

**STOCKTON BRIDGE CLUB
CONSTITUTION
January 2012**

1. NAME

The Club is called Stockton Bridge Club (hereinafter identified as SBC)

2. OBJECTS

The object of the Club is to provide facilities for its members for playing Duplicate Contract Bridge and promote the development and playing of Contract Bridge.

3. HEADQUARTERS

The headquarters of the Club shall be that playing venue chosen by the members at a General Meeting.

4. AFFILIATIONS

The Club shall be affiliated to the North Eastern Bridge Association and to the English Bridge Union.

5. MEMBERSHIP

5.1. Membership shall be open to anyone wishing to play or learn contract bridge unless their application has been refused under the provisions of clause 5.3 of this Constitution or they are a previous SBC Member expelled under the provisions of clause 15.2 of this Constitution.

5.2. A person shall apply to become a member of SBC by the payment of the agreed SBC annual subscription together with any joining fee as provided for in clause 12.3 of this Constitution to the Treasurer and providing the SBC Secretary with full details of their postal address and all other relevant contact details.

If no objections to the proposed membership are received by the SBC Secretary within 3 months of the receipt of the membership application the applicant shall become a full member of SBC

5.3. Any member(s) wishing to object to an application for membership shall notify the SBC Secretary in writing within 2 months of the application. The Committee shall as soon as is practicable consider the objection, and promptly inform both the applicant and objector of the decision.

5.4 In the event of the Committee deciding to refuse an application the Committee may, at its discretion, provide the unsuccessful applicant with written reasons for its decision; however the Committee shall not be obliged to do so.

In the event of the Committee deciding to refuse a membership application all those monies paid by the applicant as per 5.2 of this Constitution shall be returned to the applicant by the SBC Treasurer.

- 5.5. The Committee shall refuse any application should the Committee consider there are insufficient facilities to accommodate an increased SBC membership.
- 5.6. Notwithstanding the right of any appeal as per the provisions of the SBC Schedule of Disciplinary Procedures which form part of this Constitution a member shall immediately cease to be a member of SBC should they be expelled from SBC under the provisions of clause 15.2 of this Constitution
- 5.7 In the event of a member seeking to resign from SBC their membership of SBC shall immediately cease when that members resignation is received by the SBC Secretary in writing or by email.
- 5.8 Notwithstanding the right of any appeal as per the provisions of the SBC Schedule of Disciplinary Procedures which form part of this Constitution any member suspended by the Committee shall forfeit all voting rights for the duration of the suspension.
- 5.9. A member shall cease to be a member of SBC should the member fail to pay the agreed SBC subscription fee within 6 months of the due date,
- 5.10 All SBC members shall be automatically enrolled as members of the English Bridge Union (EBU) and the North Eastern Bridge Association (NEBA) unless they make known to the SBC Secretary in writing or by email that they do not wish to be so. In this case they will be considered as 'Guests' for the purpose of Pay to Play or other submissions to the EBU. Members of the EBU and NEBA shall abide by the bye-laws of those organisations.

6. OFFICERS

6.1. The Officers of SBC shall be:

6.1.1 Chairman

6.1.2 Secretary

6.1.3 Treasurer

6.2. No member of SBC shall hold the office of more than one Officer of the Club at the same time.

6.3 The Officers of SBC shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Club, and shall hold office until the next AGM, 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 SBC, the Committee shall choose a replacement to fill such vacancy until the next SBC AGM. The replacement may either be an existing member of the committee or co-opted to the committee according to clause 7.3 of this constitution.

7. COMMITTEE

- 7.1. The Committee of the Club shall be comprised of the three Officers of the Club, together with four to seven members of SBC, who shall be elected at the AGM of SBC to serve for a period of one calendar year.
- 7.2 All Committee members shall retire annually at the following AGM of SBC, but shall be eligible for re-election.
- 7.3 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 A quorum at meetings of the Committee shall be three members of the Committee, including at least one of the Officers.
- 7.5. 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 sub committees may include members of the Club who are not members of the Committee.
- 7.6. **Proceedings** of the Committee and of any sub-committees shall be regulated in such manner as the Committee may from time to time decide.
- 7.7. The Committee shall make a report to each AGM of SBC concerning the affairs of the Club since the previous AGM of SBC.

8. MANAGEMENT

- 8.1. The affairs of SBC shall be managed by the Committee, and the Committee shall have power to determine any issue arising in connection with the affairs of SBC 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 SBC (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 SBC, 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.

