A chaplaincy model constitution

This model chaplaincy constitution (please scroll down after this introduction for a printable version) is offered as a means of preparing a specific constitution for the purposes of registration under local law.

Templates for individual countries may be available from Archdeacons; these will derive from the basic model, but take into account national legal requirements where these are necessary.

Any textual amendment made in the process must be agreed in writing by the Diocesan Registrar.  The finished constitution must receive the Bishop's approval before coming into force.  *See* *Diocesan Constitution* §25, and J3.

In this model, the terms chaplaincy and parish are both used:  chaplaincy being the diocesan norm, and parish being the official designation in certain countries.  When this document is adapted for a particular place, ‘parish’ should only be used in those countries where it is the correct usage.  Where the worshipping body is not a full chaplaincy of the Diocese the word congregation should be substituted throughout.



Church of England Diocese in Europe

ST **NAME’S** ANGLICAN CHURCH, **PLACE**

(\*Chaplaincy/Parish name in local-language translation)

C O N S T I T U T I O N

**1  Title and address of the chaplaincy/parish**

The chaplaincy/parish takes for its title ‘Chaplaincy/Parish of St **Name**, **Place**’ / ‘St **Name’s** Anglican Church, **Place**’ / ‘Anglican Church of **Place / Country**’.

The registered address of the chaplaincy/parish is **00 Street, Place**. It can be altered by decision of the chaplaincy/parish council.

**2  The Boundaries of the chaplaincy/parish** *– a clause to be added only where relevant*

The parish / chaplaincy shall be deemed to include all members of the Churches of the Anglican Communion resident in (**Place**/**Country**) *or* (the Region of **Region Name**) *or* (Department of the **Department Name**)

**3  Duration of the chaplaincy/parish**

There is no limitation on the life of the chaplaincy/parish.

**4 The Diocese in Europe**

The chaplaincy/parish (of St Name) in Place is a constituent part of the Church of England (Anglican) Diocese in Europe.  It conforms (1) to the provisions of the laws and decrees relating to religious associations in Country, and (2) to the regulations of the Church of England (Anglican) Diocese in Europe, and is constituted according to the canon law and other regulations of the Church of England, and the regulations of the Diocese in Europe, namely:

* The Canons of the Church of England (London, 6/2000) and its updated editions and supplements thereafter
* Diocese in Europe Constitution (London, 1995)
* Church Representation Rules (2020) and its updated editions thereafter.
* Diocese in Europe Handbook 2022 and the Diocesan Constitution 1995 and other relevant documents referenced in the Handbook or Constitution.

The chaplaincy/parish maintains appropriate canonical, synodical and financial rights and responsibilities in the Diocese in Europe.

**5  Objects of the chaplaincy/parish**

The objects of the chaplaincy/parish are the public exercise of Anglican worship and witness in conformity with the canon law of the Church of England of which the Diocese in Europe is a constituent part; the proclamation of the gospel; every pastoral activity allowed by law; the administrative, financial and legal management of the congregation; and all actions consonant with the objects of the congregation.

**6  The Ordinary**

The chaplaincy/parish (of St **Name**) in **Place** is under the ordinary jurisdiction of the Bishop for the time being of Gibraltar in Europe.  The Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe is a diocesan Bishop of the Church of England.

**7  The Chaplain**

The chaplain or priest-in-charge is a priest of the Church of England, or a Church in communion therewith, and is both appointed by, and serves under a licence issued by, the Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe, after consultation with the relevant officers of the Diocese in Europe and the duly elected representatives of the laity in the chaplaincy / parish. The chaplain represents the chaplaincy / parish in relation to third parties, government services and local authorities, and in legal matters.  They are responsible for the execution of chaplaincy / parish council resolutions.

**8  The Laity: membership and provision for representation**

* The chaplaincy/parish is made up of those, of major age, whose names are registered on the electoral roll in accordance with the *Church Representation Rules* of the Church of England, and reviewed annually prior to the general chaplaincy/parish meeting. Names may be removed from the roll in accord with current diocesan regulations.
* The *Church Representation Rules* provide for the election of lay officers and a chaplaincy / parish council, the rights and obligations of whom are laid out in the documents listed above.
* The council must present, at least annually, a report of its activities, financial and administrative, to the general chaplaincy/parish meeting for its verification and approval.
* The lay officers and council must prepare each year a financial statement for the year past and an inventory of its property, buildings and contents.

(In financial and property matters the chaplaincy/parish church council can validly decide on such purchases and sales of properties as is necessary for the purposes of the chaplaincy/parish, on mortgages, leases longer than nine years, sales of possessions belonging to the chaplaincy/parish, and loans, without requiring the consent of the general chaplaincy/parish meeting.)

* Any Specific provisions for situations where there are two or more congregations or places of worship (eg local congregational committees, deputy wardens, management of finances etc

**9 Liturgical provision**

The liturgical rites used by the duly appointed chaplain and other ministers in the chaplaincy/parish (of St **Name**) in **Place** are those allowed by the canons and regulations of the Church of England, under the provisions of the *Diocese in Europe Constitution.*

**10  Local law**

The ecclesiastical and canon law of the Church of England is binding on the chaplaincy/parish, its officers and all persons serving it holding the Bishop's License.  The only exception is where an ecclesiastical law is in direct conflict with a local national law.  In such a case the local law takes precedence to the extent of the point at issue not further.

**11  Constitutional amendments**

Any changes to this Constitution shall only be authorized by the Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe who shall also have sole authority in the event of any dispute or other question that arises upon the interpretation of this Constitution; andbe authorized in accordance with the provisions of J3(d) of the Bishop’s Regulations (*Diocesan Handbook*)

**12  Dissolution**

In the event of a dissolution being ordered by two thirds or more of the members present at a general or chaplaincy/parish meeting, one or more liquidators are named by the latter, and the assets, if any, devolve on the Church of England Diocese in Europe or its successor.