

Newhaven Chamber of Commerce Constitution



I: Name

The name of this association shall be the Newhaven Chamber of Commerce, hereafter referred to as "the Chamber."

II: Purpose

The Chamber is a non-profit, non-political organization established to:

1. Promote and support the economic vitality of the Newhaven business community.
2. Advocate for policies and initiatives beneficial to commerce and enterprise.
3. Provide networking, educational, and promotional opportunities for members.
4. Foster cooperation between businesses, local government, and the community.
5. To support charitable fundraising activities where considered appropriate to the intent of the Chamber interests and the wellbeing of Newhaven and its inhabitants
6. To discuss and deal with all matters (non-political and non-sectarian) arising relative to local affairs

III: Membership

Section 1: Eligibility

Membership shall be open to individuals, businesses, and organisations engaged in manufacture, commerce, business, trade, shipping, distribution, agriculture, fishing, professional practice or charitable/CIC activities with an interest in or providing business services within Newhaven and the local area.

Section 2: Membership

The Chamber has established three categories of membership

- a. **Full membership:** for businesses and businesspeople based in or who operate or provide services within Newhaven and the local area. Full membership will provide a range of benefits (described below); full voting rights and the right to stand for committee.
- b. **Affiliate membership;** This is open to voluntary, charitable and non-profit making organisations that operate in the aforementioned area. They will receive full benefits of membership but will not be eligible to hold a position on the committee or vote in an election
- c. **Honorary membership:** from time-to-time individuals who have, in the opinion of the committee, provided service to the benefit of Newhaven may be asked to become Honorary members. This will run for one year unless otherwise stated.
- d. Any person, firm or company wishing to become a member of the Chamber will need to be nominated and recommended by an existing member. On application, payment of the required fee and providing the application matches the criteria for membership as set out above, the member will receive a welcome pack and be entitled to the benefits of membership

- e. Any firm, company or authority becoming members of the Chamber shall nominate in writing a representative, whose name shall be entered in the register of the Chamber as representing such company and who shall have full authority to exercise all right of membership on behalf of such firm, company or authority representative and shall have the right to appoint a deputy

Section 3: Benefits; Rights and Responsibilities

Members are entitled to participate in Chamber events, vote in elections, and receive benefits. Members must abide by the bylaws and maintain good standing.

Members benefit from the opportunity to network and share business ideas and experiences with like-minded businesspeople.

Members will receive a welcome pack comprising of:

- a. Membership certificate (to be displayed at the business premises)
- b. A window sticker (to be prominently displayed to demonstrate your association)
- c. A pen, card wallet and badge
- d. A copy of the constitution
- e. A list of the current executive steering committee and their contact details
- f. An information page and weblink on the chamber website
- g. Chamber rules

Available online or via enewsletter:

- h. A chamber newsletter (via subscription on www.newhavenchamber.co.uk)
- i. Weekly breakfast meetings and events (available via the calendar at www.newhavenchamber.co.uk)
- j. Special offers from other Chamber members or external support agencies that are deemed to be beneficial to the membership by the executive committee, or the secretary as displayed on www.newhavenchamber.co.uk
- k. The Chamber of commerce will from time to time organise meetings, seminars and talks designed to bring benefits to the Chamber and its members which will be promoted on the website and/or via newsletters.

Section 4. Subscriptions

An annual joining fee shall be payable by all members, this fee to be fixed at a rate deemed appropriate by the Chamber Executive Committee. The annual fees are ratified at the Annual General Meeting

Membership will be on a Calendar year basis and 28 days before renewal, an invoice will be sent to the member, confirming the required fee for the forthcoming year. Failure to pay the required membership fee within 7 days of the renewal date will result in cancellation of the membership and all member benefits listed above will be withdrawn.

Payment of fees can be by cash, bank payment or standing order.

Section 5: Management

The management policy of the Chamber shall be vested in the Chamber. The day to day

management shall be the responsibility of the President, the Vice President, and the secretary of the Chamber Executive Committee.

- **President:** Presides over meetings, represents the Chamber, and oversees its functioning.
- **Vice President:** Assists the President and assumes duties in their absence.
- **Secretary:** Maintains records and minutes of meetings. In addition, the secretary shall be responsible for the promotion of the chamber, management of the membership, organisation of the meetings. The Chamber shall have the power to employ and pay a secretary and so long as there shall be no paid secretary an honorary secretary shall be elected by the chamber. The Chamber shall be empowered to pay the honorary secretary for the time being an honorarium in recognition of their services to the Chamber. The secretary (whether Honorary or paid) shall conduct correspondence of the chamber in conjunction with the President.
- **Treasurer:** Oversees financial matters and reports to the Chamber Committee.

