Great Yarmouth Unity Project CIC

Membership and Partners Policy

Who we are and how we work together

Document	GYUP Membership and Partners Policy
Version	0.3 — draft for member comment
Status	Circulated to members for comment; not yet agreed by directors
Prepared by	Dr Sarah Flindall (original text); Philip Williams (revisions)
Date	29 October 2026
Related policy	Supplements, and does not replace, GYUP Membership Policy V1.0 (agreed September 2026). If directors agree this document, the Membership Policy will be reviewed so that the two are consistent.
Approval	Directors, at the directors' meeting following the consultation period
Review	Annually, or sooner if the Articles of Association are amended

1. Purpose of this policy

This policy explains who is part of Great Yarmouth Unity Project CIC (GYUP), the different ways people and organisations can be involved, and the roles of members, partners and directors. It is written for directors, members, partners and prospective members.

Its main new content is the concept of Partners, and what Partner status does and does not mean.

The rules on who can become a member, how to apply, the register of members and how membership ends are set out in GYUP's Membership Policy V1.0, which this document supplements and does not replace. Where the two differ, the Membership Policy applies. If the directors agree this document, they will review the Membership Policy so that the two are consistent, including adding a reference to Partners.

2. Our purpose

GYUP exists to bring people and organisations together to improve lives and opportunities in our community. We believe that together we can achieve more than we can alone.

GYUP is a facilitator, connector and collective voice. We want to help people share skills, develop ideas, identify opportunities, reduce duplication and work together to achieve better outcomes.

We do not need to own every project, deliver every service or control the people who work with us. Our role is to help our community become more effective.

3. Who is part of GYUP

People contribute in different ways and have different amounts of time and capacity available. GYUP recognises three kinds of involvement.

3.1 Members

Members are people or organisations formally admitted as members under GYUP's Articles of Association. They have the applicable voting rights and undertake the £1 guarantee described in the Articles (see section 6).

Membership gives people a formal role in GYUP's governance. Members may be actively involved in collaborative work or may be less active at different times. Their legal rights do not depend simply on how much they participate.

People apply for membership by registering on gyup.org. Membership takes effect when the application is approved by the directors under Article 27 of the Articles. Who is eligible, and the full application process, are set out in the Membership Policy V1.0.

3.2 Partners

Partners are individuals or organisations connected to GYUP who share its community-focused aims but are not formal members. They may offer support, share information, make connections or collaborate when opportunities arise.

We value these relationships and want to acknowledge them openly, without implying that every partner is actively involved in joint work. Section 4 sets out what Partner status does and does not mean.

3.3 Active collaboration

Some members and partners are actively involved in developing ideas, sharing expertise, connecting organisations or delivering collaborative projects. We want to recognise this contribution honestly, while understanding that people's involvement may change over time.

3.4 Taking part without being a member

People do not have to be members to take part in GYUP's members' meetings or its WhatsApp group. Formal membership matters for governance, such as voting; it is not a condition of joining in.

These descriptions explain people's relationships and levels of involvement. They do not create additional legal membership categories.

4. What Partner status means

Partner status applies in the same way to individuals and organisations. It is a recognition of goodwill and shared aims, and nothing more. In particular, an organisation cannot treat its Partner status as evidence of any wider relationship with GYUP.

Partner status does	Partner status does not
Recognise a shared commitment to GYUP's community-focused aims	Give membership, voting rights or any role in GYUP's governance

Partner status does	Partner status does not
Allow GYUP to acknowledge the relationship publicly	Allow the partner to speak for, represent or act on behalf of GYUP
Open the way to sharing information, connections and opportunities	Imply that GYUP endorses the partner's organisation, products, services or activities
Make it easier to collaborate when a suitable opportunity arises	Entitle the partner to GYUP funding, resources, referrals or use of its name or logo
	Create any contract, legal relationship or ongoing obligation on either side

Any joint project between GYUP and a partner is agreed separately, in writing, and on its own terms. A partner who wishes to use GYUP's name or logo in any way beyond stating that it is a GYUP partner needs the directors' written agreement first.

The directors may decline or end Partner recognition where the relationship no longer reflects GYUP's purpose, or where Partner status has been used in a way this section does not allow.

5. Membership eligibility

Who can become a member, and how to apply, are set out in section 2 of GYUP's Membership Policy V1.0. This document does not change them.

