

# FARNBOROUGH (KENT) BRIDGE CLUB CONSTITUTION

## THE CLUB

- 1.1 The club shall be known as the FARNBOROUGH (KENT) BRIDGE CLUB and shall be affiliated to the Kent Contract Bridge Association and the English Bridge Union.
- 1.2 The objects of the club shall be to:
  - (a) facilitate the playing of duplicate or other forms of contract bridge
  - (b) organise contract bridge competitions
  - (c) facilitate the teaching and promotion of contract bridge
  - (d) organise social events for the members of the club and for such visitors, i.e. non-members, as the committee shall think fit.

## MEMBERSHIP

- 2.1 There shall be three categories of membership of the club:
  - (a) ordinary membership
  - (b) honorary life membership
  - (c) youth membership (available to those under the age of 18 years).
- 2.2 Any person wishing to become an ordinary or a youth member shall deliver a completed application form to the Secretary of the club ('the Secretary'), which will be displayed on the club notice board and/or the prospective member's name displayed on the members only area of the website for a minimum of three weeks. Such applications shall then be considered, together with any representations received from existing members, by the committee, normally after the applicant has played at the club at least three times. The committee's decision to accept or reject the application will then be notified in writing to the applicant. The applicant will then become a member of the club as soon as they pay their annual subscription. If an application for membership is rejected the committee will specify if the applicant may apply for membership again, and if so after what time period.
- 2.3 A person can rejoin the club without having to complete an application form if:
  - they used to be a member,
  - their membership lapsed less than five years ago,
  - they pay the annual subscription, and
  - their membership has not been cancelled or suspended under clause 2.8 or any similar provision in any earlier club constitution.

If the person's membership lapsed more than five years ago the committee may decide to waive the requirement to deliver or advertise an application form if it thinks fit.
- 2.4 Honorary life membership may be granted only at the discretion of the committee to those who have rendered distinguished service to the club. Honorary life members shall not be required to pay an annual subscription.
- 2.5 Youth members shall not be entitled to vote at general meetings of the club and cannot be officers of the club.
- 2.6 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 a period as it may decide.

- 2.7 A member shall cease to be a member of the club immediately if their membership is cancelled or suspended under clause 2.8 or on the delivery to the Secretary of notification in writing of the member's resignation.
- 2.8 The committee may cancel or suspend the membership of any person in the interests of the club. Before doing so the committee shall:
  - (a) provide the member with a written statement of the facts or matters that may form the basis for deciding to cancel or suspend membership,
  - (b) permit the member to address the committee in person or in writing about those facts or matters and whether the cancellation or suspension of membership is justified in the interests of the club, and
  - (c) seek such advice or assistance from the English Bridge Union as the committee may think fit.
- 2.9 Annual subscriptions are due on 1<sup>st</sup> August each year. A member whose subscription has not been paid by 30<sup>th</sup> September shall cease to be a member except in exceptional circumstances agreed by the committee.
- 2.10 The committee will keep a register of members which will include details of their names, addresses, contact details and dates on which membership commenced and ceased
- 2.11 Members of the club are automatically enrolled as members of the English Bridge Union and shall abide by its bye laws.
- 2.12 All members are deemed to have accepted the provisions of this constitution and such regulations or rules as the committee may make from time to time in the course of running the club.

