

Bristol and West Hockey Club Constitution

Ratified AGM 1st June 2024

1 NAME

The name of the Club shall be Bristol & West Hockey Club (BAWHC). The Ladies' section will be known as Bristol & West Jaspers within their league.

The Club shall be affiliated to the National Governing Body, England Hockey, as well as local and regional associations that help to govern and run the sport, and shall abide by their regulations.

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF BAWHC

- **Club Leadership:** To identify and retain great people in critical roles.
- **Facilities:** Maintain the ability to host all Home matches and training sessions, with safe playing surfaces and welfare facilities.
- **Different Ways to Play:** Maintain a thriving club with options for players and members of all ages and abilities.
- **Developing People:** Support members' development as Players, Coaches and Umpires.
- **Friendly, Social and Welcoming:** All members, both new and existing, to feel they are a part of a community, rather than just a club.
- **Strong Local Community Connections:** Develop a club brand that is known and recognisable amongst the local community.
- **Stretching and Developing as a Club:** Ensure the club brand and governance are fit for the future.

3 MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

A Member shall be defined as someone who has paid their Annual Subscription for that season (or re-registered if their Annual Subscription is waived).

The Club will establish and maintain a register of all current Members, the contents of which is available for use by the Committee and adult/junior team coaches and squad captains for the purpose of eligibility and selection of Members to attend training and play in Club matches.

The income from annual subscriptions and match fees gives the Club the means to provide opportunities for members to play and participate in hockey and to fund Club development for the benefit of our members. The Club requires all individuals who attend training or who play hockey for the Club to be members and to pay an appropriate annual subscription and where they play matches, the associated match fees.

3.1 PLAYING CATEGORIES

Adult. Aged 18 years or older as of 1st September. Those who do not meet the criteria of the Student or Junior category are regarded as adult members.

Student/Unemployed

- A student in School Year 12 or above in full time education
- In any type of formal education for 3 or more days a week
- Registered unemployed
- A junior up to and including School Year 11 who plays senior hockey

Junior. A player in School Year 11 and below not playing senior hockey.

Occasional. A player, regardless of age, who intends to participate in no more than three winter league games for the Club in a season. Those that wish to solely train, solely play in the mixed games, or solely participate in the summer league; or a mixture of the aforementioned will fall under this category. Their application must be approved by the Membership Secretary and annual subs paid before they train or become eligible for selection for a match.

3.2 NON-PLAYING CATEGORIES

Non Playing Support. Non-playing Club affiliated Umpires and Coaches, and individuals who act in a voluntary capacity in support of the Club. Unless they hold a committee role, they cannot vote at the AGM.

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Social. Parents/guardians and those interested in keeping in touch with the Club. Applicants for social membership shall be proposed and seconded by adult members and then approved by the Club Committee. Unless they hold a committee role, they cannot vote at the AGM.

Honorary. Celebrated members of the club who provide significant continued contribution to the club can be recognised by this category. Non-playing members or former members may be invited to become Honorary members at the discretion of the Club Committee. Unless they hold a committee role, they cannot vote at the AGM.

4 FEES

The Club membership year (season) shall run from 1st September to 31st August. All Members are entitled to the full benefits of membership up until the 31st August following payment of their relevant subscription.

Payment via the Spond app is the only permissible means to pay for annual subscriptions and match fees. All members must have a Spond profile.

The structure is as described below:

	Annual Subscription	Match Fee
Adult	£85	£12
Student/Unemployed	£65	£6
Junior	£50	£6
Occasional	£40	£12
Social	£0	N/A
Non Playing Support	£0	N/A
Honorary	£0	£0

Every Member selected to play in a match for the Club will pay the match fee for their relevant membership category for each game. **The match fee is to be paid on the day of the match.**

A squad captain may waive the match fee for certain individuals; such as outfield players going in goal or players that had extremely limited game time as a result of injury.

Goalkeepers with their own kit do pay annual subscription but do not pay a match fee for any match type.

