

The House of Laity Election Rules 2025

as amended by the House of Laity Election (Amendment) Rules 2026

CONTENTS

PART 1

INTRODUCTION

1. Citation and commencement
2. Interpretation

PART 2

ELECTRONIC VOTING

3. Elections portal

PART 3

ORDINARY ELECTION IN A DIOCESE

4. Application of this Part
5. Timetable
6. Initial letter to all electors
7. Register of electors available for inspection
8. Invitations to nominate
9. Validity of nominations
10. Election address
11. Publication of candidates' names and addresses
12. Requirement for poll
13. Provision of electors' names and addresses
14. Prohibition of election material
15. Voting
16. The count and result
17. Fees and expenses

PART 4

RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES CONSTITUENCY

18. Application of this Part
19. Timetable
20. List of communities and number of members
21. Qualified electors
22. Presiding officer
23. Nominations
24. Validity of nominations
25. Election address
26. Publication of candidates' names and addresses
27. Requirement for poll
28. Prohibition on election material
29. Voting
30. The count and result
31. Expenses

PART 5

ELECTION TO FILL A CASUAL VACANCY

- 32. Application of this Part
- 33. Timing
- 34. Vacancy within two years of election
- 35. Result

PART 6

ARMED FORCES SYNOD

- 36. Result of election

PART 7

APPEALS

- 37. Application of this Part
- 38. Appeals relating to eligibility to vote: religious communities
- 39. Appeals relating to nominations
- 40. Appeals against election result
- 41. Appeal procedures
- 42. Summary election appeal: notice
- 43. Summary election appeal: referral to relevant judge, etc.
- 44. Summary election appeal: parties
- 45. Summary election appeal: determination
- 46. Full election appeal: notice of appeal
- 47. Full election appeal: referral of notice
- 48. Full election appeal: parties
- 49. Full election appeal: appeal panel
- 50. Full election appeal: preliminary assessment
- 51. Full election appeal: appeal out of time
- 52. Full election appeal: consideration of matters at issue
- 53. Full election appeal: determination
- 54. Determination of appeal: general

PART 8

MISCELLANEOUS

- 55. Power of archbishop to make supplementary provision etc.
- 56. Delegation by archbishop or bishop
- 57. Revocation

The House of Laity Election Rules 2025

as amended by the House of Laity Election (Amendment) Rules 2026

In exercise of the powers under Rules 56 and 59 of the Church Representation Rules, the General Synod makes the following Rules.

PART 1

INTRODUCTION

Citation and commencement

- 1.—(1) These Rules may be cited as the House of Laity Election Rules 2025.
- (2) These Rules come into force on the day on which the General Synod is next dissolved.

Interpretation

2.—(1) A reference in these Rules to a numbered Rule with the prefix “CRR” is a reference to the Rule numbered as such in the Church Representation Rules.

(2) An expression used in these Rules and in the Church Representation Rules has the same meaning in these Rules as it has in those Rules.

(3) Where a diocese is divided into areas under CRR Rule 51, with the result that elections in that diocese to the House of Laity are conducted as if each of the areas were a separate diocese, these Rules apply to each of the areas accordingly; and, in their application to each area, these Rules have effect as if a reference to the diocese were a reference to the area.

(4) In these Rules, “elections portal” has the meaning given in Rule 3(1).

(5) In these Rules, “religious communities election” means an election to the House of Laity for the purposes of CRR Rule 46(1)(c) (and as to which, see Part 4 of these Rules).

(6) A reference in these Rules to the single transferable vote system is a reference to the form of that system that is for the time being provided for in the rules made by the General Synod under its Standing Orders; and a reference in these Rules to “the STV Rules” is a reference to those rules.

(7) A reference in these Rules to a date given in the timetable for the stage of an election is a reference to the date given for that stage of the election—

(a) in the case of a diocese, in the timetable in Rule 5;

(b) in the case of a religious communities election, in the timetable in Rule 19.

(8) In these Rules—

“personal data” has the same meaning as it has in the Data Protection Act 2018;

“working day” means a day which is not a Saturday or Sunday, Christmas Day, Good Friday, or a bank holiday in England under the Banking and Financial Dealings Act 1971.

PART 2

ELECTRONIC VOTING

Elections portal

3.—(1) The presiding officer for an election under these Rules must, with the assistance of the body nominated under CRR Rule 53(2) (independent body to assist with electronic voting), provide an online facility for the conduct of the election; and a reference in these Rules to “the elections portal” is a reference to that online facility.

(2) This Rule does not apply to a religious communities election.

PART 3

ORDINARY ELECTION IN A DIOCESE

Application of this Part

4. This Part applies in the case of an ordinary election to the House of Laity in a diocese.

Timetable

5.—(1) The timetable for the operation of these Rules is set out in the following table—

<i>Date</i>	<i>Rule</i>	<i>Stage</i>
Day 1	CRR Rule 54(5)	Diocesan electoral registration officer gives names and addresses of electors to secretary of each deanery synod
Day 7	CRR Rule 54(6)	Secretary of each deanery synod responds to diocesan electoral registration officer
Day 14	CRR Rule 54(8)	Diocesan electoral registration officer gives names and addresses to presiding officer
Day 16	6(1)	Presiding officer sends initial letter to each elector
Day 32	CRR Rule 55(2)	Invitations to nominate issued
Day 56	CRR Rule 55(4)	Close of nominations
Day 56	11(1)	Deadline for receipt of election addresses
Day 70	15(2)	Invitations to vote issued
Day 70	15(9)	Voting period opens
Day 91	15(9)	Voting by voting paper closes
Day 92	15(9)	Voting by using elections portal closes
Day 93	16(2)	Count begins
Day 98	16(6)	Deadline for declaration of result
Day 98	16(7)	Deadline for preparation of result sheet

(2) Each numbered day specified in the first column represents the date which falls that number of days into the period that begins with the day on which the General Synod is next dissolved, with that date accordingly being “Day 1”.

(3) Each provision of the Church Representation Rules or of these Rules specified in the second column provides for the stage that must take place on or by (as the case may be) the date represented in the first column for that stage.

(4) Each description given in the third column is a description of the stage provided for by the provision specified in the second column for that stage.

(5) The time by which each stage must take place is 5 p.m. on the date represented in the first column for that stage.

(6) The timetable specifying the actual date of each stage must be published on the diocese's website.

Initial letter to all electors

6.—(1) The presiding officer must, by the date given in the timetable, give each elector a letter which—

- (a) sets out the timetable for the election;
- (b) explains the process for voting in the election;
- (c) if the presiding officer has an email address for the elector--
 - (i) specifies that address and indicates that it is the address that will be used for the purposes of the election unless the elector has informed the presiding officer that the elector either does not wish that address to be used for the purposes of the election or wishes to use it only for submitting an election address under Rule 10,
 - (ii) gives the elector an opportunity to provide a different email address to be used for the purposes of the election, and
 - (iii) gives the elector an opportunity to choose to nominate by means of a nomination paper and to vote by means of a voting paper and not to do either by using the elections portal and, accordingly, not to be contacted by email for the purposes of the election but to reserve the right to submit an election address under Rule 10 from a specified email address;
- (d) if the presiding officer does not have an email address for the elector, gives the elector an opportunity—
 - (i) to provide an email address to be used either for the purposes of the election or only for submitting an election address under Rule 10, or
 - (ii) to indicate that the elector does not wish to use an email address for any purpose of the election and wishes to be able to nominate by means of a voting paper and to vote by means of a voting paper;
- (e) informs the elector of how the body nominated under CRR Rule 53(2) will communicate with the elector for the purposes of the election;
- (f) gives each elector an opportunity to indicate that the elector's personal circumstances are such that the elector's postal address should not be included in the register of lay electors in the form in which it is made available for inspection under Rule 7;
- (g) sets out the grounds on which a person is disqualified from election to the House of Laity of the General Synod;
- (h) states that any information to be provided in response to the letter should, if the elector wishes to make a nomination or to be nominated, be provided within two weeks of the date of the letter.