In summary, membership is open to individuals and to specified kinds of not-for-profit organisation. Organisations operating for private profit are not eligible. People who own, run or work for a business are welcome to join as individual members in their own right, and businesses themselves may become Partners (section 4).

The exclusion of for-profit organisations is a policy of the directors, made under their discretion to approve members in Article 27, which itself sets no eligibility requirement beyond director approval. The policy rests on GYUP's not-for-profit character (Article 4) and on the coalition of individuals, statutory and VCSE organisations described in its objects (Article 5). It is described here as a policy, rather than a requirement of the Articles, so that it can be understood, questioned and reviewed on the right basis.

6. What the £1 guarantee means

GYUP is a company limited by guarantee. Each member undertakes to contribute £1 towards the company's assets if it is wound up, subject to the conditions in the Articles. This is a limited financial commitment, not an investment or shareholding. Section 4 of the Membership Policy V1.0 sets out the detail.

Members are not personally responsible for the company's debts simply because they are members. Directors have separate legal responsibilities for their role in managing the company.

7. The role of members

Members collectively have a formal role in GYUP's governance through the rights provided by the Articles and company law. This includes the applicable voting rights and the ability, through a properly passed special resolution, to use the members' reserve power set out in the Articles to direct directors to take or refrain from taking specific action.

This is a collective power exercised through the proper process. It is not an individual member's automatic right to instruct a director.

Members bring the ideas, experience, knowledge and community connections that give GYUP its value.

8. The role of directors

Directors are responsible for managing GYUP as a legal company. They must ensure that it is properly governed, financially responsible and compliant with its legal obligations.

Their role is to safeguard GYUP's purpose and ensure that decisions are made appropriately and transparently.

Directors are not the bosses of members or their independent organisations. Their responsibility is to ensure that GYUP itself operates effectively and in accordance with its purposes, governing documents and the law.

A useful question for every director is: "Does this decision help GYUP fulfil its purpose and enable our community to achieve more?"

9. Can people who run profitable businesses be involved?

Absolutely. GYUP welcomes people and organisations from across our community, including businesses, charities, CICs, community groups, public services and individuals.

Running a successful business is entirely compatible with a genuine commitment to community wellbeing. People may contribute through their skills, experience, employment opportunities, mentoring, generosity or collaborative work.

We do not judge people's value by whether their organisation makes a profit. The membership policy in section 5 is about the shape of the coalition set out in GYUP's objects, not a judgement on business.

What matters is that everyone respects GYUP's purpose, independence and values. GYUP's name, resources, relationships and funding must not be used to provide an unfair private advantage. Potential conflicts of interest must be declared and managed, and decisions must serve GYUP's community-focused purpose.

GYUP is not anti-business. It is committed to ensuring that the collective works for the benefit of the community, rather than being used for individual gain.

10. How we work together

We aim to build relationships based on trust, respect, transparency and shared purpose.

- Members and partners retain their independence and responsibility for their own activities.
- We encourage people to share ideas, skills, knowledge and opportunities.
- We recognise different levels of involvement honestly.

- We manage disagreements constructively and make decisions through appropriate processes.
- We ensure that GYUP's resources and relationships are used responsibly and in line with its purpose.

We do not expect everyone to contribute in the same way. We want to create opportunities for people to contribute where they can and where they can make a difference.

11. Our shared commitment

GYUP is not about building an organisation for its own sake. It is about enabling people and organisations to do more for our community.

Our members give GYUP its formal collective foundation. Our directors safeguard its governance and legal responsibilities. Our partners extend the relationships and opportunities available to us. Our active collaborators help turn shared ideas into action.

We do not all have to do the same thing, or give the same amount of time, to contribute to a shared vision.

Our aim is simple: to connect, facilitate and enable, so that our members, partners and community can achieve more together.

Together we achieve more

12. Consultation

This draft is circulated to members for comment before the directors consider it for agreement. Members are particularly invited to comment on the following.

No.	Question
1	The term "Partner". Alternatives such as "Working with" and "Connected to" have been considered, but read awkwardly as a heading or category label. Is "Partner" the right term, or is there a better one that works as a label?
2	Does section 4 make clear enough what Partner status does and does not mean, particularly for organisations?
3	Is the relationship between this document and the Membership Policy V1.0 clear?
4	Is anything missing, unclear or wrong?

Comments should be sent to the directors@gyup.org by the closing date given in the circulation notice. All comments received will be considered at the directors' meeting at which this policy is presented for agreement, and the outcome recorded in the minutes.