

CONSTITUTION OF THE TORBAY CHESS LEAGUE

1. Name and Legal Status

1.1 The League shall be known as The Torbay Chess League (“the League”).

1.2 The League shall be an unincorporated association.

2. Aims

To promote the development of chess in South Devon and adjacent areas by

2.1 arranging closed competitions for clubs and individuals at all levels of play

2.2 organising open chess congresses, normally one or more each year

2.3 facilitating improvements in the standard of play, particularly at junior level

2.4 optionally, participating in external competitions as the League

2.5 supporting other relevant chess organisations

2.6 undertaking any other activity directly related to the foregoing aims.

3. Governance

3.1 The Officers of the League, who must be members, shall be:

- Mandatory: President, Secretary, Competition Secretary and Treasurer
- Optional (if elected at the AGM): Junior Chess Secretary, Match Captain, Publicity Officer, Equipment Officer, Congress Organiser.

Normally, no person may hold more than two of these offices, all of which are voluntary. Officers should always act in the best interests of members.

3.2 To be eligible for the office of President, a candidate should usually have served for at least the preceding year as an Officer; the new President should accept that office on the understanding that, other than in unforeseen circumstances, he/she would be willing to give at least 12 months notice of any intention to stand down.

3.3 The operational management of the League shall be vested in an Executive, comprising the President, Secretary, Competition Secretary, Treasurer and (if appointed) the Junior Chess Secretary. Meetings of the Executive shall be held, when necessary for the effective and efficient conduct of the League’s affairs, at the President’s discretion. The minutes of any such meetings shall be tabled at the next Council meeting.

3.4 The policy and strategy of the League shall be governed by the Council, comprising the Executive, the other Officers, one delegate to the Devon County Chess Association (DCCA), one delegate to the English Chess Federation (ECF) and one representative from each affiliated club. The Council may, from time to time, co-opt a maximum of two other persons for specific purposes and for periods of up to one year. It may appoint subcommittees whose business shall be conducted in accordance with the principles of this Constitution and its Rules to the extent that either or both are relevant and practicable.

3.5 The Council shall meet in the autumn and on such occasions as the Secretary, in consultation with the President, may deem necessary or at the request of seven members of that body. The agenda and relevant documentation shall be sent to each Council member at least fourteen days before the meeting.

3.6 At the Autumn Council Meeting, normally in September, the main emphasis will be on the new season and, in particular the admission of new clubs and members, changes to the structure and rules of the competitions, the arrangements for any Torbay Individual competitions, and the arrangement of fixtures.

3.7 All clubs will advise the Competition Secretary of the teams they wish to enter at least seventy-two hours before the time for the Autumn Council Meeting, so that fixture pairing charts can be prepared. It shall be a condition of entry to the competitions that all fixtures are agreed at this meeting and that each club sends a representative with the authority to do so. Each club shall send a complete list of its fixtures to the Competition Secretary within one week after the meeting.

3.8 Without prior approval from an AGM or SHM, an Officer, the Executive or the Council shall not undertake any enterprise that would expose the League or its members to untoward risks, financial or otherwise.

3.9 A reasoned appeal against the decision of an Officer may be made, in writing, to the Secretary, who will include it in the agenda for the next AGM or Council meeting. The decision at that meeting shall be final.