(2) Where the form and wording of the letter to be given under paragraph (1) have been prescribed by the Business Committee, the presiding officer must use that form and wording.

Register of electors available for inspection

7.—(1) The register of lay electors must be available for inspection at the diocesan office during the period beginning with the issue of invitations to nominate and ending with the close of nominations.

(2) The register of lay electors must, in the form in which it is made available for inspection, include the name, the email address (if one has been provided) and, subject to paragraph (3), the postal address of each elector but no other personal data.

(3) Where an elector has informed the diocesan electoral registration officer or the presiding officer (whether in response to the letter under Rule 6 or otherwise) that the elector wishes the postal address on the register not to be included on the register in the form in which it is made available for inspection, the register in that form must not include that postal address.

(4) Corrections to the register of lay electors may be made up until the close of nominations; but after the close of nominations, no names may be added to or removed from the register until the declaration of the result of the election.

Invitations to nominate

8.—(1) An invitation to nominate a candidate for the election must—

(a) in the case of an elector who has provided an email address for the purposes of the election, be issued in an email which contains instructions on how to use the elections portal to make a nomination, or

(b) otherwise, be in the form of a nomination paper and be issued by post or in person.

(2) A nomination paper must be in the form circulated to the presiding officer by the provincial registrar or in a form to a substantially similar effect.

(3) The presiding officer must ensure that, until the close of nominations, there is a facility on the diocese's website for downloading and printing a nomination paper.

(4) The invitation to nominate must specify the date given in the timetable for the close of nominations.

(5) The invitation to nominate must state that, if a poll is held under this Part, the name of each person nominating a candidate will be published alongside the name of the candidate.

(6) The invitation to nominate must be accompanied by a statement from the presiding officer as to the entitlement of a person wishing to stand for election to submit an election address under Rule 10 to the presiding officer.

(7) The presiding officer must ensure that the elections portal—

(a) when a nomination of a candidate is submitted—

(i) indicates that an email by way of acknowledgment will be sent to the candidate, and

(ii) causes an email to that effect to be sent to the candidate and to each of the persons nominating the candidate;

(b) if the process for making a nomination has been begun but has not been completed, causes an email to be sent at an appropriate time to remind the person who has begun the process that it has not been completed and that nominations close on the date given in the timetable.

Validity of nominations

9.—(1) A nomination of a candidate is valid only if—

- (a) it is made by following the procedure provided for by the elections portal, or
- (b) a completed nomination paper is given to the presiding officer by post or in person.

(2) The information which must be provided as part of a nomination includes—

- (a) the candidate's full name (including, if the candidate wishes, any title),
- (b) if the candidate commonly uses a name different from the name given under sub-paragraph (a) and wishes the commonly used name to be used for the purposes of the election, that commonly used name,
- (c) the candidate's postal address and, if applicable, a statement by the candidate that the candidate's personal circumstances are such that the postal address should not be published for the purposes of the election,
- (d) the candidate's qualifying connection to the diocese (see paragraph (9)),
- (e) the year of the candidate's birth,
- (f) a statement as to whether the candidate has previously served as a member of the General Synod and, if so, the dates of the candidate's previous service as a member and the House of which the candidate was a member, and
- (g) evidence of the candidate's consent to serve.

(3) The presiding officer must—

- (a) as soon as each nomination is received, determine whether it is valid, and
- (b) without delay, notify the candidate and each of the persons nominating the candidate whether the nomination is valid.

(4) The steps which the presiding officer must take when determining for the purposes of paragraph (3)(a) whether a nomination is valid include contacting each of the persons specified as nominating the candidate to ask whether that person is willing to nominate the candidate; and, in the absence of a response after a reasonable period, the presiding officer is entitled to conclude that the person concerned is willing to nominate the candidate.

(5) If the presiding officer determines that a nomination is not valid, the officer must give the candidate and each of the persons nominating the candidate the reasons for the determination when notifying it to each of them under paragraph (3)(b); and that notification must include an explanation of the right of appeal under Rule 39(1) against the determination.

(6) A person is not to be included as a candidate for the election if the presiding officer has not received a valid nomination for that person by the close of nominations.

(7) A nomination that is not received by the close of nominations is not valid (regardless of whether it would in other respects count as valid).

(8) A nomination is not invalidated merely because the name or description of the qualifying connection given for the purposes of paragraph (2)(d) is inaccurate in some respect.

(9) A reference to the "qualifying connection" that a candidate has to a diocese is a reference to—

- (a) the parish or parishes in the diocese on whose church electoral roll the candidate's name is entered,
- (b) the cathedral on whose community roll the candidate's name is entered,
- (c) the guild church in the diocese of London on whose electoral roll the candidate's name is entered,
- (d) the chaplaincy in the diocese in Europe on whose electoral roll the candidate's name is entered,
- (e) if the area of the diocese includes Westminster Abbey, St. George's Chapel, Windsor or the Cathedral Church of Christ in Oxford, a statement by the candidate that the dean has declared at any time in the period of two months beginning one month before the date of the dissolution of the General Synod that the candidate is a habitual worshipper, or
- (f) the mission initiative in the diocese on whose mission initiative roll the candidate's name is entered.

Election address

10.—(1) A person wishing to stand for election may submit an election address in accordance with this Rule.

(2) An election address may be in electronic form or in hard copy and must—

- (a) if it is in electronic form, be capable of being printed in easily legible form on not more than two sides of A4 paper;
- (b) if it is in hard copy, be on not more than two sides of A4 paper.

(3) An election address must be prepared at the expense of the person wishing to stand for election.

(4) A person who is not otherwise using an email address for the purposes of the election is nonetheless entitled to submit an election address to the presiding officer from an email address already notified to the presiding officer (whether in response to the letter under Rule 6 or otherwise).

Publication of candidates' names and election addresses

11.—(1) The presiding officer must, as soon as reasonably practicable after the close of nominations, ensure that the name of each candidate, the name of each person nominating that candidate and, if that candidate has submitted an election address under Rule 10, a copy of that election address—

- (a) are available by means of the elections portal,
- (b) are posted on the diocese's website, and
- (c) are sent by post to each elector who has not provided an email address for the purposes of the election.

(2) In the case of a candidate whose nomination expressed the wish that a name which the candidate commonly uses should be the name used for the purposes of the election, that commonly used name must be published under paragraph (1) alongside the candidate's actual name.

(3) The presiding officer may, but is not required to, take the steps set out in paragraph (1)(a), (b) and (c) in the case of any election address which the presiding officer receives after the close of nominations.

(4) A failure to post on a diocese's website a copy of every election address which is required to be posted under paragraph (1)(b) does not invalidate the election and is accordingly not a ground of appeal under Part 7.

Requirement for poll

12.—(1) If the number of candidates for the election does not exceed the number of seats to be filled, each candidate is declared elected; and the presiding officer must inform each candidate accordingly.

