

# **CONSTITUTION OF THE ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS CROQUET CLUB**

(Revised: 9 March 2024)

## **1. NAME**

The club shall be called The Royal Tunbridge Wells Croquet Club, hereafter referred to as “the Club”.

## **2. OBJECTS**

The Club is formed to provide for its members croquet lawns and a clubhouse, to encourage its members to learn and participate in the sport of croquet, to promote participation in croquet within the local community and to supply all things incidental to the playing of croquet and associated social activities.

## **3. MEMBERSHIP CLASSES**

A. Ordinary member - Any person aged 18 years or over at the start of the Club year (1 January) who shall be entitled to use and enjoy all the facilities and activities of the Club and to vote at General Meetings.

B. Student member - Full-time students under 25 years of age at the start of the Club year (1 January). They may not hold office nor vote at any General Meeting of the Club. Student members under 18 are not entitled to a key and may therefore only play when there is another club member present.

C. Honorary member - Awarded in recognition of services to the Club, Honorary members may be elected at the Annual General Meeting on the recommendation of the Committee. A two-thirds majority of those members present at the meeting and voting will be necessary. Honorary members may be elected for life or for such other periods as may be appropriate to the Club and as such they shall be entitled to full rights and privileges of using the Club and shall be entitled to vote at any General Meeting.

D. Corporate member – A company, club or similar organisation. Members or employees of a Corporate member shall be entitled to use the Club facilities at a reduced rate. A representative of a Corporate member shall be entitled to vote at any General Meeting.

E. Second club member – A member of another club affiliated to Croquet England who has designated that as their primary club. They shall be entitled to use and enjoy all the facilities and activities of the Club and to vote at General Meetings.

F. Social member – A non-playing member who shall be entitled to use the facilities of the Club other than for playing croquet. They shall be entitled to vote at General Meetings.

## **4. HONORARY OFFICERS**

A. Ordinarily, the Honorary Officers of the Club shall consist of the Chairman, the Secretary and the Treasurer. Election of the Honorary Officers will take place at the Annual General Meeting and any two members of the Club may propose and second any candidate or candidates in writing to the Secretary not less than 14 days before such meeting takes place. Voting will take place at the Annual General Meeting and any candidate who receives a majority of the votes shall be elected unless there are multiple candidates for a given office, in which case the candidate who receives the largest number of votes shall be declared elected. Each Officer shall take office on election and shall hold office until the next Annual General Meeting, but may be re-elected to the same office or another office at that or any future AGM.

**B. THE HONORARY CHAIRMAN**

The Chairman is responsible for the general direction of Club affairs and represents the Club in the public relations aspects of its activities. He/she will chair meetings, direct committee procedures, oversee the day to day running of the Club and generally take responsibility for the well-being and good name of the Club.

**C. THE HONORARY SECRETARY**

The Secretary is responsible for the general administration of the Club. He/she shall keep full and correct minutes of all meetings and see to it that members are kept informed of all relevant procedures.

**D. THE HONORARY TREASURER**

The Treasurer shall receive subscriptions and shall transact all the financial business of the Club. He/she shall keep accounts of the Club and shall present an annual Statement of Account at each Annual General Meeting. The Treasurer shall have power to sue for and recover all sums due to the Club.

**5. COMMITTEE**

A. The Management of the Club (except as otherwise provided by these rules) shall be deputed to a Committee consisting of the Honorary Officers plus up to 6 Elected Members.

B. At the Annual General Meeting, Elected Members of the Committee shall retire but shall be eligible for re-election. Any two members of the Club may propose and second any candidate or candidates in writing to the Secretary not less than 14 days before such meeting takes place. Voting will take place at the Annual General Meeting and any candidate who receives a majority of the votes shall be elected unless there are more than 6 candidates, in which case each voting member may cast their vote for up to 6 candidates and the 6 candidates who receive the largest number of votes shall be declared elected. Elected Members will take office immediately.

C. In the event of a vacancy on the Committee or should any Honorary Officer or Elected Member become, in the opinion of the remainder of the Committee, unable to fulfil their duties, the Committee shall have power to appoint any member (except as otherwise provided by these rules) to fill such vacancy until the next Annual General Meeting.

