

Leatherhead Model Flying Club: Constitution 2024

1) GENERAL

- a) The club shall be called **Leatherhead Model Flying Club** and is affiliated to the British Model Flying Association ("BMFA")
- b) The aims and objectives of this not-for-profit club shall be to provide facilities for, and to promote participation in, the sport of building and responsible flying of model aircraft with due regard to the mutual interests of modellers and the safety of the general public. The club does not fly helicopters.
- c) Alterations to this constitution can only be made by a two-thirds majority of the members present at an Annual General Meeting or at an Extraordinary General Meeting called for that purpose with the proviso that there is a minimum of four committee members including at least one elected officer present. Any proposed alterations must be submitted to the secretary in writing at least 14 days prior to the meeting.
- d) In the absence of an officer, any powers conferred on that officer may also be exercised by the Chair.

2) MEMBERS

- a) A "member" means any class of membership.
- b) The Committee has the right to refuse membership to new applicants. Membership of the club shall be open to all persons irrespective of ethnicity, nationality, gender identity, religion or beliefs; or of age, sex or disability except as a necessary consequence of the requirements of Model Flying as a particular sport.
- c) New members who do not hold a minimum of a BMFA 'A' certificate (or a 'BPC') or equivalent are expected to work to attain this achievement. If this is not achieved within 1 year then the committee will review the situation and renewed membership may be denied.
- d) New members will be required to serve an initial probationary period of 6 months. During this time they may have their membership terminated at the discretion of the Committee for unsatisfactory conduct.
- e) New members' subscriptions shall be dependent on membership class, plus the joining fee, as decided by the committee. On changing from junior to senior the increased subscription will come into force in the year following that member's 18th birthday. The club, being a non-profit organization, will revise its entry fees and subscriptions in line with the costs of continued operation with any surplus being used to build appropriate reserves. All surplus income or profits will be reinvested in the club. No surplus assets will be distributed to members or third parties.
- f) Subscriptions are due by 1st January each year. Any member, who has not paid the subscriptions for the following year by this date, in whole or in part, will not be permitted to fly until they have done so. BMFA membership must be in place before flying.
- g) There is a grace period of 1 month for payment of subscriptions. Members who have not renewed their membership by January 31st of the club's current financial year will be deemed to have left the club and a renewal after this period will be treated as a new membership application. New members joining during the course of the year pay a subscription ending 31st December calculated as a proportion by month of the total annual subscription. A formal membership application is required from all prospective members.
- h) Any member wishing to resign may do so, in writing to the secretary. There will be no refund of subscriptions in this case.
- i) All members must be members of the British Model Flying Association and must appear on the club members list on the BMFA membership portal. The only exception to this is for those members who play no active part in the club whatsoever; i.e. social members only.

- j) A member may be made a life member, paying no further club membership subscriptions for extensive services to the club but they must remain members of the BMFA. Life members can only be created by a majority ballot of club members at a general meeting.
- k) All members, without exception, must comply with all club rules. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action by the Club which may lead to dismissal from the Club.
- l) Guest Membership: Members may invite guest fliers to the site on arrangement with the Committee and must have insurance satisfactory to the club, details of which they must provide to the club secretary in advance of their visit. Guest membership will be issued by the secretary and the club member must assume total responsibility for the actions and safety of the guest. Guest members will be accompanied to the flight line by a club member with a minimum of an 'A' (or 'BPC') or their equivalent certificate to ensure that local site rules are obeyed. The same person cannot be a guest more than twice in any calendar year regardless of whose guest they are. Guest members must hold a minimum of a BMFA 'A' (or 'BPC') certificate or their equivalent. Guest members and their models must comply with the club's current rules and noise regulations