(2) If the number of candidates for the election exceeds the number of seats to be filled, a poll must be held in accordance with the following provisions of this Part; and the presiding officer must inform each candidate accordingly.

Provision of electors' names and addresses

13.—(1) The presiding officer, having received a request from a candidate, must supply free of charge to that candidate one copy of the name and address of every elector; and for this purpose the address of an elector—

- (a) includes the elector's email address if one has been provided, but
- (b) if the presiding officer has been informed that the elector does not wish the elector's postal address to be supplied to candidates, does not include the elector's postal address.

(2) Where a request of the kind referred to in paragraph (1) is received before the close of nominations, the presiding officer may not supply the copy of the names and addresses until after the close of nominations.

Prohibition of election material

14.—(1) The presiding officer must ensure that, during the election period, no communication which in the opinion of the presiding officer is likely to prejudice the election is circulated to the electors, or is distributed at a meeting of the diocesan synod or any deanery synod in the diocese, by or under the authority of the presiding officer or the diocesan synod.

(2) The rural dean and the lay chair and secretary of each deanery synod in the diocese must each seek to ensure that, during the election period, no communication which in the opinion of any of them is likely to prejudice the election forms part of an official circulation or is distributed at a meeting of the deanery synod.

(3) The "election period" is the period which—

- (a) begins with the date given in the timetable for the issue of invitations to nominate, and
- (b) ends with the date given in the timetable for the end of the period for voting by the elections portal (see Rule 15(9)).

(4) "Communication" does not include an election address under Rule 10 or a record which the presiding officer has authorised of a hustings event.

(5) Material does not constitute a “communication” merely because it refers to a person who is a candidate in the election in a context or capacity which does not have a bearing on the election.

Voting

15.—(1) A poll is to be conducted using the single transferable vote system, subject to CRR Rule 75 (STV constraints).

(2) The presiding officer must ensure that, on the date given in the timetable, each elector is issued with an invitation to vote.

(3) The email or postal address to be used for the purposes of paragraph (2) is—

- (a) the address entered against the person’s name in the register of lay electors, or
- (b) if, before the close of nominations, the person had notified the presiding officer in writing of another address, that other address.

(4) Each invitation to vote must—

- (a) if the elector has provided an email address for the purposes of the election, be issued by an email containing instructions on how to use the elections portal to vote, or
- (b) otherwise, be in the form of a voting paper and be issued by post or in person.

(5) The information which must be displayed within the elections portal, and which must be included on each voting paper, includes in relation to each candidate—

- (a) the candidate’s full name (as it appears on the completed nomination, including any title) and, if applicable, the name commonly used by the candidate,
- (b) the candidate’s postal address, unless the candidate has expressed the wish that the address is not to be included within the elections portal or on a voting paper,
- (c) the candidate’s qualifying connection to the diocese (as defined by Rule 9(9)),
- (d) the candidate’s year of birth,
- (e) a statement as to whether the candidate has previously served as a member of the General Synod and, if so, the dates of the candidate’s previous service as a member and the House of which the candidate was a member, and
- (f) the name of each person who nominated the candidate.

(6) The elections portal must include, and each voting paper must be accompanied by, an explanation of the right of appeal under Rule 39(2) against the determination that the nomination of a candidate is valid.

(7) A voting paper must also specify the time and date by which and the address to which the voting paper should be returned to the presiding officer.

(8) A voting paper must be in the form circulated to the presiding officer by the provincial registrar or in a form to a substantially similar effect.

(9) The period within which votes may be cast begins on the date given in the timetable, and ends on the date given in the timetable, with the last day of the period for casting a vote by using a voting paper falling at least one day before the last day of the period for casting a vote by means of the elections portal.

(10) The presiding officer must ensure that, when an invitation to vote is issued to a person, the person is also given written notification of the period referred to in paragraph (9).

(11) A vote in the election is valid only if, in a case involving the use of the elections portal, the vote is cast by following the procedure provided for by the elections portal.

(12) A vote in the election is valid only if, in a case involving the use of a voting paper—

- (a) the vote is cast by marking the voting paper in the manner indicated on the paper,
- (b) any requirements under the STV Rules as to indication of preferences are met,
- (c) the voting paper is signed, and the voter's full name is written, on the reverse, and
- (d) the voting paper is given to the presiding officer by post or in person before the end of the period referred to in paragraph (9).

(13) The presiding officer must ensure that the following are preserved for at least two years after the declaration of the result of the election—

- (a) a record of each valid vote cast in the election by means of the elections portal, and
- (b) each voting paper used to cast a valid vote in the election.

The count and result

16.—(1) The presiding officer must ensure that, on the day after the last day of the period for voting by using a voting paper, each valid vote cast by using a voting paper is entered into the elections portal.

(2) The presiding officer must ensure that—

- (a) the valid votes cast by means of the elections portal, and those entered into the portal under paragraph (1), are counted before the end of four working days beginning with the last day of the period for voting,
- (b) there is a facility for each candidate to observe the count by way of a live video stream or webcast, and
- (c) each candidate is given written notice of when that facility will be available and instructions on how to use it.

(3) Where, within seven days of the completion of the count, the presiding officer thinks that there should be a recount because of a possible irregularity or inaccuracy in the count, the officer may, with the consent of the provincial registrar, order a recount.

(4) If the presiding officer orders a recount under paragraph (3), the presiding officer must—

- (a) determine the time and place at which the votes will be recounted, and
- (b) give each candidate written notice of the time and place so determined.

(5) A notice under paragraph (2)(c) or (4)(b) must include an explanation of the right of appeal under Rule 40 against the result of the election.

(6) The presiding officer must, by the date given in the timetable, declare the result and ensure that the declaration is—

- (a) posted on the diocese's website,
- (b) given to each candidate, and

(c) given to the Clerk to the General Synod.

(7) The presiding officer must, by the date given in the timetable, prepare a result sheet showing a record of the election; and, if the provincial registrar has prescribed the form of the result sheet, the result sheet must be in that form or in a form to a substantially similar effect.

(8) The full return of the result and the result sheet must, until the General Synod is next dissolved, be displayed—

(a) on the diocese's website, and

(b) on the Church of England website.

(9) A copy of the result sheet signed by the presiding officer must be deposited in the diocesan office and must, for the six months after the date of the count, be available for inspection by any elector.

(10) In the case of each person elected, the presiding officer must ensure that the person's election address (if there is one) is posted on the diocesan website until the General Synod is next dissolved (or, if the person ceases to be a member before then, until the person so ceases).

(11) If the person elected provides the presiding officer with the election address in a form which omits the person's postal address (but is in all other material respects unaltered), the election address posted on the diocesan website under paragraph (10) must be in that form.

(12) In the case of each person elected, the presiding officer must—

(a) make reasonable endeavours to contact that person to ask for permission to post the person's email address on the diocesan website (if the person has provided an email address and regardless of whether it appears in the election address posted under paragraph (10)), and

(b) having obtained permission under sub-paragraph (a), post that person's email address on the diocesan website for the period referred to in paragraph (10).

Fees and expenses

17.—(1) The presiding officer is entitled to such fees for the performance of functions imposed by rules under CRR Rule 53(4) as are provided for by order under section 86 of the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and Care of Churches Measure 2018.

(2) Where, with the prior written agreement of the bishop's council and standing committee, the presiding officer for an election or some other person performs other functions in connection with the election, the presiding officer or other person is entitled to such fees as are specified in the agreement.

