



Belfast Bowling Club

Constitution and Byelaws

Last amended/updated October 2023

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1. Name

The Club shall be called **BELFAST BOWLING CLUB**.

In this document "he;him/his" should be interpreted as "he/she; him/his/her".

2. Affiliation

The Club shall be affiliated through the Irish Bowling Federation to the Irish Bowling Association (IBA), The Irish Women's Bowling Association (IWBA), the Northern Ireland Private Greens League (NIPGL), the Northern Ireland Women's Private Greens League (NIWPGL), and to the Northern Ireland Veterans Association (NIVA).

3. Objectives

The objects of the Club are:

- 3.1 to promote and foster the game of flat green bowls as formulated by the World Bowls Board.
- 3.2 to foster social recreation among the members.
- 3.3 in pursuance of these objectives:
 - to hold or arrange Bowling and other sporting matches and competitions and offer and grant or contribute towards the provision of prizes, awards and distinctions;
 - to raise money by subscriptions, grants or sponsorship;
 - to organise or subscribe to and promote social events;
 - to invest and deal with the finances of the Club;
 - to borrow or raise or secure the payment of money in such manner as the Club shall think fit.

4. Club Sections

Belfast Bowling Club welcomes men and women bowlers. All Club activities are open to both men and women. Equal participation is encouraged. All classes of membership and the opportunity to hold office is available equally to men and women.

However, interclub competitions, in which the Club participates, are governed by NIPGL, IBA and NIVA (for men) and NIWPGL and IWBA (for women). These organisations define the rules of the game, the scoring system and the eligibility of players in interclub league and cup competitions.

To ensure that Belfast Bowling Club is involved and complies with the regulations of the appropriate organisations there will be two sections of the Club, one for men and one for women, each governed by a Section Captain.

5. Trustees

- 5.1 Trustees shall deal with the property of the Club as directed by resolve of the Management Committee duly recorded in the minutes and they shall be indemnified against loss or damage of the property of the Club.
- 5.2 Trustees shall be members of the Club and shall be elected on the recommendation of the Management Committee, and with their prior consent, at an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting convened for the purpose of filling a vacancy.

- 5.3 they shall hold office until death, or resignation, or by removal from office by the resolution of the Management Committee at an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting convened for the purpose.
- 5.4 the number of Trustees shall not exceed five and the property of the Club shall be vested in them.
- 5.5 the senior Trustee or his nominated deputy shall be a member of the Management Committee and shall convene a meeting of the Trustees at least once per year.

6. Management

The general affairs of the Club shall be conducted by a Management Committee drawn from the full and honorary membership of the Club. However, by way of an agreement signed in 2001, Belfast Harlequins Club is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the Club premises and is required to provide and keep in place all necessary insurances.

This agreement is for a ten-year period, was last updated in October 2021, and remains in place until 30 September 2031.

- 6.1 the Management Committee shall consist of the officers of the Club who are the President, The Immediate Past President, The Vice President, one Trustee, The Honorary Secretary, The Honorary Treasurer, the Men's Captain, the Women's Captain and six other members. All will hold office for 1 year.
- 6.2 with the exception of the Immediate Past President and Trustee, all Management positions will become vacant at the AGM.
The President, Vice-President, Honorary roles, Captains and six other members will be elected at the AGM.
- 6.3 in the event of a vacancy occurring amongst the officers or Management Committee, the Committee may co-opt a suitably qualified member to fill the vacancy until the next Annual General Meeting.
- 6.4 five members, including at least two office bearers, a Trustee or his nominee shall form a quorum for the Management Committee, which shall meet not less than once per month during the bowling season and as often as necessary during the off season.
- 6.5 at its first meeting after each Annual General Meeting the Management Committee shall appoint:
 - such sub-committees as are considered necessary, each of which will have its powers and duties determined by the Management Committee and shall contain at least one member of that Committee;
 - representatives for Greens, Social & Entertainment Activities, Belfast Harlequins.
- 6.6 the Management Committee may fill any vacancy arising on any sub-committee by co-opting a suitably qualified replacement.
- 6.7 the Management Committee shall have the power to inspect the minutes and books of account at any of its meetings and it shall be the duty of the responsible officers to produce such records when requested.
- 6.8 the President of the Club shall be entitled to attend the meetings of all committees and sub-committees.
- 6.9 the office bearers of the Club shall act as an emergency committee and shall report on all matters dealt with and decisions taken to the first subsequent meeting of the Management Committee.
- 6.10 no expenditure other than incidental outlay or any financial engagement shall be incurred without prior sanction by the Committee.

