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**Articles of Religious Organisation**

**situate**

**and**

**resident within the**

**English & Welsh Jurisidiction**

### Name

The name of the religious organisation is:

 ……………......................................................................

referred to as ‘the organisation’ throughout this document.

**2. Aims/purpose**

The aimsof the organisation are to promote [Name religion] and provide opportunities for people in the England & Wales to participate in the religious activities of the organisation through the rules and beliefs as governed by clause 13 Rules/Procedures.

**3.** **Committee**

All aspects of running the organisation will be governed and managed by a Committee of no less than three individuals and no more than nine. These members will be called Committee Members. The organisation will have at least the following officers:

* + 1. Chair
		2. Secretary
		3. Treasurer

### 4. Committee Membership

1. The Committee Members of the organisation will be the members of the organisation and have voting rights.
2. Any Committee Member who ceases to be a Committee Member shall automatically and immediately cease to be a member of the organisation.
3. Committee membership is not transferable to any other person.
4. Every Committee Member shall possess one vote.

**5.** **Appointment and election of the Committee**

1. The first Committee will be comprised of the three signatories adopting this governing document.
2. Apart from the Committee Members originally adopting this governing document, every subsequent Committee Member must be elected by a majority vote at a properly convened committee meeting and will serve for a term to be decided by vote at the committee meeting.
3. Anyone can be appointed to the Committee if the existing Committee Members unanimously deem them to be a fit and proper person for the role with the required skill and experience by vote at a committee meeting.
4. Each of the initial Committee Members can serve an unlimited term.

### 6. Removal of Committee Members

1. Committee Members can be removed if:
2. they cease to be a member of the organisation;
3. the Committee Member dies;
4. the Committee Member resigns in writing;
	1. if the resignation means there will be less than three Committee Members the remaining Committee Members may only act to co-opt a third Committee Member;
5. they are absent without permission from committee meetings held within a 24 month period;
6. a two-thirds majority of the Committee, acting reasonably and properly, feel and vote it is in the best interests of the organisation The Committee can only do this if:
	1. the Committee Member has been given at least 21 days’ written notice of the committee meeting where the issue will be discussed and decided by vote, including the reasons for the discussion;
	2. the Committee Member, or the Committee Member’s representative (who does not have to be a member of the organisation), has been allowed to submit a written statement prior to the meeting;
	3. the decision to remove the Committee Member is communicated in writing within 14 days of the meeting taking place;
7. Any decision made by the Committee is final.

**7. Associate Members**

In addition to committee membership the organisation may permit Associate Members.

1. Associate membership is open to individuals who support the aims of the organisation and will not possess voting rights.
2. The Committee may refuse an application for Associate membership if, acting reasonably and properly, they consider it to be in the best interests of the organisation;
	1. the Committee must inform the applicant in writing of the reasons for the refusal within 21 days of the decision
	2. the Committee must consider any appeal in writing the applicant may make about the decision
3. The Committee decision following any written appeal must be notified to the applicant in writing but shall be final. In this clause and throughout this document ‘in writing’ and ‘written’ can include electronic methods of communication;
4. Associate membership is not transferable to any other person
5. Active Associate Members must supply contact details to the Committee to be used for the purpose of group activity administration only.

### 8. Termination of Associate membership

1. Associate membership is terminated if:
2. the Associate Member dies;
3. the Associate Member resigns in writing;
4. the Committee, acting reasonably and properly, deems termination of Associate membership is in the best interest of the organisation. The Committee can only do this if:
5. the Associate Member has been given at least 21 days’ written notice of the committee meeting where the issue will be discussed and decided, including the reasons for the discussion;
6. the Associate member, or the Associate member’s representative (who does not have to be an Associate member of the organisation), has been allowed to submit a written statement to the meeting;
7. the decision to terminate the Associate membership is communicated in writing within seven days of the meeting taking place;
8. Any decision made by the Committee to terminate Associate membership is final.

**9.** **Payments to Committee Members**

1. Where it is in the best interests of the organisation Committee Members can be paid for providing goods and professional services to the organisation.
2. Any payment made will be no higher than the standard market rate.
3. Where a payment for goods and services is made to a Committee Member, that committee Member must adhere to the conflict of interest and loyalties clause in this document.
4. No Committee Member will be paid for their role as a Committee Member of the organisation.

**10. Conflicts of interests and conflicts of loyalties**

1. Committee members must declare any conflict between their personal interests and the best interests of the organisation. Conflicts arise from and include but are not limited to:
	1. payments to a Committee Member to provide goods or services;
	2. payments to a relative of a Committee Member to provide goods or services;
	3. payments to a business interest of a Committee Member to provide goods or services;
2. Where a conflict of interest has been declared the Committee Member will take no part in the organisation’s decision making process relating to the conflict of interest.

