

Confirmed copy May 2018

The Charter

GRANTED BY

KING CHARLES II.

TO

THE GOVERNORS

OF THE

Charity for Relief

OF THE

POOR WIDOWS AND CHILDREN

OF

Clergymen,

A.D. 1678

THE CHARTER

Recitals

Charles the Second by the grace of God, King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c. To all whom these presents shall come greeting. Whereas we are informed by the humble petition of divers of our loving subjects who are sons of clergymen, that several charitable and well-disposed persons, the children of clergymen and others, have appeared very free and forward in contributing to the relief and maintenance of such of the widows and children of loyal and orthodox clergymen as are poor and indigent, which have been to good effect in placing out many of the said poor children apprentices, and towards the maintenance of others at the university and to the relief of many of the said poor widows. And whereas we are informed and well-assured, that if we would be graciously pleased to erect and settle a Corporation for the receiving, managing and disposing of the said Charity, they should not only be encouraged to continue and enlarge such their contributions, but divers others would be likewise induced to extend the like charity to the uses aforesaid. And whereas nothing is more agreeable to our royal inclinations than the promoting works of mercy and charity.

1. Know you, therefore, that we, taking into our princely consideration the great sufferings of many of the clergy in England in the late times of rebellion for their loyalty and fidelity to us and our Royal Father of ever blessed memory, and also the great good which may arise by our promoting of so public and charitable a work, have, for the better and more orderly carrying on the same, of our especial grace, certain knowledge, and mere motion, willed, ordained, constituted and appointed, and by these presents for us, our heirs and successors, do will, ordain, constitute, declare and grant, that our right trusty and well beloved cousin Francis Earl of Longford, in the Kingdom of Ireland, John Lord Bishop of Rochester, Peter Lord Bishop of Ely, John Lord Bishop of Chester, Edward Lord Bishop of Carlisle, John Lord Bishop of Oxford, Humphrey Lord Bishop of Bangor, William Lord Bishop of Llandaffe, Ezechiel Lord Bishop of Raphoe, Henry Lord Fairfax of Cameron, in the Kingdom of Scotland, Sir Joseph Williamson, Knight, Principal Secretary of State, Sir John Robinson, Knight and Baronet, Lieutenant of our Tower of London, Sir Herbert Crofts, Baronet, Sir Samuel Moreland, Baronet, Sir Thomas Meeres, Knight, Sir Christopher Wren, Knight, Sir Andrew Hacket, Knight, Sir Samuel Clarke, Knight, Sir John Berry, Knight, Sir Thomas Higgens, Knight, Sir William Dolben, Knight, one of our Serjeants at Law, Recorder of our City of London, Sir George Crooke, Knight, Sir Nicholas Pedley, Knight, Serjeant at Law, Sir Robert Baldock, Knight, Serjeant at Law, Francis Barrett, Serjeant at Law, William Gregory, Serjeant at Law, Doctor William Lloyd, Dean of Bangor, Doctor Tobias Wickham, Dean of Yorke, Dr James Duport, Dean of Peterborough, Doctor George Benson, Dean of Hereford, Doctor John Castilian, Dean of Rochester, Doctor William Holder, Sub-almoner, Doctor Zachariah Cradock, Doctor Thomas Sprat, Doctor Thomas Wren, Archdeacon of Ely, Doctor Edward Davenant, Doctor Stephen Phillipps, Doctor Henry Dove, Doctor Henry Brunsell, Doctor William