- 6.11 the Management Committee shall be indemnified by the members against any cost, charges, damages, and expenses which it may incur in or about the execution of its duties or offices and against any liability it may incur at the request of members, unless such loss or damage etc arises in consequence of its own wilful neglect.
- 6.12 an Officer or member of the Committee shall ipso facto, vacate office if:
- he resigns, by notice in writing, or ceases to be a member of the Club;
 - he is requested to resign by a meeting of the Committee, and a resolution is passed at such meeting by a majority of the members of the Committee present, that he do resign;
 - he is absent from four consecutive monthly meetings of the Committee unless prevented from attending by illness, or unless has obtained the permission of the Committee for such absence.

7. Membership

- 7.1 membership of the Club shall consist of the Trustees, honorary members, full members, associate members, social members and junior members.
- 7.2 the number of members may be restricted where the Management Committee deems such action desirable.
- 7.3 Full & Honorary Members are entitled to:
- participate in all Club activities;
 - hold office;
 - have voting rights;
 - play on the green and in Intraclub competitions;
 - play in all IBA/IWBA, NIPGL/NIWPGL, NIVA leagues and competitions, according to the rules of the governing body.
- 7.4 Associate Membership is available only to existing Club members. Associate members have the same rights as full members except that they cannot play in any Interclub competitions.
- 7.5 Social Members may not:
- play on the green;
 - represent the Club in any capacity;
 - hold office;
 - have voting rights.
- 7.6 Junior members must be under the age of 18 years on 1 October prior to their admission to the Club and shall cease to be regarded as such at 30 September in the Club year in which they become 19. They shall be entitled to participate in all the activities of the Club, but they cannot hold office or vote.
- 7.7 Honorary membership may, on the recommendation of the Management Committee, be offered at an Annual General Meeting, to persons who have made a valuable contribution to the advancement of the game of bowls or to the well-being of the Club.
- 7.8 the number of members not having voting rights shall not exceed 25% of those having voting rights.
- 7.9 the election of all classes of membership to the Club shall be vested in the Management Committee.

8. Applications for Membership

- 8.1 candidates for membership shall be elected by the Committee. The Committee may investigate the application at a properly convened meeting of the Committee, or the Honorary Secretary may contact a quorum of the Committee who may investigate the application.
- 8.2 all applicants for membership must complete an application form obtainable from the Honorary Secretary which will include the name address, telephone number(s) and email address.
- 8.3 if elected the member agrees to allow appropriate use of these details to be available to other members for the efficient organisation of activities carried out by the Club. GDPR¹ will be adhered to.

9. Resignation and Expulsion

- 9.1 members intending to resign from the Club must submit their written resignation together with their locker key and pass card to the Honorary Secretary on or before the opening day in any year.
- 9.2 if at any time, in the opinion of the Committee, the acts or conduct of a member are, or is, detrimental to the interests of the Club, or if in any other circumstances it is desirable in the interests of the Club to call for an explanation, the Committee may, by notice in writing, call for an explanation from him.

If within fourteen days of the service of such notice he fails to give an explanation or gives an explanation which shall not be deemed satisfactory by the Committee, the Committee may, by a vote of two-thirds of the members present invite him to withdraw from the Club within a time specified.

In default of his so doing within the time specified, he may be expelled from the Club, and shall cease to be a member as and from the date of the posting to him of notice of expulsion.

