

# NORFOLK CONTRACT BRIDGE ASSOCIATION

## CONSTITUTION

### 1. NAME

The name of the Association shall be THE NORFOLK CONTRACT BRIDGE ASSOCIATION (hereinafter referred to as "the Association").

### 2. OBJECTS

- (a) To promote and further the interests of Duplicate Contract Bridge in the County of Norfolk.
- (b) To organise, manage and promote all forms of Duplicate Contract Bridge competition within the County of Norfolk.
- (c) To encourage the formation of Duplicate Contract Bridge Clubs within the County of Norfolk and the affiliation of such clubs to the Association.
- (d) To co-ordinate the activities of all Duplicate Contract Bridge Clubs which become affiliated to the Association.
- (e) To provide any advice or assistance as may, from time to time, be requested by affiliated clubs in the management and conduct of their affairs.
- (f) To promote the teaching of the game of Contract Bridge within the County of Norfolk and to co-ordinate, in consultation with other interested parties, the teaching of Contract Bridge throughout the County of Norfolk.
- (g) To encourage clubs to welcome and organise appropriate competitions for inexperienced players.
- (h) To be a constituent member of the English Bridge Union and to participate in the Company known as The English Bridge Union Limited, by nominating Ordinary Members of the Association to hold shares in the said Company on behalf of the Association.
- (i) To maintain and enforce, within the County of Norfolk, the Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge as promulgated by the World Bridge Federation and all decisions, rules and regulations as may, from time to time, be promulgated by the English Bridge Union.

### 3. MEMBERSHIP

- (a) All members of the Association must be Player Members of the EBU.
- (b) A Player Member of the EBU shall become a member of the Association when their primary allegiance to the Association is recorded with the EBU.
- (c) A Player Member of the EBU whose primary allegiance is not with the Association can become a member of the Association by meeting its terms and conditions in force at the time of the request for membership.

- (d) A member of the Association must be a paid up member for the relevant Membership Year in order to vote at its Annual General Meeting and to participate in its main competitions within that Membership Year.
- (e) The Membership Year shall run for the twelve month period from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March.
- (f) A member of the Association becomes a paid up member through payment of any Association Pay to Play county component when participating in events at an affiliated Duplicated Bridge Club, and/or through payment of an annual subscription for their Association membership category.
- (g) If any Association member has not paid their annual subscription by 31<sup>st</sup> July then that Association member will not be able to vote at the following AGM as a paid up Association member.
- (h) An Association member ceases to be a paid up Association member on 31<sup>st</sup> July if at that date the Association member has not paid any outstanding annual subscription. That member can subsequently become a paid up Association member on payment of the current Membership year's subscription, but this late payment shall not override clause 3.(g) above.
- (i) For the avoidance of doubt, if an Association member is within a membership category that has a nil Association Pay to Play county component and a nil annual subscription for a Membership Year, then that member shall automatically become a paid up Association member for that Membership Year.
- (j) The Association Pay to Play county component and each of the Association member category's annual subscription, for the Membership Year starting in the following 1<sup>st</sup> April, shall be determined by a simple majority of the paid up members at the preceding Annual General Meeting.
- (k) The Association membership categories shall be as follows:
  - (i) Ordinary Association Member – a Player Member of the EBU who has their primary allegiance recorded with the Association on the 1<sup>st</sup> April of the Membership Year. An Ordinary Association Member shall also be a new Player member of the EBU whose EBU membership start date is within the Membership Year and that member's primary allegiance is recorded with the Association on their EBU membership start date.
  - (ii) Dual Members – a Player Member of the EBU who does not have their primary allegiance recorded with the Association by 1<sup>st</sup> April of the Membership Year.
  - (iii) Honorary Life Members - A General Meeting of the Association may, on the recommendation of the General Committee, elect an individual as an Honorary Life Member of the Association.
  - (iv) Junior Members - Any individual, who is qualified to become an ordinary member of the Association but who is under the age of twenty-five on the first day of January preceding the beginning of the subscription year, shall be admitted as a Junior Member of the Association.

- (v) Affiliated Clubs - Any Contract Bridge Club, or any club whose activities include the playing of Duplicate Contract Bridge, whose area of activity lies wholly or partly within the County of Norfolk, or in an adjoining County, may become affiliated to the Association.

