

The Church of England
Guild of Vergers



Statutes of the Guild

January 2025



Leading the way since 1932
Presidents: The Archbishops of Canterbury and York

Name: _____

Branch/Group: _____

Region: _____

Date of Joining: _____

THE VERGER'S PRAYER

Almighty Father,
from whom every family in heaven and earth is named,
who has called us into the fellowship of your Church,
grant, we pray, that in all our churches
we may fulfil the duties
and enjoy the privileges of our spiritual home.
And on those who offer themselves for service
as vergers in the house of God
bestow the fullness of your grace,
that, united in love to you and to one another,
we may show forth your glory
and hasten the coming of your kingdom.
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND GUILD OF VERGERS

Founded 1932

STATUTES

I NATIONAL OFFICERS

I.1 CHAIRMAN

The National Chairman is responsible for all aspects of the running of the Guild. They will work closely with the General Secretary regarding day to day matters and work closely with other officers, as appropriate. They will chair both the Standing and Executive Committees and will attend all formal meetings held by the Guild. Further particulars of this role are laid out within the job description which is held by the General Secretary. Candidates will be nominated by the branches and elected by the AGM after interview by the Executive Committee. They will hold office for three years. In any vote should there be a tie, the Chairman will have a casting vote.

On completion of their three-year term they may choose to stand for election for one further consecutive term of three years. There is no limit to the number of consecutive terms a person may serve as National Chairman. The Chairman must be a full member of the Guild.

If the National Chairman is unable to attend any meeting which they are required to attend and chair, the Executive Committee will, by majority vote, appoint another officer of the Guild to act in their place.

I.2 GENERAL SECRETARY

The General Secretary is responsible for taking minutes of meetings of the Executive and Standing Committees, circulation of information to branch officers and regional representatives. Further particulars of this role are laid out within the job description which is held by the General Secretary. Candidates will be nominated by the branches and stand for election at the AGM after interview by the Executive Committee. They hold office for five years. There is no limit to the number of consecutive terms a person may serve as General Secretary. They carry out the instructions of and report to the Executive Committee and submit a report thereon at the Annual General Meeting.

The General Secretary may be either a full or associate member of the Guild and will be an ex-officio member of all committees established by the Guild.

Enquiries relating to the work of the Guild and requests for information from third parties must be directed to the General Secretary, being the only officer who is authorised to provide such information, as appropriate.

1.3 NATIONAL TREASURER

The National Treasurer is responsible for maintaining the finances of the Guild of Vergers. Further particulars of this role are laid out within the job description which is held by the General Secretary.

Candidates will be nominated by the branches and stand for election at the AGM after interview by the Executive Committee. They hold office for five years. There is no limit to the number of consecutive terms a person may serve as National Treasurer. They carry out the instructions of and report to the Executive Committee and submit a report thereon, together with the audited annual accounts at the Annual General Meeting.

The National Treasurer may be either a full or associate member of the Guild. Limits may be placed on the value of cheques and other payments that can be made by the National Treasurer from Guild funds when acting alone.

1.4 MEDIA OFFICER

The Media Officer is responsible for maintaining all forms of media, including hardcopy and electronic publications as well as the publicity relating to the Guild. Further particulars of this role are laid out within the job description which is held by the General Secretary.

Candidates will be nominated by the branches and stand for election at the AGM after interview by the Executive Committee. They hold office for three years. There is no limit to the number of consecutive terms a person may serve as Media Officer. They carry out the instructions of and report to the Executive Committee and submit a report thereon at the Annual General Meeting.

The Media Officer may be either a full or associate member of the Guild.

1.5 WELFARE OFFICER

The Welfare Officer is responsible, in conjunction with the National Chaplain for the pastoral care of members of the Guild, Further particulars of this role are laid out within the job description which is held by the General Secretary. They will work closely with the National Chaplain and National Chairman on day to day matters and officers as appropriate.

Candidates will be nominated by the branches and stand for election at the AGM after interview by the Executive Committee. They hold office for three years. There is no limit to the number of consecutive terms a person may serve as Welfare Officer. They carry out the instructions of and report to the Executive Committee and submit a report thereon at the Annual General Meeting.

