WHMFC CONSTITUTION

(Issue 8 – Sept 2025)

GENERAL

1. The club shall be called '***Willy Howe Model Flying Club'*** (**WHMFC**) and will be affiliated to the British Model Flying Association (BMFA).

2. The club's principal aim shall be the promotion of safe and responsible model aircraft flying.

3. All members, without exception, must obey all club rules. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action by the club and may lead to dismissal.

4. All members must be members of the British Model Flying Association and must be able to provide evidence of such on request.

5. When there is a joint meeting between ***Willy Howe Model Flying Club*** and another club, the participating club must be able to provide evidence of adequate insurance cover well in advance of the event.

6. Members may invite guest fliers to the site on arrangement with the Committee, but they must be BMFA insured and the club member must assume total responsibility for the actions and safety of the guest. Guests must fly under the supervision of instructors if their ability requires it, and such arrangements must be made in advance of the visit.

7. A 'member' means either an adult member, or a junior member, who has paid the necessary membership fee as agreed at the latest AGM

8. A member may be made a life member for extensive services to the club. Life members can only be created by a majority ballot of club members at a General Meeting. Life (Honorary) Membership is for WHMFC only and the individual remains responsible for BMFA Membership.

9. The Committee has the right to refuse membership to new applicants.

10. New members will be required to serve an initial probationary period of 6 months. During this time, they will not be eligible to serve on the Committee and may have their membership terminated at the discretion of the Committee for unsatisfactory conduct.

11. Members who have allowed their subscription to lapse for less than one year will not normally be asked to reapply for membership, but will be required to pay a full 12 months subscription. Reduced subscriptions will apply from 1st September when they will be halved. The Committee reserves the right to ask for a formal membership application if it so wishes. Reduced membership (for New Members only) to apply from 1st July, 33% reduction and from 1st September a 50% reduction.

12. New members joining after 1st September may offset the half year fee into following year's fees, thus New Members effectively have 16 months for cost of 12 months.

13. Persons letting their membership lapse for one year or more will be required to re-apply for membership and pay on their return to the club. During the period from end of year to the date of rejoining, the lapsed member forfeits the right to vote on any club matters. Full fee applies in all cases of lapsed members rejoining.

14. Potential new Members and Guests may have up to three 'free' sessions before either joining or paying £5 per session, at which point they must be BMFA Members. All such persons are subject to paragraph 23 below.

15. All field safety rules and regulations will be reviewed annually, and will be considered binding for 12 months, excepting where urgent action is required. This action must then be ratified by the Committee at the next club meeting or General Meeting. The field safety rules are considered as a supplementary code to those laid out by the **British Model Flying Association's Member's Handbook**; compliance with which is mandatory within **Willy Howe Model Flying Club**.

16. 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.

17. The Committee may impose a flying suspension not exceeding **60** days upon any member in the event of misconduct. Any suspension must be accompanied by a verbal and/or written warning as deemed appropriate with Article 17.

18. The Committee may consider removal from the membership list of any member whose conduct on the field or elsewhere, in person or electronically, is considered prejudicial to the club. Dismissal will be in accordance with the following procedure in order to comply with the laws of natural justice:

    a. The member is to be given a verbal warning by an authorised Committee Member in which the member is made aware of his/her misdemeanour and what he/she is reasonably required to do to make amends.
    b. If the member does not respond, he/she is to be given a written warning by an authorised Committee Member to advise him/her of his/her misdemeanour and what he/she is reasonably required to do to make amends.
    c. If he/she fails to respond, the Committee should invite him/her in writing to meet with them at a previously agreed date and time to discuss the situation, advising they are considering withdrawal of his/her membership.
    d. If he/she still fails to respond to reasoning or fails to attend without reasonable cause, the Committee can advise him/her in writing that his/her membership is withdrawn, stating the reasons why this decision was reached.
    e. When the member is advised of withdrawal of his/her membership, he/she must be given the right of appeal. If he/she opts to appeal, this will be to the Club membership at an EGM that the Committee would call on his/her 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 (see section 'Voting and Conduct of Meetings' below).

    In the event of gross misconduct, immediate dismissal without warning may be considered but the member must still be accorded his/her rights to present his/her case to the Committee and be given a right to appeal in accordance with sub-paragraphs c, d and e above.

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

19. Adherence to CAA rules is the sole responsibility of each individual and the club will not be liable for a member's actions or inactions.

20. Alterations to this constitution can only be made at the Annual General Meeting or at a General Meeting called for that purpose. Any proposed alterations must be submitted to the Secretary in writing at least 14 days prior to the meeting.

FLYING

21. The latest revision of the club document 'WHMFC Field Safety Rules' shall apply at all times.

22. 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.

23. Participation in the BMFA Achievement Scheme is encouraged, as this can lead to better flying standards, especially in regard to safety. The Committee will assist any member wishing to participate in the scheme

24. All new flying members under instruction must attain a minimum standard of flying as determined by a WHMFC Instructor or Examiner before being allowed to fly unsupervised.

25. Guests may be requested to provide a 'proving' flight; this can be requested by any club member. Refusal to provide such a flight will result in prohibiting the guest from flying unsupervised.