(g) Restrictions on Members

- (i) Each member of the Association shall undertake to observe and be bound by the Laws of Duplicate Contract Bridge and the rules, regulations and Bye-Laws of the English Bridge Union for the time being in force.
- (ii) The Association shall have the powers and the procedures for the enforcement by its Conduct and Disciplinary Committees of the standards of fair play, courtesy and personal deportment prescribed in the Bye-Laws and regulations for the time being of the English Bridge Union, to which each member of the Association shall be required to conform.
- (iii) Only Ordinary Members or Junior Members or Honorary Life Members of the Association may serve as officers of the Association or as members of any of the Association's Committees or Sub-Committees.
- (iv) Any member of the Association may also be a member of one or more other County Associations.
- (v) An individual member for whom the Association is not his County Association of Primary Allegiance, as defined by the English Bridge Union, shall not be eligible to represent the Association in any national or inter-county competition

#### 4. OFFICERS

The Officers of the Association shall consist of the following:

- (a) The President
- (b) The Chairman
- (c) The Secretary
- (d) The Treasurer
- (e) The Competition Secretary
- (f) The Chief Tournament Director
- (g) The Membership Secretary
- (h) The Congress Secretary
- (i) The Minute Secretary
- (j) The Publicity Officer

- (k) The Education Officer
- (l) The Club Liaison Officer
- (m) Chairman of the Conduct Committee
- (n) The Shareholders in the English Bridge Union Ltd., of whom there shall be as many in number as may, from time to time, be stipulated in the Bye-Laws of the English Bridge Union.

A General Meeting of the Association may, on the recommendation of the General Committee, elect one or more Honorary Life Vice-Presidents from among those individual members who have made an exceptional contribution to the Association over a long period of time.

There shall be no prohibition on any individual member being the holder simultaneously of more than one of the offices of the Association.

No payment or other reward for services shall be made at any time to any officer of the Association other than the reimbursement of any expense properly incurred by the officer on the Association's business.

## 5. MANAGEMENT

- (a) The Association shall be managed by a General Committee, a Management Committee and a number of Sub-Committees.
- (b) The General Committee shall comprise the following:
  - (i) The officers.
  - (i) One representative of each Affiliated Club.
  - (ii) No more than three General Representatives.
  - (iii) The Chairmen of the Tournament Committee, the Congress Committee, the Selection Committee, the Conduct Committee and Disciplinary Committee, and of any other properly constituted Sub-Committees of the General Committee.
- (c) The Management Committee shall comprise the following:
  - (i) The Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Competition Secretary and Chief Tournament Director.
  - (ii) No more than four General Members.
- (d) Sub-Committees
 

There shall be the following Sub-Committees:

  - (i) The Tournament Committee.
  - (ii) The Congress Committee.
  - (iii) The Selection Committee.

(iv) The Conduct Committee.

(v) The Disciplinary Committee

The General Committee may, at any time, create, dissolve or vary the composition of any other Sub-Committee. In creating such a Sub-Committee, the General Committee shall specify which, if any, of the officers shall be ex officio members and the maximum number of additional members. A subsequent decision to reduce the size of such a Sub-Committee shall not curtail the term of office of any elected member.

The President, Chairman and Secretary of the Association shall be ex officio members of all Sub-Committees other than the Selection Committee and the Conduct and Disciplinary Committees.

Sub-Committees shall report to the General Committee.

(e) The Tournament Committee shall comprise the following:

(i) The Competition Secretary, the Chief Tournament Director, the Education Officer, the Chairmen of the Selection Committee, Conduct and Disciplinary Committees.

(ii) No more than seven General Members.

(f) The Congress Committee shall comprise the following:

(i) The Congress Secretary, Competition Secretary and Treasurer.

(ii) No more than seven General Members.

(g) The Selection Committee shall comprise the following:

No fewer than three and no more than five General Members.

(h) The Conduct Committee shall comprise the following:

No fewer than two and no more than six additional members chosen by the Chairman of the Committee who shall be nominated on an ad hoc basis by the Management Committee from a panel of appropriate members of the Association nominated for the purpose by the Chairman of the Committee and approved by the Management Committee.

(I) The Disciplinary Committee shall comprise the following:

No fewer than two and no more than six additional members chosen by the Chairman of the Committee from a panel of appropriate members of the Association nominated for the purpose by the Chairman of the Committee and approved by the Management Committee.

## 6. GENERAL MEETINGS

General Meetings of the Association shall be held on the following occasions:

An Ordinary General Meeting, to be known as the Annual General Meeting (hereinafter referred to as "the AGM"), shall be held each year, normally during the month of

September, no later than the thirty-first day of October in any year. The members will be notified of the time and place of the AGM by individual mailing.

- (a) An Extraordinary General Meeting shall be held within thirty days of a resolution calling for such a meeting to be held being adopted by either the Management Committee or the General Committee. Such a resolution shall specify the business which shall be discussed at that meeting and no other business may be discussed at the meeting.
- (b) An Extraordinary General Meeting shall be held within thirty days of a petition calling for such a meeting, bearing the signatures of no fewer than fifty ordinary members, being presented to the Secretary. Such a petition shall specify the business which shall be discussed at that meeting and no other business may be discussed at the meeting.
- (c) The quorum for a General Meeting and an Extraordinary General Meeting shall be 30 fully paid up members.

