

CONSTITUTION AND RULES

THE WALLINGFORD BRIDGE CLUB

April 2007

1 TITLE

1.1 The name of the Club shall be 'The Wallingford Bridge Club.'

2 AIMS

2.1 The aims of the Club are:

- To provide suitable opportunities for players of all abilities (from Novice to Expert) to play Duplicate Bridge.
- To foster a friendly atmosphere for playing Contract Bridge.
- To promote and further interest in playing Contract Bridge.
- To run Bridge competitions and to participate in external matches and competitions.
- To run charity events from time to time.

3 AFFILIATION

3.1 The Club shall be affiliated to the English Bridge Union.

4 MEMBERSHIP

4.1 The membership of the Club shall be divided into the following classes:-

- **Ordinary Members**, who shall have been elected as such by the Committee in accordance with the rules of the Club.
- **Temporary Members**, those who have been proposed for Ordinary Membership but not yet elected.
- **Student Members**, who have signed up for one of the Clubs officially organised classes.
- **Honorary Life Members**, who are members who have been granted Honorary Life Membership by the Committee in recognition of outstanding service to the Club.

4.2 Application for Ordinary Membership shall be made in writing to the Secretary. The application shall be counter-signed by a proposer and seconder both of whom shall be Ordinary or Honorary Life Members. The application shall be displayed on the Club notice board for at least 14 days prior to the Committee Meeting at which the application is considered.

4.3 An applicant is a Temporary Member until their application has been considered by the Committee and if elected, all relevant dues have been paid.

4.4 The Secretary shall notify the applicant of the Committee's decision. This notification shall be made as soon as is practical.

5 COMMITTEE AND OFFICERS

5.1 The day to day business of the Club shall be managed by a Committee, subject to the final authority of a General Meeting of the Club. The Committee is empowered to act without reference to a General Meeting, providing that such action is within these Rules and that there is no motion concerning that action pending for discussion at a General Meeting.

5.2 The Committee shall consist of the following:

5.2.1 Officers: Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Club Captain

5.2.2 Non-executive Committee Members: there shall be five Committee Members.

5.2.3 Non-voting Committee Members: The President and the Vice-presidents shall be entitled to attend all Committee meetings. In addition, the Committee may co-opt other members as and when they deem it desirable.

5.3 The Committee is empowered to co-opt replacement Officers and Committee members in the event that an Officer or Committee Member is no longer able to serve. Such replacements shall have full voting rights.

5.4 At the first committee meeting after the Annual General Meeting the committee shall elect a Vice-Chairman to act on behalf of the Chairman at any time that the Chairman may be unavailable.

5.5 Duties of Officers

5.5.1 The Chairman shall take the Chair at Committee Meetings and General Meetings. The Chairman is ex-officio a member of all sub-committees.

5.5.2 The Secretary shall be responsible, under the direction of and with the help of the Committee, for all the business of the Club and shall conduct all correspondence, send due notice of all meetings to the Members concerned and keep Members informed of all matters of interest to them. In particular, the Secretary shall maintain the following records:-

- Register of Members (The actual day-to-day management of this is the responsibility of the Membership Secretary.)
- Minutes and agendas of general meetings and committee meetings. She/He shall also ensure that minutes of all sub-committees are presented to the Club Committee. The actual preparation of minutes may be delegated to a minuting secretary.
- Files of correspondence.

5.5.3 The Treasurer shall be responsible for all moneys paid to the Club, for making all necessary payments as authorised by the Committee and obtaining vouchers therefore so far as is practicable. The Treasurer shall keep an account of transactions, shall produce such accounts for inspection as required at any Committee meeting and shall deposit all moneys received in such Bank or Banks as the Committee may authorise.

The treasurer shall present the audited accounts to the AGM.

5.5.4 The Club Captain shall be responsible for

- The appointment of team captains for teams representing the Club.
- The team selection for matches and other competitions.
- For finding and promoting ways in which the standard of play within the Club may be improved.
- For ensuring that all the Club's competitions are covered by adequate sets of rules covering qualification and any event or complaint likely to arise during the running of a competition. Any change of rule proposed by the Captain must be approved by the Committee.

