

BEWDLEY BRIDGE CLUB CONSTITUTION

1. Name

The Club shall be called “Bewdley Bridge Club.”

2. Object

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

3. Headquarters

Bewdley Bridge Club is predominately an online Bridge Club with no fixed venue and offers several on-line sessions throughout the week.

Face-to-face sessions are periodically arranged by the Committee at suitable locations in the Bewdley area.

The assets required for Face-to-face sessions have been retained and are stored by several members of Bewdley Bridge Club.

Any proposal to change the headquarters of the club shall require a formal presentation by the Officers of the Club to an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) of the club (see sections 6-9 of this constitution).

4. Affiliations

The Club shall be affiliated to the Worcestershire Contract Bridge Association (WCBA) and to the English Bridge Union (EBU).

5. Membership

5.1 Membership Eligibility

Existing members shall be invited to renew their membership on a 6 monthly basis (1st April and 1st October), this to be achieved by payment of the club subscription fee. By payment of this fee members agree to:

- Abide by the club constitution, rules and policies and procedures
- In respect of Data Protection Legislation agree for personal data to be shared as described in 5 (c)
- Ensure they have suitable equipment to play online Bridge

New members are welcome to join the club subject to completion of an appropriate membership application pro-forma and payment of the appropriate subscription fee. The Committee reserves the right to reject applications if it is felt such applications are not in the best interest of the club.

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

5.2 Age Criteria

Subject to Membership Eligibility Criteria in Section 5 a):-

All bridge players and those wishing to learn to play who are over the age of eighteen years shall be entitled to apply for full membership of the Club.

Players under the age of eighteen years shall be entitled to apply for Junior membership subject both to written consent from a parent or guardian and subject to compliance with appropriate Safeguarding Legislation of Guidance. Such members are not entitled to vote at General Meetings of the Club.

5.3 Membership Personal Data

Subject to ongoing compliance with Data Protection Legislation, the Club shall seek confirmation via payment of the subscription fee that existing members renewing their club membership shall:-

- Give their consent for their name, telephone number and email address (personal details) to appear on the club members contact list;

- Give their consent for their personal details to be provided to the WCBA;
- Give their consent so that, whilst the EBU will already hold the member's name and issue an EBU membership number, the club can provide the member's email address to the EBU.
- That those requesting to be part of the Club's WhatsApp group give their consent for their mobile telephone number to be shared with other members of the group.

5.4 Membership Renewal

Any existing member at 1st April or 1st October who has not renewed their membership by payment of the club within 3 months shall be assumed to have resigned and future club membership will be subject to reapplication in accordance with the requirements set out in Section 5a) of the constitution.

A former member of the Club who wishes to re-join as a member shall be required to complete an appropriate membership application pro-forma, signed agreement to the club rules and payment of the appropriate subscription fee.

5.5 Matching Membership Levels to Playing Facilities

Whilst wishing to avoid this situation other than in extreme circumstances, the Club Committee must reserve the right when considering applications for new membership to have regard to the playing facilities available and have the right to recommend to an EGM of the Club that new applications for membership shall be closed for such period as it may decide if numbers are unmanageable.

5.6 Membership Resignation

A member shall cease to be a member of the club immediately if the Club Secretary is notified of the intention to resign either in writing or by use of email. Any return of subscription will be at the discretion of the committee.

5.7 Disciplinary Action

A member shall cease to be a member of the club immediately if expelled from the club under the provisions of Section 15 of the Club Constitution (Conduct and Disciplinary Matters).

6. **Officers of the Club**

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 of the Club shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Club, and shall retire annually at the ensuing 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 the Club, the Club Committee (See Section 7) shall choose a member of the Committee or, if necessary co-opt a new member to the Committee to fill such a vacancy until the next AGM of the Club.

6.5 Save in respect of wilful wrongdoing, the Officers of the Club shall not in any circumstances be responsible for the liabilities of the club.

7. **Committee**

7.1 The Committee of the Club shall consist of the Officers of the Club, together with as many other members of the Club as are deemed appropriate from time to time. The Committee shall be elected at the AGM of the Club, and shall retire annually at the next AGM, 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 AGM, whether to fill a vacancy arising, or as additional members. 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 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.
- 7.5 Proceedings of the Committee and of any subcommittees shall be regulated in such manner as the Committee may from time to time decide, subject to the overriding requirement that individual Committee members should not participate in decisions where they have a conflict of interests.
- 7.6 The Club Chairman, on behalf of the Committee shall make a report to each AGM of the Club concerning the affairs of the Club since the previous AGM.

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 an AGM of the Club.
- 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 from the AGM.
- 8.5 The Club Committee shall be authorised to incur such items of capital expenditure or major items of renewal of club assets that it deems are necessary in order to maintain effective operation of bridge activities, including, where relevant, investment in improved technologies.

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 An EGM 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 An EGM 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 a physical location in the Bewdley area or alternatively use a virtual meeting (see paragraph 9.12)
- 9.5 The Chairman, if present, shall chair all General Meetings of the Club, and, in his absence, another 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 any other business at a General Meeting if he thinks fit. However, there can be no presumption by Members that such items can be discussed at a General Meeting if the items have not been notified to the Secretary no later than one week prior to the date fixed for the meeting.
- 9.9 A quorum at General Meetings of the Club shall be ten members present in person or online.
- 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). In the case of a General Meeting which has been previously 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 meeting shall constitute a quorum.