## 7. GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

General Committee Meetings shall be held on the following occasions:

- (a) An Ordinary General Committee Meeting, to be known as the Spring General Committee Meeting, shall be held annually, normally during the month of March, no later than the thirty-first day of March in any year, except that, in years when Easter falls in March, the Meeting may be held no later than the second Sunday in April.
- (b) An Ordinary General Committee Meeting, to be known as the Autumn General Committee Meeting, shall be held annually immediately prior to the AGM.
- (c) An Extraordinary General Committee Meeting shall be held within thirty days of a resolution calling for such a meeting to be held being adopted by the Management Committee. Such a resolution shall specify the business which shall be discussed at that meeting and no other business may be discussed at the meeting.
- (d) An Extraordinary General Committee Meeting shall be held within thirty days of a petition calling for such a meeting, bearing the signatures of the representatives of no fewer than one third of the Affiliated Clubs, being presented to the Secretary. Such a petition shall specify the business which shall be discussed at that meeting and no other business may be discussed at the meeting.

## 8. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Management Committee shall meet at its own discretion.

## 9. SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Sub-Committees shall meet at their own discretion.

## 10. ELECTIONS

- (a) The Secretary, Treasurer, Competition Secretary and Chief Tournament Director shall be elected by the AGM to take office on the first day of April next following or, if later, at the conclusion of the Spring General Committee Meeting next following.
- (b) The President of the Association shall be elected by the Autumn General Committee Meeting to take office on the first day of April next following or, if later, at the conclusion of the Spring General Committee Meeting next following.
- (c) The Chairman of the Association shall be elected by the Spring General Committee Meeting, from among members of the General Committee, to take office at the conclusion of that meeting or, if later, on the first day of April in the same year.
- (d) The remainder of the officers shall be elected by the Spring General Committee Meeting to take office at the conclusion of that meeting or, if later, on the first day of April in the same year.
- (e) Retiring officers may offer themselves for re-election except in the following circumstances:
  - (i) No individual member may serve for more than one term as the President of the Association.
  - (ii) No individual member may serve for more than three consecutive terms as the Chairman of the Association.
- (f) Casual vacancies, during the course of the year, among the officers shall be filled by the Management Committee.
- (g) Club representatives
  - (i) Club representatives shall be elected or appointed by the Affiliated Clubs at any time to take office at any specified time. Each club shall notify the Secretary of the Association in writing of the name and address of its representative.
  - (ii) There shall be no prohibition on any officer of the Association also being elected to serve as a club representative nor on any individual member being elected to serve simultaneously as the representative of more than one affiliated club.
- (h) Three or fewer General Representatives may be elected by the AGM to serve on the General Committee with effect from the first day of April next following or, if later, at the conclusion of the Spring General Committee Meeting next following.
- (i) Four or fewer General Representatives shall be elected by the Spring General Committee Meeting to serve on the Management Committee with effect from the conclusion of that meeting or, if later, the first day of April in the same year.
- (j) The members of all Sub-Committees, other than the Selection Committee and the Conduct and Disciplinary Committees, shall be elected by the Spring General Committee Meeting to take office at the conclusion of that meeting or, if later, on the first day of April in the same year.

- (k) The Chairmen of the Conduct and Disciplinary Committees shall be elected by the Spring General Committee Meeting to take office at the conclusion of that meeting or, if later, on the first day of April in the same year.
- (l) The members of the Selection Committee shall be elected by the first meeting, following its election in any year by the General Committee, of the Tournament Committee, to take office at the conclusion of that meeting.
- (m) Each Sub-Committee, other than the *Conduct and Disciplinary* Committees shall, at its first meeting following its election in any year, elect its own Chairman and Secretary from among the members elected to serve on the Sub-Committee.
- (n) The term of office of every officer, every General Representative on the General Committee or the Management Committee, all members of Sub-Committees other than the Selection Committee and the Conduct and Disciplinary Committees and the Chairman of the Conduct Committee shall end in the year following that in which it commenced on the thirty-first day of March or, if later, immediately prior to the conclusion of the Spring General Committee Meeting in that later year.
- (o) The term of office of members of the Selection Committee shall end immediately prior to the conclusion of the meeting of the Tournament Committee which elects its successor.
- (p) The term of office of additional members of the *Conduct and Disciplinary* Committees shall commence immediately before the opening of an enquiry and end immediately after the closure of that enquiry.

