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# Billericay Mayflower Bridge Club



## 1. NAME

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The Club shall be called Billericay Mayflower Bridge Club.

## 2. OBJECT

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The object of the Club shall be to provide facilities for its members for playing Duplicate Contract Bridge and facilities for less experienced players to learn and to play Contract Bridge in a friendly and supportive atmosphere.

## 3. HEADQUARTERS

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The headquarters of the Club shall be situated at the Club's principal playing venue.

## 4. AFFILIATIONS

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The Club will be affiliated to the Essex County Bridge Association and to the English Bridge Union (EBU).

## 5. MEMBERSHIP

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5.1. Full Membership shall be open to any person over the age of eighteen years able to play the game of bridge or wishing to learn the game of bridge.

5.2. Players under the age of eighteen years are entitled to apply for Junior Membership.

5.3. Any person wishing to become a member of the Club shall apply for membership by completing and forwarding to the Secretary such form as may be prescribed from time to time by the Committee.

5.4. The Club may confer Honorary Life Membership on any member who has rendered special service to the Club.

5.6. All members are deemed to have accepted the requirements of this Constitution and the rules and codes of conduct adopted by the Club.

5.7. The Committee will keep a register of members which will include details of their names, addresses and contact details.

5.8. In considering applications for membership the Committee shall have regard to the playing facilities available and may from time to time decide that the Club shall be closed to new applications for membership for such period as it may decide.

5.9. A member shall cease to be a member of the Club immediately if expelled from the Club under the provisions of the Schedule of Disciplinary Procedures (see Annex) or if his/her resignation in writing is delivered to the Secretary.

5.10. A member whose subscription has not been paid shall cease to be a member on the expiration of the period of one month from the date on which the subscription was due for payment.

# Billericay Mayflower Bridge Club



5.11. A former member of the Club who wishes to re-join as a member may do so without the necessity for a further formal application for membership, unless the Committee decides otherwise.

5.12. Members of the Club are automatically enrolled as members of the English Bridge Union and shall abide by its Bye Laws.

## 6. OFFICERS

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6.1. The Officers of the Club shall be the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

6.2. No member of the Club shall simultaneously hold more than one Office of the Club.

6.3. Each of the Officers of the Club shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Club, and shall retire annually at the ensuing Annual General Meeting, but shall be eligible for re-election.

6.4. In the event of a vacancy arising during the year in the office of any Officer of the Club, the Committee shall choose one of their numbers to fill such vacancy until the ensuing Annual General Meeting.

## 7. COMMITTEE

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7.1. The Committee of the Club shall consist of the Officers of the Club, together with two other members of the Club, who shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Club. The Committee shall retire annually at the ensuing Annual General Meeting, but shall be eligible for re-election.

7.2. The Committee may from time to time co-opt further members of the Club to serve on the Committee until the ensuing Annual General Meeting, whether to fill a vacancy arising, or as additional members, except that the total number of members of the Committee (including Officers) shall at no time exceed ten. Co-opted members shall be entitled to participate fully in the proceedings of the Committee.

7.4. The Committee shall be meet at least twice per year, presence electronically (visually and audibly) being acceptable.

7.3. A quorum at meetings of the Committee shall be three members of the Committee, including at least one of the Officers.

7.4. The Committee may from time to time appoint sub-committees to undertake on its behalf such aspects of the administration of the Club as it shall think fit, and members of such sub-committees may include members of the Club who are not members of the Committee.

7.5. Proceedings of the Committee and of any sub-committees shall be regulated in such manner as the Committee may from time to time decide.

7.6. The Committee shall make a report to each Annual General Meeting of the Club concerning the affairs of the Club since the previous Annual General Meeting.

## 8. MANAGEMENT

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8.1 The affairs of the Club shall be managed by the Committee, and the Committee shall have power to determine any issue arising in connection with the affairs of the Club which is not specifically provided for in this Constitution.

