

AVON CONTRACT BRIDGE ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION

(ratified at the AGM on 04/05/2011)
(amended at the AGM on 20/05/2012)

1. TITLE AND CONSTITUENT MEMBERSHIP

1.1

The 'Avon Contract Bridge Association' is an Association as defined in the Bye Laws of the English Bridge Union Ltd., and shall be referred to as the 'Association' throughout the Constitution.

1.2

The Association is a Constituent Member of the English Bridge Union Ltd. It shall abide with its Bye Laws, Rules and Policies. Hereinafter the English Bridge Union Ltd shall be referred to as the EBU.

2. OBJECTS OF THE ASSOCIATION

2.1

To promote Duplicate Contract Bridge in the County of Avon and the encouragement of inter-club, inter-county and national competitions.

2.2

To employ the funds of the Association in the best interests of the game of Duplicate Contract Bridge, having regard to the fact that the Association is a non-profit making body.

3. MANAGEMENT OF THE ASSOCIATION

3.1

The management of the affairs of the Association shall be vested in the following Officers:-

- (a) Chairman (who acts as the chairman of the Executive Committee)
- (b) Vice Chairman
- (c) Secretary
- (d) Treasurer
- (e) Tournament Secretary

and not more than six other members of the Association, who together will form the Executive Committee. All Officers and other Executive Committee members must be elected annually at the Annual General Meeting by a simple majority of the paid up members of the Association.

(Note: the position of Membership Secretary was removed at an AGM held on 20/05/2012 as this is now a redundant post.)

3.2

The Executive Committee shall meet from time to time as it deems fit, but not fewer than four times within a calendar year. A quorum shall consist of six members and, in the event of a tie on votes cast, the chairperson of the meeting, shall have the casting vote.

3.3

The Executive Committee shall have the power to co-opt and to fill any casual vacancies.

3.4

The Executive Committee may from time to time appoint and disband subcommittees as may be deemed necessary, and may delegate to them such powers or duties as may be deemed to be expedient. Such sub-committees shall conduct their business as directed by the Executive Committee.

3.5

The Executive Committee is responsible for the control of all monies and assets of the Association. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the collection of all monies due to the Association, payment of all accounts and for keeping the books of account.

The Treasurer shall account to the Executive Committee for all financial transactions as and when required, and prepare a report and statement of accounts duly audited, for each Annual General Meeting.

The signatures of the Treasurer and one other authorised member of the Executive Committee shall be required on the paperwork for the payment of monies out of the Association.

4. MEMBERSHIP

4.1

All members of the Association must be Player Members of the EBU.

4.2

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.

4.3

A Player Member of the EBU whose primary allegiance is with another Association or does not have primary allegiance to any Association can become a member of the Association by meeting its terms and conditions in force at the time of the request for membership.

4.4

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.

4.5

The Membership Year shall run for the twelve month period from 1st April to 31st March.

4.6

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 Duplicate Bridge Club, and/or through payment of an annual subscription for their Association membership category.

4.7

If any Association member has not paid their annual subscription by 31st May then that Association member will not be able to vote at the following AGM as a paid up Association member.

4.8

An Association member ceases to be a paid up Association member on 31st May 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 4.7 above.

4.9

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.

4.10

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 April, shall be determined by a simple majority of the paid up members at the preceding Annual General Meeting.

4.11

The Association membership categories shall be as follows:

4.11.1 Ordinary Member - a Player Member of the EBU who has their primary allegiance recorded with the Association.

4.11.2 Dual Member - a Player Member of the EBU who has their primary allegiance recorded with another Association.

4.11.3 Direct member – a Direct Player Member of the EBU who does not have primary allegiance to any Association.

5. LIFE MEMBERS

The Executive Committee of the Association may honour long standing members for their service to the Association by electing them to life membership of the Association.

A Life Member of the Association shall automatically become a paid up member of the Association for each Membership Year whilst they remain a Playing Member of the EBU and shall not be required to pay any annual subscription for their the Association membership category. In addition a Life Member of the Association shall not be required to pay the entrance fee to any of its county competitions.

6. MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

6.1

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 subscriptions, appointment of an Auditor and election of EBU shareholders.

6.2

A request for a Special Resolution from a paid up Association member, which shall require a vote of the paid up members at the AGM, must be sent in writing to the Secretary no later than four weeks before the date of the AGM. The request must be supported in writing by two other paid up members of the Association.

6.3

A nomination for a paid up Association member to serve on the Executive Committee must be received in writing by the Secretary four weeks before the date of the AGM. The nomination must be from a paid up member of the Association and supported by another paid up member of the Association.

6.4

The Secretary shall publish all nominations to serve on the Executive Committee no later than three weeks before the AGM.

6.5

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 affiliated club and directly to members who do not belong to clubs of the Association at least 21 days before the date of the meeting. The meeting shall deal only with such matters.

6.6

The EGM shall be held no earlier than 28 days and no later than 42 days after the Secretary has received the written request.

6.7

Any vote at an AGM or an EGM, which is tied, shall be split by the casting vote of the chairperson of the AGM or EGM.

6.8

An AGM or an EGM shall be deemed to have been published three days after written details are posted (and this shall include e- mail posting) by the Secretary to the secretaries of the Association affiliated clubs.

The Secretary shall make every effort to widen the circulation using available individual member email lists and the Association website if available.

6.9

The quorum for an AGM and EGM shall be thirty paid up members.

6.10

The Secretary shall be required to arrange a further EGM, if an AGM or EGM respectively fails to reach a quorum. In both circumstances the additional EGM shall be scheduled to occur within the period of 28 days to 42 days after the aborted AGM or EGM.

The Secretary shall publish the date, venue and time of the EGM at least three weeks before the date of the additional EGM.

6.11

If the additional EGM once again fails to reach a quorum, the Executive Committee shall be able to take any decisions necessary so that it can continue to manage the affairs of the Association.

7. MEMBERS' BEHAVIOUR

7.1

Each member of the Association shall be required in connection with the game of Duplicate Contract Bridge, to conform to the standards of fair play, courtesy and personal deportment prescribed by the Bye Laws and regulations for the time being of the EBU.

7.2

The Association shall have the powers and the procedures for the enforcement of the requirement in clause 7.1. The procedures that will be followed (which includes 'Disciplinary Procedures') are those as laid down by the English Bridge Union, which may be updated from time to time (the latest procedure(s) will be used). This was agreed at an AGM held on 20th May 2012.

8. AFFILIATED DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB

Any Duplicate Bridge Club may affiliate to the Association and all such Clubs shall be affiliated to the EBU. The Association has the right to determine at an Annual General Meeting through a simple majority of its paid up members, the annual club affiliation fee to be charged for the twelve month period from the following 1 April.

9. ELECTIONS FOR THE REGIONAL CLUB COMMITTEE

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 is 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.

10. CONSTITUTION AMENDMENTS

Alterations to the Constitution shall be made only at an AGM or EGM through the positive votes of at least two thirds of the paid up members present.

11. DISSOLUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION

The Association can be dissolved at an EGM provided at least two thirds of the total paid up members present on the date of the EGM positively vote for its dissolution. The assets of the Association on a dissolution shall be donated to a charity or charities decided by the paid up members attending the dissolution meeting.

12. INTERPRETATION

On all questions of interpretation of the Constitution the decisions of the Executive Committee shall be binding until or unless upset at an AGM or EGM. The Executive Committee shall determine any point or matter that is not covered by the Constitution.

13. DEFINITIONS

The terms Association, Constituent Member, Duplicate Contract Bridge and Playing Member have the meanings set out in the Bye Laws of the EBU.