

Local Ecumenical Partnership Grange Park Church

Constitution

1. Name

The Local Ecumenical Partnership shall be known as Grange Park Church

The Partnership is a Baptist Church within the Central Baptist Association and a Church of England church plant.

2. Sponsoring Body

The Grange Park Church looks for support to Shire & Soke as its Sponsoring Body and will be accountable (for operating according to this constitution) to the partner Churches through the Sponsoring Body.

The Sponsoring Body shall appoint one of its members to act as link person.

3. Evangelical Identity

Grange Park Church holds to the Evangelical Alliance Statement of Faith. All ministers and members of the leadership team are expected to uphold it.

4. Baptism and Membership

Baptism shall be administered according to the rite and/or practice of the participating denominations.

Anyone requesting Believer's Baptism who has been previously baptised as an infant may elect either a rite of Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows, or Believer's Baptism. Choice of the latter will move them from the Common Roll to Baptist only membership.

Members are expected to be Christians who are willing to embrace the Vision and Values of Grange Park Church.

The legal requirement to keep a register of baptisms shall be met.

A Common Roll of Church Members shall be kept and revised annually at the AGM.

Members may choose not to be on the Common Roll, instead opting for Anglican or Baptist only membership. They will still be eligible to vote at the AGM.

For the purposes of financial denominational assessment all on the Common Roll will be considered half Anglican and half Baptist.

5. Worship and Eucharist / Holy Communion

Grange Park Church shall respect the faith and practice of each of its member denominations.

A balanced, varied and relevant pattern of worship shall be aimed for in order to maximise the riches of each tradition.

6. Church Government

6.1. The Staff

A balanced number of ordained ministers of each participating denomination should be aimed for on the Staff Team. The appointment of Anglican and Baptist Ministers shall be made in accord with the procedures of the denomination concerned, but in full consultation with the other denomination.

The Church Council may delegate its responsibility for other appointments (such as Lay workers or administrative support staff) to a team consisting of the Ministers, Elders and Church Secretary. This team may consult with others whenever necessary.

6.2. Church Leadership

The Church Council will normally recognise as Senior Minister one of the Ministers from the participating denominations, this will then be ratified by the church meeting. The Senior Minister will take ultimate responsibility for leading the church, supported by the Senior Leadership team consisting of the other Ministers, Elders and Church Secretary.

The Senior Leader and Leadership team are accountable to the Church Council and the Church Meeting.

Elders are elected at the AGM to serve the church as part of the senior leadership team for a renewable term of 3 years. Elders are mature believers whose private and public life testify to a living faith, and of good repute in the congregation. There will normally be at least 4 elders aiming for a balanced representation from the participating denominations and common roll

6.3. Church Council

A Church Council of both elected and ex-officio members (Ministers and Elders) shall handle all matters of worship, buildings, fabric, finance and other matters referred to it. Decisions of the Church Council, whose total membership shall not exceed 15, shall be made by majority vote with the Chairman having a casting vote.

All elections to the Council, Church Secretary and Treasurer shall normally take place at the AGM. Elders may also be elected at the AGM.

At its first meeting after the AGM the Church Council shall appoint a Chairman, and Vice-Chairman (if so required).

6.4. Church Meetings and Consultation

Church Meetings will be held regularly and (replaces 'or') as requested by the Church Council or Ministers.

Only church members and the Ministers may vote.

The Church Meeting will consider (replaces 'At the discretion of the Church Council and Staff') major issues in the life and development of the Church. The Church Council and staff will facilitate discussion and encourage prayer. (Replaces 'shall be brought before the Church membership through an appropriate pattern of consultation and prayer.')

The AGM shall meet not later than April 30th, each year

7. Premises

Any premises shall be subject to The Sharing of Buildings Act 1969, unless specifically designated otherwise.

8. Finance

There shall be a common purse. The Treasurer shall receive and account for all monies donated to the Partnership through collections, gifts, etc, to the Church Council and the Annual General Meeting.

9. Wider Participation

If other churches in or near the neighbourhood of Grange Park Church wish to join Grange Park Church at any time, this shall be subject to the agreement of the Church Council, Church Meeting, appropriate denominational authorities and the Sponsoring Body.

10. The Constitution

The Church Meeting, subject to the agreement of the Staff, the Sponsoring Group and the appropriate denomination authorities may make alterations of the Constitution.

A two week notice and two thirds majority at the Church Meeting is required for any alterations.

11. Evaluation

An annual report of the working of the Partnership shall be submitted by the Church Council to the Sponsoring Group for perusal and comment. A major review by persons appointed by the Sponsoring group shall normally be carried out every five years.