5.6 Committee Meetings and responsibilities

5.6.1 Not more than 90 days shall elapse between a Committee Meeting and the date of the next Committee Meeting.

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5.6.2 The business of the Committee is:

- To authorise such expenditure of the Club funds as they may deem necessary.
- To consider the amount of the annual subscription, entrance fee, table money, visitor's fees, match fees and any other charges which they may deem necessary and to propose changes to be placed before a General Meeting.
- To elect new Members in accordance with the rules.
- To co-opt Members to fill casual vacancies on the Committee until the next General Meeting.
- To take whatever disciplinary action over Members they may deem necessary.
- To appoint sub-committees for the general running of the Club.
- To enter teams in outside competitions and to approve the Club Captain's choice of Team Captains and assist, if required, in the selection of the teams.
- Such other items as are necessary for the day-to-day running of the Club.
- To wind up the Club (ref. Clause 19) the Committee shall have the power to enter into contracts, leases and other financial commitments on behalf of the Club within available funds. Commitment which would cause an excess over these funds shall not be entered into without the approval of the Members at a General Meeting.

5.6.3. At Committee meetings five members including at least one Officer shall constitute a quorum. Should there be no quorum present the meeting shall be adjourned to a date agreed by the Committee members. In the absence of the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman the members present shall elect one of their number as Chairman of the meeting.

6 PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENTS

6.1 The Club shall have a President who must be an Ordinary or an Honorary Life Member of the Club. During his/her term of office the President may not be a Vice-President of the Club and may not hold any of the offices listed in 5.2.1.

The office of President shall be consultative only except that:-

- The President shall, at his/her sole discretion, be entitled to convene an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Members should any situation warrant such a step.
- The President shall be entitled to attend all Committee meetings but not to vote at them.

6.2 The Club may appoint up to two Vice-Presidents, whose role will be to deputise for the President when required. Vice Presidents must be Ordinary or Honorary Life Members of the Club. Vice-Presidents may hold any of the Club Management positions listed in Clause 5.2.1.

6.3 The office of Vice-President shall be consultative only except that a Vice-President shall be entitled to attend all Committee meetings but not to vote at them.

7 ELECTIONS

7.1 Nominations

7.1.1 All nominations shall be made in writing to the Secretary not less than seven days prior to the date of the AGM.

7.1.2 All nominations shall be posted to the Club notice board at a Club playing night prior to the AGM. Once posted they shall remain on display until the start of the AGM.

7.1.3 In the event that no nomination has been made for a position, The Chairman of the AGM may accept nominations from the floor.

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- 7.1.4 The Committee shall nominate a President for the subsequent year unless they are unable to find a suitable candidate. Ordinary or Honorary Life Members may make additional nominations. Should there be more than one nomination an election will be held at the Annual General Meeting.
- 7.1.5 The Committee shall nominate at least one and at most two Vice-presidents for the subsequent year unless they are unable to find a suitable candidate. Ordinary or Honorary Life Members may make additional nominations. Should there be more than two nominations for Vice-presidents an election will be held at the Annual General Meeting.
- 7.1.6 Candidates for the positions listed in 5.2.1 can be nominated by any Ordinary or Honorary Life Member.
- 7.1.7 Candidates for non-executive membership (5.2.2) can be nominated by any Ordinary or Honorary Life Member.
- 7.2 Voting:
 - 7.2.1 At all Annual or Extraordinary General Meetings each Member and Honorary Life Member present shall have one vote only, except that in the event of an equality of voting the Chairman of the meeting shall be entitled to a second or casting vote.
 - 7.2.2 Postal Voting – Members with a valid reason for an inability to attend can register a vote in writing with the Secretary at least two days before the relevant meeting.
 - 7.2.3 The members shall vote for the candidates at the Annual General Meeting and those with the majority of the votes shall be advised accordingly by the Secretary within one week of the meeting. In the event of a tie between candidates a further vote shall be taken but only for the candidates in that tie.

