

The Liberal Synagogue Elstree Rules



Date of Rules: 8 December 2022

1. Rules

These are the Rules of The Liberal Synagogue Elstree, a Charitable Incorporated Organisation Registered Charity Number 1182920. They should be read in conjunction with the Constitution. In the event of a conflict between Charity Law, the Constitution and these Rules, Charity Law and the Constitution shall take precedence.

2. Binding on members

The Rules are binding on members. All members are deemed to accept the Rules when they join the synagogue and each time they renew their annual membership.

3. Changes to the Rules

The Rules may only be changed by a decision of the Board of Trustees (the "Board"). Any such changes must be communicated to the members through a General Meeting and will come into force at the conclusion of such a meeting. Note that changes to the Rules are decided by the Board and not by a vote of a General Meeting.

4. Synagogue activities

- (1) In furtherance of the objects but not otherwise the Board should arrange that the synagogue should:
 - a. provide and maintain a place of worship and to arrange and conduct religious services;
 - b. provide, arrange and conduct religious education;
 - c. solemnise marriages;
 - d. make provision for burial and cremation;
 - e. perform such other religious rites and charitable duties as the Board shall from time to time determine;
 - f. raise funds and to invite and receive contributions provided that in raising funds the synagogue shall not undertake any substantial permanent trading activities and shall conform to any relevant requirements of the law;
 - g. employ such staff as are necessary for the proper pursuit of the objects, and to make all reasonable and necessary provision for the payment of pensions and other benefits for staff and their dependants, as defined in the appropriate particulars of employment for each member of staff;
 - h. co-operate with other charities, voluntary bodies and statutory authorities operating in furtherance of the objects or of similar charitable purposes and to exchange information and advice with them;
 - i. establish or support any charitable trusts, associations or institutions formed for all or any of the objects.
- (2) The Board should:
 - a. determine and decide all questions relating to the religious practices and services of the Synagogue and to the religious education of the children of members;

- b. determine and decide all questions relating to membership of the Synagogue;
- c. determine and decide all questions which may arise concerning the administration of the Synagogue and its affairs and the furtherance of its declared objects;
- d. do all such other lawful acts and things as shall be conducive to the achievement of the objects.

(3) The Board may decide that the synagogue should:

- a. buy, take on lease or in exchange any property necessary for the achievement of the objects and to maintain and equip it for use;
- b. sell, lease or dispose of all or any part of the property of the Synagogue
- c. borrow money and to charge all or any part of the property of the Synagogue with repayment of the money so borrowed.

5. Membership Categories

(1) There shall be three categories of membership.

- d. Full Member. Someone over 18 years of age, of the Jewish Faith and who subscribes to the principles and objects of Liberal Judaism and of the Synagogue.
- e. Associate Member. Someone over 18 years of age and of the Jewish Faith who, because of a commitment to another Synagogue, does not wish to become a full member of the Synagogue.
- f. Friend. Someone over 18 years of age who is the non-Jewish spouse or long term partner of a Full or Associate Member, or who has no connection of this nature to the Synagogue if they have an interest in Judaism.

(2) Rights of the Various Categories of Membership

The table below shows the various rights available to each category of membership:

	Full	Associate	Friend
Voting rights at an AGM or EGM	Yes	No	No
Included in the burial and funeral schemes	Yes	No	No
Can conduct services	Yes	Yes	No
Can attend services	Yes	Yes	Yes
Can become a Trustee	Yes	No	No
Can attend committee, team or group meetings	Yes	Yes	Yes
Can hold leadership positions on committees, teams or groups	Yes	No	No

6. Funeral and Burial Scheme

The synagogue operates a Funeral scheme, and operates a Burial Scheme through Liberal Judaism. All members are automatically enrolled in these schemes and the costs are included in the costs of annual membership. Full details of the schemes are documented separately and are available on request from the synagogue office, including joining fees for new members where applicable.

Any child or person in the legal custody of a Full Member brought up or of the Jewish faith, up to the age of 21 years and normally residing at the same address as their parent or guardian shall be included in the burial and funeral schemes.

7. Application for Membership

(1) Applications

Applications for membership of the Synagogue in any category shall be made to the Synagogue office Membership Officer in a form prescribed by the Board from time to time. The Board may require an interview by one or more members of staff or volunteers of all or any prospective members as they consider necessary, or as a matter of policy. An applicant for membership shall become a member of the Synagogue upon the acceptance of the application by the Board or their delegates and after payment of the appropriate subscription.

