

# **CONSTITUTION OF THE SUSSEX COUNTY CONTRACT BRIDGE ASSOCIATION**

## **TITLE**

1. The name of the organisation is The Sussex County Contract Bridge Association, hereafter referred to as the Association.

## **OBJECTS**

2. The objects of the Association shall be:
  - a) To promote and foster the playing of duplicate bridge in Sussex.
  - b) To organise or manage all forms of duplicate bridge competitions.
  - c) To remain affiliated to the English Bridge Union (hereinafter referred to as the EBU) and to implement and enforce in the County the decisions, rules and regulations of the EBU.

## **MANAGEMENT**

3.
  - a) The affairs of the Association shall be governed by a Management Committee consisting of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Tournament Manager, hereinafter collectively referred to as "the Officers" and not less than eight nor more than fourteen other members.
  - b) The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Association shall be ex-officio members of all the Association Committees.
4. Five elected members shall form a quorum for all purposes of the Management Committee. The President and Vice-Presidents shall not form part of this quorum.

## **CLUB AFFILIATION**

5. A bridge club (hereinafter called a club) which is located in the County of Sussex and which is affiliated to the EBU shall automatically be affiliated to and form part of the Association. A bridge club that is affiliated to the Association shall be bound to observe the rules and regulations of the Association and of the EBU.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

6. Membership of the Association shall be granted to any bridge player who satisfies one or more of the following conditions:
  - a) Birth in the County
  - b) Residence in the County
  - c) Place of business in the County
  - d) Membership of an affiliated bridge club in the County
  - e) Continuing members who no longer satisfy any of the above criteria
7. The Management Committee shall have discretion to grant membership to a limited number of members who do not satisfy any of the conditions set out in Clause 6.
8. All members of the Association shall undertake to observe the rules and regulations of the Association and of the EBU, be bound by their decisions and be subject to any disciplinary measures imposed by those bodies.
9. A member of the Association may be a member of one or more other County Associations, but in that event, he/she must choose one of them as his/her primary Association and may not represent more than one County in any national or inter-county competition in any one season.

## **CONDUCT**

10. Each member of the Association 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, for the time being, of the EBU. The Association shall have the powers and the procedures for the enforcement of this requirement as set out in the Schedule to this Constitution (which shall stand as part of the Constitution and be subject to the same provisions as the Constitution for its amendment).

## **SUBSCRIPTION**

11. The annual subscription and the county element of the EBU's Pay to Play subscription shall be determined by the Management Committee, subject to ratification by a General Meeting. The annual subscription shall become due on 1<sup>st</sup> April each year, together with the annual subscription and Club affiliation subscription payable to the EBU. Where relevant, subscriptions may be accepted on behalf of the Association by individual Clubs. Subscriptions may be paid by a Direct Debit scheme subject to such a scheme having been introduced by the Association and the EBU and subject to the agreement of the individual member.
12. A member whose Association subscription is not received by 31<sup>st</sup> July, may, at the discretion of the Management Committee, and in the absence of a satisfactory written explanation given to the Secretary, cease to be a member of the Association. Those who cease to be members for this reason may apply for re-admission, but such re-admission may be subject to the payment of an additional fee to be determined by the Management Committee.

## **FINANCE AND ACCOUNTS**

13. The Management Committee shall employ the funds of the Association in such a manner as it may deem to be in the interests of members in the furtherance of the objects of the Association, regard being taken that the Association is a non-profit making body.
14. The Management Committee shall determine charges for all competitions organised or managed by the Association.
15. Expenses and honoraria may be paid to Officers, Management Committee members and other members undertaking tasks on behalf of the Association at the discretion of the Management Committee. Similarly, the Association may contribute towards the expenses of members engaged in international, national and inter-County competitions.
16. Accounts comprising a statement of income and expenditure and a balance sheet made respectively up to and at 31<sup>st</sup> December shall be certified by the Association's auditor and submitted to the following Annual General Meeting.

## **GENERAL MEETINGS**

17. An Annual General Meeting of the Association shall be held in March of each year, or as soon as possible thereafter. The place, date and time of the Annual General Meeting shall be determined by the Management Committee. A notice convening the meeting shall be sent to each member of the Association at least 21 days before the date of the meeting and multiple copies of an agenda listing the ordinary and special business to be transacted shall be sent to each affiliated club at least 21 days before the date of the meeting. The ordinary business of the meeting shall comprise submission of the Reports of the Management Committee, adoption of the Accounts, election of Officers and Management Committee members, ratifying the membership subscription and appointment of an Auditor.
18. An Extraordinary General Meeting shall be convened on the instructions of the Chairman or on receipt of a requisition signed by not less than 20 members and stating the purpose of such a meeting. A notice convening the meeting together with either the motions or a statement of the matters to be discussed shall be sent to each member of the Association at least 21 days before the date of the meeting. The meeting shall deal only with such matters.
19. The quorum for the conduct of business at a General Meeting shall be 30 members present and voting.
20. Voting shall be by show of hands or by ballot as directed by the Chairman of the meeting. The Chairman shall be permitted to exercise a casting vote. Proxy votes shall not be accepted.