- 9.3 any member who has been called upon to withdraw from the Club, or has been expelled as aforesaid, shall have the right, within fourteen days of notice of expulsion, to serve notice in writing to the Honorary Secretary requiring the question of his expulsion to be submitted to an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Club.
Such general meeting shall be summoned by the Honorary Secretary within twenty-one days of receipt of such notice. At such meeting the member whose expulsion is under consideration shall be allowed to offer an explanation to the charge either verbally or in writing. While the conduct of a member is under consideration under this Article he may be suspended by the Committee, and while suspended he shall not be entitled to exercise any of the rights or privileges of membership of the Club, pending the consideration of his explanation.

10. Annual General Meeting

- 10.1 the Annual General Meeting shall be held not later than 31st October in each year.
- 10.2 the date of the meeting, determined by the Management Committee, shall be prominently displayed on the Club noticeboard for at least 14 days prior to the meeting.
- 10.3 at least seven days notice of the date of the meeting shall be given in writing (or electronically) by the Honorary Secretary to each member entitled to vote, together with a copy of the agenda and of any Notices of Motion which have been properly submitted.
- 10.4 the business at the Annual General Meeting shall be to:

¹ GDPR: General Data Protection Regulation

- receive and approve the minutes of the preceding Annual General Meeting and of any Extraordinary General Meeting held in the interim;
 - receive the reports from the President, the Honorary Secretary and the Captains of each section;
 - receive and approve the financial statement and report from the Honorary Treasurer;
 - elect the President, Vice-President, Honorary Officers, Captains and committee for the current year;
 - determine the rates of subscription for the current year for each class of membership;
 - appoint two auditors who shall not be members of the Management Committee;
 - consider any Notices of Motion;
 - deal with any other competent business.
- 10.5 the quorum for the Annual General Meeting shall be 20% of members with voting rights. If within half an hour from the time appointed for the meeting a quorum of members is not present, the meeting, if convened on the requisition of the members, shall be dissolved. In any other case it shall stand adjourned to the same day in the following week at the same time and place, and if at such adjourned meeting a quorum of members is not present within half an hour from the time appointed for the meeting, the members then present shall form a quorum.
- 10.6 Notices of Motion, prepared in accordance with the rules governing Annual or Extraordinary General Meetings must be submitted to the Honorary Secretary not less than 14 days before the date of the meeting so that the proposal can be included in the notice calling the meeting.

11. Extraordinary General Meeting

- 11.1 an Extraordinary General Meeting may be convened by:
- the Management Committee at any time;
 - a joint application signed by not less than 20% of the members entitled to vote, stating the reason for the request, and given to the Honorary Secretary.
- 11.2 the Honorary Secretary shall call a meeting within 21 days of receiving the request. Within seven days each member who is entitled to vote shall be notified in writing or email of the date, time and venue. The purpose of the meeting shall be enclosed.
- 11.3 no business other than that stated on the Calling Notice shall be conducted at such a meeting.
- 11.4 at an Extraordinary General Meeting the quorum shall be 20% of members with voting rights.

12. Finance

The financial year of the Club shall commence on each 1st October.

12.1 Subscriptions

- a. the Annual Subscriptions payable by members shall be such amounts as shall be determined by the Committee from time to time.
- b. the Club, at a General Meeting, shall have power to alter at any time the annual subscriptions designated by the Committee.
- c. the annual subscription for all classes of membership shall be determined at the Annual General Meeting and shall be payable to the Honorary Treasurer.
- d. subscriptions for current members are due by 1 March.

- e. if the subscription remains unpaid at 1 March the member shall be deemed to have forfeited his membership.
- f. subscription for new full membership is 50% of the full membership fee for the first year and is due within 2 weeks of joining.
- g. the Management Committee may abate a member's subscription in whole or in part in the case of illness or other such hardship.

12.2 Accounts

- a. the Committee shall appoint three signatories for cheques. All cheques drawn on the Club's bank account shall be signed by any two of these signatories preferably including the Honorary Treasurer.
- b. the accounts of the Club shall be audited annually by two auditors appointed at each Annual General Meeting from members not appointed to the Management Committee.
- c. a copy of the annual statement of account, duly certified by the auditors, shall be made available to each member with voting rights at or prior to the Annual General Meeting.
- d. the Committee shall cause true accounts to be kept of all money received and expended by the Club and the matters in respect of which such receipt and expenditure take place, and of the assets and liabilities of the Club.
- e. books of Account shall be kept at the registered office of the Club, or such other place as the Committee shall think fit, and shall at all reasonable times be open to the inspection of the Committee.
- f. no member other than a member of the Committee shall have the right to inspect any account or book or document of the Club, except as authorised by the Committee, or by the Club in general meeting.