1.6 TRAINING OFFICER

The Training Officer is responsible for all aspects of the running of the Guild of Vergers Training Course. They will work closely with the National Chaplain and National Chairman on the day to day administration of the Training Course. They will support students in all aspects of their training. The Training Officer and National Chaplain will organise the National Training Conference. Further particulars of this role are laid out within the job description which is held by the General Secretary. Candidates will be nominated by the branches and stand for election at the AGM after interview by the Executive Committee. They hold office for three years. There is no limit to the number of consecutive terms a person may serve as Training Officer. They carry out the instructions of and report to the Executive Committee and submit a report thereon at the Annual General Meeting.

1.7 TRAINING ADMINISTRATOR

The Training Administrator will be concerned only with the Guild Training Course. Further particulars of this role are laid out within the job description which is held by the General Secretary. Candidates will be nominated by the branches and stand for election at the AGM after interview by the Executive Committee. They hold office for three years. There is no limit to the number of consecutive terms a person may serve as Training Administrator.

1.8 NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP OFFICER

The National Membership Officer is responsible for the Headquarters Branch including registering and monitoring all members of the Guild of Vergers who are not allocated to a local branch. If a local branch closes, members thereof can choose to join an adjacent branch or the Headquarters Branch. Further particulars of this role are laid out within the job description which is held by the General Secretary. Candidates will be nominated by the branches and stand for election at the AGM after interview by the Executive Committee. They hold office for three years. There is no limit to the number of consecutive terms a person may serve as National Membership Officer.

They carry out the instructions of and report to the Executive Committee and submit a report thereon at the Annual General Meeting.

1.9 OVERSEAS MEMBERSHIP OFFICER

The Overseas Membership Officer is responsible for registering and monitoring all members of the Guild who are based outside the United Kingdom. They will maintain close links with the Vergers Guild of the Episcopal Church of the United States. Further particulars of this role are laid out within the job description which is held by the General Secretary. Candidates will be nominated by the branches and stand for election at the AGM after interview by the Executive Committee. They hold office for three years. There is no limit to the number of consecutive terms a person may serve as Overseas Membership Officer.

They carry out the instructions of and report to the Executive Committee and submit a report thereon at the Annual General Meeting.

1.10 CONFERENCE SECRETARY

The Conference Secretary is responsible for the arrangements for the Annual Training Conference, as determined by the Conference Committee (6.2). They will also serve on the Welfare Committee (6.4). Further particulars of this role are laid out within the job description which is held by the General Secretary.

Candidates will be nominated by the branches and stand for election at the AGM after interview by the Executive Committee. They hold office for three years. There is no limit to the number of consecutive terms a person may serve as Conference Secretary.

1.11 THE GUILD CHRONICLER

The Guild Chronicler is responsible for the keeping of historical records of the Guild and its activities. They will also serve on the Media Committee (6.3).

They are appointed by the Executive Committee and will hold the appointment for three years. They carry out the instructions of and report to the Executive Committee and submit a report thereon at the Annual General Meeting.

1.12 NATIONAL CHAPLAIN

The National Chaplain is responsible for the overall spiritual wellbeing of the members of the Guild. Further particulars of this role are laid out within the job description which is held by the General Secretary.

They will:

- a) be concerned with the spiritual and pastoral needs of the membership;
- b) be the Chairman of the Board of Assessors (6.1.2); and
- c) be a non-voting member of the Executive Committee and an ex-officio member of all Committees.

The National Chaplain is appointed by the Presidents of the Guild following a recommendation by the Executive Committee. They hold office for five years. There is no limit to the number of consecutive terms a person may serve as National Chaplain.

They carry out the instructions of and report to the Executive Committee and submit a report thereon at the Annual General Meeting.

1.13 LEGAL ADVISOR

The Executive Committee may appoint a suitably qualified person to act as a Legal Advisor to it. Such person may hold office for a period of five years, which can be renewed without limit, and be invited to attend all meetings of the Executive Committee and the Standing Committee, and to any other Committee meetings that the Chairman of that Committee requests. The Legal Advisor shall be an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee and shall not vote on any resolution that is proposed at any meeting.

1.14 REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

1.14.1 The Country is divided into a number of regions, for instance this could be: The North, The Midlands, The South West and The South East.