Morton, Dean of Christ Church in Dublin, Doctor Francis Turner, Doctor Thomas Belke, Doctor Edward Layfeild, Doctor Gilbert Ironside, Warden of Wadham College, Doctor John Nicholas, Warden of New College, Doctor Hezekiah Burton, Doctor William Durham, Doctor Anthony Saunders, Doctor Aucher, Doctor John Meriton, Doctor Edward Reynolds, Doctor John Hall, Master of Pembroke College in Oxford, Doctor Ambrose Atfeild, Doctor Richard Osgood, Doctor John Echer, Doctor John Bradborne, Doctor Henry James, Doctor Oliver Pocklington and Doctor Samuell Brunsell, Doctors in Divinity; Doctor Samuell Collins, Doctor Nicholas Stanley, Doctor Walter Needham, Doctor John Mapletoft, Doctor Edmond Dickenson, Doctor John Novell, Doctor Amherst, Doctor Richard Martin and Doctor John Atfeild, Doctors in Physic; Bryan Fairfax, Richard Leigh of Lyme, Lee Warner, John Amherst, Henry Bigland, Charles Porter, William Killingworth, Edward Bigland, Arthur Turner, Langworth Crosse, Roger Bellwood, George Cary, Charles Wren, William Wren, Tobias Rustat, Richard Stern, Thomas Henchman, Henry Hitch, Everingham Cressey, Robert Hyde, John Rotheram, Esquires; Whistler of Ham, in the County of Southampton, William Knightly, William Dyke, Ralph Croke, Major John Clarke, Ellis Crispe, Samuell Crispe, Robert Sanderson, William Satterthwait, William Breedon, Jerome Lacy, Andrew Mervill, Francis Knowles, Richard Whitton, Charles Steward, William Lucas, Loud Cordwell, Humphrey Henchman, Captain Henry Kelligrew, Gilbert Dolben, John Beamont, James Paul, James Beverley, Salathiel Lovell, Thomas Leigh, Amias Hext, Esquires; Barnaby Oley, Samuell Fuller, Phillip Fell, William Zouch, Samuell Forster, Ralph Davenant, James Davenant, John Symonds, James Buchanon, Theophilus Hooke, John Endworth, Benjamin Calamy, Mathew Novell, Samuell Walton, Edward Pelling, Jonathan Dryden, Bachelors in Divinity; Samuell Franklyn, John Lyndsey, Thomas Bedford, Charles Beamont, Gentlemen, James Peirce, Gentleman, Henry Whistler, merchant, John Archer, Gentleman, Henry Loades, Merchant, Nathaniell Lodington, Merchant, Barnaby Tonstall, Gentleman, Richard Dawling Bruene Reeves, Gentleman, John Flavell, Robert Chase, Merchants, Granada Chester, Richard Kettleby, Gentlemen, Obadiah Sedgewick, Merchant, Thomas Howard, Gentleman, Edward Thornborough, Merchant, Thomas Langham, William Sedgewick, Charles Watts, Gentleman, Thomas Porey, Merchant, Robert Chapman, William Layfeild, William Wake, Samuell Skinner, Mathew Cupper, John Buchanan, Edward Hassell, Charles Bellvoyer, Bartholomew Parr, Nathaniell Hornby, William Midleton, Joseph Hornby, Gentlemen, Mathew Elleston, Merchant, James Livesy, Michael Forster, Henry Symons, John Bulteele, Gentlemen, Edward Wake, Gentleman, Edward Nicholas, John Martin, Captain Francis Wiltshaw, Captain Richard Day, John Annand, John Bowerman, Merchant, Robert Davy, John Barnes, Robert West, Francis Holt, Charles Chappell, Thomas Crump, Theophilus Peirson, Gentlemen, George Torriano, Merchant, Evan Williams, Gentleman, Ralph Townson, George Etkins, John Crump, John Viney and Charles Rampane, Gentlemen, and their successors, to be elected and chosen in the manner hereinafter expressed, from time to time, for ever, hereafter be, and by virtue of these presents shall be, one body politic and corporate in deed and in name, by the name of The Governors of the Charity for Relief of the Poor Widows and Children of Clergymen, and them by the same name of the

Governors of the Charity for Relief of the Poor Widows and Children of Clergymen.