13. Voting

- 13.1 all voting at an Annual or Extraordinary General Meeting shall be by show of hands or by ballot, one vote to each member entitled to vote.
- 13.2 a recount will be taken if demanded by at least six members.
- 13.3 in the event of votes being tied the President will have the casting vote.
- 13.4 at every general meeting the President, or failing him, the Vice-President, shall preside and in the absence of both the President and Vice-President the meeting shall elect some other member of the Committee to preside. The person presiding shall have a second or casting vote.
- 13.5 the presiding officer may, with the consent of the meeting (and shall if so directed by the meeting) adjourn the meeting from time to time and place to place, but no business shall be transacted at any adjourned meeting other than business left unfinished at the meeting from which the adjournment took place.
- 13.6 every Full/Honorary/Associate Member personally present shall have one vote.
- 13.7 if a poll is demanded, it shall be taken in such manner as the presiding officer directs and the result of the poll shall be deemed to be the resolution of the meeting at which the poll was demanded. Any poll duly demanded on the election of a chairman of a meeting or on any question of adjournment, shall be taken at the meeting and without adjournment.
- 13.8 on a poll, votes may be given either personally or by proxy. No person shall act as a proxy unless he is an ordinary member. A proxy shall be appointed in writing and the instrument appointing a proxy shall be sent to the Honorary Secretary not less than forty-eight hours before the time of holding the meeting at which he proposes to vote.

14. Duties of Principal Officers

- 14.1 **Committee.** The business and affairs of the Club shall be under the control of the Management Committee elected at an Annual General Meeting.
- in case any vacancy should occur in the Committee it shall be filled by the Committee by co-option;
 - the Committee shall be the sole authority for the interpretation of rules and byelaws, and its decision shall be final and binding on the members of the Club;
 - meetings of the Committee shall be held in each month of the year or such other time as shall be determined from time to time by the Committee;
 - meetings may also be convened at any time by the direction of the President or Vice-President or by the Honorary Secretary at the request of any two members of the Committee;
 - the Committee shall have power to make, vary, add to and repeal rules and byelaws for the regulation of the business of the Club;
 - all questions at meetings of the Committee shall be decided by simple majority.
- 14.2 **President.** The President or his nominated deputy shall preside over all meetings of the Club. He shall also represent the Club at sporting, civic, or social occasions and endeavour to promote the interests of the Club during his term of office.
- 14.3 **Immediate Past President.** Provides continuity and support for one year from the end of his period as President.
- 14.4 **Vice President.** The Vice-President shall carry out the duties, and have the same responsibilities and powers, of the President when he is not available.
- 14.5 **Honorary Secretary.** The Honorary Secretary shall be responsible for:
- promptly and accurately entering in the minutes book a record of the proceedings at all general meetings and at the management and emergency meetings;
 - initiating any necessary action required by decisions of the Management Committee;
 - dealing promptly with all correspondence and consultation with the Management Committee;
 - issuing timeously notice, together with agendas of Annual and Extraordinary General Meetings to each member entitled to vote;
 - any administrative action required concerning misconduct.
- 14.6 **Honorary Treasurer.** The Honorary Treasurer shall be in control of the Club bank accounts and be responsible for:
- maintaining accurate records of all monies received and disbursed by him;
 - reporting to each Management Committee meeting details of all income and expenditure since the previous meeting together with balances available and outstanding liabilities;
 - making such payments as directed by the Management Committee;
 - producing for audit purposes a summary of the annual income and expenditure together with supporting documents and receipts within 21 days of 1st October;
 - presenting the annual financial statements to the Annual General Meeting, together with the Management Committee's proposals for the current year.
- 14.7 **Captains.** Section Captains will be responsible for
- ensuring that the affairs of the Club align with the appropriate governing body;
 - submitting reports for management meetings;