1.14.2 The Regional Representatives are the focal point of communication between members and the Executive Committee. They shall liaise with Group Contact or Branch Officers, disseminating information to those contacts and receiving information back. Further particulars of this role are laid out within the job description which is held by the General Secretary.

1.14.3 There are a number of Regional Representatives each of whom is a member of Executive Committee to which they report. They attend all formal meetings held by the Guild. The Regional Representatives are voting members of the Executive Committee. They carry out the instructions of and report to the Executive Committee and submit a report thereon at the Annual General Meeting.

- 1.14.4 A Regional Representative shall be appointed to represent the region from within the geographical area of the Region and may be a member of a Group or a Branch to sit on Executive Committee. The Regional Representative shall hold office for a period of at least three years and may continue to stand while members of the Region are happy with this position.
- 1.14.5 Regional Representative shall be approved at Executive Committee, should a person be willing to stand that is felt, by the consensus of the Executive Committee, to be unsuitable for the role the Local Groups and/or Branches shall be advised directly, having first contacted the nominated person.

2 LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

The Guild shall be comprised, where possible, of **Groups**, where a former **Branch** has not dissolved they shall remain a Branch which is to be reviewed by 1 January 2029.

2.1 **Groups**

- 2.1.1 Where a Branch has closed a **Group** shall be formed (in line with section 10)
- 2.1.2 Groups shall be established where membership number enable an effective local cohort.
- 2.1.3 Groups shall nominate to the Executive Committee a single person who shall act as **Group Contact** and shall be a conduit of information from the General Secretary to the Group members and from the members to the General Secretary.
- 2.1.4 Group Contacts shall be **approved** at Executive Committee, should a person be willing to stand that is felt, by the consensus of the Executive Committee, to be unsuitable for the role the Group Membership will be advised directly, having first contacted the nominated person.
- 2.1.5 Groups may form subcommittees from their members for purposes of organising events
- 2.1.6 No **subscriptions** shall be paid to the Group, all subscriptions shall be made direct to National tier of the Guild.
- 2.1.7 Each Group may appoint, in consultation with the Diocesan Bishop (to which the Clergy person is responsible to), a **Group Chaplain** who shall be responsible for the spiritual welfare of the Membership of that Group, and who shall liaise with the National Chaplain on all matters which affect the Guild at large. A Group Chaplain must either be an ordained member of the Church of England, or in communion with the See of Canterbury and the Church of England and hold, at least, PTO in the Church of England. Where the area that the Group covers is over

multiple dioceses, permission shall first be sought from the Priest's Diocesan Bishop. After appointment the Chaplain shall contact each other relevant Diocesan Bishop to seek permission to officiate in their Dioceses as chaplain.

2.1.8 **Group Returns**

The Group must provide a list of Members, their class of Membership of the Group and their address & contact details to the General Secretary in accordance with the Guild's licence under the General Data Protection Regulations 2016 and the Data Protection Act 2018 (or any subsequent amendment or re-enactment thereof), by the last day of March each year. They are also required to provide any information as requested by the General Secretary.

2.1.9 **Branch Life Members**

Effective from the 1 January following the formation of a Group after the dissolution of a Branch (2.1.1) Branch life membership shall no longer be held, all members who were once a Branch Life Member shall revert to a fee-paying member in line with their membership level.

2.2 **Branches**

2.2.1 **Branches** which wish to remain as a Branch where Membership numbers enable an effective organisation to be maintained may do so should the following parameters be met, this is subject to review by 1 January 2029.

2.2.2 Each Branch shall elect a Chairman, a Treasurer, a Secretary and a Chaplain (see 2.2.5). Except in the case of Branch Chairman (who shall be Full Members of the Guild), any Full or Associate Member of the Guild can stand for election as a Branch Officer.

2.2.3 **Fees**

National Membership fee shall be set by the Executive Committee and shall be at one rate for both memberships, this shall be paid direct to the National Tier. Local subscriptions may be levied and these may be paid to the local Branch directly.