(3) The expenses of an election, and the fees and expenses incurred by the body nominated under CRR Rule 53(2) in assisting the presiding officer with the conduct of an election, are to be paid by the diocesan board of finance.

PART 4

RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES CONSTITUENCY

Application of this Part

18. This Part applies in the case of an ordinary religious communities election.

Timetable

19.—(1) The timetable for the operation of these Rules is set out in the following table—

<i>Date</i>	<i>Rule</i>	<i>Stage</i>
Day 1	20(1)	House of Bishops secretary provides provincial registrar with list of religious communities in the province
Day 7	20(2)	Provincial registrar issues citation to head of each religious community in the province
Day 14	20(3)	Head of each religious community gives list of electors to presiding officer
Day 32	23(2)	Invitations to nominate issued
Day 56	23(3)	Close of nominations
Day 56	26(1)	Deadline for receipt of election addresses
Day 70	29(2)	Invitations to vote issued
Day 70	29(8)	Voting period opens
Day 91	29(8)	Voting period closes
Day 93	30(1)	Count begins
Day 98	30(6)	Deadline for declaration of result
Day 98	30(7)	Deadline for preparation of result sheet

(2) Each numbered day specified in the first column represents the date which falls that number of days into the period that begins with the day on which the General Synod is next dissolved, with that date accordingly being “Day 1”.

(3) Each provision of these Rules specified in the second column provides for the stage that must take place on or by (as the case may be) the date represented in the first column for that stage.

(4) Each description given in the third column is a description of the stage provided for by the provision specified in the second column for that stage.

(5) The time by which each stage must take place is 5 p.m. on the date represented in the first column for that stage.

(6) The timetable specifying the actual date of each stage must be published on the Church of England website.

List of communities and number of members

20.—(1) On the dissolution of the General Synod, the secretary of the House of Bishops—

- (a) must provide the registrar of the province of Canterbury with a list of every religious community in that province, and
- (b) must provide the registrar of the province of York with a list of every religious community in that province.

(2) The provincial registrar, having received the list provided under paragraph (1), must, on the date given in the timetable, issue to the head of each religious community a citation in respect of the election of two persons from the members of religious communities in either province for the purposes of CRR 46(1)(c).

(3) The head of each religious community must—

- (a) on receipt of a citation from the provincial registrar, compile a list of the members of the community who are entitled to vote, with the list setting out the full name and the religious name and title of each member,
- (b) give a copy of the list to the presiding officer, and

- (c) on the date given in the timetable, give each member of the community (including those who are not entitled to vote) a copy of the list and a written explanation of the right to appeal under Rule 38 against inclusion in the list.

(4) The citation referred to in paragraph (2) must specify the time and date by which the presiding officer is to be notified of validly nominated candidates (as to which, see Rule 24).

Qualified electors

21. The electors are every lay person who, at 6.00 a.m. on the date on which the General Synod is next dissolved, is—

- (a) an actual communicant member of the Church of England aged 18 or over,
- (b) a member of a religious community, and
- (c) resident either in the province of Canterbury or in the province of York.

Presiding officer

22. The presiding officer is—

- (a) the registrar of each province in respect of the religious communities situated in the province, or
- (b) a person appointed by the registrar.

Nominations

23.—(1) A candidate for election must be nominated by two persons, each of whom is an elector.

(2) The presiding officer must ensure that, on the date given in the timetable, each elector is issued with a nomination paper by post or in person.

(3) The nomination paper must specify the date given in the timetable for the close of nominations.

(4) The nomination paper must state that, if a poll is held, the actual name and the religious name and title of each person nominating a candidate for the election will be published alongside the actual name and religious name and title of the candidate.

(5) The nomination paper must be accompanied by a statement from the presiding officer as to the entitlement of a person wishing to stand for election to submit an election address under Rule 25 to the presiding officer.

Validity of nominations

24.—(1) A nomination is valid only if it is made by giving a completed nomination paper to the presiding officer by post or in person.

(2) The information which must be provided as part of a nomination includes—

- (a) the candidate's full name (including, if the candidate wishes, any title or post-nominal letters) and religious name and title,
- (b) if the candidate commonly uses a name different from either of the names given under sub-paragraph (a) and wishes the commonly used name to be used for the purposes of the election, that commonly used name,

- (c) the religious community to which the candidate belongs,
- (d) the candidate's year of birth,
- (e) a statement as to whether the candidate has previously served as a member of the General Synod and, if so, the dates of the candidate's previous service as a member and the House of which the candidate was a member, and
- (f) evidence of the candidate's consent to serve.

(3) The presiding officer must—

- (a) as soon as a nomination is received, determine whether it is valid, and
- (b) without delay, notify the candidate and each of the persons nominating the candidate whether the nomination is valid.

(4) If the presiding officer determines that a nomination is not valid, the officer must give the candidate and each of the persons nominating the candidate the reasons for the determination when notifying it to each of them under paragraph (3)(b); and that notification must include an explanation of the right of appeal under Rule 39(1) against the determination.

(5) The steps which the presiding officer must take when determining for the purposes of paragraph (4) whether a nomination is valid include contacting each of the persons specified as nominating the candidate to ask whether that person is willing to nominate the candidate; and, in the absence of a response after a reasonable period, the presiding officer is entitled to conclude that the person concerned is willing to nominate the candidate.

(6) A person is not to be included as a candidate in the election, if the presiding officer has not received a valid nomination for that person by the close of nominations.

(7) A nomination that is not received by the close of nominations is not valid (regardless of whether it would in other respects count as valid).

Election address

25.—(1) A person wishing to stand for election may submit an election address in accordance with this Rule.

(2) An election address may be in electronic form or in hard copy and must—

- (a) if it is in electronic form, be capable of being printed in easily legible form on not more than two sides of A4 paper;
- (b) if it is in hard copy, be on not more than two sides of A4 paper.

(3) An election address must be prepared at the expense of the person wishing to stand for election.

Publication of candidates' names and election addresses

26.—(1) The presiding officer must, as soon as reasonably practicable after the close of nominations, ensure that the name of each candidate, the name of each person nominating that candidate and, if that candidate has submitted an election address under Rule 25, a copy of that election address—

- (a) are posted on the Church of England website, and
- (b) are sent by post to each elector.

(2) In the case of a candidate whose nomination expressed the wish that a name which the candidate commonly uses should be the name used for the purposes of the election, that commonly used name must be included under paragraph (1) alongside the candidate's actual name.

(3) The presiding officer may, but need not, take the steps set out in paragraph (1)(a) and (b) in the case of any election address which the presiding officer receives after the close of nominations.

(4) A failure to post on the Church of England website a copy of every election address which is required to be posted under paragraph (1)(a) does not invalidate the election and is accordingly not a ground of appeal under Part 7.

Requirement for poll

27.—(1) If the number of candidates does not exceed two, each candidate is declared elected; and the presiding officer must inform each candidate accordingly.

(2) If the number of candidates exceeds two, a poll must be held in accordance with the following provisions of this Part; and the presiding officer must inform each candidate accordingly.

Prohibition of election material

28.—(1) The presiding officer must ensure that, during the election period, no communication which in the opinion of the presiding officer is likely to prejudice the election is circulated to the electors by or under the authority of the presiding officer.

(2) The head of each religious community must seek to ensure that, during the election period, no communication which in the opinion of the head of the community is likely to prejudice the election forms part of an official circulation to members of the community.

