

THE WALTHAM FOREST BRIDGE CLUB CONSTITUTION

1. NAME AND OWNERSHIP

The Club shall be called the Waltham Forest Bridge Club and the proprietors shall be the members for the time being.

2. OBJECTS AND POWERS

The object of the Club shall be to provide facilities for its members for playing Duplicate Contract Bridge.

It shall have the power to acquire or rent premises, furniture, books, stationery and other equipment and the right to publish and advertise anything to promote Bridge or the Club and the power to sell and or provide refreshment on the Club's premises, the power to employ and remunerate any persons for services to the Club and the power to run teaching courses and organise any social function for its members and visitors. It shall have the power to award such prizes to its members and visitors as the Committee shall determine. The Club should aim to be non-profit-making with any surplus funds used for reinvestment in the Club's facilities and equipment.

3. HEADQUARTERS

The headquarters of the Club shall be such venues as may currently be arranged.

4. AFFILIATIONS

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

5. MEMBERSHIP

5.1. Membership of the club shall be open to anyone interested in playing Contract Bridge regardless of sex, age, disability, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, religion or other beliefs.

The club may have different classes of membership and subscriptions on a non-discriminatory and fair basis. The club will keep subscriptions at levels that will not pose a significant obstacle to people participating.

5.2. In considering applications for membership the Committee will consider the standard of play and behaviour at the table, as defined by the English Bridge Union 'Best Behaviour at Bridge policy'.

5.3. The Committee shall however review all applications for membership at each of their Meetings to ensure that the criteria in Clauses 5.1 and 5.2 have been complied with.

5.4. In declining an application the Committee may give a reason but shall not be obliged to do so. If an applicant is unable to obtain the required confirmations under clause 5.3, the committee can determine that the applicant shall not be permitted to play at the Club even as a visitor.

5.5. 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.

5.7. A member shall cease to be a member of the club immediately if expelled from the club under the provisions of clause 13.3, or if his/ her resignation in writing is delivered to the Secretary.

5.8. A member whose annual 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

5.9. 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.

5.10. At all events organised by the Club, members shall conform to the acceptable standard of play (as defined by the Committee from time to time) and behaviour at the table (as defined by the English Bridge Union in its "Best Behaviour at Bridge" policy). Any members wishing to object to a member's standard of play or behaviour shall follow the complaints procedure in clauses 13.1-13.9 of this constitution.

5.11. The Committee may designate certain members as Life Members, subject to the approval of the members at the next Annual General Meeting of the Club. Such Life Members will be absolved from paying annual subscriptions.

6. OFFICERS

6.1. The Officers of the Club shall be the Chairman, Secretary, Vice Chairman, and Treasurer all of whom shall be members of the club.

6.2. Nominations for the posts of Officers 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 and posted on the Committee Notice-board by the Secretary.

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 any paid up member to fill such vacancy until the ensuing Annual General Meeting. Persons fulfilling such a vacancy shall not have a vote on the Committee.

7. COMMITTEE

7.1. The Committee of the Club shall consist of the Officers of the Club, together with up to four 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 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 but have no vote. In addition, the Committee may delegate certain tasks to club members with their agreement.

7.3. A quorum at meetings of the Committee shall be three members of the Committee.

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

7.5. Subject to Clauses 7.5a -7.5d below, the proceedings of the Committee and of any subcommittees 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, or seem to have, a conflict of interest.

7.5a The Secretary shall keep minutes of all meeting of the Committee and subcommittees.

7.5b The Committee may direct the Secretary to mark as "Restricted Business" any part of the minutes that should not be made public for any reason.

7.5c The Secretary shall circulate draft minutes including Restricted Business items to the other members of the Committee for approval and action as soon as practical after the end of the relevant meeting.

7.5d On receiving the approval of the Committee that the minutes represent an accurate record of the proceedings at the meeting, the Secretary shall distribute the minutes (excluding any Restricted Business items) as soon as practical to the Club members by email or by any other similar electronic means and shall make these minutes available to members on the Club's website and at the Club Premises.

7.6. The Committee shall make reports 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 Club financial year (which is August to July).

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/ her absence some other member of the Committee shall chair the meeting.

9.6. Notice of the date of any General Meeting of the Club shall be given or sent to all members of the Club no later than 21 days prior to the date fixed for the meeting, by hand, by email or by other similar electronic means. This Notice shall include an explanation of the right of members to propose motions under clause 9.7 below.

9.6a The Agenda for the General Meeting together with copies of any reports, accounts or resolutions that will be considered at that meeting shall be given or sent to all members of the Club no later than 7 days prior to the date fixed for the meeting by hand, by post, by email or by other electronic means to the last address notified by the member to the Secretary.

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 by the start of the meeting.