8.5 All minutes of SBC Committee meetings shall be made available to all SBC members via display on the SBC club notice board and on the SBC website.

9. GENERAL MEETINGS

9.1. An Annual General Meeting (AGM) of SBC shall be held in each year between 1st and 31st May on a date published in the Club Calendar.

9.2 An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) of SBC 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 calendar month of the receipt of such request.

9.3. An EGM of SBC may be convened by the Committee on its own initiative at any time.

9.4. All General Meetings of SBC shall be held at the headquarters of SBC 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 the Secretary or Treasurer shall chair the meeting.

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

9.7 Any member may propose a motion to be discussed at a General Meeting of SBC provided that notice of the proposed motion is delivered to the Secretary in writing or by email no later than two weeks prior to the date fixed for the meeting.

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

9.9. A quorum at General Meetings of SBC shall be ten members present in person.

9.10 If, fifteen minutes after the time fixed for a General Meeting of SBC, no quorum is achieved, the meeting shall be adjourned to a new date giving all Club members at least 3 weeks' notice of the new date.

9.11 Where a General Meeting which has been adjourned due to the lack of a quorum (but not for any other reason) and subsequently reconvened in accordance with 9.10, those members actually present at the reconvened meeting shall constitute a quorum.

9.12 Voting at any AGM or EGM of SBC shall be by show of hands. Those members who cannot be present at any AGM or EGM of SBC may submit their votes on the motions published in the agenda to the Secretary by email or in writing. Where the committee deems a motion to be particularly important or at the

request of a majority of the members present at the AGM or EGM, the Secretary may be asked to organise a vote by paper and/or email to enable those members not present to vote.

9.13 In the event of the votes for and against a motion being equal the chairman of the meeting shall have a second or casting vote.

9.14 Only members of SBC are entitled to speak or to vote at an AGM or EGM. However, at the discretion of the officer chairing the meeting, a non-member may be invited to speak but not to vote.

9.15 For the purpose of an AGM of SBC the membership shall be those persons who were paid up members at the previous March 31st.

9.16 For the purpose of an EGM of SBC the membership shall be those persons who were paid up members at the end of the month preceding the EGM.

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 post or by email to the last address of each member notified to the Secretary at least three weeks prior to the meeting.

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 post or by e mail to the last address of each member notified to the Secretary at least three weeks prior to the meeting. A notice shall also be displayed on the SBC notice board or in a prominent position at the headquarters of SBC and/or by handouts at a SBC club night.

10.3. Notices of any other matters to be brought to the attention of members shall be made by displaying a notice on the SBC notice board or in a prominent position at the headquarters of the SBC or by email.

11. NOMINATIONS

11.1. All nominations for the posts of Officers or Committee members shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary, and shall be signed by the Proposer, a Seconder and the Nominee, all of whom shall be members of SBC.

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

11.3 In the event of there being no nominations received the current Officers and members of the Committee, including all co-opted members shall with their acceptance remain in office. Where Officers or members are unwilling or

unable to remain in office they shall be replaced as provided for in Clauses 6.4 and 7.2 of this Constitution.

12. SUBSCRIPTIONS and FEES

- 12.1. Each member of the Club shall pay an annual subscription, the amount of which shall be decided at a General Meeting of SBC. Subscriptions shall be due for payment by the end of June in each year in respect of the year to the following March 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 until his subscription has been paid in full.
- 12.2. Each member of the Club, and each guest **or** visitor, shall pay table money on each occasion when he plays at the club, the amount of which shall be decided at a General Meeting of SBC
- 12.3. Successful applicants for membership of SBC may be required to pay a joining fee, the amount (if any) of which for the time being shall be decided at a General Meeting of SBC.
- 12.4 The Committee may determine variations to the level of subscriptions and table money for members, guests or visitors depending on circumstances prevailing; this discretion shall include the right to waive all subscriptions or table money in the event of hardship or good cause.
- 12.5 An AGM or EGM of SBC can confer on the Committee the authority to increase the level of subscriptions and/or table money prior to the next AGM of SBC.
- 12.6 The Committee shall determine the level of fees to be charged for use of the premises or equipment of SBC or for any purpose which the Committee deems fees shall to be charged.

13. ACCOUNTS

- 13.1. The Committee shall arrange for accounts to be prepared and audited in respect of the financial affairs of SBC for each financial year ending on March 31st.
- 13.2. The accounts for each financial year of SBC shall be presented to the AGM of SBC for discussion and approval for the accounts shall be sought.