## 11. CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS

- (a) Nominations for any office or for any Sub-Committee or the General Committee must be in writing, must be signed by two Ordinary Members other than the candidate and may be submitted to any member of the Management Committee.
- (b) The Management Committee shall ensure that any nominations which are valid under the terms of (a) shall be included on the agenda for the appropriate meeting, provided that they were received no fewer than twenty-eight days before the scheduled date of that meeting, and may, at its discretion, include any nominations received later than this but before the preparation of the agenda.
- (c) Nominations shall be considered valid if they appear on the agenda for the meeting at which the election is to take place and if the member nominated is eligible to be elected at the time of the election.
- (d) For all elections the following procedure shall be followed:
  - (j) If the number of valid nominations is less than the number of places to be filled, any candidates for whom valid nominations have been received shall be elected without a vote. The election will then proceed for the remaining place or places and nominations shall be accepted from the floor of the meeting.
  - (ii) If the number of valid nominations, including any accepted under the terms of (i), is exactly equal to the number of places to be filled, the candidate or candidates shall be elected without a vote.

- (iii) If a vote is required for a single place, it shall be conducted by a show of hands.
  - (iv) If a vote is required for more than one place, each member present and *eligible* to vote shall be supplied with a ballot paper showing clearly the names of all candidates and the number of places to be filled. The Chairman shall appoint one or more tellers to collect and count the ballot papers. The appropriate number of candidates who receive the largest number of votes shall be elected. Any tie shall be determined by lot.
  - (v) In the event of this procedure leaving any vacancy unfilled, the Management Committee shall have the authority to appoint to any such vacancy any Member who would have been eligible for nomination at the time of the election.
- (e) For the purposes of electing the Chairman at the Spring General Committee Meeting, the retiring Chairman shall vacate the chair which shall be taken by any other member of the Management Committee who may be present.
  - (f) All affiliated Clubs are entitled to propose and vote for a County Representative to sit on the Regional Club Committee. All nominations for this must be submitted to the County Secretary in writing (or email) at least 28 days prior to the A.G.M. In the event that there are more than one nomination for the post each affiliated club shall have one vote to be exercised (by letter or email) to the County Secretary to arrive prior to the commencement of the A.G.M.

## 12. RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY

- (a) The General Committee shall have overall responsibility for the administration of the affairs of the Association according to this Constitution.
- (b) The Management Committee shall be responsible for the day-to-day management of the Association and shall act with the authority of the General Committee in all matters, having regard to any decisions of fact or policy which may have been made by the General Committee.
- (c) The Tournament Committee shall have the following specific responsibilities:
  - (i) To approve and publicize a programme of County competitions.
  - (ii) To appoint an organiser and a tournament director for each County competition.
  - (iii) To arrange the dates and venues of all County matches.
  - (iv) To elect the Selection Committee.
- (d) The Selection Committee shall have sole responsibility for selecting players to represent the County where the conditions of a competition require this and, where appropriate, to appoint a Captain of the selected team.
- (e) The Congress Committee shall be responsible for the organisation, annually, of the Norfolk Congress. The President of the Association, whose term of office

ends in the year in which a Congress is held, shall officiate at the opening and closing ceremonies of that congress.

(f) The Conduct Committee

The Management Committee of the Association shall appoint its Conduct Committee. The Conduct Committee shall be responsible for investigating complaints against the Association's members and to determine whether a disciplinary offence should be referred to the Association's Disciplinary Committee.

The Conduct Committee shall consist of no fewer than three members of the Association 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

(g) The Disciplinary Committee

The Management Committee of the Association shall appoint the Disciplinary Committee. 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 Association 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

(h) The procedures of the Conducts and Disciplinary Committees shall conform mutatis mutandis to those prescribed in the Bye-Laws of the English Bridge Union for enquiry by its Law and Ethics Committee into allegations of misconduct by individual members.

### 13. FINANCE

(a) The Association shall be a non-profit-making body but the General Committee shall ensure that sufficient reserves are maintained to meet all of the Association's foreseeable expenses.

(b) It shall be the responsibility of the General Committee to ensure that the funds of the Association are employed in such a manner as to be in the best interests of the Association and of the game of Contract Bridge.

(d) Accounts shall be made up to the thirty-first day of March in each year and shall be certified by an Honorary Auditor appointed at the preceding AGM. The accounts shall be submitted for approval to the AGM next following.

#### 14. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

The Constitution may be amended by a General Meeting of the Association provided that the resolution to amend the Constitution has been properly published on the agenda for the meeting and that the resolution is supported by no fewer than two-thirds of those present and voting.

#### 15. INTERPRETATIONS

In this Constitution, where the context so admits:

- (a) The masculine includes the feminine and the singular the plural, and
- (b) "individual member" shall mean and include "ordinary member", "*dual member*", "honorary life member" and "junior member".
- (c) reference to the County of Norfolk shall be deemed to include those areas of adjoining Counties where, due to their geographical position, members may elect Norfolk as their County of primary allegiance.