## **ELECTIONS**

21. The Officers of the Association and the members of the Management Committee as specified in Clause 3 shall be elected annually at the Annual General Meeting.
22. Any two members of the Association may nominate a member to serve as an officer or as a Management Committee member, having previously received the assent of such member. The nomination shall be submitted in writing upon a prescribed form which shall be obtained from an Officer of the Association. The nomination form shall be submitted to the County Secretary at least seven days before the Annual General Meeting. The County Secretary shall be responsible to ensure that nomination forms have been validly completed.
23. At each election, subject to the following caveat, the retiring Officers and Management Committee members may offer themselves for re-election. The Chairman may stand for re-election and if re-elected may serve as Chairman for a maximum continuous period of five years. Upon the expiry of

the maximum period of service as aforesaid the Chairman shall not be permitted to stand for the Office of Chairman again until the Annual General Meeting the following year.

24. If insufficient nominations have been received in advance of the Annual General Meeting, those so nominated shall be declared elected.

#### **OTHER APPOINTMENTS**

25. The Management Committee shall have powers to appoint any Association member for any specific purpose or to co-opt the services of any member, subject to the agreement of that member.
26. All appointments under Clause 25 shall lapse at the next Annual General Meeting, but may be renewed by the Management Committee.
27. The Secretary of every Club, or a member nominated by the Club, shall be entitled to attend meetings of the Management Committee.
28. Club delegates described in Clause 27 shall not be entitled to vote at meetings of the Management Committee.

#### **HONORARY MEMBERSHIP**

29. The Association may appoint a President and not more than five Vice-Presidents. Such appointments shall be made in accordance with the recommendations of the Management Committee in recognition of long and valuable service to the Association, and they shall be subject to the approval of a General Meeting.
30. The President and Vice-Presidents shall enjoy the full rights of ordinary members. They may attend and vote in meetings of the Management Committee.
31. The Management Committee may appoint as Honorary Life Members those members of the Association who, in the opinion of the Committee, have given outstanding services to bridge at Club, County or National level.
32. Honorary Life Members shall not be obliged to pay the annual subscriptions of the Association and of the EBU.

#### **AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION**

33. This Constitution shall not be amended except at a General Meeting of the Association. A notice of the proposed amendment shall be sent to members at least 21 days before the date of the General Meeting and no motion amending the Constitution shall be passed unless it is carried by 20 members or two-thirds of those present and voting, whichever is the greater.

## **SCHEDULE PURSUANT TO CLAUSE 10 OF THE CONSTITUTION**

1. The Schedule prescribes the powers and procedures for enforcing Clause 10 of the Constitution of the Association.
2. The Management Committee shall appoint a County Conduct Committee (referred to in this Schedule hereafter as "the Committee") to be comprised of five members of the Association. The Committee shall report to the Management Committee. A quorum of any meeting shall be three of its members for the time being. It shall act by simple majority vote and its Chairman, appointed by the Committee, or whomsoever the Committee shall appoint to chair its meeting, shall have a second and casting vote in the event that there is parity in voting.
3.
  - i. The association shall act by the Committee for the enforcement of the standards prescribed in the said Clause 10 of its Constitution.
  - ii. Subject to clause 3 (iv), the Committee shall consider any written allegations received to the effect that an individual member of the Association has not conformed to the appropriate standards of behaviour as set out in the Bye-Laws of the English Bridge Union relating to conduct (currently 36-38).
  - iii. The procedures of the Conduct Committee shall conform mutatis mutandis to those prescribed by the bye-laws of the EBU for enquiry by its Laws and Ethics Committee into allegations of the misconduct by individual members. It shall have the powers to make findings and decisions consequent thereon in respect of allegations brought to its attention.
  - iv. At any time after it has duly received an allegation in the aforementioned manner, the Conduct Committee shall have the power (whether it has commenced any procedure in respect thereof or not) to refer the allegation to the EBU for the consideration of its Laws and Ethics Committee and in so doing it shall have fully discharged its responsibilities under this Schedule.
  - v. When the Conduct Committee does not use the powers vested in it by the provisions of 3(iv) above, and having duly enquired into the allegation concerning an individual member and has found that member to be in default of the before mentioned standards, it shall have powers to impose one or more of the following penalties:
    - (a) that the member shall be admonished,
    - (b) that the member shall be barred from all, or such as it may specify, of the competitions sponsored by or licensed by the Association, for such a period as it may determine,
    - (c) that the member shall repay the cost of repairing any physical damage caused by the action of the member.
4.
  - i. The findings and decisions of the Conduct Committee, made in accordance with Section 3 above, shall be delivered to the individual member in writing and shall have effect 21 days thereafter EXCEPT that the said individual member shall have the right to appeal against the said findings and decisions, other than the exercise of powers described in Section 3(iv) above, within the said period of 21 days. Such appeal shall be in writing and delivered to the Secretary of the Association within the said period.
  - ii. In the event of such an appeal, any decision to apply one or more of the penalties described in the foregoing 3(v) shall not take effect until the appeal has been determined.
  - iii. Any such appeal shall be referred to an Appeals Committee to be appointed by the EBU acting by its Laws and Ethics Committee. The said Appeals Committee shall be fully empowered to consider and enquire into the matter appealed in such manner as it shall see fit to determine the outcome of the appeal or to confirm or vary the findings and decisions of the Conduct Committee in relation of the matter appealed but not to impose any penalty which is not within the powers of the Conduct Committee. Alternatively, the Appeals Committee shall have the power to decide that the allegation is one that shall be referred to the said Laws and Ethics Committee as an allegation of misconduct under the Bye-Laws of the EBU relating to the conduct.

Where such referral shall occur, the prior findings and decisions of the Conduct Committee in relation to the matter shall be nullified and the individual member so informed.