

Constitutional Review 2011

(This will need to read in conjunction with the Constitution as it stands – see website www.freemen-few.org.uk if you do not have a copy)

1. Name No change
2. Objects Addition to read as follows:-

The objects of “Freemen of England and Wales” are to advance public education in, and promote research into, the history and legal customs of the ancient towns of England and Wales with relation to the legal institution of the freedom. To publish the useful results of such research, and in the furtherance of this object to provide advice and information concerning the legal institution of the freedom within each of those several places in England and Wales where that institution is to be found. To take necessary action to protect and maintain the legal institution of the freedom when threatened by statute or other interventions.

3. Alterations to the Constitution Amend to read as follows:-

Alterations to this constitution must receive the assent of a minimum of two-thirds of the members eligible to vote by Poll at an Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting following approval by the same margin at the preceding Court Meeting. A resolution for the alteration of the constitution must be received by the Secretary of the Association at least 31 days before the meeting at which the resolution is to be brought forward. At least 21 days notice of such a meeting must be given by the Secretary and must enclose notice of the alteration proposed. No alteration made to clauses 2 (Objects) and 13 (Dissolution)

4. Full Membership Amend to read as follows:-

Full Membership of the Association shall consist of:-

1. Gild Members
2. Individual Members

1. The term “Gild Member” shall mean the organised body of freemen representing the town or city where those freemen are listed on the Burgess Roll or where no such body exists, the individual Gild Companies that collectively combine the freemen of the Burgess Roll
2. The term “Individual Member” shall mean a person who either:-
 - (a) Has had his/her claim to be admitted a freeman of their town/city established and his/her name entered on the Roll of Freemen/Burgess Roll in accordance with section 248(3) of the Local Government Act 1972 and is not represented by a Gild Member.

(b) Is a freeman admitted according to the law and custom of the City of London and is not represented by a Gild Member.

5. Associate Membership.

Associate Membership shall be open to:-

- (a) Persons upon whom the Honorary Freedom of a place has been conferred.
- (b) Persons who although not freemen under 4.2(1) are “interested or concerned in freemen’s affairs for professional, legal, social or historical reasons.
- (c) Customary freeholders or tenants of manorial boroughs.
- (d) Non-Freemen bodies, groups or organizations i.e. comprised of members who are not freemen as under 4.2(a) whose aims are sympathetic to those of FEW and who fully support the objectives of FEW.

Associate members may attend, and with the permission of the chairman, speak, but shall not vote at a general meeting.

6. Corporate Membership

Freemen, other than individual members who are members of a subscribing gild member, shall be known as Corporate Members. They will not have any of the rights or liabilities of full members of the Association.

7. Honorary Membership

The Association may admit as Honorary Members persons who have rendered distinguished service to the Association. They will have the same rights as Associate Members. Admission must be by unanimous agreement of a court meeting.

8. Regalia All members shall be entitled to purchase and display the tie badge and ancillary items of regalia of FEW but only Full Individual Members of FEW will be entitled to purchase and wear the FEW Gown.

9. Cancellation of Membership.

Gild and individual members (including associates) whose subscriptions remain unpaid for 12 months after falling due shall have their membership cancelled. They may be re-admitted with the full agreement of the court on such terms as the court decides. Any member whose conduct is considered damaging to the reputation or well-being of the Association may be dismissed from the Association by the full agreement of the court. Any such dismissal to be final and unalterable.

10. Officers

Section b) final sentence to read: The duties of officers shall be as allocated by the court, which may appoint additional officers if required, following approval at an Annual General Meeting.

Section b) Additional para: "Any nominee for executive office must have senior officer experience within their own Gild and any nominee for the office of Deputy President or Vice President must have served as an Executive Officer of the Association for a minimum of one year, within the preceding four years immediately prior to the nomination".

11. The Court

The Court shall consist of the representatives of each Gild Member and shall be responsible for the regulation of the affairs of the Association. The Court shall have the power to appoint a sub-committee consisting of 2 or more court members to investigate any appropriate matter provided that their findings are reported back to the next court with no unauthorised actions being taken.

12. Finance

- a) Delete treasurer and insert Executive
- b) After "The Court.. insert alone

13. Meetings

- a) Annual General Meetings shall be held in the months of September or October, due notice of which shall be given by post to each member not less than 60 days before the date fixed for the meeting.
- b) Court meetings shall be held in March, and (if desired) June, at a time and place to be decided by the Court.
- c) Executive Meetings shall be held in January, and immediately before each Court or Annual General Meeting at a time and place to be decided by the Executive and Court.
- d) The minutes of all meetings shall be reported in the journal immediately following the date of each meeting. In the event that this time-scale is considered insufficient at any time, such minutes shall be provided by post to each court member as soon as possible following the meeting.

14 Voting

- a) Guild Members may send to General or Court meetings what representatives they desire (including professional advisers to speak on their behalf) but only one representative may vote. Only items previously included in a court meeting agenda notification shall be subject to voting. Each member shall have one vote and voting shall be by a show of official voting cards or membership cards only. All voting shall be under poll regulations

as below. Postal votes are accepted, but proxy votes are not permitted

- b) On a poll at AGM individual full members shall have one vote each and the representatives of each Full Gild Member shall have one vote for each full freeman member of his Gild subject to a maximum of 1000 and barring any duplication of members. In the event of uncertainty or dispute as to the number of freemen in a gild said number is to be determined by such evidence as may be provided and considered fair and just by the invigilator nominated by the meeting.
- c) AGM vote counting will be undertaken by three nominees from the host gild under the control of an appointed invigilator. Total results for and against only will be published, but all voting material will be held in the archives for a minimum of 4 years in case of query.

15. Dissolution

No change