2.2.4 **Branch Returns**

The Branch must provide a list of Members, their class of Membership of the Branch and their address & contact details to the General Secretary in accordance with the Guild's licence under the General Data Protection Regulations 2016 and the Data Protection Act 2018 (or any subsequent amendment or re-enactment thereof), by the last day of March each year. They are also required to provide any information as requested by the General Secretary. Copies of the signed accounts and capitation are sent to the National Treasurer by the last day of March each year.

2.2.5 **Branch Chaplains**

Each Branch may appoint, in consultation with their own Diocesan Bishop (to which the Clergy person is responsible to), a Branch Chaplain who shall be responsible for the spiritual welfare of the Membership of that Branch, and who shall liaise with the National Chaplain on all matters which affect the Guild at large. A Branch Chaplain must either be an ordained member of the Church of England, or in communion with the See of Canterbury and the Church of England and hold, at least, PTO in the Church of England. Where the area that the Branch covers is over multiple dioceses, permission shall be sort from the Priest's Diocesan Bishop. After appointment the Chaplain shall contact each other relevant Diocesan Bishop to seek permission to officiate in their Dioceses as chaplain.

2.2.6 **Branch Life Members**

Any Branch may honour any of its Full or Associate Members by appointing them as an **Honorary Member of that Branch**, at the level of membership that the Branch member holds at the time. Such appointments may be for life at the discretion of the Branch. The annual subscriptions due and payable by an Honorary Member shall be paid by the Branch making such appointment.

2.2.7 **Resolutions of any Branch**

All Resolutions passed by any Branch of the Guild must not be contrary to the National Constitution, and any significant Resolution must be notified to the General Secretary. If in doubt, advice should be sought from the National Chairman or General Secretary.

2.2.8 **Dissolution of any Branch**

If any Branch is dissolved (see section 10) all moneys and assets held by that Branch shall be delivered to the National Treasurer who shall hold such moneys until such time as required. The National Treasurer shall deliver to the appropriate Guild officer any assets to hold for as long as is required. Members of a dissolving Branch can form a local Group in line with section 2.1.

3 OFFICE VACANCIES

Should an office fall vacant before the end of the prescribed term (with the exception of the office of a Regional Representative) an election would be held; the newly elected person filling the role for the remainder of the term, subject to any limitations regarding terms of office as already noted. Should any Regional Representative step down before the end of their term then then the Local Groups or Branches shall be advised and a new person is to be recommended to the Executive Committee (in line with 1.14.5).

4 ELECTION

In order to be elected to any role, save that of National Chaplain, the candidate would need to submit a short resume for publication in the spring edition of the Virger Magazine. All completed nomination forms must be received by the General Secretary not less than 60 days prior the election date. A person cannot submit themselves for election on the day of election.

Members of the Executive Committee will, after interview, vote to elect each officer and at the next General Meeting present those “elected” officers for approval by the membership.

If the General Meeting declines to approve a presented officer, then the office will become vacant and will be open for re-election at the next meeting of the Executive Committee

5 VOTING

In all matters pertaining to the business of the Guild, be this at branch or national level, only fellows and full members may vote. Associate members may have their voice heard and recorded but are not eligible to vote. Within the Executive Committee all members are entitled to vote by virtue of their position, irrespective of their membership status, only one vote may be cast per region by the Regional Representative. This rule overrides the previous rule save that of branch meetings and any general meetings.

6 ABSENT VOTING

6.1 **Branch Level**

30 days prior to any election of a branch officer(s) or matter requiring a vote at branch level the Branch Secretary will distribute to all their members the particulars of who is standing or the matter to be voted on. If a member has advised the Branch Secretary that they will not attend the meeting they may submit, by letter only, a vote for or against each person or matter. All absent votes must be received by the Branch Secretary not less than 14 days before the meeting. Any votes received after this time will not be counted. Each absent vote must include a statement that they are voting as a full member of the Church of England Guild of Vergers and include their full name, address and signature. It is the responsibility of the Branch Secretary to verify the membership status of each voting member.

6.2 **National Level**

45 days prior to any matter at national level requiring a vote the General Secretary will distribute to all members of the Guild, via the Branch Secretaries (who shall immediately notify their members) the particulars of the matter. If a member has advised the General Secretary that they

cannot attend the meeting they may submit, by letter only, a vote for or against each specified matter. All “absentee votes” must be received by the General Secretary no less than 14 days before the meeting. Any votes received after this time will not be counted. Each absent vote must include a statement that they are voting as a full member of the Guild and include their full name, address and signature. It is the responsibility of the General Secretary to verify the membership status of each voting member.