- 3.10 The League either may hold its AGM as a standalone meeting (normally in May or June), or may combine the AGM with the ACM held in October. The determination of whether to combine the two meetings shall be made by a resolution at the previous AGM, or by the Chairman and Secretary jointly in the absence of such a resolution. The agenda and relevant documentation shall be sent to each Unattached Member, Officer, delegate, affiliated club and club representative at least fourteen days before the meeting.
- 3.11 The objects of the AGM shall, *inter alia*, be: a) to receive reports from Officers and delegates; b) to present trophies; c) to receive and approve accounts; d) to approve income and expenditure estimates from the Treasurer; e) to elect or re-elect for the ensuing year all Officers and delegates; treasurers hold positions of special trust and their election requires, additionally, the endorsement of the President; f) to decide whether to appoint Auditor(s). Unfilled or unforeseen vacancies shall be dealt with by the President at his discretion.
- 3.14 Agendas for AGMs and meetings of the Council and Executive shall be prepared by the Secretary in agreement with the President.
- 3.15 Any member may submit an appropriate item for the agenda of an AGM to the Secretary at least three weeks before the meeting.
- 3.16 Any Council member may submit an appropriate item for the agenda of a Council meeting to the Secretary at least three weeks before the meeting.
- 3.17 A Special General Meeting (SGM) may be called by the President, the Council or by a minimum of twenty members signing a written application to the Secretary stating the object of the meeting. The Secretary shall respond to such a requirement within six weeks. The agenda, with relevant documentation, shall be sent to all signatories, Unattached Members, Officers, delegates and affiliated clubs giving at least twenty-one days' notice. The matter concerned shall be the only substantive item on the agenda.
- 3.18 Meetings shall take place in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution and the Rules for the Conduct of Council Meetings, AGMs and SGMs hereto annexed.

4. Membership

- 4.1 Chess clubs and other bodies, admitted by the Council in its sole discretion, may affiliate to the League on payment of the appropriate subscription and become corporate members. *Bonafide* members of affiliated clubs, who are officers of, or have played in the League for that club, shall, *ipso facto*, be members of the League.
- 4.2 Individuals, who are not members of affiliated clubs, may become members of the League on payment of the appropriate subscription and shall be known as Unattached Members. Unattached Members shall only be allowed in a given subscription year if subscription fees for Unattached Members were determined at the last AGM prior to the start of the subscription year.

5. Subscriptions

- 5.1 Subscriptions shall be determined by the League at its AGM.
- 5.2 The subscription year shall be from 1st September to 31st August.
- 5.3 Membership of the League shall be deemed to have lapsed for the current year, if the appropriate subscription has not been paid by 30th November.

6. Finance

- 6.1 The financial year shall be from 1st May to 30th April.
- 6.2 Officers shall keep a record of all financial transactions and pass it to the Treasurer, who shall be consulted before any unplanned expenditure is incurred.
- 6.3 Expenses wholly and necessarily incurred by Officers on behalf of the League shall be reimbursed.
- 6.4 With the prior approval of the Council, the Treasurer and the Congress Treasurer shall maintain bank/building society accounts which most advantageously meet the needs of the League. There shall be two or more signatories to each account, one of whom shall be the treasurer for that account, but only one signature shall be required for disbursements from the cheque account. The other signatories shall in each case be Officers of the League. The treasurers shall be separately accountable to the Council and to the AGM for the use of these accounts.
- 6.5 If appointed, the Auditor(s) shall examine the accounts and the accounting procedures annually to verify that they give a true and full record of all activities undertaken in the name of the League.

7. Activities

7.1 Officers shall, in accordance with Council policy, exercise the following main functions:

- **President**
 - provides leadership.
- **Secretary**
 - supports the President and provides continuity
 - formally represents the League; ensures adherence to the Constitution and its procedures at meetings
 - ensures that the business of the League is dealt with in timely fashion
 - organises meetings and keeps formal minutes
 - acts as the interface with the outside world
 - provides to the DCCA the League's entry for the ECF Yearbook
 - maintains a trophy register
 - collects and conserves source material for the historical record of chess activity in the League's area.
- **Competition Secretary**
 - organises and controls inter-club team competitions within the structure and competition rules approved by the Council
 - organises or delegates any Torbay Individual Competitions, open only to current and former members of the League, and ensures that any dates are advised to the General Secretary, DCCA, in time for their inclusion in the annual calendar of events.
- **Treasurer**
 - exercises financial control and ensures compliance with statutory requirements
 - arranges any necessary insurance
 - affiliates the League to the DCCA and registers it with the ECF
 - formulates, with other Officers as appropriate, estimates for income and expenditure, including subscriptions and entry fees for competitions.
- **Junior Chess Secretary**
 - organises individual and team championships
 - arranges the participation of the League's junior members in team and individual events
 - organises development activities.
- **Match Captain**
 - organises any League participation in the West of England Chess Union's and the DCCA's graded jamborees
 - seeks other opportunities in which teams representing the League can participate.
- **Publicity Officer**
 - promotes to the general public the game of chess, the activities of the League and the opportunities that its clubs provide.
- **Equipment Officer**
 - safeguards the equipment owned by the League and the Congress
 - controls its use to further the aims of the League; where appropriate, secures revenue for its use or disposal.

