

## **Should we change our name and re-structure the Association?**

These are the questions that came out of our discussions at the AGM back in June. Council met in October and spent some time considering these thorny issues and came up with some proposals on which we would like your opinion. Once we have the feedback from this consultation process we will, I hope, be able to present some formal proposals to the AGM in June 2020 in Birmingham.

**Proposal 1.** On the question of name, Council thought it should be made clear that we welcome members from other denominations, which is already allowed. They felt that it was not the time to change the name, partly on the grounds of cost implications, but also because it was our identity.

**Proposal 2.** On the question of membership: do we need separate classes of membership? In the past the associate membership was really meant for members of other denominations. Associate and full members pay the same subscription and receive the same benefits. Council therefore felt that there should be simply one single membership with no need for a junior membership – all should be equal members. Current item 3(a) of the constitution would need to be amended to read 3(a) Membership of the association shall be open to any individual of any Christian denomination sharing an interest in flower arranging.

**Proposal 3.** In the light of this the wording of the application form was discussed; it was agreed unanimously that we would no longer ask for the signature of an applicant's incumbent or minister nor should we specify that a member has to be a baptised Christian, simply a member of a Christian denomination.

### **Proposal 4.**

Council had a lengthy discussion on the current branch structure. However, it was felt that organising on a regional basis would not relieve us of the current geographical problems i.e. of people needing to travel long distances. Existing branches would have to be subsumed into larger areas requiring greater management and it was thought that this would not be welcomed. There will always be the concern about singleton members and how we accommodate them and make them feel part of the association.

Council's view was that we should retain the existing branch organisation but require a branch to have a minimum of one meeting per financial year at which the members would elect a leader/facilitator (combining the role of chairman and secretary. A treasurer would only be necessary if they expect to derive income/expenditure) and a person to serve on National Council. This would allow areas like York to become a formal branch (they currently meet at least once a year and deliver a report to the National AGM) and the members in Bolton and Birmingham to form branches. Branches would not need to be co-terminus with a diocese but should represent the best grouping of members who could meet together.

Singleton members would be asked to nominate an existing branch to which they would belong until such time as one is established in their own or connecting areas. New members could be asked to nominate the branch to which they want to belong on the membership application form. This idea found favour with members of council as something that might be workable and acceptable to members.

Council would be grateful for your views on these proposals. These should be sent to the National Secretary either in writing or by e-mail by the end of March 2020. His contact details are in the front cover of this magazine.

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National Secretary  
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