## **MANAGEMENT**

- 3.1 The general management of the club shall be vested in a committee comprising the officers (Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) and up to six other members.
- 3.2 The committee shall have power to fill any vacancies that occur and to co-opt other members at its discretion provided that the total number of committee members including the officers shall not at any time exceed nine. The co-opted members shall serve on the committee until the next annual general meeting and shall be entitled to participate fully in the proceedings of the committee.
- 3.3 At committee meetings the quorum is four, or the majority of the committee, whichever is larger, including at least two officers. In the absence of the elected Chair, the committee members present shall appoint one of their number to act as chair. Each committee member shall be entitled to one vote, except the chair who shall also have a casting vote.
- 3.4 All members of the committee shall be elected annually at the annual general meeting and shall retire annually at the next annual general meeting, but shall be eligible for re-election. A member shall not serve as Chair of the club for more than three consecutive years nor fill more than one officer role at any one time.
- 3.5 If a vacancy arises during the year of one of the officers of the club, the committee shall choose one of their number to fill that vacancy until the next annual general meeting.
- 3.6 The committee may from time to time appoint such person or persons on such terms as it shall think fit to undertake specific activities or tasks relating to the running of the club.
- 3.7 The committee shall manage the affairs of the club, and the committee shall have power to determine any issue concerning the affairs of the club which is not specifically provided for in this constitution.
- 3.8 The committee shall have the power to make rules for regulating the conduct and affairs of the committee and the club, providing those rules are not inconsistent with this constitution.

- 3.9 Any issue of policy or any regulations or rules adopted 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 its application.
- 3.10 Nominations for the officers and other members of the committee shall be delivered to the Secretary in writing, not less than 14 days before the annual general meeting, with the names of the proposer and seconder and an indication of the nominee's willingness to stand. In the event of a shortfall for any position those candidates nominated shall be elected at the annual general meeting without a vote being taken and nominations for any vacancies shall be accepted from the floor.

## **GENERAL MEETINGS**

- 4.1 Any amendment to this constitution must be approved at a general meeting.
- 4.2 The committee shall convene an annual general meeting of the club not later than the end of October in each calendar year to:
- (a) Receive a report from the Chair concerning the affairs of the club since the preceding annual general meeting,
  - (b) Receive and approve the statement of accounts for the club to the end of the preceding financial year,
  - (c) Determine the annual subscriptions and table money for the next financial year,
  - (d) Elect the officers and other members of the committee,
  - (e) Appoint an accounts examiner, who shall not be a member of the committee, to examine the accounts for the current financial year and report thereon at the next annual general meeting, and
  - (f) Deal with any matter notified to the Secretary in writing not less than 14 days before the meeting.
- 4.3 Notice convening the annual general meeting shall be given to members not less than 28 days before the meeting. The agenda for the meeting shall be posted on the club noticeboard and website not less than 7 days before the meeting.
- 4.4 A special general meeting may be convened at any time by the committee, giving at least 21 days' notice to the members.
- 4.5 The committee shall convene a special general meeting within 35 days of the receipt by the Secretary of a request to do so providing the request:
- (a) is in writing,
  - (b) specifies the object of the meeting,
  - (c) is signed by at least 15 members or 20% of the club members, whichever is the smaller, and
  - (d) has not been rescinded by the members who requested the general meeting.
- The committee shall give members at least 21 days' notice of the meeting and no business other than that for which the meeting was convened shall be transacted.
- 4.6 At a general meeting the quorum is 25 members or 20% of the members, whichever is the lower. Should a quorum not be present by 15 minutes after the time fixed for the meeting, the meeting shall be adjourned to a new date and members notified of the new date. Should a quorum not be achieved at the reconvened meeting, the number of members present shall constitute a quorum.
- 4.7 At a general meeting each member of the club shall be entitled to one vote, except the chair of the meeting who shall also have a casting vote. Any members who are unable to attend the annual general meeting may vote by proxy for any candidates who have been proposed and seconded for positions on the committee, by giving written instructions to either the Chair or the Secretary. Any decision of the majority at a general meeting shall be binding on all members of the club.
- 4.8 All general meetings of the club shall be held at the premises at which the club regularly meets unless circumstances arise which render this impractical.