### 11. Powers and Responsibilities

1. The Committee has ultimate legal responsibility for the organisation.
2. The Committee can act in any lawful way to fulfill the aims of the organisation.

**12.** **Meetings and proceedings of the Committee**

1. The Committee will meet at least once a year.
2. Any Committee Member can request the Chair call a meeting outside of the minimum meeting per year. If requested to do so the Chair must call a meeting within 90 days of the request.

### Three Committee members or a third of all Committee Members (whichever is the greater) will be quorum for committee meetings.

1. No decision may be made by a meeting of the Committee unless a quorum is present.
2. Decisions shall be made by majority vote of those present at the meeting.
3. Minutes of all Committee Meetings will be kept and shared with the Committee after the meeting.
4. Associate Members may be invited to attend committee meetings and make suggestions regarding the organisation.
5. The Committee may make collective decisions by email outside of committee meetings. Any such decisions should be reported and minuted at the next committee meeting.
6. The requirement for the yearly meeting can be dispensed with by unanimous agreement of the Committee.

### 13. Rules / Procedures

1. The Committee can establish rules and procedures outside of this document to assist with the day to day running of the organisation including definitions of beliefs adopted by the organisation and rules of how beliefs are to be manifested as a member of the organisation.
2. Nothing in any rules or procedures will be permitted to contradict anything in this governing document. In the event of a contradiction arising between the rules and procedures and this governing document the rules and procedures shall be amended so that the contradiction is amended in favour of the governing document.
3. If there is an inconsistency between any of the provisions of this governing document and the provisions of any rules or procedures, the provisions of this governing document shall prevail.
4. Any rule or procedure not compatible with the governing rules in this governing document shall be removed or amended within 14 days of the date of knowledge of the incompatibility.
5. The governing rules are:
	1. To provide opportunities for people in the England & Wales to participate in the religious activities of the organisation in compliance with the laws of England & Wales.
	2. To ensure that the views of the organisation and members at all times maintain a certain level of cogency, seriousness, cohesion and importance.
	3. To ensure that the manifestation of the beliefs of all members of the organisation will be restricted as prescribed by laws which are necessary in a democratic society in the interest of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.
	4. To ensure that the beliefs of all members are genuinely held, not merely an opinion or viewpoint based on the present state of information available, are weighty and relate to a substantial aspect of human life and behaviour and worthy of respect in a democratic society, compatible with human dignity and do not conflict with the fundamental rights of others.

### 14. Finance

1. The financial year shall end on 5 April of each calendar year.
2. A bank account may be opened in the name of the organisation, all payments will be authorised by any two Committee Members.
3. The organisation is a not-for-profit organisation and any income and property of the organisation will be applied solely towards promoting the aims of the organisation as set out in this document.
4. The distribution of profits and assets among its members is expressly prohibited.
5. Payment of legitimate expenses is allowed.

### 15. Annual General Meeting (AGM)

1. The first AGM will be called within 12 months of the execution of this governing document.
2. All subsequent AGMs will be within 15 months of the previous AGM.
3. Any normal committee meeting can be designated as the AGM.
4. All normal procedures for a committee meeting will apply to the AGM.
5. Associate Members may be invited to attend the AGM, but will not have a vote.
6. The AGM will include a report on the year’s activities and the last set of finalised accounts at each AGM.
7. The requirement for an AGM can be dispensed with by unanimous agreement of the Committee.

### 16. Accounts

1. The financial accounts will be prepared after each financial year by the treasurer and examined and scrutinised by a person who is independent of the Committee.
2. The accounts will be presented at the AGM.
3. If there are no financial transactions in any financial year the requirement for financial accounts shall be dispensed with for that financial year

**17. Alterations to the governing document**

* + - 1. The governing document may be amended by a two-thirds majority of the voting members present at an AGM save for clause 18 which may not be amended.
			2. The governing rules of the organisation will be amended to the extent that amendment is required for the organisation to remain in compliance with laws of England and Wales. Otherwise the governing rules may not be amended in any circumstance.

**18. D****issolution**

In the event of the organisation being wound up, any assets remaining after the payment of debts and liabilities will be donated to an elected charitable organisation. The elected charitable organisation will be decided by a vote of remaining committee members. No remaining assets will be distributed to members.

The organisation will be wound up immediately in the event that at least one current committee is not a member of the Ministry of Religion. (“MOR”). The MOR is a trading name of Religions House Ltd with company number 16596826 and registered office 71-75 Shelton Street, Covent Garden, London, WC2H 9JQ

**Clause 13 Beliefs**

[Insert the beliefs typed in by the user]