9.8. The business of the Annual General Meeting shall be as follows:-

- a. To approve the minutes of the previous General Meeting.
- b. To receive and approve the Report of the Committee prepared under clause 7.6 above.
- c. To receive and approve the Accounts and Treasurers Report prepared under clause 11.3 below
- d. To elect the Officers of the Club in clause 6.4 above.
- e. To determine the annual subscription for the purpose of clause 10.1 below
- f. To consider any members motions submitted in accordance with clause 9.7 above.
- g. To discuss any other business at unless the Chairman decrees the item should have been included as a member's motion under clause 9.7 above.

9.9. A quorum at General Meetings of the Club shall be either ten paid up members or 10% of the paid-up members, whichever is the smaller, 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 (for a which a similar 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 normally be by show of hands, with the Chairman not having a vote except in the case of a tie in the voting when the chairman shall have a casting vote.

10. SUBSCRIPTIONS and FEES

10.1. 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. Annual Subscriptions shall be paid before the 1st February in the following year. Any person whose annual subscription remains unpaid after the 1st February in the following year shall (in accordance with clause 5.8 above) no longer be considered a member of the Club and shall therefore pay table money at the rate applicable to visitors. Such members may re-join the club (without the need to pay any joining fee) by paying their subscription in full for the year that they wish to re-join unless the Committee decides otherwise.

10.2. Each member of the Club, and each visitor, shall pay table money on each occasion when he/she plays at the Club, the basic amounts of which for the time being shall be decided by the Committee of the Club.

10.3. The Committee may determine variations on the basic amounts of subscriptions (e.g. pro rata subscriptions) and table money for members and visitors.

11. ACCOUNTS

11.1. The Committee shall arrange for independently scrutinised accounts to be prepared in respect of the financial affairs of the Club for each year ending on 31st July.

11.2. The Committee shall set the terms and conditions for the employment of the Scrutineer.

11.3. The accounts shall comprise an Income and Expenditure Account, Balance Sheet, Scrutineer's Report and together with a report from the Treasurer highlighting any relevant financial information for the year or the future shall be presented to the Annual General Meeting of the Club for approval. A copy of the last approved accounts shall be available to members on the Club's Web site and at the Club Premises.

12. VISITORS

12.1. 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 on a "first come first served" basis whether they are members or visitors.

12.2. The Committee may from time to time place a limit on the number of occasions on which a non-member may play at the club without being required to apply for membership.

13. CONDUCT

13.1. In the event of a complaint being made to the Committee about the conduct of a member of the Club, the Committee may (and if a written complaint is received signed by at least three members of the Club, it shall) investigate the complaint. Committee members should in general withdraw from participation in decisions where they may have, or appear to have, a conflict of interest.

13.2. On investigating such a complaint the Committee shall give the member about whose conduct the complaint has been made an opportunity to be heard and put forward evidence in their defence (this includes witnesses if appropriate). If a live Hearing takes place the member may be accompanied by a friend or representative who need not be a member of the club. Additionally, the member has the right to have questions put to the complainant and supporting witnesses (if any) by the Committee.

13.3. If on investigating such a complaint the Committee is of the opinion that the member has behaved in an unacceptable manner or in such a manner as to cause injury to the interests of the Club, then the Committee may reprimand the member, suspend the member from the privileges of membership for such period as it may think fit, or expel the member from the Club. Suspended or expelled members may not play at the Club during such periods or suspension or expulsion even as a visitor.

13.4. The Committee shall forthwith notify the member of any decision made on the investigation of a complaint about his/ her conduct, and may if it thinks fit publicise the decision by displaying a notice at the headquarters of the Club.

13.5. An appeal shall lie to a Special General Meeting of the Club against any decision to reprimand, suspend or expel a member of the Club following the investigation of a complaint about his/her conduct.

13.6. Notice of such an appeal must be in writing, and delivered to the Secretary within two weeks of the notification to the member of the decision of the Committee.

13.7. In the event of an appeal being made against it, the decision of the Committee shall not be put into effect until the appeal has been determined.

13.8. On the appeal being heard by a Special General Meeting of the Club, the Special General Meeting shall have power to overrule the conclusion of the Committee, or to uphold it, in which event the sanction imposed by the Committee may be confirmed or varied (to any sanction which the Committee was empowered to impose, or to none).

13.9. Nothing in this Constitution shall preclude the Committee from referring a matter of conduct to the Committee of the Essex County Bridge Association, or to the Laws & Ethics Committee of the English Bridge Union if it considers it appropriate to do so.

14. ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

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

14.2. In order for a resolution to alter this constitution to take effect at least two-thirds of the votes cast on the resolution must be in favour.

15. WINDING UP

15.1. 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.

15.2. 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.

15.3. 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 shared equally among the paid up members of at least two continuous years standing to the 1st August prior to the winding up.

Adopted by the members of the Club at the Special General Meeting on 1st June 2015.