

Constitution for an Unincorporated Association Local Ecumenical Partnership

Help and Guidance

This document explains and guides what you should write in the various fields available for editing. Please note you will not be able to change any text in the document that is not highlighted in **red writing**. Paragraph numbers below refer to paragraph numbers in the constitution.

Where text is not relevant to the combination of partners to the LEP, we recommend that you replace deleted text with the word 'deleted'. This will preserve the numbering of the constitution, and enable the denominational authorities and Charity Commission to see easily where text has been altered from the model.

Text you have altered **will remain in red**, so that those with responsibility for checking constitutions can see at a glance the changes made.

Introductory Paragraph

Use the drop-down menu to enter the date the constitution was adopted.

Delete the text 'LEP name' and replace it with the name of your LEP.

PART 1

2. Name

Replace the text with the name of your LEP (this should match the name given in the introductory paragraph)

7. Withdrawal

- (4) We suggest an extension period of three months would be suitable, which would give a total of six months for discussion. However, there may be local reasons why a shorter or longer time period should be adopted.

PART 2

9. Membership

- (2) Replace the text in each line with the relevant names of the participating local churches. These names should match what is written in the Partnership Agreement at paragraph 6.

If the LEP has been formed as a church plant, so as yet there may be no pre-existing local church partners, the suggestion is to change the text to:

'The members of the participating [*name of denomination as appropriate*] church shall be those persons who are listed on the membership roll of the [*name of denomination as appropriate*] church.'

If you do not yet have a particular church partner in your LEP, replace that line of text with 'deleted'.

- (7) If the Church of England is a partner in the LEP, and the LEP is the parish church, then paragraph 7 MUST be included.

If the Church of England is not a partner, or the LEP is not the parish church, then replace the whole paragraph with the word 'deleted'.

11. Congregational Meetings

- (4) & (5) These two paragraphs MUST be included if the LEP includes Baptist and/or United Reformed Church partners.

Otherwise, replace each paragraph with 'deleted'.

17. Officers and Trustees

- (1) a) Insert numbers for the minimum and maximum number of trustees your LEP will elect. Make sure these numbers are appropriate for the size of congregation, and realistic. Bear in mind that the Charity Commission directs that there should always be at least three Trustees.

c) This line is only necessary if you have a Church of England partner to the LEP (see guidance on paragraphs 18.3 below)

18. Appointment of LEP trustees

- (3) If you have a Church of England partner to the LEP you MUST include the whole of section 18.3. You will need to include the relevant parish name in paragraph 18.3.a and also the number of trustees the PCC can appoint to the LEP.

If you do not have a Church of England partner, replace the title with 'deleted' and delete the following paragraphs.

- (4) This paragraph is relevant ONLY if you have a Methodist and/or a Church of England partner(s) in the LEP. If not, delete the text and replace with 'deleted'. (NB There are two fields which will need to be deleted. You only need to write 'deleted' in the first field.)

33. Interpretation

‘Area of Benefit’: Replace the text with the Area of Benefit of the LEP. This text must be the same as in the Partnership Agreement.

‘The Partnership Agreement’: Enter the date of the Partnership Agreement. This will probably be the same as the date of the constitution.

‘The Participating Denominations’: Enter the names of the denominational bodies of each of the partner churches in your LEP: e.g. the Church of England, the Methodist Church, the United Reformed Church, the Baptist Union of Great Britain, etc. The text should be the same as in the Partnership Agreement.

‘The Participating Churches’: Enter the names of the local Churches participating in your LEP. If your partners are currently existing churches that have decided to work together in an LEP, you should put their names. If your LEP is a new church plant, you can put ‘a Baptist church within the xxx Baptist Association’, ‘a United Reformed Church within the xxx Synod’, etc. The text should be the same as in the Partnership Agreement.

‘Relevant Authority’: Replace the text in each line with the appropriate names of the local church partners and their relevant authority.

For the Church of England the appropriate authority will usually be the Bishop of the local Diocese.

For the Methodist Church the appropriate authority will usually be the local Circuit and District.

For the United Reformed Church the appropriate authority will be the local Synod.

For the Baptist church, the text is there for you.

As before, if you do not yet have a particular church partner in your LEP, replace the text with ‘deleted’.