(3) The “election period” is the period which—

(a) begins with the date given in the timetable for the issue of nominations, and

(b) ends with the date given in the timetable for the end of the period for voting.

(4) “Communication” does not include an election address under Rule 25 or a report that the presiding officer has authorised of a hustings event.

(5) Material does not constitute a “communication” merely because it refers to a person who is a candidate in the election in a context or capacity which does not have a bearing on the election.

Voting

29.—(1) A poll is to be conducted using the single transferable vote system, subject to CRR Rule 75 (STV constraints).

(2) The presiding officer must ensure that, on the date given in the timetable, each elector is issued with a voting paper by post or in person.

(3) A voting paper must specify in relation to each candidate—

(a) the candidate's full name (as it appears on the completed nomination, including any title or post-nominal letters), the candidate's religious name and title (as they appear on the list compiled under Rule 20(3)) and, if applicable, the name commonly used by the candidate,

(b) the religious community to which the candidate belongs,

- (c) the candidate's year of birth,
- (d) a statement as to whether the candidate has previously served as a member of the General Synod and, if so, the dates of the candidate's previous service as a member and the House of which the candidate was a member, and
- (e) the name of each person who nominated the candidate (including that person's religious name and title).

(4) A voting paper must be accompanied by an explanation of the right of appeal under Rule 39(2) against the determination that the nomination of a candidate is valid.

(5) A voting paper must also specify the time and date by which and the address to which the voting paper should be returned to the presiding officer.

(6) A voting paper must be in the form circulated to the presiding officer by the provincial registrar or in a form to a substantially similar effect.

(7) The presiding officer must ensure that, when a voting paper is issued to a person, the person is also given written notification of the time and date of the end of the period for voting.

(8) The period within which votes may be cast begins on the date given in the timetable and ends on the date given in the timetable.

(9) A vote is valid only if—

- (a) it is cast by marking a voting paper in the manner indicated on the paper,
- (b) any requirements under the STV Rules as to indication of preferences are satisfied,
- (c) the voting paper is signed, and the voter's full name is written, on the reverse, and
- (d) the voting paper is given to the presiding officer by post or in person before the end of the period for voting.

(10) The presiding officer must ensure that each voting paper used to cast a valid vote in the election is preserved for at least two years after the declaration of the result of the election.

The count and result

30.—(1) The presiding officer must ensure that, before the end of four working days beginning with the last day of the period for voting, all valid votes are counted; and the presiding officer must give each candidate written notice of the time and place at which the votes will be counted.

(2) Each candidate, or a person nominated by the candidate, is entitled to be present at the count in order to scrutinise it but is not entitled to take part in it.

(3) Where, within seven days of the completion of the count, the presiding officer considers that there should be a recount because of a possible irregularity or inaccuracy in the count, the officer may order a recount.

(4) If the presiding officer orders a recount under paragraph (3), the presiding officer must—

- (a) determine the time and place at which the votes will be recounted, and
- (b) give each candidate written notice of the time and place so determined.

(5) A notice under paragraph (1) or (4) must include an explanation of the right of appeal under Rule 40 against the result of the election.

(6) The presiding officer must, by the date given in the timetable, declare the result and ensure that the declaration—

- (a) is posted on the Church of England website, and
- (b) is sent to each candidate and to the Clerk to the General Synod.

(7) The presiding officer must, by the date given in the timetable, prepare a result sheet showing a record of the election.

(8) The full return of the result and the result sheet must, until the General Synod is next dissolved, be displayed on the Church of England website.

(9) A copy of the result sheet signed by the presiding officer must be deposited in the office of each provincial registrar and must, for the six months after the date of the count, be available at all reasonable times for inspection by any elector.

(10) In the case of each person elected, the presiding officer must ensure that the person's election address (if there is one) is posted on the Church of England website until the General Synod is next dissolved (or, if the person ceases to be a member before then, until the person so ceases).

Expenses

31. The fees and expenses incurred by the presiding officer in the conduct of an election and any other costs of the election are to be paid by the Archbishops' Council.

PART 5

ELECTION TO FILL CASUAL VACANCY

Application of this Part

32.—(1) This Part applies in the case of—

- (a) an election in a diocese to fill a casual vacancy in the House of Laity, or
- (b) a religious communities election to fill a casual vacancy.

(2) The election to fill the casual vacancy is to be conducted as if it were an ordinary election, with the provisions of these Rules that would apply to an ordinary election applying accordingly to the election to fill the casual vacancy but subject to the modifications provided for in this Part.

(3) The reference in Rule 9(9)(e) to the date of the dissolution of the General Synod is to be read as a reference to the date on which invitations to nominate are issued.

Timing

33.—(1) The presiding officer must determine the timetable for the election, unless the election is required by Rule 34(1) or (2) to be conducted by using the voting records of the previous election; but the interval between any two stages of the election must be no shorter than the interval between the equivalent two stages of the previous election.

(2) The election must, so far as possible, be completed as soon as reasonably practicable and in any event—

- (a) in a case within Rule 34(1) or (2), within one month of the notification by the secretary to the House of Laity to the presiding officer of the occurrence of the vacancy, or

(b) in any other case, within six months of that notification.

(3) But if the Convocations of the Provinces are due to be dissolved under section 1(2) of the Church of England Convocations Act 1966 within twelve months of the notification by the secretary to the House of Laity to the presiding officer of the occurrence of the vacancy, it is not to be filled unless directions providing otherwise are given to the presiding officer by—

- (a) in the case of an election in a diocese, the lay members of the bishop's council and standing committee acting in accordance with any directions of the diocesan synod;
- (b) in the case of a religious communities election, the Standing Committee of the House of Laity.

(4) If the vacancy is not filled within the period required by paragraph (2), the Chair of the House of Laity may give directions to the presiding officer as to the date by which it must be filled.

(5) In the case of a religious communities election, the presiding officer must notify the head of each religious community in writing of any directions given to the presiding officer under this Rule.

Vacancy within two years of election

34.—(1) Where a casual vacancy occurs in the two years beginning with 1st August in the year of the most recent ordinary election—

- (a) the election to fill the vacancy must be conducted using the voting records of the ordinary election,
- (b) the number of persons to be elected is to be the same as in the ordinary election, and
- (c) no candidate elected on the original count and continuing to serve is to be excluded.

(2) Where a casual vacancy occurs in a diocese in the two years beginning with the date on which the result of an election in that diocese to the House of Laity was declared, or where a casual vacancy occurs among the lay members of the religious communities in the two years beginning with the result of a religious communities election, and that election was itself held to fill a casual vacancy and was conducted as an ordinary election—

- (a) the election to fill the vacancy must be conducted by using the voting records of the election held to fill the previous vacancy,
- (b) the number of persons to be elected is the total of the number who were elected in the election held to fill the previous vacancy and are continuing to serve and the number of casual vacancies to be filled, and
- (c) no candidate elected on the original count and continuing to serve is to be excluded.

(3) In a case within paragraph (1) or (2), the presiding officer must ask each candidate who was not elected in the election held to fill the previous vacancy, and who is still qualified for election, if that candidate consents to serve.

(4) If the number of candidates does not exceed the number of vacancies to be filled and at least one of the candidates consents to serve, that candidate or, if there is more than one, each of them is declared elected; and the presiding officer must inform the candidate, or each of them, accordingly.