Goalkeepers that use a Club-owned kit will pay annual subscriptions and a match fee.

Squad captains will qualify for the Student/Unemployed match fee in recognition for their time and administrative effort organising the team. This does not apply to a temporary, stand-in captain.

The committee may in certain circumstances waive annual subscription if the individual significantly contributes to the running of the club. Roles that are financially recompensed (Umpiring and Level 1 coaching) shall be excluded. The Membership Secretary shall record this and intervene on the individual's Spond Annual Subscription invoice.

4.1 FLEXIBLE PAYMENT

Applicants requiring flexible payment arrangements should contact the Membership Secretary in the first instance. Applications need to be received by the 15th September, or within a fortnight for those joining after that date. Arrangements will need to be agreed before they can train or be eligible for team selection.

Their circumstances will be considered by the Committee and the applicant may be offered a monthly payment plan. Payments will be made monthly via Spond. The Membership Secretary will document these formal arrangements and alter the individual's Spond Annual Subscription invoice. The Treasurer and Membership secretary shall be jointly responsible for monitoring these arrangements throughout the season.

4.2 JOIN DATE

A player's "Join Date shall be the day that they first use the club in a match or training capacity.

4.3 ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION DEADLINE

For players joining before 1st September, Annual Subscriptions must be paid, or a payment plan agreed with the Membership Secretary, by the **30th September**, or within 21 days of their join date, whichever is the later.

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Applicants that wish to qualify for a category other than Adult must contact the Membership Secretary, each season, by 15th September (or within 21 days of their join date, whichever is the later), or they will be classed as the adult category. The applicant shall provide evidence of their eligibility for an alternative category, which will undergo review by the committee, who's decision shall be final. Committee may delegate this responsibility to any number of individual committee officers. These players shall be recorded by the Membership Secretary and reviewed annually for a change in circumstances.

4.4 MID SEASON JOINERS

All new individuals joining from 1st January will pay half subscription for their membership category. No discount shall be applied for those seeking the Occasional Category.

4.5 LATE PAYMENT SANCTIONS

Applicants that have not paid the annual subscription (or setup a payment plan) by the 30th September (or 21 days from their join date, whichever is the later) will be ineligible to train and/or be selected to play for the Club in friendly, league or cup games or in other competitions.

Any individual who fails to pay by the date advertised cannot enjoy the privileges of membership, such as utilising the Club's Accident Cover nor cast a vote at an AGM.

An individual that has not paid the Club's Annual Membership Subscription, or requested special consideration, by the date advertised, may be removed from the Club. The Membership Secretary shall send a written notice, informing them of this action. The Membership Secretary shall have power to reinstate an individual on receipt of a satisfactory explanation and payment.

4.6 PRO RATA REFUND IN EVENT OF SERIOUS INJURY OR ILLNESS

In the event of a member suffering a serious injury or illness that prevents them playing for over 3 months, Committee will consider an application for a pro-rata refund of Annual Subscription. This shall only be available to members who have paid for a full annual subscription for their member category (i.e., mid-season joiners are not eligible).

An application for refund under these circumstances must be made to the Committee in writing through the Membership Secretary and must include the injury reporting form.

4.7 INTER-CLUB PLAYER TRANSFER

In accordance with the rules of the league, the Club requires all players transferring to/from the Club to settle all outstanding Annual Subscription fees and/or Match fees to their current Club before they can be released by the Club, and hence register and play for the receiving club. The Annual Subscription is non-refundable in the event of player transfer. Once the above is satisfied, the transfer will be instigated via GMS.

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5 FINANCES

The Club treasurer will be responsible for the finances of the Club. All Club monies will be banked in an account held in the name of the Club.

The financial year of the Club will run from 1 May to 30 April.

An approved statement of annual accounts will be presented by the treasurer at the Annual General Meeting.

All members of the Club shall be jointly and severally responsible for the financial liabilities of the Club.

