

SAWBRIDGEWORTH TOWN TWINNING ASSOCIATION: CONSTITUTION

1 NAME	The Association shall be called the Sawbridgeworth Town Twinning Association
2 AIMS	The aims of the Association are to encourage and arrange long-term links between the people of Sawbridgeworth and the people of Bry sur Marne, France, and of Moosburg, Germany, including schools and community groups, by organising biennial visits and hosting activities.
3 MEMBERSHIP	<p>Membership shall be open to residents of Sawbridgeworth or long-term former residents with strong ties to the Association.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Association membership is currently free, but under constant review by the Committee. • Residents become Members of the Association by expressing their willingness to join to a Committee Member and following the Management Committee's acceptance of the new Member. • Once a resident is a Member, he/she/they will remain a Member until they formally resign or have been inactive for two calendar years.
4 MEMBERS' RIGHTS AND DUTIES	<p>Members have the right to take part in Association activities, including the biennial visits and hosting activities. This right is, however, limited by the availability of hosting families for biennial visits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members have a duty to look after their guests during visits, including providing, and paying for, normal hospitality. • By confirming that they will take part in a specific Association activity, Members become liable for the direct costs of their participation.
5 FUNDING	<p>The Association's income is derived from fundraising activities, grants and Members' contributions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income from fundraising and grants cannot be used to pay for the direct cost of Members' participation in events, but is earmarked for the costs of hosting activities for visitors. • The Association will run all activities out of accumulated funds.
6 MANAGEMENT	<p>The business of the Association will be managed by a committee (the Management Committee, hereinafter the Committee) consisting of a Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer and up to four other members, who shall be elected/re-elected at the AGM.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee shall agree the dates of biennial visits with Members and counterparts in Bry and Moosburg and a formal letter of invitation shall be sent by the Chairman for incoming visits, with a copy sent to the current Mayor and the Town Clerk. • The Committee may, at its sole discretion, invite the current Mayor to attend meetings ex officio in a non-voting capacity. • The Committee shall have the power to co-opt Members and appoint sub-committees as required; the Chairman shall be a member of any such sub-committee ex-officio. • Casual vacancies may be filled by the Committee at its discretion. • Members' complaints or disputes should be raised with the Committee or the Chairman, who will aim to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of all concerned.
7 MEETINGS	The Committee shall meet as required and at least three times a year. Any three members shall form a quorum.

8 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING	The Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held not later than 31 March each year. Members shall be notified at least three weeks in advance of the AGM. A minimum of six Members shall form a quorum.
9 EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETINGS	An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) may be called by any six Members of the Association by writing to the Secretary with the reasons for the meeting. Members shall be given at least 14 days notice of an EGM.
10 VOTING	All issues affecting the Association, apart from Dissolution, shall, if required and after appropriate discussion at an AGM or EGM, be decided by a majority of Members present and voting. In the event of an equal number of votes, the Chairman shall have the casting vote. Committee decisions shall, similarly, be confirmed by a majority of those voting, with the Chairman having a casting vote.
11 BANK ACCOUNT	A bank account shall be opened in the name of the Association and will be managed by the Treasurer. <i>The Committee shall appoint at least three signatories for the account, any two of whom are required to authorise payments by any accepted method on behalf of the Association.</i>
12 ACCOUNTS	The Accounts of the Association shall be kept by the Treasurer and independently examined accounts shall be presented to the AGM. The Association's financial year shall be from 1 January to 31 December. A suitably experienced Independent Examiner shall be appointed annually at the AGM to check the Association's accounts and shall be eligible for re-appointment.
13 ALTERATIONS TO THIS CONSTITUTION	This Constitution may be amended by resolution at the AGM or at an EGM. Proposed amendments shall be submitted to the Secretary at least three weeks in advance of such meetings.
14 DISSOLUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION	The Committee shall call an EGM to consider dissolving the Association in any of the following circumstances: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If, in the opinion of the Committee, the Association has insufficient funds to make financial commitments. 2. If there is a proposal to do so from either the Committee or 25 per cent of the membership. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the EGM, remedies shall be considered to prevent the immediate dissolution of the Association and the membership present shall first vote on all proposed remedies, each to be decided by a simple majority vote. Acceptance of a remedy will normally prevent the immediate dissolution of the Association, but may still allow a deferred, conditional, dissolution. • The EGM will then vote on immediate or deferred, conditional, dissolution of the Association, which will require a two-thirds majority vote. • On dissolution, all outstanding financial commitments of the Association will be settled and any remaining funds will be distributed to a Sawbridgeworth Association or Charity decided upon by impartial members of the Management Committee, in consultation with the Members.

Dated: 02 February 2023