

Constitution
of the
Friends of Thomas Earlston Group

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1. Name of the Association

The name of the Association is the "Friends of Thomas Group".

2. Objects of the Group

- 2.1. To promote awareness of Thomas the Rhymer, his life, his works and his home.
- 2.2. To collate and publish information, in various formats.
- 2.3. To make information available and readily accessible to the public.
- 2.4. Erect signage of Thomas's birthplace and the Rymer Tower within Earlston.
- 2.5. To collate historical information, myths and legends about and around Earlston throughout the years and make this information available to all.

3 Operations of the Group

To further the above objects, but not otherwise, the Group may perform the following:

- 3.1. To promote the legend of Thomas the Rhymer locally, nationally and internationally.
- 3.2. To promote tourism to Earlston and surrounding area.
- 3.3. To liaise with schools and other organisations in the Earlston area to develop awareness of local history.
- 3.4. To publish or contribute to the publication of any papers, periodicals, books, reports or other documents on subjects that are within the objects of the Group;
- 3.5. To promote and / or pay the expenses of meetings on matters within the objects of the Group. Subject to the restrictions below, pay expenses of speakers, invited by the Group, attending such meetings for the purposes of lecturing or giving expert advice or assistance;
- 3.6. To make representations at public meetings or in other ways as appears necessary to further the objects of the Group;
- 3.7. To make grants, donations, loans or annual payments to any association or body for charitable objects similar to those of the Group;
- 3.8. To raise funds and to invite and to receive subscriptions, gifts and donations for the objects of the Group;
- 3.9. To invest monies of the Group, not immediately required for its purposes, in or upon such investments, securities or properties as regarded fit and proper;
- 3.10. To establish and support or aid in the establishment and support of any charitable association or institution connected with purposes of the Group;
- 3.11. To do all such other things that will further the attainment of the above objects or purposes.

4. Restrictions on Operations

- 4.1. The only use of income and property of the Group, however derived, is towards the objects of the group as detailed in this Constitution;
- 4.2. No income or property shall be paid or transferred, directly or indirectly, by way of dividend, bonus or otherwise as a profit to members of the Group;
- 4.3. Members of the Group are entitled to reasonable payment for services or activities undertaken on behalf of the Group, but only if the Committee has given prior authority;
- 4.4. The Committee will establish what a reasonable payment is.

5. Membership

- 5.1. The Group shall have the following categories of membership:
 - Individual – open to any person aged 16 or over who supports the objects of the Group;
 - Associate – open to any organisation that supports the objects of the Group;
 - Honorary – awarded by the Committee to individuals who have made an exceptional contribution to the objects of the Group. (Note: this is a lifetime award).
- 5.2. Membership of the Group will be by nomination and secondment by two existing members of the Group, and approved by the Committee.
- 5.3. The Committee has the power to refuse membership to any applicant. The applicant has no right to know the reason for this refusal and has no right of appeal;
- 5.4. Only members as defined by these categories, or any other person invited by the Group and approved by the Committee, will be eligible to take advantage of any travel arrangements made by the committee;
- 5.5. The Committee will determine membership fees, including introduction, the level and discontinuation. The Committee will give a minimum three months notice of any change in fee status or level.

6. Office Bearers

- 6.1. The normal Office Bearers of the Group are the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer;
- 6.2. At the Annual General Meeting, members of the Committee will elect the Office Bearers from the members of the Committee;
- 6.3. The Chair, or in his/her absence the Secretary will preside at the Annual General Meeting and at any other meetings at the request of the Committee;
- 6.4. The Committee may appoint further Office Bearers if the needs of the Group activities warrant such action.

7. Organisation

- 7.1. Each Annual General Meeting will appoint Office Bearers and members of the Committee to administer the Group;
- 7.2. Within the "Restrictions on Operations", this Committee shall have full powers to manage and control all affairs, including financial, of the Group;
- 7.3. The Committee will consist of the Office Bearers of the Group and no more than three Individual or Associate Members.
- 7.4. If more than six persons are nominated for the Committee at an Annual General Meeting, a vote will be held to determine which persons will form the Committee.
- 7.4. A quorum of the Committee shall consist of three voting Committee members. The majority voting, of those present at the meeting entitled to vote, will make decisions. In the event of a tied vote, the Chair (or presiding Officer in the absence of the Chair) shall have a casting vote, whether or not he/she has voted before;
- 7.5. The Committee may appoint sub-Committees as necessary. At least one member of the Committee must be a member of any sub-Committee. The remaining members of any sub-Committee will normally be members of the Group, though the Committee will co-opt any person they feel can forward the objects of the group.

8. General Meetings

- 8.1. The Committee will call an Annual General Meeting in February each year and may call other General Meetings as required;
- 8.2. The Committee will convene an Extraordinary General Meeting on receipt by the Secretary of a written application signed by at least six Members;
- 8.3. A minimum of twenty-one days notice will be given to all Members for the Annual General Meeting and any Extraordinary General Meetings. A minimum of seven days notice is required for other General Meetings;
- 8.4. The Secretary must receive notices of motion for the Annual General Meeting and any Extraordinary General Meetings at least fourteen days before the date of the meeting;
- 8.5. Each Member of the Group will be entitled to vote at the Annual General Meeting, any Extraordinary General Meetings and other General Meetings.

9. Finance

- 9.1. The Financial Year of the Group runs from 1st February in any year until 31st January in the following year;
- 9.2. At each Annual General Meeting, a validated set of accounts for the preceding Financial Year will be presented to the Members. A responsible person selected by the Committee will validate the accounts. The responsible person may be a member of the Committee other than the Treasurer;
- 9.3. These accounting arrangements will continue until the assets of the Group reach the level where a more detailed level of scrutiny, as determined by the Committee or the Law, is required;
- 9.4. The Committee is responsible for operating Bank Accounts for the funds of the Group. It also has the power to invest funds in appropriate securities;
- 9.5. Any Group cheques or expenditure must be signed by the Treasurer and one other Office Bearer of the Group.

10. Amendments to the Constitution

- 10.1. Only a General Meeting of the Group can amend this Constitution. A 60% majority of those attending and entitled to vote will be required to pass any changes;
- 10.2. Notice of the proposed Amendment/s will be circulated to all Office Bearers and Members at least seven days before the date of the meeting.

11. Dissolution of the Group

- 11.1. A General Meeting of the Group will be required to dissolve the Group;
- 11.2. After settlement of all accounts, any residual property and monies will be applied to a purpose or other organisation that accords with the objects of this association.

Authorised on behalf of the Committee by:

Chair:.....

Secretary:..... Treasurer:.....

Date:.....