

The CONSTITUTION

of CHURCHES TOGETHER IN SUDBURY & DISTRICT

1. BASIS OF MEMBERSHIP

- (i) The churches in Sudbury and surrounding villages seek to share in a developing partnership of mission and ministry to their communities as Churches Together in Sudbury & District (CTiS&D).
- (ii) CTiS&D's member churches acknowledge God's revelation in Christ, and confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the Holy Bible.
- (iii) In obedience to God's will, and in the power of the Holy Spirit, they commit themselves to working together to seek a deepening of their communion with Christ and with one another in the Church, which is His body.
- (iv) They seek to fulfil their mission to proclaim the Gospel by common witness and service in Sudbury & District to the glory of the one God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

2. AIMS

- (i) To help build the Kingdom of God by facilitating common witness to Christ by member churches, helping them to share the Gospel and to promote justice and peace in Sudbury & District and in the wider world;
- (ii) to encourage member churches to worship and pray together, each church sharing with the others its traditions and practices, in response to Christ's prayer that all His disciples shall be one;
- (iii) to help member churches work together for the spiritual and social needs of the town and district;
- (iv) to encourage good relationships between the leaders and congregations of member churches;
- (v) to facilitate consultation between member churches.

3. RELATIONSHIPS

CTiS&D works from time to time with a range of appropriate local and national bodies, including Churches Together in Suffolk/England/Britain & Ireland as determined by the Forum of CTiS&D.

4. MEMBERSHIP

A. Membership of CTiS&D is open to:

- (i) any local church within the CTiS&D area (as determined by the Forum) which affirms the Basis of Membership and commits itself to promote the aims of CTiS&D;
- (ii) any local church which on principle has no credal statements in its tradition and therefore cannot formally subscribe to the statement of faith in the Basis of Membership, provided that, acting through its formal decision-making body, it satisfies at least 75% of the member churches that it manifests faith in the incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ as witnessed in the Scriptures, and is committed to the spirit of the Basis of Membership and the Aims of CTiS&D.
- (iii) any para-church group that commits itself to promote the aims of CTiS&D, provided that, acting through its formal decision-making body, it satisfies at least 75% of the member churches that it will work to the spirit of the Basis of Membership and the Aims of CTiS&D.

B. If two or more churches in a Benefice or other formal association notify CTiS&D that they have elected to be represented as a Group, they shall appoint a Minister/Leader and two lay representatives to the Forum, and one representative to the Enabling Group (with alternates if required) and notify their names to CTiS&D.

5. OFFICERS and other appointments

- (i) The Officers of CTiS&D are the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Executive Secretary/Administrator, and Treasurer. A Minutes Secretary, Communications Officer, Publicity Officer, and additional Vice-Chairpersons may also be appointed by the Forum.
- (ii) The Officers are elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM), normally held in September or October, to serve for one year. An officer may be re-elected if willing but after 6 years' continuous service may only stand for re-election if two thirds of those attending the AGM and who are eligible to vote so decide; in which case his or her name may be considered with any other nominations received.
- (iii) If there be only one candidate for Chairperson he or she shall require endorsement by at least two thirds of the persons present and eligible to vote.
- (iv) Ideally there should be a balance of representation of member churches among the Officers.
- (v) Chairpersons of Projects agreed by the Forum to be under the auspices of CTiS&D shall also normally be appointed at the AGM subject to the same conditions as apply to CTiS&D Officers under 5(ii). It is expected that the Steering Committee of each Project and its registered volunteers will hold their own AGM shortly before the CTiS&D AGM and will recommend a Chairperson, but the appointment remains the responsibility of the Forum. Members of Project committees shall be elected annually from among the relevant Project volunteers; their names (and any changes during the year) shall be notified as soon as possible to the Forum by the respective Project Chairperson. The CTiS&D officers shall be ex-officio members of all such committees.
- (vi) Nominations: Each nomination for an Officer or Project Chairperson must be communicated to the Executive Secretary at least 7 clear days before the AGM. Nominations for lay candidates must be seconded by the Minister or Leader of the church that the nominee customarily attends, thus confirming that he/she is in good standing with that church. The AGM chairperson may waive any requirement of this sub-paragraph if satisfied that due to special circumstances it is in the interests of CTiS&D as a whole to do so.
- (vii) Elections and other decisions under paras. 5(ii) (iii) and (v) shall be by secret ballot if at least 5 Forum members so request or the AGM chairperson deems it appropriate.