26. Any member whose flying standards drop below the minimum requirement solo standard will be required to rejoin the training scheme until the desired standards of flying are met. This will be determined by one or more members of the committee, in response to any concerns raised.

27. Instructors should hold a BMFA Achievement Scheme B Certificates or equivalent, or be a BMFA Registered Instructor, or be approved by the committee prior to giving instruction

28. The club will provide equipment for use by novices, as necessary; this includes models, batteries, and buddy box radio equipment. Details and procedures are detailed on the club website.

29. Models may be scrutinised by any member of the committee, who reserve the right to ground any model on safety grounds.

COMMITTEE

25. The Committee of the Club shall comprise of not more than 5 members including, Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Safety Officer and Website Secretary. A quorum of any Committee meeting shall consist of a majority of Committee Members.

26. Committee members shall be elected from written nominations at the AGM, to ideally serve for a period of two years for sake of continuity. The Committee will be elected by majority vote by a show of hands from eligible members present, plus any other voting method agreed by the committee.

27. Should a committee position become vacant, the Committee may co-opt a replacement who will then serve until the following AGM. This will be by a majority vote from the Committee Members.

28. Members elected to Office will have full voting rights at all meetings. In the event of a tie, the Chairman will have a casting vote.

29. The Committee reserve the right to carry out negotiations and make decisions in the interest of the club or on behalf of members where necessary, the committee reserve the right to authorise expenditure on behalf of the club up to, but not exceeding a value of £300. Where expenditure of more than £300 is being considered a proposal must be placed before the membership at a club meeting for approval.

30. Money may only be withdrawn form club funds following agreement by the majority of the committee, evidenced by email.

31. The Secretary must be informed of any negotiations proposed by Club members that affect the Club as a whole and copies of any written correspondence must be submitted to him for record purposes.

32. Committee Members may receive reasonable reimbursement for necessary expenditure incurred wholly on behalf of the club whilst performing his/her duties. Receipts are to be obtained and presented to Club Treasurer.

33. Any Committee Member or Officer wishing to resign should do so in writing.

34. Any Member of the Committee who is absent for three consecutive Committee Meetings without reasonable cause will automatically forfeit his seat on the Committee.

35. The Committee may pay accounts and incur any normal liabilities on behalf of the club. If a Committee Member engages or becomes involved in court proceedings, whether criminal or civil, in his representative capacity on behalf of the club, as opposed to his capacity as a private individual, the club will indemnify, by reason of its affiliation to the BMFA, the Committee Member in respect of any fines or damages or costs awarded against the Committee Member.

36. 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.

VOTING AND CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

37. All Meetings will be supported by an agenda, and minutes published.

38. A quorum of any General Meeting is to be at least one quarter of the membership.

39. Voting will normally be by show of hands, however a secret ballot must be taken should any member request that this be done. Proxy and postal voted will not be allowed; electronic voting is allowed.

40. All proposals must be seconded and voted upon. A majority vote of those present is required to carry any proposal to alter this constitution.

41. Amendments to proposals must be voted upon first.

42. Non-Committee Members may attend Committee meetings as observers by applying to the Secretary at least 14 days before any meeting. Any non-Committee Member may be asked to leave the meeting subject to approval from the Committee.

43. Non-Club Members may attend Club Meetings as observers as invited members of the Club. Any non-Club Member may be asked to leave the meeting subject to approval from the Committee.

44. 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.

45. Patrons of the club have no voting rights but are free to attend all Club Meetings.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

46. A convenient date for the Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be decided each year by the Committee. At least 28 days notice of the meeting will be given in writing to all Club Members.

47. Annual subscriptions and the joining fee will be decided at the Annual General Meeting.

48. Subscriptions are due by 1st January each year. Any Member who has not paid the subscriptions for the ensuing year by this date, in whole or in part, will not be allowed to fly until they have done so. BMFA membership must be in place before flying (see paragraph 4 above).

49. Accounts are published quarterly to the committee. Members can request these, and raise an issue to the committee.

EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS

50. The Secretary will convene an Extraordinary Committee meeting within 14 days on request from any Member of the Committee, stating the business to be discussed.

51. 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 stating the business to be discussed.

52. The Secretary shall convene an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Club on receipt of a request in writing signed by not less than a quarter of the Members of the Club, stating the business to be brought before the meeting, of which 28 days' notice has been given to all members in writing stating the business to be discussed.

53. When a request for a meeting is made in accordance with Article 50 and it is not called within 28 days, the requisitioners may themselves convene an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Club by giving 28 days notice in writing 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.

DISSOLUTION OF THE CLUB

54. Should it become necessary or desirable to dissolve the Club, the Committee will call an Extraordinary General Meeting. Should a quorum of three quarters of the membership fail to appear, the meeting will be adjourned and a further EGM must be called. The second meeting will proceed even if a quorum is not present and the motion will then be carried by a simple majority vote.

55. On dissolution and on 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 in equal shares to charity.

56. If the final accounts are less than required to refund the subscriptions to the members, the total money remaining will be donated to charity. All members will receive a final statement of accounts.

CHILD PROTECTION

57. The Club requires that any child admitted to the Club Site or events is a signed up Junior Member (under the age of 18) of WHMFC and is accompanied by a parent or legal guardian at all times who will assume full responsibility for that Junior Member.