



Once a Chorister

EST. 1910

Example Constitution

A fully worked example of the Generic Constitution Template, completed for the fictional Anytown Cathedral Old Choristers' Association — illustrating how a member association might fill in each article.

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1. Title

The Association shall be called the Anytown Cathedral Old Choristers' Association ('the Association').

2. Objects

The objects of the Association are:

- (a) to promote fellowship and maintain contact among former choristers of Anytown Cathedral;
- (b) to support and safeguard the choral tradition of Anytown Cathedral;
- (c) to organise reunions, events and other activities in furtherance of these objects; and
- (d) to maintain the Anytown Chorister Bursary Fund, supporting choristers currently at the Cathedral.

3. Patron

The Dean of Anytown Cathedral, or such other senior member of the Chapter as the Committee shall invite, shall be asked to serve as Patron of the Association. The Patron shall be entitled to attend and speak at any meeting of the Association but shall have no vote unless also a Member.

4. Membership

Membership of the Association shall comprise:

- (a) a Patron;
- (b) a President;
- (c) such Vice Presidents as the Committee shall from time to time appoint;
- (d) Honorary or Life Members, elected by the Committee in recognition of exceptional service to the Association;
- (e) ordinary Members, being former choristers (trebles, altos, tenors and basses) of Anytown Cathedral; and
- (f) Associate (or 'Individual') Members, being any other person — such as a former lay clerk, organist, or Precentor — whom the Committee agrees to admit in support of the Association's objects.

The annual subscription for each class of membership shall be set by the Committee and confirmed at the Annual General Meeting; it shall be £15 for ordinary Members and £10 for Associate Members.

5. Management Committee

COMPOSITION

The affairs of the Association shall be managed by a Committee consisting of a Chair, a Secretary and a Treasurer, together with not fewer than two and not more than five other Members, all elected at the Annual General Meeting. The Committee may co-opt additional members to serve until the next Annual General Meeting.

POWERS

The Committee is empowered to manage the day-to-day affairs of the Association; to approve expenditure within any budget agreed at the Annual General Meeting; to appoint sub-committees for specific purposes, such as organising a reunion; and to act on behalf of the Association between General Meetings.

QUORUM

No decision of the Committee shall be valid unless a quorum of three Members, or one-third of the Committee's serving members (whichever is greater), is present or has otherwise indicated agreement.

6. Elections

Officers and other Committee Members shall be elected at each Annual General Meeting to serve until the next Annual General Meeting, and shall be eligible for re-election. Nominations must be received by the Secretary not less than fourteen days before the meeting. Where the number of nominations for a role exceeds the number of vacancies, the election shall be decided by a vote of the Members present.

7. Amending the Constitution

This Constitution may be amended by a resolution carried by not less than two-thirds of the Members present and voting at a General Meeting, provided that notice of the proposed amendment has been given to Members not less than twenty-one days beforehand. No amendment may be made which would prevent the Association from meeting HMRC's requirements for Gift Aid, where the Association relies on Gift Aid income.

8. General Meetings

An Annual General Meeting shall be held once in every calendar year, with not less than twenty-one days' notice given to Members, at which the Committee shall present a report and the Treasurer's accounts. An Extraordinary General Meeting may be called at any time by the Committee, or on the written request of not fewer than ten Members, and shall be held within twenty-eight days of such a request. No business shall be transacted at any General Meeting unless a quorum of ten Members is present.

9. Finance & Accounting

The Treasurer shall keep proper accounts of all money received and spent by the Association, and shall present an income and expenditure account and statement of assets to every Annual General Meeting. All money raised by or on behalf of the Association shall be applied only to further its objects, and no surplus funds shall be distributed to Members. A bank account shall be maintained in the name of the Association, to be operated by any two of the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. Any bank interest, and any Gift Aid reclaimed on eligible donations, shall be treated as income of the Association. The Association's financial year shall run from 1 January to 31 December.

10. Reunions

The Association shall organise a reunion at least once every two years, normally including a service of Choral Evensong at Anytown Cathedral, to which all Members shall be invited. The Committee may charge a fee to cover the reasonable costs of any reunion or event.

11. Safeguarding

The Association is committed to the safety and wellbeing of everyone who takes part in its activities, and in particular of children and adults at risk.

(a) The Committee shall appoint a Safeguarding Officer, who shall act as the first point of contact for any concern raised in connection with an Association event.

(b) The Safeguarding Officer shall liaise with Anytown Cathedral's own safeguarding team and, where necessary, the relevant statutory authorities, and shall report any serious concern to the Committee at the earliest opportunity.

(c) The Association shall follow the safeguarding policy of Anytown Cathedral where its activities take place on Cathedral premises or involve Cathedral personnel, and shall otherwise adopt the model safeguarding policy published by Once a Chorister.

(d) All Committee Members and volunteers organising or supervising an event likely to involve children or adults at risk shall complete an appropriate DBS (or equivalent) check, renewed as required by law, before taking up their role.

(e) Any allegation or concern involving a child or adult at risk shall be treated as a safeguarding matter in its own right, taking precedence over the Association's ordinary decision-making procedures, and shall never be dealt with solely by the person against whom the concern is raised.

This is a worked example only, illustrating one way the Generic Constitution Template might be completed. It is not a substitute for your own legal advice. An editable Word template with section-by-section drafting notes is available separately at onceachorister.com/get-involved/forming-an-association/.