(2) Subscription on joining

A full year's subscription or completion of a monthly direct debit is payable on joining, unless otherwise agreed by the Board or their delegate(s). Where the new member is planning a special celebration (e.g. a Bar- or bat-mitzvah, wedding, mixed faith blessing, etc), a full year's subscription is payable in full on joining. Any prescribed joining fee for the burial and funeral schemes is payable in full on joining.

8. Subscriptions

- (1) The annual membership shall be determined from time to time by the Board which may impose different rates of subscription for different classes or age groups of members. The Board may also determine discounts to be offered to members who pay their whole annual subscription in advance and in a timely manner, or for any other group as they see fit.
- (2) Every member shall be liable to pay such annual subscription in advance on the 1st day of January in every year. At the option of the member this may be paid in two equal half-yearly instalments on the 1st day of January and the 1st day of July in each year, or by 12 monthly payments by direct debit.
- (3) If a member has not paid the current subscription or any part thereof after three months from the due date and subsequent to notification from the synagogue fails after one month to bring their subscription up to date or to provide a satisfactory explanation, their membership shall then cease, along with all other rights including funeral and burial rights.
- (4) The Synagogue shall have the right to reduce the subscription of any person unable to pay the full amount in force at that time. At the discretion of the synagogue, any such reduction may be treated as a deferment to be paid as a debt either:
 - a. a) From the estate of the member following their death; or
 - b. b) upon demand, should the member's circumstances be deemed by the Honorary Treasurer to have improved.

Following the death of the member, the Honorary Treasurer shall have the discretion to further defer the repayment until the death of the member's partner, if applicable.

9. Honorary Presidents

- (1) Members at a General Meeting may, as they see fit, elect an Honorary Life President and/or an Honorary Life Vice President in recognition of distinguished service to the Synagogue and community. Such office shall be held for life, but shall not carry any voting or other rights in the administration of the affairs of the Synagogue. There shall be no more than one Honorary Life President at any one time, and no more than one Honorary Life Vice President at any one time.
- (2) Members at a General Meeting may, as they see fit, elect an Honorary President and Vice Presidents in recognition of distinguished service to the Synagogue and community. Such office shall be held for a period of one year and upon re-election for a maximum of three consecutive terms but shall not carry any voting or other rights in the administration of the affairs of the Synagogue. There shall be no more than one Honorary President at any one time.

10. Affiliation and Representation

- (1) The synagogue shall be affiliated to Liberal Judaism (The Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues). The Board shall appoint the number of representatives to the Council of Liberal Judaism to which it may from time to time be entitled. Members so appointed may be removed and substituted at the discretion of the Board, subject to the rules of Liberal Judaism.
- (2) The synagogue will be represented at the Board of Deputies of British Jews. The synagogue at its General Meetings shall appoint the number of representatives to which it may from time to time be entitled, subject to the rules of the Board of Deputies of British Jews.

11. Accounting procedures

- (1) The funds of the Synagogue, including all donations contributions and bequests, shall be paid into an account or accounts operated by the Board or its delegate(s) in the name of the Synagogue, at such bank as the Board shall decide from time to time.
- (2) All money and other property held by any staff, subsidiary or associate body or group of the Synagogue shall be the property of the Synagogue and the Board shall have the power at any time to require any such body or group to deliver to the Board a statement of its current financial position and to deliver to the Synagogue all money and other property held by it.
- (3) All staff, committees, groups, teams and other subsidiary and associate bodies of the Synagogue shall prepare such accounts as the Board shall require for each financial year of the Synagogue, and shall deliver the same to the Board not later than one month following the end of the financial year. They shall make available to the Board and to the Examiner all books of account and other documents reasonably required in connection therewith.
- (4) All cheques drawn and electronic payments made through any Synagogue bank or similar account must be signed or otherwise authorised by at least two people, in line with the procedures and directions of the Board as prescribed from time to time.

12. Staff Appointments

All staff appointments shall be made through a fair, open and transparent process. No offer of employment for any senior member of staff (e.g. Rabbi, Chief Executive) may be made without the express authority of the Board.

Rabbinic appointments will be led by a sub-committee specially convened by the Board, consisting of at least one trustee and at least two non-trustee members from different demographics of the synagogue. This sub-committee will conduct at least the first round of interviews and will report back to the Board at each stage with their recommendation. Wherever practicable short listed candidates will be invited to lead one or more services and other activities as part of the selection process, and all members will be invited to pass any feedback to the sub-committee. The final decision on any appointments will be made by the Board.