3) RULES, DISCIPLINE AND SAFETY

- a) Additions and amendments to field safety rules and regulations can only be made by proposals approved at a General Meeting.
- b) All field safety rules and regulations will be reviewed annually by the committee, and will be considered binding for 12 months. In cases where urgent action is required the committee may put in place a temporary change which must then be ratified by the members at the next general meeting.
- c) Any complaint concerning any member must be made in writing and signed by the complainant(s). The written complaint must then be forwarded to the Secretary so that the matter can be addressed at the next Committee meeting.
- d) Where an allegation of misconduct is made against a member, the member may be suspended from all club activities while an investigation is carried out.
The Committee may impose a suspension from club activities including attendance at the club flying site, not exceeding 60 days upon any member in the event of misconduct. Any suspension must be accompanied by a written warning as deemed appropriate in accordance with Article 3.e.
- e) The Committee may consider removal of membership where conduct on the field or elsewhere is considered to be prejudicial to the club. Dismissal will be in accordance with the following procedure in order to comply with the laws of natural justice:
 - i) The member is to be given a verbal warning by an authorised Committee Member in which the member is made aware of their misdemeanour and what they are reasonably required to do to make amends.
 - ii) If the member does not respond, they are to be given a written warning by an authorised Committee Member to advise them of their misdemeanour and what they are reasonably required to do to make amends.
 - iii) If they still fail to respond, the Committee should invite them in writing to meet with them at a mutually agreed date and time to discuss the situation, advising they are considering withdrawal of their membership
 - iv) If they still fail to respond to reasoning or fail to attend without reasonable cause, the Committee can advise them in writing that their membership is withdrawn, stating the reasons why this decision was reached.
 - v) When the member is advised of withdrawal of their membership, they must be given the right of appeal. If they opt to appeal, this will be to the Club membership at an EGM which the Committee would call on their behalf at a previously agreed date and time. The motion to uphold the membership withdrawal or reverse it must be in accordance with the voting procedures set out in the Club Constitution.

In the event of gross misconduct, immediate dismissal without warnings may be considered but the member must still be accorded their rights to present their case to the Committee and be given a right of appeal in accordance with sub-paragraphs 3.e.iii, 3.e.iv and 3 e v above.

In the event of dismissal the Committee will arrange for the member's current membership fee (excluding BMFA subscription) to be reimbursed in full.

- f) The club will set out its policy and guidelines for safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults on its Web Site

4) FLYING

- a) The Committee, Officers and Instructors will be responsible for the running of the flying field at all times. Appointment to the position of Instructor or Examiner can only be made by a Committee decision.
- b) All flying members must attain the minimum standards of flying required under the Leatherhead Model Flying Club training scheme before being permitted to fly supervised but without a buddy box. Members must have a minimum of a BMFA 'A' (or BPC) certificate (or equivalent) before being allowed to fly unsupervised.
- c) Any member whose flying standards, at the discretion of the chairman and safety officer, drop below the minimum required solo standard will be required to rejoin the training scheme until the desired standards of flying are met.

5) COMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND APPOINTMENTS

- a) The Committee of the Club shall comprise of not less than 6 and not more than 9 senior members. No member can serve on the committee unless they have been a club member for a minimum of one year.
- b) The elected Officers of the committee shall be: Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer.
- c) One senior club member may be appointed annually as the club's BMFA Delegate who should represent the club at all relevant meetings. The committee shall appoint a Training Officer, Site Officer, Safety Officer, Membership Liaison Officer and, if appropriate, Communications, Competition and any other new officer roles deemed necessary by the committee from amongst themselves. A member may hold one or more of these roles.
- d) Any Committee member or member who is involved in any organisational position within the Club must hold membership of the British Model Flying Association.
- e) Committee officers and members shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting from written nominations received no later than 14 days prior to the meeting, to serve for a period of one year. The Committee will be elected by majority vote by anonymous ballot from members present. All fully paid up flying members and life members are eligible to vote.
- f) Should committee positions be vacant, the Committee may, by a majority vote, co-opt a member with that member's agreement who will then serve until the following Annual General Meeting

6) COMMITTEE ORGANISATION AND POWERS

- a) Members elected to office will have full voting rights at all meetings.

- b) The Committee are authorised to carry out negotiations and make decisions in the interest of the club or on behalf of the membership where necessary without consulting the members. Other than for normal repair and maintenance of the mower/tractor, approval from the membership at an ordinary meeting must be sought for expenditure greater than £500 for a single item/transaction.
- c) Each Committee officer is required to submit a sample of his signature for banking reference purposes.
- d) Expenditures over £50 may only be made from the club funds when authorized in writing by the Treasurer and one other committee officer
- e) Members of the committee are authorised to make single purchases of up to £20 without pre authorisation
- f) The Secretary must be informed of any negotiations proposed by club members which affect the Club as a whole and copies of any written correspondence must be submitted to him for record purposes
- g) Any Committee member may be reimbursed for reasonable pre-authorised documented out-of pocket expenses
- h) A committee member must disclose any committee or other official role in another flying club.
- i) Any Committee Member or Officer wishing to resign must do so in writing.
- j) Any member of the Committee who is absent from three consecutive Committee meetings without reasonable cause will automatically forfeit his seat on the Committee.
- k) The Committee may pay accounts and incur any normal liabilities on behalf of the club