(5) If the number of candidates exceeds the number of vacancies to be filled—

- (a) the presiding officer must withdraw from the election any candidate who has not consented to serve or is no longer qualified for election, and

- (b) the valid votes in the election held to fill the previous vacancy must be recounted from the beginning using the single transferable vote system, subject to CRR Rule 75 (STV constraints).

(6) “Voting records”, in relation to an election, means the records and voting papers preserved from that election under Rule 15(13) or 29(10).

Result

35.—(1) A person elected to fill a casual vacancy holds office only for the unexpired part of the term of office due to be served in the case of that vacancy.

(2) In the case of an election in a diocese, the presiding officer must, within four working days of the declaration of the result—

- (a) send a full return of the result to every person already elected in the diocese as a member of the Lower House of Convocation or the House of Laity, and
- (b) post on the diocese’s website the full return of the result.

(3) In the case of a religious communities election, the presiding officer must, within four working days of the declaration of the result, send a full return of the result to the other persons already elected under CRR Rule 46(1)(c).

PART 6

ARMED FORCES SYNOD

Result of election

36. In the case of an election to the House of Laity held for the purposes of CRR Rule 46(1)(f) (Armed Forces Synod), the full return of the result must, until the next dissolution of the General Synod, be displayed on the Church of England website.

PART 7

APPEALS

Application of this Part

37.—(1) This Part applies in the case of any election under these Rules.

(2) This Part also applies in the case of an election to the House of Laity for the purposes of CRR Rule 46(1)(f) (Armed Forces Synod); and where for those purposes a choice, rather than an election, of members is or is to be made, a reference in the following provisions of this Part to an election includes a reference to a choice.

Appeals relating to eligibility to vote: religious communities

38.—(1) Where a person’s name is not included on the list compiled under Rule 20(3) of persons entitled to vote in a religious communities election, that person may appeal against the failure to include the name on the grounds that the person is qualified to vote in the election.

(2) Where a person who is qualified to vote in a religious communities election objects to the inclusion of another person’s name on the list compiled under Rule 20(3), the person may appeal against that inclusion of the name on the grounds that the other person is not qualified to vote in the election.

Appeals relating to nominations

39.—(1) An appeal may be made against a determination under Rule 9(3)(a) or 24(3)(a) that a nomination is not valid on the grounds that the nomination is valid and that the person should, accordingly, be included as a candidate in the election.

(2) An appeal may be made against a determination under Rule 9(3)(a) or 24(3)(a) that a nomination is valid on the grounds that the nomination is not valid and that the person should, accordingly, not be included as a candidate in the election.

(3) An appeal under paragraph (1) or (2) may be brought only by an elector in the election.

Appeals against election result

40.—(1) An appeal against the result of an election may be made on the grounds that a person whose election is the subject of the appeal—

- (a) was not duly elected,
- (b) was not qualified to be a candidate at the time of the election, or
- (c) before the end of the period for voting, misrepresented a material fact in connection with the election.

(2) An appeal against the result of an election may be made on the grounds that the conduct of the election was such as to affect the outcome of the election.

(3) An appeal against the result of an election in a diocese other than the diocese in Europe may be made on the grounds that—

- (a) it has been determined on an appeal under CRR Rule 57 (enrolment) that an error was made in the register of lay electors in the diocese or the question is awaiting determination on an appeal under that Rule, and
- (b) the error would or might be material to the result of the election.

(4) An appeal against the result of an election in the diocese in Europe may be made on the grounds that—

- (a) it has been determined on an appeal under the provision applying in that diocese which corresponds to CRR Rule 57 that an error was made in the electoral roll of a chaplaincy or the register of lay electors in the diocese or the question is awaiting determination on an appeal under that provision, and
- (b) the error would or might be material to the result of the election.

(5) An appeal against the result of an election may be made on the grounds that a vote which was allowed should have been disallowed, or that a vote which was disallowed should have been allowed, but only if the allowance or disallowance of the vote would or might be material to the outcome of the election.

(6) An appeal under paragraph (1)(b) may not be brought if—

- (a) the grounds of the appeal are to the effect that the nomination of the person whose election is the subject of the appeal was not valid, and
- (b) an appeal on grounds to that effect was brought under Rule 39(2) before the election.

(7) An appeal under this Rule may be brought by—

- (a) a candidate in the election,
- (b) an elector in the election, or
- (c) the Chair of the House of Laity.

(8) On an appeal under this Rule, a person who was declared elected as a member of the House of Laity but whose election is or may be affected by the appeal is to be regarded for all purposes as a member of the House of Laity and of the General Synod pending the determination of the appeal.

(9) If the Chair of the House of Laity is unable to bring an appeal under this Rule, the Vice-Chair of the House may do so; and if the office of Chair or Vice-Chair of the House is vacant, the person who last held the office is to be treated as holding the office for the purposes of this Rule.

Appeal procedures

41.—(1) Each of the following appeals (referred to in these Rules as a “summary election appeal”) is to be dealt with in accordance with Rules 42 to 45 and 54—

- (a) an appeal under Rule 39(1) or (2) (validity of nomination);
- (b) an appeal under Rule 40(1)(a) or (b) (whether person elected or qualified as candidate);
- (c) an appeal under Rule 40(5) (allowance or disallowance of vote).

(2) Each of the following appeals (referred to in these Rules as a “full election appeal”) is to be dealt with in accordance with Rules 46 to 54—

- (a) an appeal under Rule 38 (eligibility to vote: religious communities);
- (b) an appeal under Rule 40(1)(c) (misrepresentation of material fact);
- (c) an appeal under Rule 40(2) (conduct of election);
- (d) an appeal under Rule 40(3) or (4) (error in register of lay electors).

Summary election appeal: notice

42.—(1) Notice of a summary election appeal—

- (a) must be in writing,
- (b) must give brief particulars of the grounds of appeal, and
- (c) may be accompanied by written submissions.

(2) Notice of a summary election appeal must be given to the presiding officer for the election.

(3) Notice of an appeal under Rule 39(1) (appeal against determination that nomination not valid) must be given no later than two days after the day on which the person to whom the nomination relates is notified of the determination.

(4) Notice of an appeal under Rule 39(2) (appeal against determination that nomination valid) brought by an elector (including one who is a candidate) must be given no later than two days after the day on which the elector receives an invitation to vote in the election.

(5) Notice of an appeal under Rule 40(1)(a) or (b) (appeal relating to whether person elected or qualified as candidate) must be given no later than two days after the day on which the result of the election is declared.

(6) Notice of an appeal under Rule 40(5) (appeal against allowance or disallowance of vote) must be given no later than two days after—

- (a) the day on which the vote is allowed or disallowed, or
- (b) if the appeal is being brought on grounds that there is an error in the register of lay electors but an appeal under CRR Rule 57 (enrolment) or, in the case of an election in the diocese in Europe, the equivalent provision to that Rule has yet to be determined, the day on which that appeal is determined.

Summary election appeal: referral to relevant judge, etc.

43.—(1) The presiding officer, having received notice of a summary election appeal, must without delay (and in any event within 48 hours of receiving the notice of appeal unless in the meantime written notice is given to withdraw the appeal)—

- (a) refer the notice of appeal to the relevant judge,
- (b) give a written notification to each candidate in the election, and
- (c) if any decision to which the appeal relates was made by a person other than the presiding officer, give a written notification to that person, and
- (d) in the case of an appeal under Rule 39(1) or (2), give a written notification to the person whose nomination is the subject of the appeal.

(2) A person to whom a notification is given under paragraph (1)(b) or (d) is entitled to make written representations to the relevant judge on a decision to which the appeal relates.

