to a prescribed limit) and their membership.

The Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer may be members of any such sub-committee. Unless expressly excluded, all sub-committees shall have the powers to co-opt further members, who need not necessarily be members of the Executive Committee of the Friends.

7. MEMBERSHIP: Membership shall be open to all who have paid the current annual subscription. Subject to this payment they shall be entitled to vote at the Annual General Meeting.

Membership subscriptions are due on April 1st each year. The membership of those who have not paid the due fees within three months of that date shall be deemed to have lapsed.

The Executive Committee shall have the power to appoint honorary members. Such appointments shall be notified at the next Annual General Meeting. All staff of the Essex Record Office are automatically honorary members of the Friends.

8. PAYMENTS: No payments, either direct or indirect, shall be made out of Friends' funds to any member for his services, or for anything other than legitimate expenses incurred in the course of work for the Friends, except in accordance with a resolution agreed by a General Meeting.

9. SUBSCRIPTION: The annual subscription shall be that sum which the Executive Committee shall from time to time determine and present for confirmation at the next Annual General Meeting, it being understood that such subscription shall be the minimum subscription payable.

10. FINANCE: The Friends' financial year shall begin on 1st April and end on 31st March of the following year. The Executive Committee shall have full power to authorise expenditure, which it may delegate at its discretion. The Chairman shall have power, acting in consultation with the Secretary and the Treasurer, to authorize expenditure in an emergency.

11. FUNDS: The Treasurer shall have power at his/her discretion, subject to the decisions of the Executive Committee and to resolutions passed at General Meetings, to invest the Friends' funds in any publicly-quoted securities, or to arrange for them to be held in accounts opened in the Friends' name in any recognised bank or building society.

12. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: The Annual General Meeting shall be held not later than six months after the close of the financial year. The ordinary business to be transacted shall be :- (a) to receive the report of the Executive Committee, (b) to receive the Financial Statement, (c) to appoint a President (should there be a vacancy), or Vice-Presidents and Honorary Officers and the Executive Committee for the ensuing year, and (d) to appoint an Honorary Examiner. A quorum of twenty-five members in total will be necessary to conclude any business. Formal notice of any other business to be transacted shall be sent to the Secretary not less than fourteen days before the Meeting, or in the case of a proposed amendment to the Constitution, not less than twenty-eight days. Formal notice of the Annual General Meeting is to be sent out to members not less than 21 days before the date of the AGM.

13. SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING: A Special General Meeting shall be called at any time if requisitioned by:- (a) the Executive Committee or (b) twenty-five or more Friends who have duly signed, and transmitted to the Secretary, a request to this effect. The Secretary shall advise all Friends of such a Meeting, setting out the subject or subjects proposed for consideration and giving not less than fourteen days' notice of the Meeting. The Meeting shall have no power to act on any topic other than those so set out.

14. ALTERATION OF CONSTITUTION: Subject as provided below, any provision of this Constitution may be amended by a majority of two-thirds of those present and voting at a General Meeting, the notice summoning which shall have included or had linked with it the text in full of the amendments proposed to be put to the Meeting, and the names of the Friends proposing them. This provision shall not apply to Sections 1, 2, and 16 of this Constitution.

15. TRUSTEES: The property of the Friends other than cash, which shall, except as specified below, be under the control of the Treasurer, shall be vested in trustees. The Trustees shall be not less than three in number, as resolved by the Executive Committee, and shall be appointed by the Executive Committee and confirmed in office by the next following Annual General Meeting. They shall remain in office until death or resignation or until removed from office by resolution of the Executive Committee. The Trustees shall take no action in respect of the properties or securities vested in them except on the advice of the Executive Committee or, in case of urgency, after consultation with the Chairman or other appropriate Officers.

16. DISSOLUTION OR WINDING-UP: If it is decided at a Special General Meeting of the Friends by a majority of the Friends present and voting that the Friends shall be dissolved, the Executive Committee shall wind up the affairs of the Friends. Any assets remaining after satisfaction of any liabilities properly payable therefrom shall be transferred or paid to such other charitable organisations having objects similar to the Friends as the Executive Committee shall with the approval of the Charity Commissioners decide, but letters, documents and similar artefacts may first be offered to the Essex Record Office or to a successor body to that Office.

ANNEX

The County of Essex as constituted in 1954 shall be understood to comprise:- (a) the administrative County of Essex as defined in the Local Government Act 1972, and also including the unitary authorities of Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock as constituted in 1998, and (b) that part of the present area of Greater London which was formerly part of the County of Essex and which now comprises the London Boroughs of Newham, Barking and Dagenham, Waltham Forest, Redbridge, and Havering.