D. The Committee shall meet as necessary to examine the Accounts and arrange the affairs of the Club. The quorum at Committee meetings shall be 3 Committee members. In the absence of the Honorary Chairman, the Committee shall appoint a chairman of the meeting from among those present

E. Any Committee member present shall have one vote upon every motion and in the case of equality of votes the chairman of the meeting shall have a second, casting vote.

F. Minutes shall be taken of all proceedings of the Committee and shall be open for inspection by any member of the Club by application to the Secretary. The minutes, whenever possible, must be written up within fourteen days of the relevant meeting and distributed to the Committee members forthwith.

**6. OTHER MEMBERSHIP MATTERS**

A. Membership of the Club shall be open to anyone interested in the sport on application, regardless of sex, age, disability, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, religion or other beliefs.

B. The Club will keep subscriptions at levels that will not pose a significant obstacle to people participating.

C. An application for membership may only be declined by the Committee if the membership of the person concerned would be likely, in the view of the Committee, to be contrary to the best interests of the sport or to the good conduct and interests of the Club. An applicant who has been refused membership may appeal by notice in writing. This notice must be sent to the Complaints Administrator of Croquet England within 14 days and shall be dealt with in accordance with the Croquet England Complaints Procedure.

D. On payment of the agreed subscription (and/or joining fee) by a new member, the Secretary shall furnish him/her with a copy of all relevant documents. No-one is deemed to be a member able to enjoy the rights and privileges of the Club until such payment has been made.

E. A member of the Club who has not paid his or her subscription by a final due date prescribed by the Committee may, at the discretion of the Committee, be deemed to have resigned.

## **7. CONTACT DETAILS OF MEMBERS**

It is the duty of each member to ensure that the Secretary has his or her current contact details. The Secretary will maintain a list of contact details for all members.

## **8. RULES OF MEMBERSHIP**

A. Every member shall be bound by and submit to the rules and regulations of the Club.

B. All members are responsible for the safe keeping and proper use of playing equipment and other property and for their guests. Any misuse of and damage to such property must be reported to a Committee member.

C. No member shall take away, or permit to be taken away, from the Club any property of the Club unless authorised by a Committee member of the Club.

D. The rules of the Club in relation to the everyday use of the Club and its facilities will be posted on the notice board in the clubhouse and as such members will be deemed to have full knowledge of the rules of the Club.

## **9. SUBSCRIPTIONS**

The annual subscription (and/or joining fee) for each category of member shall be determined by the Committee as will Green Fees for visitors per lawn per session.

## **10. DISCIPLINE AND APPEALS**

A. Any complaint regarding the behaviour of a member should be submitted in writing to the Secretary or Chairman.

B. A panel of three Committee members will meet to hear the complaint within 30 days of it being lodged; this panel will not include any of the complainants or subjects of the complaint. The panel has the power to take appropriate disciplinary action including the termination of membership.

C. The outcome of the disciplinary process will be notified in writing to the person(s) who lodged the complaint and the member(s) against whom the complaint was made within 7 days of the hearing.

D. There will be the right of appeal by the member(s) against whom the complaint was lodged following the announcement of any disciplinary action. Any appeal must be notified in writing to the Secretary or Chairman within 14 days of issuance of the notification of the

outcome of the process. The Committee (excluding any recused members) will consider the appeal within 14 days of the Secretary or Chairman receiving the appeal.

E. If the panel recommends a member is expelled, as they have behaved in a manner likely to bring the Club into disrepute or cause substantial prejudice to it, that decision must be ratified by a vote at a General Meeting and provided that:

- The resolution was carried by at least two-thirds of those attending and voting.
- This was the only business at the meeting.
- Before putting the motion to the vote, the member had a full opportunity to address the meeting.

F. The member expelled may appeal by notice in writing. This notice must be sent to the Complaints Administrator of Croquet England within 14 days and shall be dealt with in accordance with the Croquet England Complaints Procedure.

G. Following expulsion, any subscription for the whole of that year that has been paid by that member may be returned or retained by the Club in accordance with a decision of the Committee.

## **11. CESSATION OF MEMBERSHIP**

Any person on ceasing to be a member of the Club shall forfeit all rights to and claims upon the Club, its property and funds and shall return to the Secretary any keys and other Club property.

