

The XIII Principles of The Gothic Alliance

Foreword

The Burning Flame

The Gothic Alliance has its roots in the “Gothic Meetup of Manchester”. Founded in 2006, the original vision of the GMM was of a burning flame — a light in the darkness — a beacon by which searchers may find like-minded souls. For some, our gathering has become an extended family.

Our Gothic Heart

We have amongst our clan those who affiliate with various genres of music and avidly follow bands. Many of us are bold and glorious in our makeup and dress. But not all of us dress like this. Some of us have interest in literature, history, art, culture and film. For others, the focus is one of science and philosophy.

We are, indeed, an eclectic congregation.

It is difficult, therefore, to define just what “Gothic” is and what it is not. Yet, if there is a dark vein which runs through us all, it is this:

We are outsiders who, in our own ways, find interest and beauty in the things most people do not.

So if there is to be just one thing which defines what is in our Gothic heart, let it be this.

An Age of Darkeness

Despite the shiny lights of modernity, we live in an age of a certain kind of darkeness.

Things which once held value to human beings — a sense of permanence, community and authenticity — have been cast to the four winds. We live in a time in which such things are not valued.

What is more, our Gothic personas do not make life easy for us and many of us find ourselves alone. Some of us make easy targets for those who like to abuse.

It may be true that we are outsiders to mainstream culture, but that does not mean that we ought to be alone. Never has it been more important, therefore, that our beacon not only burns on, but that its flame burns even brighter than before.

The Gathering

To this aim, we of Gothic of Manchester, have drafted a set of principles for a Gothic group — which we call a “Gathering”. A Goth who forms a Gathering is a “Caller” of a Gathering.

We think there should be many Gatherings around the world, not just ours. So we are calling these Gatherings as a whole: “The Gothic Alliance”.

The Gothic Alliance shall have no ruler. What is offered is a set of coherent principles by which Gothic Gatherings may organise and grow. As such, they are only principles for a Gathering, not a set of commandments for individuals. Goths may adopt them only because they choose to. The only proviso is that all principles are adopted for a Gothic Gathering, or none are adopted.

The XIII Principles

1. A meeting of two or more Goths may call itself a “Gathering” of The Gothic Alliance provided they remain true to these principles and provided that, as a Gathering, they have no other affiliation.
2. A Gathering may use the name “The Gothic Alliance” but should prefix or append its geographical region so that Goths may easily find a Gathering in their local area and that separate Gatherings may be recognisable. Where a new Gathering is formed within a region where one already exists, its Caller should add an identifying word or phrase to its name so as to make it distinguishable.
3. The primary purpose of a Gathering is to provide a social fabric for its members and a way for kindred souls to find each other. Although the Internet (or the technological media of the day) may be used as a way of organising Gatherings, synthetic social media is to be no substitute for real life. The purpose of a Gathering must always be to gather in the flesh rather than to be remote on social media. Within The Gothic Alliance, *actual reality* is to be preferred over *virtual reality*.
4. While each Gathering may develop its own character or focus, it should always welcome those who find themselves to be outsiders to the mainstream.
5. Someone who founds a Gathering and who organises its events shall be the “Caller” of the Gathering. A Gathering may have several Callers and may organise itself as it sees fit. However, it should aim to have the least formal structure as possible.
6. The Gothic Alliance must never become concerned with money, status and power lest it attract self-promoters who seek to divert it for their own ends. Callers of a Gathering are, therefore, to be volunteers. Neither The Gothic Alliance itself nor a Gathering of The Gothic Alliance should ever become a money making enterprise.
7. Each Gathering shall be self-supporting and outside contributions by way of donations or sponsorship are to be refused. A Gathering may collect voluntary contributions from its members, but only to cover its expenses. A Gathering should not accumulate significant financial “reserves”.
8. Gothic craft, art, literature and music are vital to our way of life and are to be encouraged. While individual members may exchange or trade goods between

themselves within a Gathering, such activity must always remain at a personal level. Gatherings are not to be connected with or used to promote corporate activities.

9. Members of a Gathering may wish to adopt a "Gothic name" for themselves by which they are to be known. Anonymity shall not be mandatory for members, but it should always be respected.

10. The Gothic Alliance shall have no ruler. No one is to be in charge of The Gothic Alliance. As such, every Gathering is to be independent. While Gatherings may cooperate with each other so as to form a network, with respect to its own affairs, a Gathering is to be responsible to no authority other than itself and its conscience.

11. A Gathering may exclude an individual from its membership, should that individual prove themselves disruptive or cause harm to others. However, as each Gathering is entirely independent, no one has the authority to bar an individual from The Gothic Alliance as a wider entity. Disputes between members of a Gathering should be resolved internally and, where this is not possible, no one need leave The Gothic Alliance but shall be able to join or form another Gathering.

12. The Gothic Alliance is, metaphorically speaking, a network of meeting halls in a great castle. Human beings hold opinions. Meeting halls do not. The Gothic Alliance, therefore, can have no opinion on outside matters, nor can it support or condemn outside causes. Likewise, while individuals may hold whatever opinions they like, a Gathering itself may not. This is to ensure that The Gothic Alliance does not become embroiled in and dragged down by the politics of the day, whatever they may be. Rather, The Gothic Alliance is to exist outside of time so that it may endure for all time. Therefore, where a Gathering brands itself with, or formally adopts an affiliation to or against an outside cause, it may no longer call itself a Gathering of The Gothic Alliance.

13. These XIII Principles and the name "The Gothic Alliance" are offered as the cultural property of all Gothic peoples, as defined as those who are outsiders to mainstream culture. The Gothic Alliance will survive as long as its members keep its flame burning by following these principles, whilst defending it against mainstream culture and from those who would subvert it for their own interests.



The
Gothic Alliance

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