

# Northwest rc Helicopter Club



## **Constitution, Field/Safety Rule and Charity Guidelines**

### **INTRODUCTION**

North West RC Helicopter Club was formed in April 2008 for the sole intention of promoting and flying RC Helicopters.

In promotion of North West RC Helicopter Club this constitution is set out.

The clubs main principal is; to ensure the safety of all members, public and no damage is unnecessary caused to the environment and property we fly in.

# CONSTITUTION

## GENERAL

1. The club shall be called North West RC Helicopter Club and will be affiliated to the British Model Flying Association.
2. The clubs principal aim shall be the promotion of safe and responsible model aircraft flying. Main model will be RC Helicopter either electric or IC but consideration will be allowed for small aircraft i.e Foam
3. All members, without exception, must obey all club rules. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action by the Club which 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. The only exception to this is for those members who play no active part in the club whatsoever; i.e. social members only.
5. When there is a joint meeting between North West RC Helicopter 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 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 if their ability requires it, and such arrangements must be made in advance of the visit.
7. A “member” means any class of membership.
8. The Committee has the right to refuse membership to new applicants.
9. 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.
10. New members’ subscriptions shall be subject to status, plus the joining fee as decided at the Annual General Meeting.
11. Members who have allowed their subscriptions to lapse for less than one year will not normally be asked to re-apply for membership or pay the joining fee, but will be required to pay a full 12 months subscription. Reduced subscriptions will apply from June when they will be halved. The Committee reserves the right to ask for a formal membership application if it so wishes.
12. Persons letting their membership lapse for 1 year or more, will be required to re-apply for membership and pay the joining fee on their return to the club. A letter to the committee will be required explaining reason for lapse.
13. 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 at a general meeting. The field safety rules are considered as a supplementary code to those laid out by the British Model Flying Association's Members' Handbook, compliance with which is mandatory within North West RC Helicopter Club.

14. Any complaint concerning any member must be made in writing/verbal and signed by the complainant(s). The written complaint/verbal must then be forwarded to the Secretary so that the matter can be addressed at the next Committee meeting.
15. The Committee may impose a flying suspension not exceeding **28** days upon any member in the event of misconduct. Any suspension must be accompanied by a verbal and/or written warning as deemed appropriate in accordance with Article 16.
16. The Committee may consider removal from the role of members any member whose 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:
  - a. The member is to be given a verbal warning by an authorised Committee Member in which the member is made aware of his misdemeanour and what he is reasonably required to do to make amends.
  - b. If the member does not respond, he is to be given a written warning by an authorised Committee Member to advise him of his misdemeanour and what he is reasonably required to do to make amends.
  - c. If he still fails to respond, the Committee should invite him in writing to meet with them at a previously agreed date and time to discuss the situation, advising they are considering withdrawal of his membership.
  - d. If he still fails to respond to reasoning or fails to attend without reasonable cause, the Committee can advise him in writing that his membership is withdrawn, stating the reasons why this decision was reached.
  - e. When the member is advised of withdrawal of his membership, he must be given the right of appeal. If he opts to appeal, this will be to the Club membership at an EGM which the Committee would call on his 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 his rights to present his case to the Committee and be given a right of appeal in accordance with sub-paragraphs c, d and e above.

In the event of dismissal the Committee will arrange for the member's current membership fee to be reimbursed pro rata depending on stage of annual membership i.e 6mths into the year will give half membership returned..

17. Any alteration to this Constitution can only be made at a General Meeting called for the purpose. Any proposed alterations must be submitted to the Secretary in writing at least 14 days prior to the meeting.

## **FLYING**

18. It is the responsibility of all fully affiliated North West RC Helicopter Club members to ensure the running of the flying field is competent and safe at all times. Any doubt, then the safety officer or committee member must be consulted.
19. All flying members must be assessed by a competent flyer and attain a minimum standard of flying as required by the North West RC Helicopter Club. If the standard is not achieved, then direct supervision must be maintained until the standard is achieved.

## **COMMITTEE**

20. The Committee of the Club shall comprise of not more than 5 members. A quorum of any Committee meeting shall consist of a majority of Committee Members.
22. The Committee shall consist of five officers. These shall be Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and 2 safety officers.
23. One senior club member should be appointed annually as the club's BMFA Delegate who should represent the club at all relevant meetings.
24. Any Committee member or member, who is involved in any organisational position within the Club, must hold membership of the British Model Flying Association.
25. Committee members shall be elected from written/verbal nominations, at the Annual General Meeting, to serve for a period of one year. The Committee will be elected by majority vote by a show of hands from eligible members present.
26. Should a committee position become vacant, the Committee may co-opt a replacement who will then serve until the following Annual General Meeting. This will be by a majority vote from the Committee Members.
27. 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.
28. The Committee reserve the right to carry out reasonable decisions in the interest of the club or on behalf of the membership where necessary without consulting the other Committee members. Any financial decisions must be made by committee and members.
29. Each Executive is required to submit a sample of his signature for banking reference purposes.
30. Money may only be withdrawn from the fund by cheque signed by the allocated Officers.
31. 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.
32. The Secretary will receive an annual honorarium to cover out of pocket expenses not covered under the normal conditions of withdrawal from club funds, the amount of which will be decided

at the Annual General Meeting. He may also present a quarterly claim towards telephone costs for consideration by the Committee.