8.2 The Committee may from time to time formulate and publish such rules as it thinks



expedient for the efficient and harmonious running of the Club (but in the case of any conflict between such rules and this Constitution, the Constitution shall prevail).

8.3. Any policy determined by the Committee or any rules published by the Committee may be varied by a Resolution of members at a General Meeting of the Club, provided that such Resolution is not in conflict with this Constitution and is not retrospective in application.

8.4. In the event of such Resolution being passed at a General Meeting, the policy or rules (as the case may be) shall not be further varied by the Committee in a manner inconsistent with the Resolution.

8.5. Rules and policies that affect the members' day to day use of the club facilities shall be made known to all members by suitable means that may include publication on the Club's website pages.

## **9. GENERAL MEETINGS**

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9.1. An Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Club shall be held in each year no later than four months after the end of the financial year.

9.2. A Special General Meeting of the Club shall be convened by the Committee if a request for such a meeting signed by at least ten members of the Club is delivered to the Secretary, stating the reason for the meeting, and such meeting shall take place within one month of the receipt of such request.

9.3. A Special General Meeting of the Club may be convened by the Committee on its own initiative at any time.

9.4. All General Meetings of the Club shall be held at the headquarters of the Club unless circumstances arise which render this impracticable.

9.5. The Chair, if present, shall chair all General Meetings of the Club, and in his/her absence some other member of the Committee, approved by a majority of those present at the Meeting shall chair the meeting.

9.6. Notice of all General Meetings of the Club shall be given to all members of the Club no later than two weeks prior to the date fixed for the Meeting.

9.7. Any member may propose a Resolution to be discussed at a General Meeting provided that written notice of the proposed Resolution is delivered to the Secretary no later than one week prior to the date fixed for the meeting. Each Resolution shall have a proposer and seconder, both being full members of the Club.

9.8. The chairman of the meeting may permit discussion of other business at a General Meeting if he thinks fit.

9.9. A quorum at General Meetings of the Club shall be ten full members present in person.

9.10. If fifteen minutes after the time fixed for a General Meeting of the Club no quorum shall be present, the meeting shall be adjourned to a new date. A meeting may also be adjourned to a new date if, in the opinion of the chair of the meeting, there are circumstances that have arisen that makes the continuation of the meeting unsuitable. The notice for a replacement meeting shall be the same as was required for the meeting which has been adjourned.

9.11. Voting at General Meetings of the Club shall be by show of hands, and in the event of parity of voting the chair of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.



## 10. NOTICES

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10.1. Notices of any General Meeting of the Club shall be given to members by post or email and shall be posted on the Club's website.

10.2. Notices of any other matters to be brought to the attention of members shall be made by post or email.

## 11. NOMINATIONS

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11.1. Nominations for the posts of Officers or Committee members shall be in writing, and shall be signed by a proposer and a seconder, both of whom shall be full members of the Club, and also by the person nominated.

11.2. Nominations must reach the Secretary no later than two weeks prior to the date fixed for the Annual General Meeting.

## 12. SUBSCRIPTIONS and FEES

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12.1. Each member of the Club shall pay an annual subscription, the amount of which shall be decided at the AGM of the Club. Subscriptions shall be due on 1<sup>st</sup> April in respect for the year following. Unless the Committee decides otherwise, any member whose subscription remains unpaid after the due date shall pay table money at the rate applicable to visitors until his subscription has been paid in full.

12.2. Each member of the Club, and each guest and visitor, shall pay table money on each occasion when he/she plays at the Club, the amounts of which having been decided at the AGM.

12.3. The Committee shall have the power to increase Subscription and Fees for a period of up to 2 months prior to the AGM subject to ratification at the AGM.

12.4. The Committee may vary or waive subscriptions or table money in the event of hardship or for any other good reason.

12.5. The Committee may determine from time to time the amount of fees to be charged for use of the premises or equipment of the Club, or for any other purpose for which it is of the opinion that fees ought to be charged.

## 13. ACCOUNTS

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13.1. The Committee shall arrange for accounts to be prepared in respect of the financial affairs of the Club for each year ending on 31<sup>st</sup> December.