(3) The presiding officer is entitled to provide the relevant judge with a written explanation of the reasons for any decision made by the officer to which the appeal relates.

(4) A person to whom a notification is given under paragraph (1)(c) is entitled to provide the relevant judge with a written explanation of the reasons for the decision which that person made.

(5) Representations under paragraph (2) must be made, and an explanation under paragraph (3) or (4) must be provided, within seven days of the referral of the notice of appeal.

(6) A notification under paragraph (1)(b), (c) or (d) must include an explanation of the entitlement to make representations or to provide an explanation (as the case may be).

(7) The “relevant judge” is—

- (a) the Dean of the Arches and Auditor, or
- (b) if the Dean of the Arches and Auditor declines or is unable to act as such, the Vicar-General of the Province of Canterbury or the Vicar-General of the Province of York (regardless of the province in which the decision being appealed against was taken), or
- (c) if each of them declines or is unable to act as such, the chancellor of the diocese concerned.

Summary election appeal: parties

44.—(1) On a summary election appeal, each of the following is a party to the appeal (in addition to the appellant)—

- (a) the presiding officer;
- (b) any person to whom a notification is given under Rule 43(1)(c);
- (c) each relevant person.

(2) Each of the following is a relevant person—

- (a) on an appeal under Rule 39(1) or (2), the person whose nomination is the subject of the appeal;
- (b) on an appeal under Rule 40(1)(a) or (b), the person whose election is the subject of the appeal;
- (c) on an appeal under Rule 40(5), any person to whom a notification is given under Rule 43(1)(b).

Summary election appeal: determination

45.—(1) The relevant judge (referred to in this Rule as “the judge”), having had a notice of appeal referred under Rule 43, must decide whether the grounds of the appeal are established to the judge’s satisfaction.

(2) The judge, in deciding the matter at issue, may consider only—

- (a) the notice of appeal and any accompanying written submissions, and
- (b) any representations made or explanation provided in accordance with Rule 43(5).

(3) A decision under this Rule must be made within seven days of the referral of the notice of appeal.

(4) Where the judge decides on an appeal under Rule 39(1) that a nomination is valid, or decides on an appeal under Rule 39(2) that a nomination is not valid, the judge must—

- (a) give directions for the appointment of a new period for voting in the election, and
- (b) give whatever further directions the judge thinks necessary.

(5) Where, on an appeal under Rule 40(1)(a) or (b) or (5), the judge decides that the election as a whole is void, the judge must—

- (a) direct that a fresh election is to be held, and
- (b) give whatever further directions the judge thinks necessary.

(6) Where, on an appeal under Rule 40(1)(a) or (b) or (5), the judge allows the appeal but does not decide that the election as a whole is void, the judge must give whatever directions the judge thinks necessary.

(7) The judge on a summary election appeal must otherwise do one of the following—

- (a) decide that the matter at issue amounts to a minor infringement which did not affect the outcome of the election and the appeal should accordingly be dismissed;
- (b) decide that the matter at issue amounts to a procedural irregularity in the conduct of the election but the appeal should nonetheless in all the circumstances be dismissed;
- (c) decide that the appeal is wholly without merit and should accordingly be dismissed.

Full election appeal: notice of appeal

46.—(1) Notice of a full election appeal—

- (a) must be in writing,
 - (b) must give brief particulars of the grounds of appeal, and
 - (c) may be accompanied by written submissions.
- (2) Notice of a full election appeal must be given to the presiding officer.
- (3) Notice of an appeal under Rule 38 must be given no later than 14 days after the day on which the list compiled under Rule 20(3) is sent to members of the religious community in question.
- (4) Notice of an appeal under Rule 40(1)(c) or (2) must be given no later than 14 days after the day on which the result of the election is declared.
- (5) Notice of an appeal under Rule 40(3) or (4) must be given no later than 14 days after—
- (a) the day on which the result of the election is declared, or
 - (b) if an appeal under CRR Rule 57 (enrolment) or, in the case of an election in the diocese in Europe, the equivalent provision to that Rule has yet to be determined, the day on which that appeal is determined.

Full election appeal: referral of notice

47.—(1) Where notice of a full election appeal is given, the person to whom it is given must without delay (and in any event within 48 hours of receiving it unless in the meantime written notice is given to withdraw the appeal)—

- (a) give a written notification to each candidate in the election,
 - (b) if any decision to which the appeal relates was made by a person other than the presiding officer, give a written notification to that person,
 - (c) in the case of an appeal under Rule 38(2), give a written notification to the person to whose inclusion on the list objection is made, and
 - (b) refer the notice to the relevant office holders.
- (2) Where a purported notice of a full election appeal is given out of time, the person to whom it is given must without delay (and in any event within 48 hours of receiving it unless in the meantime written notice is given to withdraw the appeal)—
- (a) give written notification to each person referred to in paragraph (1)(a), (b) and (c), and
 - (b) refer the notice to the relevant office holders.
- (3) The relevant office holders are—

- (a) in the case of an election in a diocese, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the House of Laity;
 - (b) in the case of a religious communities election, the Business Committee.
- (4) A person to whom a notification is given under paragraph (1)(a) or (c) is entitled to make written representations to the panel appointed under Rule 49(1) on a decision to which the appeal relates.
- (5) The presiding officer is entitled to provide that panel with a written explanation of the reasons for any decision made by the officer to which the appeal relates.
- (6) A person to whom a notification is given under paragraph (1)(b) is entitled to provide that panel with a written explanation of the reasons for the decision which that person made.
- (7) Representations under paragraph (4) must be made, and an explanation under paragraph (5) or (6) must be provided, within 28 days of the referral of the notice of appeal.
- (8) The presiding officer and any person to whom a notification is given under paragraph (2)(a) are each entitled to make written representations to the panel appointed under Rule 49(2) on the question of whether the panel should consider the appeal.
- (9) Representations under paragraph (8) must be made within seven days of the notification under paragraph (2)(a) being given.
- (10) A notification under paragraph (1)(a), (b) or (c) or (2)(a) must include an explanation of the entitlement to make representations or provide an explanation (as the case may be).
- (11) Where the Chair or Vice-Chair of the House of Laity is directly concerned in an appeal, the Standing Committee of the House must nominate a deputy to exercise the functions of the Chair or Vice-Chair (as the case may be) in relation to that appeal.
- (12) Once a notice is referred under this Rule, the appellant may withdraw it only with the consent of the panel appointed under Rule 49 to decide the matter.

Full election appeal: parties

48.—(1) On a full election appeal, each of the following is a party to the appeal (in addition to the appellant)—

- (a) the presiding officer;
 - (b) any person to whom a notification is given under Rule 47(1)(b);
 - (c) each relevant person.
- (2) Each of the following is a relevant person—
- (a) on an appeal under Rule 38(2), any person to whom a notification is given under Rule 47(1)(c);
 - (b) on an appeal under Rule 40(1)(c), the person whose election is the subject of the appeal;
 - (c) on an appeal under Rule 40(2), (3) or (4), any person to whom a notification is given under Rule 47(1)(a).

Full election appeal: appeal panel

49.—(1) The relevant office holders must, within 28 days of receiving a referral under Rule 47(1), appoint a Chair and two other persons to serve as a panel to consider the appeal.

(2) The relevant office holders must, within 28 days of receiving a referral under Rule 47(2), appoint a Chair and two other persons to serve as a panel to decide whether, even though the purported notice of appeal was given out of time, the panel will nonetheless consider the appeal.