8 SUB-COMMITTEES AND NON-COMMITTEE POSTS

- 8.1 The Club Committee may, as appropriate, create sub-committees to manage some specific aspect of the Club's running. In particular the Committee will create:
 - 8.1.1 A Laws and Ethics Sub-committee which will be responsible for all appeals from a Director's ruling. It will also be responsible for investigating any accusations of unethical conduct by a member. It is empowered to adjust scores and modify procedural penalties. It can recommend more extensive penalties to the Committee but is not empowered to apply them directly. It shall minute its meetings and provide copies of those minutes to Secretary.
 - 8.1.2 Tournament Sub-committee which shall be chaired by the Club Captain. This Sub-committee is to assist the Club Captain in the execution of his/her duties.
- 8.2 The Committee may, as appropriate, appoint members to undertake specific tasks on behalf of the Club. In particular the following will be appointed.
 - 8.2.1 Senior Director to organise directing of duplicate events at the Club. In particular he will appoint a director for each club session.
 - 8.2.2 Publicity Officer to manage Club publicity and edit Trumpit (The Club's newsletter.)
 - 8.2.3 Training Officer to manage training provided by the Club, in particular to ensure an ongoing set of courses to introduce newcomers to Contract Bridge, courses and other facilities to improve the skills of existing members and to liaise with the EBU training department.
 - 8.2.4 Membership Secretary responsible for maintaining the Membership List, including lists of lapsed members.
 - 8.2.5 A Senior Scorer who will ensure that the club events are scored up correctly and results promptly made available to members.
 - 8.2.6 A House Manager to ensure that the necessary housekeeping is carried out.

9 PLAYING RESTRICTIONS

- 9.1 Every member is entitled to a handicap reflecting their playing record. The Tournament sub-committee will assign such a handicap at least annually. The Tournament sub-committee may change a member's handicap

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at any time if it appears that it no longer reflects their playing skill. The Tournament Sub-committee may place restrictions on eligibility for duplicate sessions and tournaments. For example it would not normally allow a Student Member to play in Club events.

10 GUESTS

- 10.1 Any member shall be entitled to bring along guests to a Club Night taking into account the playing restrictions for that session and providing the guest is not a former club member who has been asked to resign by the Committee.

11 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- 11.1 The Club's financial year shall run from 1st April to 31st March. As soon as practicable, and in any event not more than three calendar months after the end of the financial year, there shall be a meeting of the Members to be known as the Annual General Meeting under the direction of the Club Chairman for the purposes of transacting the following business:-

- To receive the Chairman's and Captain's reports.
- To receive and approve the Annual Accounts.
- To elect an Auditor for the Club Accounts.
- To elect a President for the following year.
- To elect Vice Presidents for the following year.
- To elect a Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Club Captain, Committee members for the following year.
- To present trophies for the competitions of the previous year.
- To consider proposals submitted for inclusion on the Agenda.
- To conduct any other relevant business.

- 11.2 At least fourteen clear days notice of the date and the Agenda of the meeting shall be given by posting it on the Notice Board in the Club.

- 11.3 In the absence of the Club Chairman, the Club President shall preside at the meeting. In the absence of both, the Members present shall elect from their number a Chairman for that meeting only.

- 11.4 The Quorum for an Annual General Meeting is 25 members.

12 EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETINGS

- 12.1 An Extraordinary General Meeting may be convened by the Committee at any time:

- 12.2 By the President.

- 12.3 By any ten Ordinary or Honorary Life Members upon giving notice in writing to the Secretary, signed by all of them and clearly stating the purpose of the meeting. The Secretary shall then arrange for the meeting to be held within one calendar month of the date of receipt of the requisition and shall give Members not less than seven clear days' notice of the date, time and purpose of the meeting in the same way as prescribed for an Annual General Meeting.

- 12.4 The business of an EGM shall be confined to the discussion of the matter for which the meeting was called.