The Chamber shall appoint an executive steering committee for the purpose of setting the agenda for the Chamber and for dealing with special or urgent matters which may arise with power to act as the Chamber. The executive committee shall also consider all matters to be discussed and business by the Chamber and at any general meetings shall make recommendations to such meetings

The executive committee shall comprise a minimum of **6** representatives and no more than **10**, the President, the Vice President, the Secretary and Treasurer plus representatives from various business sectors operating within Newhaven

The Chamber Executive Committee shall oversee the strategic direction, financial health, and operations of the Chamber. It shall appoint sub-committees as needed.

Section 6: Elections and Terms

The Chamber Executive Committee shall be elected by the general membership for a term of one year.

Section 7: Meetings

The Chamber Executive Committee shall meet regularly throughout the year. A majority of the Chamber Executive Committee members shall constitute a quorum.

If any member of the Chamber Executive Committee shall, in the opinion of the executive committee be unreasonably absent for more than THREE meetings expressly convened for executive matters, they shall be considered as having resigned from that committee.

Should any member require a motion to be discussed by the committee then they should put their question in writing to the secretary. The motion will then be included in the agenda of the next scheduled meeting. Should the motion be more urgent then, an extra meeting can be called.

Section 8: Committees

The Chamber Executive Committee may establish standing or ad hoc committees to carry out the work of the Chamber. Committee chairs shall be appointed by the President with Chamber Executive approval.

Section 9: Meetings of Members

An Annual General Meeting shall be held to elect Executive Committee members, present reports, and conduct other business. The meeting shall be held as soon as possible after the

completion of the annual accounts of the Chamber. Notice shall be given at least 21 days in advance.

The Business of the annual general meeting shall be:-

- (a) To receive the Annual General report from the President
- (b) To receive the accounts of the Chamber
- (c) To elect the following officers:-
 - (i) A President
 - (ii) A Vice President
 - (iii) To appoint a paid or honorary secretary
 - (iv) A minimum of six members to the executive committee.
- (e) Such other business as shall have been communicated to the secretary and included in the notice of the meeting sent to members.

The President, Vice President and Secretary shall be ex-officio members of all committees including the executive committee.

Elected officers of the chamber and members of the executive committee shall not be proposed for re-election without providing written notice that they are available to be so elected, such notice to be given SEVEN days prior to the date of such meeting.

The Secretary, on requisition of the President or five members of the Chamber can convene a special general meeting. The object of the meeting shall be stated on such requisition and not less than ten day's notice of the meeting and the subject to be brought forward there shall be given by circular to all members. The Secretary shall call the meeting within ten days of receiving the requisition.

Section 10 Voting

The votes at meetings of the Chamber shall be by show of hands, unless a ballot is demanded. The President shall have a second or casting vote in the case of a tie.

Section 11: Finances

Section 1: Financial Year

The financial year shall begin on 1st July and end on 30th June

All income shall be passed to the Treasurer to be paid into the bank for credit of the Chamber and all payments shall be made by bank transfer having the authorisation of the President or Vice President and countersigned by at least one member of the executive committee. Such payments shall have been requested by email or invoice from the person, or company providing goods or services.

An annual budget shall be prepared by the Treasurer and approved by the Chamber Executive Committee. Financial records shall be audited annually.

Section 12: Honorary Auditors

The honorary auditors shall audit the annual statement of account and balance sheet and shall certify the same before they are made available for presentation.

Section 13, Resignation

A member at any time by giving notice in writing to the secretary may resign his/her membership of the Chamber but shall continue to be liable for an annual subscription due and unpaid at the date of his/her resignation.

Section 14, Expulsion of members

Any member who, in the opinion of the majority of the Chamber at a special meeting of which due notice has been given, is considered for any reason by such meeting after due consideration, as unsuitable or ineligible to continue as a member of the chamber shall be called upon to withdraw or resign, or default thereof, at the expiration of FOURTEEN days from the date of the notice, the person to whom such notice shall be given at once cease to be a member and forfeit all rights of membership. Such member shall have the right to appeal to a general meeting.

Section 15, Alteration or addition to the constitution

This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of members present at a general meeting, provided written notice of the proposed changes is given at least 14 days prior.

Section 16, Dissolution

The Chamber may be dissolved with the consent of at least four-fifths of the members present at a special general meeting duly summoned for that purpose.

August 2025.