BOSTON BRIDGE CLUB CONSTITUTION

January 2026

1. NAME

The Club shall be called Boston Bridge Club.

2. OBJECTIVES

The objective of the Club shall be to provide facilities for its members for playing Duplicate Contract Bridge. It will also provide facilities for less experienced players and beginners to learn to play the game in a friendly and supportive atmosphere. Teaching courses will be run for different levels of abilities. We will look to extend this to attract younger players to the game.

3. HEADQUARTERS

The headquarters of the Club shall be situated at the Boston Tennis Club, 125 Sleaford Road, Boston, PE21 8EY.

4. AFFILIATIONS

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

5. MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall be open to:

5.1 All bridge players and those wishing to learn to play who are over the age of eighteen years will be entitled to apply for full or part membership of the Club. Full membership entitles the member to play in three sessions a week which currently are Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. Part membership entitles the member to play one session a week. Those who are part members cannot “carry over“ into the next week. Forms for full or part membership are available from the Secretary. Full or part members can vote at Meetings.

5.2 Players under the age of eighteen years will be entitled to apply for Youth membership paying half full subscription. Such members are not entitled to vote at Meetings of the Club and cannot be Trustees of the Club.

5.3 All members and non-members who pay as they play are deemed to have accepted the regulations of this constitution and the rules and codes of conduct adopted by the Club.

5.4 The Chair and Secretary will keep a register of members which will include details of their names, addresses and contact details. Details will be held on our secure website. This will be in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

5.5 A person shall cease to be a member of the club immediately if expelled from the club under the provisions of clause 15, or if his/her resignation in writing is delivered to the Secretary.

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

5.7. A person whose subscription (i.e. the amount paid annually) has not been paid shall cease to be a member on the expiration of the period four weeks from the date on which the subscription was due for payment.

5.8 New members who join during the year will pay a 3, 6 or 9 month subscription pro rata rate of the current membership fee.

5.9. Only members are eligible to receive trophies or prizes. The exception to this being in a teams match when at least 2 of the team are members where a trophy is being presented.

5.10 The club will not confer Honorary Life Membership.

6. OFFICERS

6.1 The Officers of the Club shall be the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. Non officer posts of Competition Secretary, County Representative and Webmaster will also be designated.

6.2 No member of the Club shall simultaneously hold more than one Officer of the Club post, except in exceptional circumstances. An officer may hold a non officer post in addition to that of Officer.

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 number to fill such vacancy until the ensuing Annual General Meeting.

7. COMMITTEE

7.1 The Committee of the Club shall consist of the Officers of the Club, together with up to six other members of the Club, who 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.

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.

7.3 A quorum at meetings of the Committee (referred to as General meetings) shall be four 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. Committee members should in general withdraw from participation in decisions where they may have a conflict of interest.

7.6 The Chair 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

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. This will include all matters related to the Covid pandemic and subsequent Government guidance.

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). The exception being Health and Safety issues related to Covid pandemic.

8.3 Any issue of 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 variation being made, the policy or rules (as the case may be) shall not be further varied by the Committee in a manner inconsistent with the resolution.

9. MEETINGS

9.1 There will be three types of meetings: those of the committee will be referred to as General Meetings (at least three per annum), the Annual General Meeting (annually) and a Special General Meeting. Minutes of AGM and SGM meetings will be available to the members on the membership page of the website.

9.2 An Annual General Meeting of the Club shall be held in each year as soon as possible after the end of the financial year currently December 31st. The exception to this will be where there is Government rulings/ guidance which prohibit such meetings.

9.3 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 or a quarter of the membership 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.

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

9.5 All Annual and Special General Meetings of the Club shall be held at the headquarters of the Club unless circumstances arise which render this impracticable.

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

9.7 Notice of all Annual and Special 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.

9.8 Any member may propose a motion to be discussed at a Meeting provided that written notice of the proposed motion is delivered to the Secretary no later than one week prior to the date fixed for the meeting.

9.9 The Chairperson of the meeting may permit discussion of other business at an Annual General Meeting if she/he thinks fit.

9.10 A quorum at an Annual or Special General Meeting of the Club shall be ten members present in person.

9.11 If fifteen minutes after the time fixed for an Annual or Special General Meeting of the Club no quorum shall be present, the meeting shall be adjourned to a new date (of which the like notice shall be given to members as was required to be given for the meeting which has been adjourned), and in the case of an Annual or Special General Meeting which has been adjourned due to the lack of a quorum (but not of a meeting adjourned for any other reason) such number of members as are actually present at the adjourned meeting shall constitute a quorum.