6. THE FORUM

- (i) The Forum shall consist of the elected Officers; a Minister or designated Leader from each member church or Group; and two lay representatives (with alternates if required) appointed by each member church or Group.
Others with special expertise may be co-opted for a limited time, expiring not later than the following AGM, but open to renewal. A co-opted person may be a 'voting member' if the Forum considers he/she will contribute generally to the work of CTiS&D rather than a specific area. Co-opted voting members must not exceed 10% of Forum membership.
- (ii) Unless the Forum members decide otherwise Forums shall be open to all regular church attenders in the CTiS&D area. Such attenders who are not Officers or appointed church representatives may speak with the consent of the person chairing that Forum, but not vote.
- (iii) The Forum shall be the ultimate decision making body of CTiS&D and is responsible for its policy.

- (iv) The Forum shall meet not less than four times annually, one meeting being the Annual General Meeting at which accounts shall be presented, Officers elected, and annual reports submitted.
- (v) At least twenty one days' notice shall be given of any meeting of the Forum.
- (vi) Attendance by a Minister or notified representative from at least 50% of member churches (or linked groups) shall constitute a quorum.

7. THE ENABLING GROUP

- (i) The work of CTiS&D shall be carried on by the Enabling Group.
- (ii) The Enabling Group shall consist of the Officers and one representative appointed by each member church or Group. Others with special skills may be temporarily co-opted (to be ratified at the next Forum). Ideally there will be a maximum of two people from any one church or Group on the Enabling Group.
- (iii) The Enabling Group will meet as necessary and at least 4 times per year to progress the policy decisions of the Forum, and may invite others to attend meetings in an advisory capacity when appropriate. It may set up working groups to explore issues identified by the Forum or the Enabling Group, and may suggest new vision and ideas for consideration by the Forum.
- (iv) Special CTiS&D representatives may be appointed by the Enabling Group to represent CTiS&D for defined purposes, to be offered for ratification at the next Forum;
- (v) Attendance by at least 50% of the notified Enabling Group representatives shall constitute a quorum.

8. Standing Committee

A Standing Committee consisting of the elected officers of CTiS&D and others of relevant experience who they co-opt shall meet at the request of the Chairperson or any 2 members to consult on important future initiatives and developments. It is an advisory group only. Notes of meetings shall be kept but normally not circulated outside the Committee.

9. FINANCE

- (i) Each member church or organisation shall pay an annual subscription to CTiS&D as agreed by the Forum.
- (ii) The financial year shall be from 1st September to 31st August.
- (iii) Cheques for over £20 and other bank instructions require any 2 of 4 signatories appointed by the Forum from among the Officers and other Enabling Group members; cheques for £20 or less require only one such signature.
- (iv) An honorary Auditor/Examiner shall be appointed at the AGM.

10. THE CONSTITUTION

This constitution, and any subsequent amendment to it, requires the approval of at least 75% of the member churches or Groups, acting through their normal decision-making bodies.

11. DISSOLUTION

CTiS&D may be dissolved by a resolution passed by not less than three quarters of the member churches acting by their representatives present and voting at a Special General Meeting of the Forum convened for the purpose of which at least 6 months' notice shall have been given to the member churches. Such resolution may give instructions for the disposal of any assets held by

or for CTiS&D provided that any assets remaining after paying all debts and liabilities shall be given by decision of the Forum to such institution or institutions or charities having similar objects to some or all the Aims of CTiS&D.

ADOPTED by the CTiS&D Forum on 18th October 2024

SIGNED: *Peter Halden*, Chairperson