5.1 LIABILITY

It is the responsibility of each Club member to behave in a responsible and safe manner whilst playing.

The Treasurer shall ensure that a suitable Third Party Liability Insurance is kept up to date. Only those who are classed as Members may claim using the club's insurance.

Individual playing members, umpires and coaches are in addition encouraged to take out suitable personal insurance.

6 OFFICERS OF THE CLUB

6.1 NOMINATIONS

Nominations for members to serve as officers of the Club must be submitted to the Club Secretary at any time up to and including the date of the AGM. Such nominations should be in writing and be supported by the name of both the proposer and the seconder who must both be members of the Club. No nomination should be submitted without the consent of the nominee. Members may not propose or second their own nomination.

6.2 TITLES AND ELECTION

The officers of the Club shall comprise:

- Chair
- Club Secretary
- Treasurer
- Club Captains (Men & Ladies)
- Junior Manager(s)
- Fixture Secretary
- Welfare Officer(s)
- Membership and Recruitment Secretary
- Communications Secretary
- Digital Modernisation Lead
- Webmaster
- Social Secretary
- Equipment Manager
- Umpire Manager

- Club Coach

These positions shall be subject to election by the AGM. Positions may be shared by up to two individuals, each of whom will be entitled to a separate vote on committee business. Individuals may also occupy multiple roles, but will be entitled to a single vote on Committee business.

6.3 VACANCIES

The Committee may appoint to vacant positions mid-season subject to ratification at the next AGM. Should any positions remain unfilled after the AGM the Club Committee will be empowered to appoint to the vacant position(s).

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7 CLUB COMMITTEE

7.1 MEMBERSHIP

The Club Committee shall consist of the officers of the Club elected at the last AGM. Team captains may attend but are not expected to do so as their views will be represented by the Club Captains.

7.2 CO-OPTING

The Committee may co-opt additional Club members for any meeting but these members may not vote. The committee may appoint such sub-committees as may be appropriate and may delegate to such sub-committees such powers as it deems fit.

7.3 CONDUCT

The Committee shall meet approximately once per month during the winter season and as and when required.

A quorum is to consist of five Club officers (NB. in the event of one officer holding two posts they shall only be able to exercise one vote and shall only count as one officer for the purposes of the quorum. This should be recognised when electing officers to the committee).

Points under discussion will be resolved by a vote, with the Chair (or Vice Chair in the absence of the Chair) only voting in the event of a tie when they will exercise a casting vote.

7.4 GENERAL MEETINGS

A general meeting will be considered quorate as long as the meeting has been constituted according to the rules of this constitution.

The majority vote at any meeting shall carry any motion proposed and seconded through the Chair. In the case of an equally split vote the subject should be debated and subjected to one further vote. If the vote is again equally split the Chairman may exercise a casting vote. This is the only time the Chairman will vote. If two or more individuals are nominated for the same post, they will be required to leave the meeting whilst the members cast their votes.

Only Members may nominate and second proposals and exercise a vote at General Meetings.

An **Annual General Meeting** shall be held as soon as possible after the end of the winter season (and financial year) on a date arranged by the Club Committee. The business of the meeting shall include:

- reports from the Chair and Treasurer along with presentation of the balance sheet for the past year,
- the election of officers,
- agreement of subscriptions and match fees for the coming year, and
- ratification of the Constitution.

An **Extraordinary General Meeting** may be called at the request of the Club Committee or after the Secretary has received a request in writing stating the object of the meeting, signed by not less than six members of the Club. If for any reason the Club decides to disband, the distribution of funds shall be decided by an Extraordinary General Meeting.

Members shall receive at least seven days' notice of an AGM or EGM.

8 CLUB COLOURS

Club colours shall be orange shirts with black trim, black shorts/skorts and orange socks. All members will be required to abide by this rule when playing for the Club. Away colours (where orange presents a clash with the opposition) shall be black shirts, black shorts/skorts and black socks.