- 4.9 The Chair, if present, shall chair all general meetings of the club. If he or she is absent, another member of the committee, approved by a majority of those present at the meeting, shall chair the meeting. If no committee member is approved by a majority of those present, the committee member with the largest number of votes of those present will act as chair.
- 4.10 The chair may rule that a resolution proposed at the meeting or after the agenda for the meeting has been published cannot be voted on until at least 7 days' notice in writing has been given to all the members of the club.
- 4.11 In the event of exceptional circumstances that make holding an annual general meeting as required under clause 4.2 impractical or unlawful:
- (a) the annual general meeting shall be held as soon as practicable,
  - (b) the committee members and officers shall continue in post until the date on which the annual general meeting is held, and
  - (c) the agenda for the annual general meeting shall include a resolution containing proposals for when the next annual general meeting should be held.

## **GENERAL**

- 5.1 The financial year of the club runs from 1st August to 31st July. The annual subscription and table monies payable by members shall be decided at the annual general meeting of the preceding year. The annual subscription of a new member is due on admission to membership and must be paid within one month. A member admitted after 1st February shall be required to pay half the annual subscription in that financial year. In the event of unexpected expenses incurred during the year, the committee shall have power to make adjustments to the table money.
- 5.2 Visitors in good standing with the EBU or equivalent organisation may be permitted to play at the club at any time, unless their application for membership has been rejected under clause 2.2. In the event of the playing facilities being inadequate to accommodate all those who wish to play, priority shall be given to members.
- 5.3 Subject to clause 5.2 above, visitors must not attend on more than six occasions (excluding county, national or special events) during any one financial year without applying for membership. All visitors shall be required to pay no more than twice the normal table money, the rate is to be set at the AGM. A special fee may be charged to members and/or visitors when a national or county event is held at the club.
- 5.4 Members must accept the obligation to act as host member as designated by the committee.
- 5.5 Each member of Farnborough (Kent) Bridge Club shall be required, in connection with the game of Contract Bridge and variations thereof, to conform to the standards of fair play, courtesy and personal deportment prescribed in the bye laws and regulations of the English Bridge Union and set out in the EBU's "Best Behaviour at Bridge." Where the club rules are silent, the committee shall have the power to refer the matter to the English Bridge Union for guidance.
- 5.6 Formal communication with the members by the committee will predominantly be done by email and/or by putting the information on the club website and/or noticeboard. Information will be deemed to have been sent to a member if it is sent to the email address held by the club for the member.
- 5.7 Any document, letter, notice etc that this constitution requires to be delivered or given in writing may be delivered or given electronically by email to the email address for the Secretary that is published on the club website, or the email address held by the club for the Secretary, and
- (a) the document, letter, notice etc shall be deemed to have been delivered or given on the day after it arrives in the relevant email inbox; and
  - (b) the sender will promptly provide the recipient with the original hard copy document, letter, or notice if asked to do so.

## **COMPETITIONS**

- 6.1 The club competition year shall be coincident with the financial year.
- 6.2 For club competitions, the rules of the competition shall state if they are open to members only, members playing with visitors, or visitors playing with visitors. The rules shall also state whether the result of a member playing with a visitor shall be disregarded for the purposes of the competition. Visitors playing with visitors' results shall always be disregarded for the purposes of the club competitions.
- 6.3 For annual competitions, such as the Jackson Cup and Lilian Martin Bowl, where the result is calculated with reference to a player's results over the year, the competition rules will state what the minimum period of play is for this competition to be valid if play is suspended for part of the year.
- 6.4 Only members who have paid their club subscription for the year in question may represent the club in external events, such as inter-club competitions or the National Inter-Club Knockout competition.

## **WINDING-UP**

- 7.1 The club may only be wound up by resolution at a general meeting.
- 7.2 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
  - 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.
- 7.3. 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. If the winding up has been initiated with a view to amalgamating the club with some other club any surplus assets and funds may be transferred to the other club. If the winding up has not been initiated with a view to amalgamating with another club, any surplus assets and funds shall be transferred to an association or charitable organisation that has an ethos or interests in line with those of the club as decided by the committee.

*January 2022*