- 12.5 The Quorum for an Extraordinary General Meeting is 25 members

13 BANKS ETC., SIGNING POWERS, INVESTMENTS

- 13.1. All payments out of Bank etc. accounts shall be signed by two authorised signatories. At a minimum the Treasurer, Secretary and Chairman shall be authorised. In addition the Committee, by unanimous vote can

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authorise other signatories. It shall be the Secretary's responsibility for advising banks etc. when changes in these officers take place and forwarding specimen signatures to them as required.

- 13.2. Surplus moneys shall be invested in Stocks, Shares, Property etc. only with the approval of Members at a General Meeting. Between General Meetings the Committee may authorise the transfer of funds to interest-earning bank etc. accounts as considered necessary.

14 ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION AND ENTRANCE FEE

- 14.1 The Annual Subscription to the Club shall be payable within 30 days of the commencement of the Club financial year (1st April). Any Ordinary Member who has not paid his/her subscription within this period shall be considered in arrears and if it is not paid within a further 60 days shall cease to be a Member. A Member in arrears shall be deemed to be a visitor.
- 14.2 At any time a member can resign their membership by giving 14 days written notice to the Secretary.
- 14.3 Changes in the Subscription shall be made only by resolution and approval at a General Meeting. This condition applies also to the fixing of any Club entrance fee.

15 AUDIT OF ACCOUNTS

- 15.1. The Club shall in each year of account appoint an auditor (preferably qualified and not a Member of the Club) to audit the accounts for that year. This appointment shall be by resolution at the Annual General Meeting. The Committee however may appoint an auditor to fill any casual vacancy occurring between Annual General Meetings of the Club.
- 15.2 The Auditor shall have a right of access at all times to the books, accounts and all other documents relating to the Club affairs and shall be entitled to require from the Officers of the Club such information and explanations as are necessary for the performance of the Auditor's duties.

16 RESPONSIBILITY OF CLUB AND MEMBERS

- 16.1 The Club shall not be responsible for any damage, loss or injury sustained by any person whilst on the Club premises or engaged in any of the Club's activities nor shall any person have any claim against the Club or the Committee (including the Officers) for any action taken in accordance with the Club rules.
- 16.2 The Committee may require any Member to make good any damage or loss caused by his/her actions or neglect to any property for which the Club is responsible.
- 16.3. Notwithstanding the above conditions the Club shall insure through the English Bridge Union under the Public Liability Insurance Policy offered to all Clubs or shall take out an equivalent insurance policy.
- 16.4 Members are required to behave courteously toward other members including their partner during a playing session.

17 DISCIPLINARY ACTION

- 17.1 Should any Member have cause for complaint against another Member he/she shall communicate this in writing to the Secretary for submission to the Committee. After such inquiry as may be necessary the Committee shall take such action as they deem fit, provided that a Member may be required to resign from the Club only by a two-thirds majority of the whole committee and only after he/she has been given ample opportunity to answer the charges against him/her.

18 NOTICE OF ALTERATIONS TO CONSTITUTION AND RULES

- 18.1 A copy of the Constitution and Rules and all alterations thereto shall be affixed to the Club Notice Board and shall be binding on all Members. New Members shall be advised of this in notification of election.
- 18.2 If the Club has a website an electronic copy of the Constitution shall be available on the website.

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- 18.3 The Constitution and Rules shall be altered only by resolution passed by a majority of at least two-thirds of the voting members present at a General Meeting. Written notice of intention to propose an alteration and particulars of the proposed alteration shall be given to the Secretary (for inclusion in the Agenda) not later than twenty-one days prior to the meeting. The Agenda and any proposed changes to the rules and constitution must be posted in the Club at least fourteen days prior to a General Meeting.

19 WINDING UP

- 19.1. In the event of it being necessary to wind up the Club, the Committee shall be empowered, after approval by the Members at a General Meeting, to take whatever action may be necessary to realise the assets of the Club and to distribute any surplus proceeds, after payment of all debts, amongst the Members entitled thereto in such equitable proportion as the Committee may decide.