13.2. Accounts shall be examined by a person who shall not be a Committee member and who shall state that the accounts are in order. If the Examiner finds the accounts not to be in order, they shall be returned to Committee for amendment as necessary.

13.3. The accounts for each year, when examined and agreed, shall be presented to the Annual General Meeting of the Club for approval.



## 14. GUESTS and VISITORS

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14.1. Any member may invite a guest to play at the club at any time, but in the event of the playing facilities being inadequate to accommodate all those who wish to play, priority shall be given to members.

14.2. The Committee may from time to time place a limit on the number of occasions on which a non-member (whether a guest or a visitor) may play at the club without being required to apply for membership.

14.3. A non-member who has applied for membership shall (subject to available playing facilities) be permitted to play at the Club until his application for membership has been considered by the Committee, even if the limit imposed by the Committee under 14.2 is thereby exceeded.

## 15. MEMBERS' BEHAVIOUR

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15.1. Each member of the Club shall be required in connection with the game of Duplicate Contract Bridge, to conform to the standards of fair play, courtesy and personal deportment prescribed by the Bye Laws and regulations for the time being issued by the EBU.

15.2. The Club shall have the powers for the enforcement of the requirement in clause 15.1. as set out in the Schedule of Disciplinary Procedures annexed to this Constitution. The Schedule shall be subject to the same provisions of the Constitution for its amendment.

15.3. Any member, guest or visitor may make a complaint regarding a member's behaviour or bridge play. This shall be by post or email to the Secretary or Chairman.

## 16. ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

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16.1. No alterations shall be made to this Constitution except by Resolution at a General Meeting of the Club.

16.2. In order for a Resolution to alter this Constitution to have effect, at least two-thirds of the votes cast on the Resolution must be in favour.

## 17. WINDING-UP

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17.1. In order for a Resolution that the Club shall be wound up to have effect at least two-thirds of the votes cast on the Resolution must be in favour, and in addition the number of votes cast in favour of the Resolution must exceed one-half of the number of full members of the Club entitled to attend and vote at the General Meeting at which the Resolution is put.

17.2. If a Resolution that the Club shall be wound up is effectively passed, the Committee shall be responsible for winding up the affairs of the Club, and unless the winding up has been initiated with a view to amalgamating the Club with some other club (in which case any surplus assets and funds may be transferred to such other club), any surplus assets and funds shall be transferred to the remaining members.



## ANNEX

### SCHEDULE OF DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

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#### **1. Requirements of the Schedule**

This Schedule is referred to under clause 15.2 of the Constitution of the Billerica Mayflower Bridge Club (hereafter referred to as the Club) and prescribes the powers and procedures for enforcement. It will comply with and follow the EBU disciplinary procedures and any variations thereof that are made from time to time. The Club shall act through its Conduct and Disciplinary Committees for the enforcement of standards prescribed in Clause 15 of the Constitution. The Club shall have additional powers as set out in the clauses below.

#### **2. Receipt of allegation**

Any person making a complaint against one or more members of the Club under the terms of Clause 15.3 of the Constitution must do so in writing to the Secretary or the Chairman of the Club. Normally no action will be taken in respect of a complaint relating to an alleged offence which occurred three months or more prior to a formal complaint in writing made.

#### **3. Conduct Committee**

The Committee of the Club shall appoint a Conduct Committee through its powers to appoint sub-committees under Clause 7.4 of the Constitution. The Conduct Committee shall be responsible for investigating complaints against the Club's members and to determine whether a disciplinary offence should be referred to the Club's Disciplinary Committee.

The Conduct Committee shall consist of no fewer than three members of the Club and no more than five. A quorum for any meeting shall be three of its members. It shall act by simple majority vote. Its appointed chair, or whomsoever in his/her absence the Conduct Committee shall select to chair its meeting, shall have a second, or casting vote in the event that there is parity of voting.