2. We do, by these presents, for us, our heirs and successors, really and fully make, ordain, constitute and declare
 - a) one body politic and corporate in deed and in name, and that by the same name they shall and may have perpetual succession; and
 - b) that they and their successors by that name shall and may for ever hereinafter be persons able and capable in the law to purchase, have, take, receive and enjoy manors, messuages, lands, tenements, rents, advowsons, liberties, privileges, jurisdictions, franchises and other hereditaments whatsoever, of whatsoever nature, kind or quality they be, to them and their successors in fee and perpetuity, or for term of life or lives, years or otherwise, in what kind soever, not exceeding the yearly value of ~~two~~ ten¹ thousand pounds, and also manner of goods, chattels and things whatsoever, of what name, nature or quality soever they be, and also to give, grant, set, let, demise, alienate, assign and dispose of the same manors, messuages, lands, tenements, hereditaments, goods, chattels and things whatsoever aforesaid; and
 - c) that by the name aforesaid they shall and may be able to plead and be impleaded, answer and be answered, defend and be defended, in all courts and places whatsoever, and before whatsoever judges or justices, or other officers of us, our heirs and successors, in all and singular actions, plaints, pleas, matters and demands of what kind, nature or quality soever they be; and
 - d) to act and do all other matters and things in as ample manner and form as any other our liege subjects of this our Realm of England, being persons able and capable in the law, or any other body corporate or politic within our Realm of England, can or may have, purchase, receive, possess, take, enjoy, retain, give, grant, set, let, alienate, assign and dispose, plead and be impleaded, answer and be answered unto, defend and be defended, do, permit and execute.
3. The Corporation shall apply the clear yearly income and at its discretion the whole or part of the property of the Corporation for the public benefit in providing assistance to beneficiaries, whether directly or indirectly, in such manner as and by such means as the Court of Assistants from time to time in their absolute discretion think fit for the relief or prevention of poverty or hardship or for the relief of illness and the promotion of health⁶, whether physical or mental.

"beneficiaries" means members of the clergy, ordinands and the

spouses, former spouses, children and dependants of living or deceased members or former members of the clergy or of ordinands.

(a) "children" includes adopted children, step-children and persons treated as the children of a marriage or civil partnership.

(b) "civil partners" means the members of a civil partnership within the meaning of Section 1(1) of the Civil Partnership Act 2004.

(c) "clergy" and "members of the clergy" mean bishops, priests and deacons of the Anglican Communion.

(d) "ordinands" means persons who are preparing for ordination as members of the clergy.

(e) the "spouse" of a person means his or her wife, husband, civil partner, widow, widower or surviving civil partner.²⁴

4. (1) The Court of Assistants may resolve that any provision of the trusts of the Corporation relating to any powers exercisable by the Court of Assistants in the administration of the Corporation, or regulating the procedure to be followed in any respect in connection with the administration of the Corporation should be modified in such manner as is specified in the resolution.

(2) Any resolution of the Court of Assistants under this clause must be approved by a further resolution which is passed at a general meeting of the Corporation either —

a) By a majority of not less than two thirds of the Governors entitled to attend and vote at the meeting who vote on the resolution, or

b) By a decision taken without a vote and without any expression of dissent in response to the question put to the meeting.

(3) Where the required resolution has been passed the powers and procedures of the Corporation are to be taken to have been modified in accordance with the terms of the resolution and effective from the date of the further resolution passed at the general meeting in accordance with clause (2) (a) or (b) above.

(4) The Court of Assistants must promptly send to the Privy Council and Charity Commission a copy of the amendment made under this provision and keep a copy of any such amendment with this Charter.⁵

5. And that the said Governors for ever hereinafter shall and may have a common seal to serve for the causes and business of them and their successors, and that

it shall and may be lawful for them and their successors to change, break, alter and make new the said seal from time to time at their pleasure, and as they shall think best.