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9 ADMINISTRATION

9.1 MEMBERS RESPONSIBILITY FOR DIGITAL ADOPTION

In Season 22/23 the Club adopted Spond as a digital solution to modernise the approach to managing all Club matters, notably selection, Club communication, and recording of payments. This has reduced the burden on club volunteers. For the Club to continue to enjoy the benefits of Spond, it is the responsibility of members to fully engage with this solution.

It is the responsibility of each member to set up their Spond app and its notifications settings, so that they can respond in a timely manner to Club events and payment requests. For U18s who's profile is managed by their guardian this expectation shall apply to those guardians equally.

9.2 FIXTURES

Pitch bookings for match fixtures are to be arranged by the Fixtures Secretary, and published into England Hockey/West Hockey and loaded into Spond. The input of fixtures into Spond may be delegated to the Squad Captains.

Thereafter the events within Spond shall be managed by the Club Captain or relevant Squad Captain. Creation and management of rearranged fixtures or fixtures without a confirmed time shall be managed by the relevant Squad Captain. Pitch booking responsibility remains with the Fixtures Secretary.

9.3 FAIR SELECTION

Club Captains and Squad Captains shall select players from their squads on a number of criteria; and the respective priorities/weighting will vary throughout the season, with the joint objectives of securing game time at a challenging level for all individuals, and meeting the Club's overall strategic aims.

Players that wish to question their selection may do so with their relevant Club Captain, but the decision of Club and Squad Captains shall be final.

The junior manager and junior coaches shall be responsible for identifying those juniors ready to be considered for adult hockey. They will liaise with the Club Captain and relevant Squad Captains to integrate these players into adult hockey.

10 RECORDS

The Membership and Recruitment Secretary shall maintain a database of members via Spond. All data shall be maintained in accordance with GDPR requirements, and the Club's Privacy Notice shall be available to view on the website.

It is impractical for the club to reasonably control photography and video recordings, especially at away games or games at public pitches, therefore by applying to join the club, members consent for the Club to use images for the sole purpose to promote the aims/objectives of the Club.

The Club Secretary shall record minutes of all Committee Meetings, the Annual General Meeting and any Extraordinary General Meetings. These shall be available within the files area of Spond to any Member.

11 EQUIPMENT

The use and provision of personal protective equipment is the responsibility of all club members at both junior and senior level. All players of any age should ensure as a minimum they always have shin pads and a mouthguard for both training and matches. The Club does not provide protective equipment for players of any level.

For participation in junior training and matches, wearing a mouthguard is mandatory.

Players may, at their own discretion, also choose additional protective equipment such as face masks or gloves. The use of personal protective equipment reduces the risk of injury and members are encouraged to consider wearing the personal protective equipment they feel appropriate at all times when playing.

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Custody of all the Club's Equipment shall be the responsibility of the Committee. Where the Club has loaned equipment for the season (e.g. goalkeeper kit, first aid kit, balls etc) to an individual, it is the responsibility of the member in receipt of the equipment to maintain, repair, and securely store the equipment whilst it is in their possession. If loaned equipment is lost, that individual is responsible for sourcing replacement equipment to the same quality and condition, or compensate the Club to allow a replacement to be purchased.

12 TRAVEL COSTS

Local matches (closer than 40 miles). Costs for travel to matches are at the expense of those travelling. Where a driver is taking other players, it is recommended that all travellers contribute to the cost of fuel.

Distant matches (further than 40 miles). Where an away game is further than 40 miles necessitating a round trip of 80 miles or more, the Club will support this travel and pay a mileage allowance. The rate will be defined in the Travel proforma form available from the Treasurer. Payments will be made for a maximum of 4 cars per match. The mileage allowance will need to be claimed back from the Treasurer by the drivers within 14 days of the trip.

Notwithstanding either of the above scenarios, an individual who travels to away games will still pay match fees.