#### **4. Disciplinary Committee**

The Committee of the Club shall appoint a Disciplinary Committee through its powers to appoint sub-committees under Clause 7.4 of the Constitution. The Disciplinary Committee shall, determine sanctions for offences admitted by the defendant, confirm whether a disciplinary offence, referred from the Conduct Committee, has occurred and determine appropriate sanctions.

The Disciplinary Committee shall consist of no fewer than three members of the Club and no more than five. At least three of its members must be present when it makes a decision to impose sanctions on the offending member. It shall act by simple majority vote. Its appointed chairman, or whomsoever in his/her absence the Disciplinary Committee shall select to chair its meeting, shall have a second, or casting vote in the event that there is parity of voting.

#### **5. Conflicts of Interest and Independence of the Conduct and Disciplinary Committees**

Any member of either the Conduct or Disciplinary Committee who is in any way personally involved in the allegations within a complaint will be disqualified from participating in either Committee that is handling the complaint.

A member of the Club cannot be a member of both the Conduct and Disciplinary Committees.

#### **6. The Complaints Process**



## 6.1. Notice of Meetings

Subject to the provisions of Clause 2 hereof, where a written complaint is made, or a matter otherwise comes to the attention of the Conduct Committee, it shall first consider whether such complaint or matter falls within the scope of the Disciplinary Rules and whether further action is warranted. If it does, the Conduct Committee secretary shall first write to the Defendant, seeking the Defendant's comments on the substance of the complaint or matter that has been raised. The Conduct Committee shall also be entitled to make such further investigations and enquiries as it in its absolute discretion considers appropriate. The Conduct Committee shall also be entitled to seek advice both from within the Club and from the EBU Laws and Ethics Committee, and to obtain external legal advice.

## 6.2. Complaint not justified

If the Conduct Committee decides that the complaint is not justified, all parties shall be notified and the matter ended.

## 6.3. Complaint justified

If the Conduct Committee decides that the complaint is justified, it may, in its absolute discretion, offer a verbal caution to the offending member, which if accepted, ends the matter. If the caution is not accepted by the offending member, or the Conduct Committee does not feel a caution is appropriate, it shall refer the case to a hearing of the Disciplinary Committee. The Defendant shall be notified in writing within two weeks of this decision and of his/her right to make a written submission to the Disciplinary Committee and to attend the hearing. The Defendant shall have the right to be represented by legal counsel of his/her choice or may be accompanied by a person to speak on his/her behalf. The Disciplinary Committee shall give at least two weeks notice of the hearing to the Defendant.

## 6.4. Disciplinary Committee's Sanctions

If after the hearing the complaint is upheld, the Disciplinary Committee may in its absolute discretion:

- (a) Give a written reprimand to the offending member(s), or
- (b) Suspend the offending member(s) from all or some of the competitions arranged or sponsored by the Club for such period as it shall determine.
- (c) Expel the offending member(s) from the Club.

If the complaint is against a member of the Committee, then in addition to any other sanctions applied, the Disciplinary Committee shall have the power to suspend such member from the Club's Committee and any of its sub-committees for such a period that it shall determine.

Any sanctions imposed by the Disciplinary Committee must be communicated to the offending member(s) in writing within twenty one days of the hearing.

Any Sanction imposed by the Disciplinary Committee shall take effect as soon as time for appeal has elapsed except that if the Defendant has filed Notice of Appeal within the time allowed, the Sanction shall not take effect until such Appeal has been determined.

## 6.5. Appeal

Every Defendant found guilty of an offence by the Disciplinary Committee has the right to appeal to the Essex County Bridge Association's Disciplinary Committee. Appeals must be in writing and lodged with the Secretary of the Association within twenty one days of the written communication of the Club's Disciplinary Committee's decision to the Defendant.





## **6.6. Referral to the EBU Laws & Ethics Committee**

At any time the County Disciplinary Committee may refer a complaint to the EBU Laws & Ethics Committee for its consideration. In doing so the County Disciplinary Committee shall have fully discharged its responsibilities under this Schedule.