6. And for the better execution of our pleasure herein, we have declared and granted, and by these presents for us, our heirs and successors, do declare and grant unto the said Governors, and their successors, that there shall be from time to time a President, Vice-President, three Treasurers and forty-two Assistants, members of the said Corporation. Which said President, Vice-President and three Treasurers and forty-two Assistants, or any five or more of them, whereof the President, Vice-President or one of the Treasurers of the said Corporation to be always one, we will shall be called the Court of Assistants of the said Corporation, who shall from time to time have the whole government, management and direction of all the affairs and business of the said Corporation, and act and do in all things as they shall judge necessary for the well-ordering and governing of the same, according to such laws and constitutions as shall be made.
7. And we further will, and by these presents for us, our heirs and successors, do ordain and grant to the said Governors, and their successors, that it shall and may be lawful to and for the said Court of Assistants for the time being, or any five or more of them, whereof the President, Vice-President, or one of the Treasurers of the said Corporation to be one, as often as they shall think it needful or expedient
 - a) to assemble themselves together at and in their hall or any other convenient place within the City of London or Westminster, or elsewhere, and there from time to time, and at all convenient times hereafter, to treat, consult, determine, constitute, ordain and make any constitutions, laws, ordinances, statutes, articles and orders whatsoever, which to them, or the major part of them, shall from time to time seem reasonable, profitable or requisite, for touching or concerning the good estate, rule, order and government of the said Corporation, according to their wisdoms and discretions, in what order and manner the said Corporation, and the members thereof, shall demean and behave themselves, as well in all matters and causes touching or concerning the said Corporation; as also
 - b) the electing of officers, and disposing, ordering and management of the lands, moneys, revenues and profits that shall be given to or acquired by the said Corporation; and also
 - c) mulcts and amerciaments upon any offenders which shall transgress or violate the said constitutions, laws, ordinances or orders so to be made, ordained and established, or any of them to impose, provide and limit,

and the same to take and recover to and for the use of the said Corporation by way of distress or action of debt, to be brought in the name of the Corporation, or otherwise by any other lawful ways or means against the said offender or offenders, his or their goods or chattels, or any of them, as the cause shall require, and as to the said Assistants, or the greatest part or number of them then present, whereof the President, Vice-President, or any one of the Treasurers for the time being to be one shall seem most expedient.

8. And the same laws, ordinances, statutes, constitutions to alter, make void and repeal, as to them, or the major part of them so assembled, whereof the President, Vice-President, or one of the Treasurers to be one, shall be thought meet. All which laws, orders, ordinances and constitutions so to be made, ordained and established as aforesaid, we will, and by these presents for us, our heirs and successors, do command and ordain to be from time to time, and at all times, kept, obeyed and performed in all things as the same ought to be, upon the penalties and amerciaments in the same to be imposed and limited, so as the same laws, orders, articles and ordinances, penalties and amerciaments, be reasonable, and not repugnant or contrary, but agreeable to the laws and statutes of this Realm of England, and be confirmed accordingly.
9. And our further will and pleasure is:
 - a) that the said John Lord Bishop of Rochester shall be the first President, and the said Sir Christopher Wren to be the first Vice-President, and the said William Wren, James Paul and Henry Loades, shall be the first Treasurers, and the said Francis Earl of Longford, Peter Lord Bishop of Ely, John Lord Bishop of Chester, William Lord Bishop of Landaffe, John Lord Bishop of Oxford, Sir Joseph Williamson, Sir John Robinson, Sir Thomas Meers, Sir William Dolben, Sir Samuell Moreland, Francis Barrett, William Gregory, Sir Andrew Hackett, Sir Samuell Clarke, William Breedon, Doctor William Lloyd, Doctor Thomas Spratt, Doctor Zachariah Cradocke, Doctor Nicholas Stanley, Doctor Walter Needham, Doctor John Mapletoft, Doctor Henry Dove, Lee Warner, Tobias Rustat, Charles Wren, Charles Porter, Arthur Turner, Longworth Crosse, James Pierce, Robert Chapman, Samuel Skinner, Henry Whistler, Edward Thornborough, Nathaniell Loddington, Obadiah Sedgewick, Henry Symons, Edward Wake, John Buchanon, Charles Beamont, John Bourman, Thomas Langham and Francis Knowles, shall be the first Assistants of the said Corporation; and
 - b) that the said President, Vice-President, three Treasurers and forty-two Assistants shall continue in the said respective places and offices until the second Thursday in the month of November which will be in the year of our Lord Christ One Thousand Six Hundred Seventy and Nine

and from then until there shall be a new choice made to succeed them respectively as is hereafter directed; and

- c) in case any of them shall die or be removed before the expiration of the said time it shall and may be lawful for the major part of the Governors that any General Court of the said Corporation shall be assembled to make choice of any member or members of the said Corporation in the place or places of such person or persons so deceased or removed which person and persons so to be chosen shall continue in the said offices or places respectively until the said second Thursday in the month of November, which will be in the year of our Lord One Thousand Six Hundred Seventy and Nine.

