

GFS (Girls' Friendly Society)

Worldwide (A ministry of the Anglican Church)



INFORMATION SHEET NO 1 GFS WORLD COUNCIL PERTH, AUSTRALIA 11 JULY TO 20 JULY 2017

We hope to send out regular Information sheets as we get nearer to World Council. This is the first to help you with your planning. We, in Australia, are looking forward to welcoming you to our country and to the World Council.

Change of Dates: Please note that the Council has now been shortened by one day and will commence on **Tuesday 11 July 2017, finishing on Friday 21 July**. When you begin to think about travel please ensure that you are in Perth, Western Australia by 2pm on 11 July. The Council will finish with early morning worship and breakfast on 21 July and travel should be booked, from late morning.

Venue The Swanleigh Conference Centre will hold 240 persons living in. It can cater for more day persons. There will be alternate accommodation available at two Caravan parks in comfortable units but at extra expense to those attending. We will be running a bus to pick up and drop off people at these two venues. However we may have to limit numbers and this will be organized by your country leader.

Cost/Registration: At this stage we are still unsure of the total cost. It is expected it will be no more than \$AUD1400 which for Australians is just a little more than we paid to attend the last world conference in Wales. We are still working on whether we can do online registrations. Registration forms will be forwarded in the last week in June and it is important that they are returned as soon as possible.

Homestays: Again we are not sure if these will be available around Australia for anyone wanting to visit other parts of Australia. We will be sending out forms to our Australian members in the near future. Swanleigh will not be available for accommodation prior to 11 July or after 10pm Friday 21 July. We will give you more information of other accommodation venues in later newsletters if you are arriving early or leaving later because of flights.

Visas: VISA INFORMATION

All non-Australian attendees (with the exception of New Zealand citizens) require a visa to enter Australia

Citizens of United Kingdom, Ireland, Japan, Korea and USA can apply for an Electronic Travel Authority on line. Very simple, Fee is around \$US39

All others can use the following website to find out how to obtain a visa

<https://www.migrationexpert.com.au/visa/australian-embassy>

An individual letter of invitation will be provided to everyone who registers for Council. I understand that the full council fee will need to be paid promptly so that the letter of invitation can state that all your expenses will be met while you are in Australia.

I realise how difficult it is because of the lack of Australian Embassies or Consulates in many countries.

I suggest that those countries that cannot apply for an Electronic Travel Authority find out as soon as possible the requirements for a visa so that you are ready to apply nearer to council. I have checked with our Immigration Department and they tell me that other than sending you a letter of invitation there is nothing I can do from Australia to assist with your Visa application.

I have checked the following but countries may have easier access that I couldn't find.

Liberia	Processed through Embassy/Consulate, Pretoria, South Africa
Ghana	Processed through Australian Embassy/Consulate, Nairobi, Kenya
Kenya	Can apply at the Australian Embassy/Consulate, Embassy in Nairobi
Solomon Islands	Can apply at the Australian Embassy/Consulate in Honiara
Mozambique	Processed through Australian Embassy/Consulate, Pretoria, South Africa
PNG	Can apply at the Australian Embassy, Port Moresby
Philippines	Can apply at the Australian Embassy, Manila
Sierra Leone	Processed through Embassy/Consulate, Pretoria, South Africa
Rwanda	Processed through Australian Embassy/Consulate, Nairobi, Kenya
South Africa	Can apply at the Australian Embassy, Pretoria
Sri Lanka	Can apply at the Australian Embassy, Colombo
Swaziland	Processed through Australian Embassy/Consulate, Pretoria, South Africa
Uganda	Processed through Australian Embassy/Consulate, Pretoria South Africa
Zambia	Processed through Australian Embassy/Consulate, Pretoria South Africa
Dominican Republic	Processed through Australian Embassy, Ottawa, Canada
Honduras	Processed through Australian Embassy, Ottawa, Canada

Please ensure you have a passport which has an expiry date at least six months after you travel.

Travel Fund: There will be funds available for assistance for one delegate to travel to and from Australia. Applications for funding will be accepted only from countries which cannot raise the funds for their delegates travel. The Travel Fund does not include the cost of Council.

Other Funds: There will be the opportunity to access the Pat Franklin Foundation in Australia for assistance with Council costs but these funds are very limited. We hope the application form will be sent at the same time as the Registration forms.

Information: All queries should be directed to me – valgribble1@bigpond.com – and we hope to have a GFS email account set up very soon that can be accessible to a number of the World team to help with enquiries.

With love to you all *Val*