



A new constitution for small Guilds

Why is TGHQ asking us to change our constitution?

The existing constitution is very limiting in the things Guilds can do and many Guilds have inadvertently acted in ways that are, strictly speaking, not allowed. This applies particularly to fundraising which the current constitution requires to be for women's education or leisure. This rules out raising funds for things like cancer research or the air ambulance.

The new small Guild constitution is worded to give you the freedom to raise funds or campaign for anything that would make women's lives better.

Who can use this version of the Constitution?

Any Guild who is not registered as a charity AND whose gross income is below £5,000 and not likely to increase above this level in the next few years.

What else has changed?

Because many small Guilds have difficulty getting a committee together this constitution gives each Guild the choice between having a conventional committee and running the Guild on a co-operative basis with everyone taking part in decision making.

We also use alternative names for the officers to make them less frightening!

Small Guilds can still use local rules or standing orders to regulate how they operate.

Do eligible guilds have to adopt the new constitution?

We believe that it is in the best interests of all eligible Guilds to adopt this constitution because of the flexibility it offers. Adopting it does not mean that a Guild has to change the way it operates now but having more options available may come in useful if it becomes difficult to get a committee together at some point in the future.

How do we adopt the new constitution?

You need to hold what is currently called an extraordinary general meeting. This can be a short meeting at the beginning or end of one of your normal meetings, but you should give at least two weeks' notice that you are holding it. At the meeting you should put a resolution for the adoption of the new small Guild constitution. All paid up members of the Guild can vote but at least one-third of the members must be present and then three-quarters of those present must vote for the resolution.

Be sure to keep a minute of the decision.

What happens if in a few years' time our income has grown?

That would be fantastic! If you reach the size where you must register as a charity, you will first have to adopt the large constitution which is more conventional.

When will the new constitution for larger Guilds be available?

We had hoped that it would be available already, but it is still with the Charity Commission waiting for their approval. We will send out copies to larger Guilds as soon as we can.