9.12 Voting at an Annual or Special General Meeting of the Club shall be by show of hands or email/postal votes lodged with the Secretary, and in the event of parity of voting the Chairperson of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote. A total of 52% of the votes casts is required for a motion to be carried. The exception to this is changes to the constitution (16.2)

10. NOTICES

10.1 Notices of any Special General Meeting of the Club, and of an Annual General Meeting at which in the opinion of the Committee any business of a non-routine nature is likely to be discussed, shall be given to members by email or post by to the last address of each member notified to the Secretary.

10.2 Notices of any Annual General Meeting at which in the opinion of the Committee no business of a non-routine nature is likely to be discussed, may be given to members either by email or post to the last address of each member notified to the Secretary, and by displaying a notice in a prominent position at the headquarters of the Club.

10.3 Notices of any other matters to be brought to the attention of members shall be made by displaying a notice in a prominent position at the headquarters of the Club and on the webpage in the members section.

11. NOMINATIONS

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 members of the Club, and also by the person nominated.

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

12. SUBSCRIPTION AND FEES

12.1 Each member of the Club shall pay a full or part annual subscription, the basic amount of which for the time being shall be decided at the Annual General Meeting of the Club. Subscriptions shall be due for payment within four weeks of the AGM/SGM in each year in respect of the year to the following December 31st. 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. They may join and pay the pro rata rate during the year.

12.2 People who join the Club part way through the financial year January to December will pay pro rata to the nearest 3 month period, e.g. If joining in April, May or June will be three quarters of the subscription fee; if joining in July, August or September will be half the subscription fee or if joining October onwards it will be a quarter of the subscription fee.

Refunds for people leaving will be at the discretion of the committee and will also be pro rata.

12.3 Each guest and visitor, shall pay table money on each occasion when they play at the Club, the basic amounts of which for the time being shall be decided at the Annual General Meeting of the Club. A record will be kept of such payments for 3 months. Youth visitors will pay half of this amount.

12.4 The Committee may determine variations on the basic amounts of subscriptions and table money for members, guests and visitors in different circumstances, and may waive subscriptions or table money in the event of hardship or for any other good cause.

12.5 The Annual General Meeting may authorise the Committee to increase the basic amounts of subscriptions and table money prior to the ensuing Annual General Meeting.

12.6 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

13.1 The Treasurer shall arrange for accounts to be prepared in respect of the financial affairs of the Club for each year ending on December 31st. The accounts will be audited before submission to AGM.

13.2 The accounts for each year shall be presented to the Annual General Meeting of the Club for approval. They will be available to members on the membership page of the website.

13.3 The Chair, Secretary and Treasurer will have access to the online banking account.

14. GUESTS AND VISITORS

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 Visitors may be permitted 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 and the guests of members.

15. MEMBERS' BEHAVIOUR

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 of the EBU. This includes the fundamental principal set out in the EBU's 'Best Behaviour at Bridge' (details on EBU webpage)

15.2 The Club shall have the powers and the procedures for the enforcement of the requirement in clause 15.1. They are set out in the Schedule of the Constitution, and shall stand as part of the Constitution and be subject to the same provisions of the Constitution for its amendment.

16. ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

16.1 No alterations shall be made to this constitution except at an Annual General Meeting or Special 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

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 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 current membership.

Schedule of Disciplinary Procedures

1. Requirements of the Schedule

This Schedule is referred to under clause 5.5 of the Constitution of the Boston 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 15.1 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 15.1 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 to the appropriate officer.

3. Conduct Committee

The Committee of the Club shall appoint its 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 and its appointed chairperson, 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 the 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, hear charges of offences and determine whether those charges are proved and if proved, to determine the sanction imposed. 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 uphold a complaint and impose sanctions on the offending member. It shall act by simple majority vote and its appointed chairperson, 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's handling of 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 6 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 by the Disciplinary Committee. The Defendant shall be notified, in writing, within two weeks of this decision and of his 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 choice or may be accompanied by a person to speak on his 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 sponsored or licensed 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 Club Disciplinary Committee has the right to appeal to the County Disciplinary Committee[1]. 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.