6.3 The particulars of each absent vote will not be released until the meeting, and at no point will the details of the person making an absent vote be released.

7 MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

Membership of the Guild shall be defined as follows:

7.1 Full Membership, subject to 2.3.1 of the Constitution, is open to all members who fulfil the role of Verger.

7.2 Should a Verger retire, then Full Membership shall stay in force.

7.3 Should a Verger resign, and no longer fulfil any duties of a Verger, they shall become an Associate Member.

7.4 Should a Verger be dismissed, and no longer fulfil any duties of a Verger, they shall become an Associate Member.

7.5 Should a Verger be made redundant (while accepting that this is through no fault of theirs) and no longer fulfil any duties of a Verger, they shall, at the next renewal, become an Associate Member.

7.6 Any person who does not fulfil any duties of a Verger, and wish to support the aims of the Guild, may be an Associate Member

7.7 All members who do not reside in the United Kingdom are only entitled, by nature of residency, to be Associate Members of the CEGV and not eligible to stand for election for Office.

8 COMMITTEE MAKE UP

The following committees have been established by the Executive Committee:

8.1 **The Training Committee** –comprising:

(a) The Training Officer (chair);

(b) The Training Registrar;

(c) The General Secretary;

(d) The National Chaplain.

8.1.1 The Training Committee will meet at least once a year, at a time and place mutually agreed by the members of the Committee.

- 8.1.2 A Board of Assessors comprised of:
- (a) The National Chaplain (chair);
 - (b) 2 independent assessors appointed by the Executive Committee;
 - (c) 3 outside assessors appointed by the National Chaplain and the Training Officer.
- 8.1.2.1 The outside assessors referred to in 8.1.2(c) must have expertise in the following areas:
- i) History
 - ii) Pastoral ministry
 - iii) Administration
- in relation to the work of a verger and the Guild Diploma Training Course.
- 8.1.3 All appointments of assessors under clause 8.1.2 will be ratified by a simple majority of the Executive Committee.
- 8.1.4 The Training Committee will appoint accredited tutors to assist with the delivery of the Training Course, with tutors initially being recommended jointly by the National Chaplain and the Training Officer. In addition, candidates may nominate a local 'mentor' to provide support and advice during the course.
- 8.2 **The Conference Committee** – comprising:
- (a) The Training Officer (chair);
 - (b) The National Chaplain;
 - (c) The General Secretary;
 - (d) The Conference Secretary; and
 - (e) Not more than two other persons as deemed necessary and approved by the Executive Committee.
- 8.2.1 Those persons referred to in 8.2(e) need not be members of the Executive Committee but must be able to provide specialist expertise relative to the organisation and administration of the Guild Training Conference.
- 8.2.2 The Conference Committee is responsible for the preparation and running of the Guild Training Conference and is directly responsible to the Executive Committee.
- 8.3 **The Media Committee** – comprising:
- (a) The Media Officer (chair);
 - (b) The General Secretary;
 - (c) The Welfare Officer;
 - (d) The National Chaplain;
 - (e) The Guild Chronicler; and
 - (f) Any other persons as requested to attend for specific reason by the Media Officer.

8.4 **The Welfare Committee** – comprising:

- (a) The Welfare Officer (chair);
- (b) The National Chaplain ;
- (c) The Conference Secretary;
- (d) Any other persons as requested to attend for specific reason by the Welfare Officer.

8.5 OTHER COMMITTEES

- 8.5.1 Other committees may be established by the Executive Committee for any specific or general purpose.
- 8.5.2 The Chairman of a Committee will be responsible for the Membership of that Committee. They will notify the General Secretary (for information) of all meetings and of any matter that may affect the Guild.

8.6 GENERAL

- 8.6.1 Unless otherwise stated, all committees shall meet at least once every calendar year.
- 8.6.2 All committees shall be directly responsible and accountable to the Executive Committee, and a report will be made of each committee's activities to the Annual General Meeting of the Guild.
- 8.6.3 All committees shall appoint a minute secretary who will record the business of each committee meeting and lodge a copy of those minutes with the General Secretary not more than 30 days after each meeting.
- 8.6.4 Prior to each meeting of the Standing Committee, the General Secretary will contact the Regional Representatives to ensure that any matters from their respective branches are raised.