7) VOTING AND CONDUCT OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- a) All committee meetings will have an agenda and be minuted, and may be held either in person or by online video conference. Minutes of committee meetings will be made available to members on request to the secretary.
- b) A quorum of any Committee meeting shall consist of a majority of Committee Members including at least one officer.
- c) All proposals must be seconded and voted upon. A majority vote of those present is required to carry any proposal. In the event of a divided vote the chairman will have the casting vote.
- d) Voting will normally be by a show of hands, however a secret ballot must be taken should any committee member request that this be done. Proxy and postal votes will not be permitted
- e) An audio recording of committee meetings may be taken by the secretary only, for the sole purpose of producing accurate minutes. The audio recording must be deleted once the written minutes are approved

8) VOTING AND CONDUCT OF GENERAL MEETINGS

- a) All general meetings will have an agenda and be minuted, and may be held either in person or by online video conference. 'Any Other Business items' will only be accepted at general meetings if the Secretary is given at least 14 days notice in writing of the item to be discussed.
- b) A quorum of any general meeting is to be at least one fifth of the membership including the committee members as required in article 1.c.
- c) All proposals must be seconded and voted upon. A majority vote of those present is required to carry any proposal other than to alter this constitution
- d) Voting will normally be by a show of hands, however a secret ballot must be taken should

any member request that this be done. Proxy and postal votes will not be permitted. In the event of a divided vote the chairman will have the casting vote.

- e) Amendments to proposals must be voted upon first
- f) An audio recording of general meetings may be taken by the secretary only, for the sole purpose of producing accurate minutes. The audio recording must be deleted once the written minutes are approved.
- g) Non club members may attend Club meetings as observers as invited guests of a club by applying to the Secretary at least 14 days before the meeting. Any non Club member may be asked to leave the meeting subject to approval from the Committee.
- h) The Committee, through the Chairman, has the power to ask a person to leave any meeting in the event of that person disrupting the meeting

9) ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

- a) An Annual General Meeting shall be held once per calendar year, the date for which will be decided each year by the Committee. At least 28 days notice of the meeting will be given in writing by email or post to all Club members
- b) Annual subscriptions and the joining fee will be decided by the committee. An EGM may be called if the members object to a change of fees by the committee.
- c) The Club's financial year shall run from December 1st to November 30th. The accounts will be presented to the AGM for approval pending examination by an independent competent person
- d) A competent individual (non-committee member) shall be appointed by the Committee to carry out an independent examination of the accounts less than 2 months after the AGM to verify that the balance sheet is correct and fairly represents the expenditure and receipts of the club, its assets and its liabilities.

10) EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETINGS

- a) The Secretary will convene an Extraordinary Committee Meeting within 14 days on request from any officer of the Committee, stating the business to be discussed.
- b) The Secretary shall convene an Extraordinary General Meeting of the club by a resolution of the Committee stating the business to be brought before the meeting, of which 28 days notice has been given to all members in writing by email or post stating the business to be discussed.
- c) The Secretary shall convene an Extraordinary General Meeting of the club on receipt of a request in writing or by email signed by at least one quarter of the current membership of the club, stating the business to be brought before the meeting. The meeting must be called within 28 days of request and 28 days' notice must be given to all members in writing stating the business to be discussed.
- d) When a request for a meeting is made in accordance with Article 10.c and it is not called within 28 days, the requesters may themselves convene an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Club by giving 28 days' notice in writing or by email to all members, duly setting out the purpose for which the meeting was called. Any resolutions passed at such a meeting shall have the same force and effect as if they were passed at a meeting convened by the Committee

11) INSURANCE AND INDEMNITY

- a) The club will hold both Civil and Employers Liability Insurance, provided through affiliation to the BMFA.
- b) The club will indemnify all committee officers and committee members if they incur any liability on behalf of the club.

- c) In the event of a Committee Member being awarded damages or costs in the course of proceedings taken by him in his representative capacity, such damages or costs will belong to the Club and not the Committee Member personally and upon receipt that Committee Member will pay them to the Club Treasurer.
- d) When there is a joint meeting between Leatherhead Model Flying Club and another flying club, the participating club must be able to provide evidence of adequate insurance cover well in advance of the event.

12) DISSOLUTION OF THE CLUB

- a) Should it be considered necessary or desirable to dissolve the Club, the Committee will call an Extraordinary General Meeting. Should a quorum fail to appear, the meeting will be adjourned and a further EGM must be called within 14 days. The second meeting will proceed even if a quorum is not present and the motion will then be carried by a simple majority vote.
- b) On dissolution and after the sale of assets, settlement of all outstanding debts and the refund of subscriptions for the remaining part of the year to the paid up members, the funds remaining will be distributed to Headley Court Charity (Charity Number 256382) or in the case of this charity no longer existing then the nearest RAF charity fund
- c) All members will receive a final statement of accounts.