## **12. GENERAL MATTERS**

A. The Club shall be affiliated to Croquet England.

B. The Club will operate on a not-for-profit basis and spend funds only to meet its objects. No payment shall be made from the Club's funds to any individual member of the Club except as repayment of out-of-pocket expenses incurred on the Club's business or for services provided with the approval of the Committee. No distributions of surplus income or assets shall be made to members by way of dividend or otherwise. Any surpluses shall be retained by the Club and used to further its objects.

C. The financial year of the Club shall end on the 31st December in each year to which day the accounts of the Club shall be balanced.

D. If it is deemed appropriate, a professional Accountant shall be appointed at the Annual General Meeting to audit the Statement of Accounts and shall certify the same.

E. Bank Accounts may be opened in the name of the Club at any Bank or Building Society designated by the Committee. The mandate shall specify that all cheques drawn on such accounts shall bear the signature of any two of the nominees selected by the Committee.

F. The Club may appoint up to 5 Trustees who shall be empowered to hold property on behalf of the Club. The initial appointment of such Trustees will be the responsibility of the Committee. However, following this initial appointment, Trustees will be subject to re-election by the membership at the next Annual General Meeting. Any two members of the Club may propose and second any candidate or candidates in writing to the Secretary not less than 14 days before such meeting takes place. Voting will take place at the Annual General Meeting and any candidate who receives a majority of the votes shall be elected unless there are more than 5 candidates, in which case each voting member may cast their vote for up to 5 candidates and the candidates who receive the largest number of votes shall be declared elected. Trustees will take office immediately.

G. Neither the Club, nor any person acting on their behalf, shall be liable to any member or guest for loss or damage to any property occurring, from whatever cause, in or about the Club's premises, nor for any injury sustained by any such person whilst on or entering or leaving such premises unless such loss, damage or injury is caused by the negligence or, in so far as the Club is covered by insurance, the misconduct of the Club, or of a person who is acting or is deemed to be acting on behalf of the Club.

### **13. GENERAL MEETINGS**

A. A General Meeting can be held when the Committee considers it appropriate.

B. A General Meeting can also be held if a written submission is submitted to the Secretary by a minimum of five members of the Club; such a submission must itemise the matters to be discussed and include the full text of any resolution to be proposed by them. In this situation, the Committee will schedule the meeting within two months of such notice being received.

C. A General Meeting will be held at such time and place as the Committee shall determine:

- Notice convening a General Meeting shall be made to all members using the most recent contact details notified to the Club not less than 21 days before such meeting takes place.
- All resolutions must be submitted to the Secretary at least 14 days ahead of a General Meeting.
- The Secretary will circulate the papers for a General Meeting not less than 7 days before such meeting takes place.

D. The Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall take place within three months from the end of the financial year.

E. A copy of the Statement of Accounts will be included in the papers submitted to the AGM.

F. The quorum at General Meetings shall be 7 voting members of the Club and including at least one of the Honorary Officers (the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer). Unless otherwise stated in this constitution, decisions made at a General Meeting shall be by a simple majority of votes from those members attending the meeting. In the event of equal votes, the chairman of the meeting shall be entitled to an additional casting vote or alternatively, in his or her discretion, he or she may direct a written poll of the voting members of the Club.

G. In the absence of the Honorary Chairman, the members shall appoint a chairman of the meeting and in the absence of the Honorary Secretary, the members shall appoint a minute-taker from among those present as the first point of business at that meeting.

H. Minutes shall be taken of all General Meetings and shall be open for inspection by any member of the Club by application to the Secretary. The minutes, whenever possible, must be written up within fourteen days of the relevant meeting and distributed to all members forthwith.

### **14. CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION**

Any two members of the Club may propose and second changes to this Constitution in writing to the Secretary not less than 14 days before a General Meeting takes place. Such alterations shall be passed if supported by not less than two-thirds of those members present at the meeting and voting, assuming that a quorum has been achieved.

## **15. DISSOLUTION**

If at any General Meeting a resolution for the dissolution of the Club is passed by a two-thirds majority of the members present, the Committee shall thereupon or at such future date as considered appropriate, proceed to realise the property of the Club and discharge all liabilities. Upon dissolution of the club any remaining assets shall be given or transferred to another registered CASC (preferably a new or existing croquet club registered as a CASC), a registered charity or the sport's governing body (currently Croquet England) for use by them in related community sports.