- 9.11 Voting at General Meetings of the Club shall be by show of hands or online votes, and in the event of parity of voting the Chairman of the Meeting shall have a second or casting vote. For the avoidance of doubt, members not present at such meetings cannot cast votes unless, exceptionally, the Committee deems otherwise.
- 9.12 The Committee at its discretion may replace an in person General Meeting with either an online meeting or for a members decision on a particular subject may request a response via email within a certain timescale determined by the Committee.

10. Notices

- 10.1 Notices of any EGM of the Club, and of an AGM at which in the opinion of the Committee any business of a non-routine nature is likely to be discussed, shall be posted on the club website and be communicated by e mail to the last address of each member notified to the Secretary.
- 10.2 Notices of any AGM at which in the opinion of the Committee no business of a non-routine nature is likely to be discussed, shall be posted on the club website and be communicated by e mail to the last address of each member notified to the Secretary.
- 10.3 Notices of any other matters to be brought to the attention of members shall be posted on the club website.

11. Nominations

- 11.1 Nominations for the posts of Officers or Committee members shall be in writing or email to the Secretary and shall be supported by a proposer and a seconder, both of whom shall be members of the Club.

- 11.2 Where, however, an existing Officer(s) or member(s) of the Committee has informed the Secretary of a willingness to be re-elected, no written nominations shall be necessary.
- 11.3 Nominations must reach the Secretary no later than one week prior to the date fixed for the AGM.

12. Subscriptions

- 12.1 Each member of the Club shall pay a single six monthly subscription fee which will cover all bridge to which the member has subscribed. The club currently offers Duplicate Single Weekly Play, Duplicate Multiple Weekly Play, Morning Single Weekly Play and Morning Multiple Weekly Play. Subscriptions shall be due for payment on 1st April and 1st October each year. Unless the Committee decides otherwise, any member whose subscription remains unpaid after the due date shall not be entitled to vote either at an AGM or call an EGM and if payment is not received within 3 months shall be assumed to have resigned and future club membership will be subject to reapplication in accordance with the requirements set out in Section 5a). The Committee may at its discretion introduce table money for any specially arranged Face-to-Face sessions to cover the costs of hiring a venue.
- 12.2 Each member of the Club may invite a guest to play online without any further subscription fee up to a maximum number of times in a six monthly period determined by the Committee.
- 12.3 The Club Committee must reserve the right to, in the future, introduce a policy of requiring a joining fee for new members in addition to subscription charges subject to any change of policy being recommended to and endorsed by an AGM or EGM.
- 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, or for any other purpose for which it is of the opinion that fees ought to be charged.

13. Financial Statements

- 13.1 The Committee shall arrange for financial statements to be prepared in respect of the financial affairs of the Club for each year ending on 31 March and shall arrange for the accounts to be reviewed by an independent person who, if a member of the Club, is not an Officer or a Committee Member of the Club.
- 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 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.
- 14.3 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.
- 14.4 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.
- 14.5 The Club Committee must reserve the right to charge a basic member charge to a visitor who is attending as a representative of the WCBA Committee or is an Officer of the EBU.

15. Members Behaviour, Conduct and Equipment Reliability

- 15.1 Each member of the Club shall be required to conform to the standards of fair play, courtesy and general conduct, the principles of which are set out in the "Best

Behaviour at Bridge” and “Club Etiquette and Procedure” statements issued by the EBU and available on the club website.

- 15.2 In the event of an equipment failure that is causing disruption to other players or delaying the movement of the play the Director can decide to eliminate the pair of players from the session. The Director’s decision is final and cannot be appealed during the session. If a member has ongoing technical issues then the Committee can make a decision to suspend the member until they have resolved their technical issues.
- 15.3 The Club has a zero tolerance approach to any disrespect shown to the Director of the session. The Directors decision to any incident to which they have been called is final and cannot be appealed during the session. If a member has any concerns about the actions of a Director they should be reported subsequently to the Club Chairman.
- 15.4 The Club shall have the powers and the procedures for the enforcement of the requirement in clause 15.1.
- 15.5 In the event of a written complaint being made to the Committee about the conduct of a member of the Club, the Committee shall investigate the complaint and, in doing so, the Committee shall give the member about whose conduct the complaint has been made an opportunity to be heard. If the complaint in the opinion of the Committee could involve a serious breach of misconduct then the Committee reserves the right to suspend the member during the investigative process.
- 15.6 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 the period as it may think fit, or expel the member from the club.
- 15.7 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 on the Club website.

- 15.8 An appeal shall lie to a General Meeting of the Club against any decision to reprimand, suspend or expel a member of the Club following the investigation of the complaint about his/her conduct. 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. 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 although the Committee reserves the right to suspend the member during the appeal process.
- 15.9 On the appeal being heard by a General Meeting of the Club, the General Meeting by means of a majority vote shall have power to overrule, amend or uphold the conclusion of the Committee.
- 15.10 Nothing in this Constitution shall preclude the Committee from referring a matter of conduct to the appropriate Committee of the WCBA and/or to the Law and Ethics Committee of the EBU if it considers it appropriate to do so.

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 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 Worcestershire Contract Bridge Association; and any Registered or recognised charitable body.

18 Adoption

18.1 The most recent update of this Constitution was adopted at the Annual General Meeting of the Club held on 10th July 2024.