

CONSTITUTION OF THE CHELMSFORD BRIDGE CLUB

1. NAME

The Club shall be called "Chelmsford Bridge Club".

2. OBJECTS

The object of the Club shall be to promote interest in and to provide facilities for its members for playing Duplicate Contract Bridge

3. HEADQUARTERS

The headquarters of the Club shall be situated at Falcon Bowls Club, Channels Drive, Chelmsford, CM3 3FB, or any other premises as decided by the committee.

4. AFFILIATIONS

The Club will be affiliated to the Essex Contract Bridge Association and to the English Bridge Union.

5. MEMBERSHIP

5.1 Membership shall be open to bridge players accepted by the committee.

5.2 Any person wishing to become a member of the Club shall apply for membership by completing an application form provided by the Committee.

5.3 All bridge players who are over the age of eighteen years will be entitled to apply for full membership of the Club.

5.4 Players under the age of eighteen years will be entitled to apply for Junior membership. Such members are not entitled to vote at general meetings of the Club.

5.5 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 regulations 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. Members shall notify the secretary of any change in their contact details.

5.8 A member shall cease to be a member of the club immediately if expelled from the club under the provisions of paragraph 15, or if his resignation in writing is delivered to the Secretary.

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

5.10 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.

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

6. OFFICERS

6.1 The Officers of the Club shall be the Chairman, 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 and Committee Members 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 and a Tournament Secretary, Technical Director, Web Master and Records Officer, 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. It is recommended that each of these responsibilities should have a deputy who is not necessarily a Committee Member. Officers of the Committee may hold any of these posts.
- 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 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

- 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 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. GENERAL MEETINGS

- 9.1. An Annual General Meeting 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 Chairman, if present, shall chair all General Meetings of the Club, and in his 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 motion to be discussed at a General 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.

9.8 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 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 (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 a 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.

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

10. NOTICES

10.1 Notices of any Special General Meeting of the Club, and of an Annual General Meeting shall be given to members by post or by e mail to the last address of each member notified to the Secretary.

10.2 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.

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. SUBSCRIPTIONS and FEES

12.1 Each member of the Club shall pay an 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 by September 1st in each year in respect of the year to the following August 31st. Unless the Committee decides otherwise, any member whose subscription remains unpaid one month 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 playing at the Club, the basic amounts of which for the time being shall be decided at the Annual General Meeting of the Club. The Committee may change the basic amount of table money should the need arise.

12.3 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.

12.4 The Committee may determine from time to time the amount of fees to be charged for use of the equipment of the Club.

13. ACCOUNTS

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 March 31st.

13.2 The accounts for each year shall be presented to the Annual General Meeting of the Club for approval.

14. GUESTS and VISITORS

14.1 Any member may invite a guest to play at the club and visitors may be permitted to play at the club the discretion of the Committee, but in the event of the playing facilities being inadequate to accommodate all those who wish to play, priority shall be given in the order members, guests and visitors.

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. If such a limit is for the time being in force, 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 is thereby exceeded.

15. MEMBERS' BEHAVIOUR

15.1. Each member of the Club shall be required, whether at or away from the bridge table, 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, including the fundamental principle set out in the EBU's "Best Behaviour at Bridge".

15.2. The Club shall have the powers and procedures to enforce of the requirement in clause 15.1. A Club Referee shall be elected annually to deal with disciplinary problems should they arise. The Club Referee does not need to be a member of the Committee. In the first instant, if a written complaint is received, the Club Referee should speak to both parties concerned to try to resolve the issue in an amicable manner. If this fails the Club Referee will follow the rules as laid down in the EBU's Schedule of Disciplinary Procedures in their example Club Constitution and will be responsible for selecting a Conduct Committee and a Disciplinary Committee should the need for them arise.

16. ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

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

16.2. Proposals to change the Constitution shall be supported by at least three members and submitted to the Secretary at least three weeks before the date of a General Meeting.

16.3. 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 such of the organisations mentioned in clause 17.3 as may be specified in the resolution initiating the winding up, and if no such organisation is so specified, to such of those organisations as the Committee may think fit.

17.3 The organisations referred to in clause 17.2 are

English Bridge Education and Development, registered charity 1153543

The Essex Contract Bridge Association;

and any Registered or recognised charitable body.

Appendix

Schedule of Disciplinary Procedures

1. Requirements of the Schedule

This Schedule is referred to under clause 15.2 of the Constitution of the Chelmsford 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 or by email to the Secretary or the Chairman of the Club. Normally no action will be taken in respect of a verbal complaint or one 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 chairman, or whomsoever in his 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 chairman, or whomsoever in his 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 Committee

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 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. 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.