- representing the Club at Interclub meetings as required;
- team selection;
- Interclub activities including
 - registration of the Club with the appropriate body;
 - registration of playing members;
 - collection of affiliation fees;
 - identifying and reporting starred members (if and when required);
 - ensuring that any restrictions determined by the governing bodies are observed;
 - advising the Honorary Treasurer of monies involved;
 - selecting which cup and league competitions are appropriate;
 - providing members with a timetable of matches;
 - communicating well in advance to the members selected to play;
 - ensuring a fair distribution of members are selected;
 - organising practice;
 - communicating with competing clubs and Match Secretaries;
 - organising meals as appropriate;
 - advising the chef of any special dietary requirements on match days;
 - selecting rinks prior to matches;
 - setting out the green – mats, jacks, score boards, etc.;
 - supervising the conduct of visiting teams and reporting as appropriate.
- Intraclub activities including:
 - maintaining good relations with the other Section;
 - arranging inter-Section activities;
 - providing players to the other Section when requested.

15. Hospitality

- 15.1 Intoxicating liquor may not be provided or consumed other than on the premises under the control of Belfast Harlequins.
- 15.2 Consumption of food on the premises shall be aligned to the legislation governing Belfast Harlequins.

16. Conduct

- 16.1 it is expected that whether on or off the Club premises, members will conduct themselves in a seemly fashion and, in particular, that the confidential affairs of the Club shall not be communicated to or discussed with persons who are not fellow members.
- 16.2 where a formal complaint has been received by the Management Committee, that a member has committed some act or actions that threatens the good name or reputation of the Club he shall be advised by the Honorary Secretary within 30 days of the allegation against him, and asked to attend a meeting of the Management Committee on a specific date to explain his actions.
- 16.3 the member may elect to be accompanied to such a meeting by another member.
- 16.4 should the member be unable to attend the meeting, the Management Committee shall offer a further date within seven days of the date of the first meeting. If this is ignored the Management Committee will terminate his membership and such determination will be permanent.

16.5 the Management Committee shall deal with all complaints, by dismissing the allegation or reprimanding, suspending or expelling the member.

17. Dissolution

- 17.1 where at any time a two thirds majority of trustees and members decide that the Belfast Bowling Club shall cease to function, legal advice will be obtained on the procedure to be followed for the realisation and distribution of the assets of the Club.
- 17.2 each full member of the Club undertakes to contribute to the assets of the Club, in the event of its being wound up while he is a member, or within one year afterwards, for payment of the debts and liabilities of the Club contracted before he ceases to be a member, and of the costs, charges and expenses of winding up, such amount as may be required not exceeding £1.

18. Byelaws

- 18.1 the Management Committee shall have power to make amend or delete byelaws as is necessary for the smooth running of the Club.
- 18.2 any questions regarding the interpretations of Club rules or guidelines are matters for the Management Committee and should be put in writing to the Honorary Secretary for consideration at the next Management Committee meeting.
- 18.3 alterations of or additions to the foregoing rules shall not be made except at an Annual General Meeting or Extraordinary General Meeting convened for the purpose.

Byelaws

1. all members shall wear regulation bowling attire in competitions and friendly games with other teams and on such other occasions as may be decided by the Committee.
2. players, umpires and markers shall wear regulation smooth heel-less shoes whilst playing on the greens and acting as umpires or markers.
3. a member entering for any competition must pay his entrance fee before he will be permitted to take part in the competition. If the entrance fee shall not have been paid when the first tie is due to be played the entry will be void.
4. the Committee or the selectors may omit from any team a member whose conduct is considered unsatisfactory and not to have been in the best interests of the Club.
5. unless otherwise provided for in the Club's competition rules, all competitions shall be played under the laws of the game as formulated by the appropriate association.
6. the Club will undertake no responsibility for articles taken into or left on the Club premises.
7. dogs will only be permitted in the Club premises if on a lead.
8. any member having a cause for complaint shall give notice in writing to the Honorary Secretary who shall bring the matter before the Committee at its next meeting.

The foregoing byelaws may be altered by the Management Committee from time to time subject to ratification by members at a General Meeting.