14. GUESTS and VISITORS

- 14.1. Any member may invite a guest to play at SBC 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 SBC members.

- 14.2. Visitors may be permitted to play at SBC 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 SBC members and the guests of SBC members.
- 14.3. The Committee may at its discretion place a limit on the number of occasions on which a non-member may play at SBC prior to being required to apply for SBC membership.
- 14.4. Any non-member who has applied for SBC membership shall, subject to 14.1 or 14.2 of this Constitution, be permitted to play at SBC until their application for SBC membership has been considered by the Committee irrespective of any limit imposed under the provisions of clause 14.3 of this constitution.

15. MEMBERS' BEHAVIOUR

- 15.1 All members of SBC shall be required to conform to the standards of fair play, courtesy and personal deportment prescribed by the Bye Laws and Regulations of the EBU.
- 15.2 The Committee of SBC shall have the powers and the procedures for the enforcement of the requirement in clause 15.1 of this Constitution including the expulsion from membership of SBC of any member failing to meet these requirements.

These powers and procedures are set out in the SBC Schedule of Disciplinary Procedures that is integral to this Constitution.

16. ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

- 16.1. This Constitution can only be amended at an AGM or EGM of SBC.
- 16.2. Any resolution to amend this constitution shall require a minimum in favour of the resolution of two-thirds of those votes cast.

17. WINDING UP

- 17.1. SBC can only be wound up by a resolution at a AGM or EGM of SBC when a minimum of two thirds of the votes cast are in favour of winding up and where the number of votes cast in favour exceeds one half of the number of those members of SBC entitled to attend and vote at the AGM or EGM of SBC at which the resolution is put.
- 17.2. If a resolution that SBC 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 another club (in which case any surplus assets and funds may be transferred to the amalgamated club), all surplus assets and funds shall normally be distributed in equal shares to those SBC members who have been members for

at least one year at the date of winding up. Alternatively the surplus assets and funds may be donated to other organisations if so decided at the AGM or EMF of SBC at which the resolution is passed.

Stockton Bridge Club

Schedule of Disciplinary Procedures

1.Requirements of the Schedule

This Schedule is referred to under clause 15.of the Constitution of the Stockton Bridge Club (hereafter referred to as SBC) 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 Sub-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 SBC under the terms of clause 15 of the Constitution, must do so in writing to the Secretary or the Chairman of SBC. On receipt of a complaint the Committee will appoint Conduct and Disciplinary Sub-Committees as set out below.

3.Conduct Sub-Committee

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

The Conduct Committee shall consist of no fewer than three members of SBC 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 Sub-Committee.

The Executive Committee of SBC 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 Sub-Committees

No member of SBC who is in any way personally involved in the allegations within a complaint may participate in either Sub-Committee handling of the complaint. A member of SBC cannot be a member of both the Conduct and Disciplinary Sub-Committees.

6.The Complaints Process

6.1. Notice of Meetings.

Where a written complaint is made, or a matter otherwise comes to the attention of the Sub-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 Sub-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 Sub-Committee shall also be entitled to make such further investigations and enquiries as it in its absolute discretion considers appropriate. The Conduct Sub-Committee shall also be entitled to seek advice both from within SBC and from the EBU Laws and Ethics Committee, and to obtain external legal advice.

6.2.Complaint not justified.

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

6.3.Complaint justified

If the Conduct Sub-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 Sub-Committee does not feel a caution is appropriate, it shall refer the case to a hearing by the Disciplinary Sub-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 Sub-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 Sub-Committee shall give at least two weeks notice of the hearing to the Defendant.

6.4.Disciplinary Sub-Committee's Sanctions

If after the hearing the complaint is upheld, the Disciplinary Sub-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 SBC for such period as it shall determine.
- (c) Expel the offending member(s) from SBC.

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

Any sanctions imposed by the Disciplinary Sub-Committee must be communicated to the offending member(s) in writing within twenty one days of the hearing
Any Sanction imposed by the Disciplinary Sub-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 SBC Disciplinary Committee has the right to appeal to the NEBA Disciplinary Committee. Appeals must be in writing and lodged with the Secretary of the NEBA within twenty one days of the written communication of SBC's Disciplinary Sub-Committee's decision to the Defendant.

6.6. Referral to the EBU Laws & Ethics Committee

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