9 FINANCE

- 9.1 The financial year will be 1 January to 31 December.
- 9.2 Annual subscriptions at a rate to be determined by the Executive Committee at the Autumn meeting will be due on the 1 January following. Dues should be paid to the National Treasurer by the 31 March and will include, if desired, a payment for publications. Branches may call for an additional payment for their own funds.
- 9.3 The National Treasurer will provide on request at meetings the account books and bank statements to verify his balances.
- 9.4 The National Treasurer may sign cheques, or authorise payments by internet banking, to the value of £100 but for larger sums two signatures or authorisations will be required from any of the Chairman, the General Secretary and/or the National Treasurer.

- 9.5 Payment Cards, if issued on behalf of the Guild, shall have Statements ratified by the user, and be submitted with all receipts and narrative to the National Treasurer to be paid within 30 days.
- 9.6 Each Branch shall submit examined accounts to the National Treasurer annually.

10 BRANCH CLOSURES

- 10.1 Where any Branch has closed and a group has been formed in its stead, the Treasurer of that Branch shall as soon as reasonably practicable after closure transfer all funds held by that Branch to the National Treasurer.
- 10.2 Where any Branch has closed and a group is formed then the money transferred by the closed Branch shall retain them in a in the General Accounts and ring-fenced for the purposes of the group, until all funds are exhausted.
- 10.3 Where any Branch has closed and no group is formed then the money transferred by the closed Branch shall retain them in a in the General Accounts and ring-fenced, for a period of six years after closure or until a Group can be formed, whichever is sooner.
- 10.4 Where any Group is formed, in the region of a former Branch, prior to the sixth anniversary of its closure, the funds transferred to the National Treasurer pursuant to paragraph 10.1 above shall be repaid to the newly-formed Group
- 10.5 Following the sixth anniversary of the Branch's closure, upon confirmation by the Executive Committee all segregated funds transferred to the National Treasurer pursuant to paragraph 10.1 above shall be transferred to, and be amalgamated with, the Guild's General Funds.
- 10.6 Where any Group is formed in the region of a former Branch after the sixth anniversary of its closure, the newly-formed Group may request repayment of the funds transferred to the National Treasurer pursuant to paragraph 10.1 above, whereupon the Executive Committee will decide upon merit if such repayment is appropriate
- 10.7 Where a large Branch closes, and smaller Groups are formed within the area of the former large Branch then the funds transferred to the National Treasurer pursuant to paragraph 10.1 shall be divided equally between the Groups.
- 10.8 Honorary Membership of a Branch, including Branch Life Membership, will come to an end when that Branch closes. Thereafter, former Branch Life Members will pay the ordinary National Capitation and any subscription or fees due to their new Branch.

11 GUILD LOGO

The Guild shall have a corporate image. The General Secretary is to be informed of any intended use of the Guild's name or logo.

12 QUORUM

The necessary quorum at each level will be:

- a) Standing Committee – Three members of which one must be either the Chairman or General Secretary.
- b) Executive Committee – At least 50% of regional representatives and the Standing Committee quorum
- c) Branch AGM – Two separate branch officers and 25% of the voting membership (either present or proxy) if not stipulated by local branch constitution.

13 THE VGEC & CEGV WORKING RELATIONSHIP

A Memorandum of Understanding between the Vergers Guild of the Episcopal Church (VGEC) and the Church of England Guild of Vergers (CEGV) states that each Guild may offer to the other Guild's members Associate Membership, with no fees being levied. A member of one Guild must apply to the other Guild in order to become a member. No voting rights are bestowed upon any Associate Member. Membership remains in force while they hold membership with their home Guild.

14 AGREEMENTS WITH THIRD PARTIES

- 14.1 No individual member of the Guild may enter into any contract or agreement with third parties on behalf of the Guild.
- 14.2 Prior notification of any intention to enter into an agreement involving the name of the Guild must be given to the General Secretary for the approval of Executive Committee.