10. And we do further, for us our heirs and successors declare and ordain that

- a) upon every second Thursday in the month of November yearly for ever, or oftener if occasion shall require a General Court or Assembly of the Governors of the said Charity for the relief of the poor widows and children of Clergymen shall be assembled and may if they think fit choose and elect a President, Vice-President, three Treasurers, and forty-two Assistants, for the purposes aforesaid, who shall continue in the said offices for the ensuing year next after the said second Thursday in November and from then until other persons be duly chosen and sworn in their rooms; and
- b) upon the death or removal of any such President, Vice-President, Treasurer or Treasurers, Assistants, at any time within the year, it shall and may be lawful for the Governors of the said Corporation, at any General Court to be for that purpose assembled, by the major part of them present at such Court, to elect and choose a President, Vice President, Treasurers or Assistants, as there shall be occasion, in the place or room of such person or persons that shall be so dead or removed; and also at such General Court or Assembly to elect such other person and persons to be members and Governors of the said Corporation of the said charity as they or the greater number of them shall think fit.

Provided always and our will and pleasure is that the President, Vice-President and Treasurers herein before-named shall, before he or they enter upon the execution of the said places respectively, take their corporal oaths for their true and faithful execution of their respective trusts and places before the Lord High Chancellor, or the Lord Keeper of the Great Seal of England for the time being, who is hereby authorised to administer the same accordingly.

And also that all and every other the persons above-mentioned, members of the said Corporation, and all such other persons as shall from time to time be

admitted to the place of one of the Assistants of the said Corporation, before they shall act as one of the Assistants of the said Corporation, shall before the President, Vice-President and one or more of the Treasurers, or three or more of the Assistants above-named who are hereby respectively authorised to administer the same, take an oath for the due and faithful performance of such offices and trusts as shall be committed unto them respectively by the said Corporation.

And also that the Court of Assistants shall have power and authority to administer an oath to all their inferior officers and ministers that shall be chosen and employed under them in the service of the said Corporation for their faithful and due execution of their several trusts reposed in them to the best of their skill, so that nothing be contained in the said oath that is or shall be repugnant, but consonant to the laws of this Kingdom.

And upon the choice of any succeeding President, Vice-President, Treasurers and Assistants, we do hereby give and grant power to the preceding President, Vice-President and one or more of the Treasurers or any three of the Assistants to administer a corporal oath to such succeeding President, Vice-President, Treasurers and Assistants respectively, for the due and faithful execution of their respective trusts and places before they enter upon the execution thereof, or act any thing in relation thereunto.

11. And our further will and pleasure is that the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, ~~the Lord High Chancellor of England,~~³ the Lord Archbishop of York, ~~or Lord Keeper of the Great Seal of England,~~³ the Lord High Treasurer of England, the Lord Bishop of London, the Lord Almoner, and the Lord Mayor of the City of London for the time being, shall be Visitors of the said Corporation: that they, ~~or the major part of them,~~ shall hear and determine all differences and disputes which shall arise touching the ordering and government of the said Corporation and the management and disposition of the revenues and charities aforesaid.
12. And lastly, our will and pleasure is, that these our Letters Patents, or the enrolment thereof shall be good and effectual in law notwithstanding the Statute of Mortmain or any other Act, Statute, matter, cause or thing whatsoever.

In witness whereof we have caused these our Letters to be made Patents. Witness our self at Westminster the first day of July, in the thirtieth year of our reign.

By Writ of Privy Seal

PIGOTT

Notes

¹ Increased by various Acts, culminating in 1810 20 December 50 George III

² Added by Order in Council made 5 April 1971

³ Offices removed by the Lord Chancellor (Transfer of Functions and Supplementary Provisions) Order 2007

⁴ Amended by Order in Council made 17 October 2012

⁵ Added by Order in Council made 17 October 2012

⁶ Amended by Scheme dated 19 October 2017