7.2 The Congress Secretary, in consultation with the President, *ex officio*, will form a Congress Committee which, in accordance with Council policy, will normally organise at least one annual congress open to all players; the Committee shall have the discretion to co-opt other persons needed to run the congress(es).

7.3 The League shall, in accordance with the terms thereof, discharge any trust with which it may be endowed.

7.4 The Council should be pro-active in identifying and pursuing other activities which would directly further the aims of the League.

7.5 The League shall review this Constitution and its annexed Rules in the year 2023 and every fifth year thereafter.

7.6 A decision to dissolve the League may be taken only at a Special General Meeting. Subsequent to such a decision, the Council shall bring about the termination of the League's affairs in a responsible and orderly manner. Dissolution shall be effective from the date on which the minutes of the final meeting of the Council are signed by the Chairman.

RULES FOR THE CONDUCT OF COUNCIL MEETINGS, AGMs AND SGMS

1. Quorum

1.1 A quorum shall be required as follows:

- three Officers for an Executive Meeting
- six members, including three Officers, for a Council Meeting
- eight members, including four Officers, for an AGM or SGM.

1.2 If a quorum is not present within one hour after the time appointed for the meeting to commence, the meeting shall be abandoned. In these circumstances the Secretary, in consultation with the President, shall make arrangements to reconvene the meeting at a later date.

2. Agenda

2.1 Items to be raised under Any Other Business must be notified to the Secretary or Chairman before the commencement of the meeting.

2.2 No decision shall be taken on any matter of substance not included in the original agenda for the meeting.

3. The Chairman

3.1 The President of the League shall act as Chairman; if he/she is absent, the Secretary shall take the Chair; if both are absent, a Chairman shall be elected from the other Officers present.

3.2 All business shall be addressed to the Chairman, who shall be responsible for the effective conduct of the meeting.

3.3 The Chairman shall formally open all meetings and deal first with the following items: (i) amendments to the order or contents of the agenda; (ii) apologies for absence; (iii) the signing of the minutes of the previous meeting, after their approval; (iv) matters arising from the minutes.

3.4 If he/she declares an interest in the matter under discussion, the Chairman shall vacate the Chair; in this circumstance he/she will nominate a deputy.

4. Rules of Debate

4.1 The Chairman shall decide the right of priority in speaking.

4.2 The Chairman may, at his discretion, impose a time limit on speakers.

4.3 For any motion or amendment to be accepted for debate, it must have a proposer and a seconder.

4.4 There shall be only one motion or amendment before the meeting at any one time.

4.5 Amendments shall be decided upon before the main proposal is put to a vote.

5. Voting

5.1 Each member present, including the Chairman, shall have one vote.

5.2 The Chairman shall have a second or casting vote in the event of a tie. Normally this vote should be cast in favour of the *status quo*.

5.3 Voting shall be by a show of hands. However, if in an AGM, SGM or Council meeting five members request a ballot, the Chairman shall adjourn the meeting for a short time to make the necessary arrangements.

5.4 For a motion or amendment to succeed, a simple majority shall be required except that any change to the Constitution or these Rules shall require at least two-thirds of those present, and eligible, formally to vote in favour.

6. General Rules

6.1 No question once decided may be re-opened at the same meeting.

6.2 Points of information may be raised by any member.

6.3 Points of order may be raised by any member; these must be framed as a question to the Chairman and shall relate only to the competence or conduct of the meeting.

6.4 The Chairman may formally declare a meeting to be closed at the end of business or, at his/her discretion, adjourn the meeting before the end of business, in which case the Secretary will notify the arrangements for the meeting to reconvene.

6.5 The Chairman's decision on the interpretation of these Rules shall be final. He/she shall also rule on any matter not covered by them or by the Constitution.