13 CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION

Any change to the Club Constitution can only be agreed at the AGM or any General Meeting (called as in section 10 above) at which all Club members have the opportunity to attend.

14 CONDUCT

14.1 CLUB EXPECTATIONS

While not necessarily linked to selection, the Club expects the following from all members:

- Get involved & volunteer – the club only survives with the contribution and participation of its members. Umpiring, committee roles, coaches and other volunteers are always required. Participation in fundraising (such as the bonus ball and fantasy hockey, club and team socials) is necessary to keep our Annual Subscriptions as low as possible.
- Club ambassadors – all members are responsible for representing the club every time we play and train. We are competitive but respectful of our opposition and umpires, and positive and encouraging to our teammates.
- Support club/squad captains – captains and committee members volunteer their time and effort, often juggling difficult decisions and unexpected circumstances to ensure members can play hockey every weekend. Please pull together and support them to create a positive and competitive team environment for us all to enjoy hockey.

14.2 DISCIPLINE

Members should at all times remember they represent Bristol & West Hockey Club and conduct themselves accordingly so as not to bring the Club into disrepute.

All complaints regarding the behaviour of members should be presented and submitted in writing to the Secretary. The Secretary will inform the Chair who shall convene a disciplinary panel to consist of not less than three committee members or suitable co-opted Club members as deemed appropriate by the Chair. The Chair should not form part of the panel as the Chair needs to remain impartial in the event of an appeal.

The panel will request written statements from both sides of the complaint as well as any witnesses. The panel will meet to review the evidence within 14 days of a complaint being lodged. The panel has the power to take appropriate disciplinary action including the termination of membership.

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The outcome of a disciplinary hearing, with reasons for the judgement should be notified to the Secretary who will inform in writing to all involved within seven days of the hearing. There will be the right of appeal to the Chair or Vice Chair following a disciplinary panel decision being announced. The Chair should consider the appeal within seven days of the Secretary receiving the appeal. The Chair may call upon the support of any Club member except those involved hitherto in deciding the outcome of the appeal. The Chair's decision is final.

15 SPORTS EQUITY AND SAFEGUARDING

The Club is committed to ensuring that equity is incorporated across all aspects of its development. In doing so it acknowledges and adopts the following Sport England definition of sports equity:

'Sports equity is about fairness in sport, equality of access, recognising inequalities and taking steps to address them. It is about changing the culture and structure of sport to ensure it becomes equally accessible to everyone in society.'

The Club respects the rights, dignity and worth of every person and will treat everyone equally within the context of their sport, regardless of age, ability, gender, race, ethnicity, religious belief, sexuality or social/economic status.

The Club is committed to everyone having the right to enjoy their sport in an environment free from threat of intimidation, harassment and abuse. All Club members have a responsibility to oppose discriminatory behaviour and promote equality of opportunity.

The Club treats the safeguarding of young players as a priority and the Club has fully adopted the England Hockey guidelines. All of the documentation on these guidelines can be found on the Club website.

All concerns, allegations or reports of poor practice/abuse relating to the welfare of children and young people will be recorded and responded to swiftly and appropriately in accordance with the Club's safeguarding procedures. The Club Welfare Officer is the lead contact for all members in the event of any child protection concerns.

If a player presents with mental health issues that may affect other Club members, the concern should be raised with the Welfare Officer. The matter can then be raised with England Hockey if it is felt necessary and guidance can be sought and fed back to interested parties.

The Club will deal with any incidence of discriminatory behaviour seriously, according to Club disciplinary procedures set out in Section 14.2.

16 CHANGE LOG

Version	Date	Notes
1	2019	AGM Ver 1 approved
2	2022	AGM Ver 2 approved
3	2023	AGM Ver 3 approved
4	2024	Document rebuilt and modernised. Clarified parameters for Occasional member category. Para sequencing altered for flow. Updated throughout reflecting changes driven by the adoption of Spond. Added detail on fair selection. EI&D language scrub