(3) In making the appointments under this Rule, the relevant office holders must be satisfied that the persons appointed, taken together, have suitable legal or other expertise or experience.

(4) A person may not be appointed under this Rule if the person—

- (a) is an elector in the diocese or religious community to which the appeal relates, or
- (b) might otherwise have a benefit from the outcome of the election.

(5) “Relevant office holders” has the meaning given in Rule 47.

Full election appeal: preliminary assessment

50.—(1) A panel appointed under Rule 49(1) must conduct a preliminary assessment of the appeal.

(2) A preliminary assessment of an appeal is an assessment as to whether there are arguable grounds of appeal; and, in conducting a preliminary assessment, the panel may consider only—

- (a) the notice of appeal and any accompanying written submissions, and
- (b) any representations made or explanation provided in accordance with Rule 47(7).

(3) If the panel considers that there are arguable grounds of appeal, the appeal stands referred to the panel for consideration and determination under Rules 52 and 53.

(4) If the panel considers that there are no arguable grounds of appeal, the appeal is dismissed.

(5) The panel’s decision on the preliminary assessment is final.

(6) The panel must give a written notification to the parties to the appeal of the decision on the preliminary assessment of the appeal and the reasons for the decision.

(7) The panel’s decision and the reasons for the decision must be published on the Church of England website at the same time as the parties are notified of the decision.

Full election appeal: appeal out of time

51.—(1) A panel appointed under Rule 49(2) may decide to consider the appeal only if, having regard to all the circumstances, it is satisfied that there is a good reason to allow the appeal to proceed.

(2) The matters which the panel considers in making that decision must include—

- (a) the purported notice of appeal and any accompanying written submissions (whether on the question of why notice of appeal was not given within the required period or on any other point), and
- (b) any representations made in accordance with Rule 47(9).

(3) Where the panel decides to consider the appeal—

- (a) the period specified in this Part for giving notice of appeal in that case is to be treated as having been extended so far as necessary,
- (b) the appeal is to be treated as having been referred to the panel for decision, and
- (c) the panel must ensure that each notification required under Rule 47(1) is given to the person concerned (and, once that has been done, Rule 47(4) to (7) and (10) applies in relation to the notification).

(4) Where the panel has decided to consider the appeal and the period for making representations in accordance with Rule 47(7) has expired, the panel may proceed to conduct a preliminary assessment of the appeal under Rule 50.

(5) The panel must give a written notification to the parties to the appeal of the decision on whether the panel will consider the appeal and the reasons for the decision.

(6) The panel's decision and the reasons for the decision must be published on the Church of England website at the same time as the parties are notified of the decision.

Full election appeal: consideration of matters at issue

52.—(1) The panel to which an appeal is referred under Rule 50 must, in deciding the matter at issue, consider all the circumstances; and for that purpose, the panel—

- (a) may inspect documents or other papers relating to the subject-matter of the appeal, and
 - (b) is entitled to be provided with such information relating to the appeal as it may require.
- (2) The panel must give each party to the appeal an opportunity—
- (a) to appear before the panel in person or by a legal or other representative, or
 - (b) if that party does not wish to take that opportunity, to make written representations on the matter at issue.

(3) A hearing under paragraph (2)(a) is to be held in public unless the panel, having regard to all the circumstances, is satisfied that it would be in the interests of justice for the hearing to be held in private.

Full election appeal: determination

53.—(1) On a full election appeal, the panel must decide whether the grounds of the appeal are established to the panel's satisfaction.

(2) On an appeal under Rule 38, the panel, having decided whether the person in question is qualified to vote in the religious communities election, must give whatever directions the panel thinks necessary.

(3) Where the panel decides that the election as a whole is void, it must—

- (a) direct that a fresh election is to be held, and
- (b) give whatever further directions it thinks necessary.

(4) Where the panel allows the appeal but does not decide that the election as a whole is void, it must give whatever directions it thinks necessary.

(5) The panel on a full election appeal must otherwise do one of the following—

- (a) decide that the matter at issue amounts to a minor infringement which did not affect the outcome of the election and that the appeal should accordingly be dismissed;
- (b) decide that the matter at issue amounts to a procedural irregularity in the conduct of the election but that the appeal should nonetheless in all the circumstances be dismissed;
- (c) decide that the appeal is wholly without merit and should accordingly be dismissed.

Determination of appeal: general

54.—(1) The decision on an appeal under this Part is final as to the matters at issue.

(2) Accordingly, a full appeal may not be brought in a case on grounds to the same effect as grounds on which a summary appeal has been brought in that case.

(3) The relevant judge or the panel which made the decision on an appeal under this Part must give a written notification to the parties to the appeal of the decision and the reasons for the decision.

(4) Where the direction that a fresh election is to be held is given under Rule 45(5)(a) or 53(3)(a), the date on which the direction is given is the date on which a casual vacancy occurs for the purposes of Part 5.

(5) The relevant judge or the panel on an appeal under this Part may direct that a party to the appeal must pay the whole or part of the expenses of the relevant judge or the panel; and a direction under this paragraph must specify the amount which the party must pay.

(6) The panel's expenses, in so far as they are not paid under paragraph (5), are to be paid—

- (a) in the case of an election in a diocese, by the diocesan board of finance;
- (b) in the case of a religious communities election, by the Archbishops' Council.

PART 8

MISCELLANEOUS

Power of archbishop to make supplementary provision etc.

55.—(1) For the purpose of ensuring that the provisions of these Rules are carried out, the archbishop of the province concerned may exercise the following powers.

(2) The archbishop may make provision for any matter not provided for in these Rules.

(3) The archbishop may appoint a person to do something in respect of which there has been neglect or default by the person required by these Rules to do that thing.

(4) The archbishop may, so far as necessary for giving effect to the intention of a provision of these Rules—

- (a) extend or alter the time for holding an election, other than one to fill a casual vacancy;
- (b) modify the procedure for an election, other than one to fill a casual vacancy.

(5) In a case in which there has been no valid election, the archbishop may—

- (a) direct that a fresh election is to be held, and
- (b) give further directions.

(6) Where difficulties arise, the archbishop may (subject to paragraph (4)) give directions for removing those difficulties.

(7) This Rule does not authorise an archbishop—

- (a) to validate anything that was invalid when it was done, or
- (b) to give a direction that is contrary to a resolution of the General Synod.

(8) Where a direction is given under paragraph (5)(a), the date on which it is given is the date on which a casual vacancy occurs for the purposes of Part 5.

(9) In the application of this Rule to a religious communities election, the references to the archbishop are to be read as references to the archbishops acting jointly (or, where Rule 56(1) applies, to the persons exercising the archbishops' functions acting jointly).

Delegation by archbishop or bishop

56.—(1) During a vacancy in an archbishopric, or where an archbishop is unable to exercise functions as such under these Rules, the functions are exercisable by the most senior diocesan bishop in the province who is able to exercise the functions.

(2) For the purposes of paragraph (1), the seniority of diocesan bishops is to be determined in accordance with section 67 of the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure 1963.

(3) During a vacancy in a diocesan bishopric, or where the bishop of a diocese is unable to exercise functions as such under these Rules, the archbishop of the province may appoint a person in episcopal orders to exercise the functions.

Revocation

57. The House of Laity Election Rules 2020 are revoked.

Made this 14th day of July 2025

A. S. McGregor
Registrar of the General Synod