33. No member of the Committee or Officer of the club may be a Committee Member or Officer of another model flying club.
34. Any Committee Member or Officer wishing to resign should do so in writing or verbal.
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 the Committee Member in respect of any fines or damages or costs awarded against the Committee Member. **ON HOLD Until AGM (LF to advise)**
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. **As 35**

#### **VOTING AND CONDUCT OF MEETINGS**

37. All meetings will be agendered and minuted. Any other business 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.
38. A quorum of any general meeting is to be at least one quarter of the membership.
39. 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 allowed.
40. All proposals must be seconded and voted upon. A majority vote is required to carry any proposal.
41. Amendments to proposals must be voted upon first.
42. 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.
43. Patrons of the club have no voting rights but are free to attend all club meetings.

#### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS**

44. A convenient date for the Annual General Meeting will be decided each year by the Committee. At least 28 days of the meeting will be given in writing to all Club members. (April / May)
45. Annual subscriptions and the joining fee will be decided at the Annual General Meeting.
46. Subscriptions are due by 1st June 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.

47. An Auditor or Auditors shall be elected by the Committee to examine the accounts before the Annual General Meeting to verify that the balance sheet is correct and fairly represents the expenditure and receipts of the club, its assets and its liabilities.

### **EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS**

48. 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.
49. 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 / Email stating the business to be discussed.
50. The Secretary shall convene an Extraordinary General Meeting of the club on receipt of a request in writing signed by not less than 5 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.
51. 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**

52. 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. The second meeting will proceed even if a quorum is not present and the motion will then be carried by a simple majority vote.
53. 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 in equal shares to the Club's charities. (See the Clubs' Charity Guidelines). Views to be sought and addressed at the agm.
54. If the final accounts are less than required to refund the subscriptions to the members, the total money remaining will be donated to the Club's charities. All members will receive a final statement of accounts.

# CHARITY GUIDELINES

1. The aim of these notes is to provide guidance to the Committee of the North West RC Helicopter Club when considering making donations to charity.
2. The Club's charity guidelines are as follows :-
3. The Club should, wherever possible, support local charity events when asked. i.e. school summer fairs, firework displays, etc. whenever it is practicable to provide a relevant display of what we do. Whether or not money changes hands largely depends on the circumstances around which the event is based. These conditions should be finalised well before the day of such an event.
4. Only money raised at these events should be made available to donate to worthy causes. No money will be diverted from members' subscriptions.
5. In the event of the club being approached to donate money to a local worthy cause, the Committee will make a decision on the amount to be donated. The maximum sum available in this case will be **£XX**.
6. In the event that the North West RC Helicopter Club is approached for sponsorship of a member or their close associate who is involved in a charity event, the Committee will make a decision on the amount to be donated. The maximum sum available for sponsorship in this case will be **£XX**.
7. The Club reserves the right to periodically donate funds to charities. The amounts and gaining charities must be agreed by majority vote at a general meeting.
8. The current nominated Club charities are :-

*List the charities as required.*

These are the charities referred to in the Club's Constitution Article 54.

# FIELD / SAFETY RULES

1. All fliers must observe field discipline and comply with the Air Navigation Order, all relevant BMFA safety codes as contained within the BMFA Members' Handbook and Civil Aviation publication (CAP) 658.
2. On matters of field safety needing an immediate decision, the responsibility lies with instructors, a member of the Committee or two committee members, in that order. Any instructions must be accepted without dissent. However, should a member believe the instructions to be wrong, then he should bring this to the attention of the Committee through Article 14 of the Constitution.
3. Any pilot not holding their solo qualification for the type of aircraft they are flying must not fly without the supervision of an instructor or their specially appointed deputy if the instructors are absent from the field. If no instructors are present at the site, any member holding the BMFA 'B' Certificate may act as an appointed deputy until an instructor arrives. Review at AGM
4. Due consideration must be given at all times to trainee or novice pilots in the circuit. In the event that the pleasure or concentration of a pilot is affected by the flying style of another, precedence will be given to the pilot who was airborne first. Intimidating flying of any sort is not permitted.
5. No more than 6 aircraft shall be airborne at any one time if deemed to be safe. If in doubt ask.
6. All flying is to be done in the designated areas only. (It is useful to include a diagram of your site(s) depicting the positions of dead airspace, pits, flight lines, pilots' box, car parking, spectators' area etc.). Over-flying of the list any particularly sensitive areas here to emphasise them. Review at AGM
7. All fliers must observe the established flight line and stand in the designated area whilst flying. Any variation to suit daily conditions may be made by the Club's safety officers. Any spectators (especially children) must remain in the spectators' area whilst flying is in progress.
8. Any person wishing to enter or cross the runway area must seek clearance from any pilots flying at the time before doing so.
9. All vehicles must be parked in the designated area only. Summer and Winter conditions may differ.
10. The frequency allocation system in use is the Peg board operated even if you are on 2.4. Peg on at all times for both 35mhz and 2.4 ghz
11. All transmitters that are on 35mhz are to be checked at least annually. Any transmitter found to be crossing over onto other channels is not to be used until the fault has been rectified.
12. Before switching on (35mhz only) the pilot must ensure that he is operating on the frequency he believes he is on and must display the appropriate frequency pennant on his transmitter.
13. Frequency numbers (35mhz only) must be called out before the transmitter in question is switched on.

14. All transmitter aerials must remain retracted unless the model is being flown. The flight is defined from the point of release to when the engine is stopped or the model is restrained.
15. Transmitters (35mhz only) should not be taken away from the flight line when retrieving an aircraft, unless to do so would aid retrieval of the model. In this instance the matter should be brought to the attention of the safety officers so that this may be carried out without the risk of over-flying the transmitter.
16. Should an aircraft go out of control, the first priority must be the safety of persons with the second being avoidance of damage to property. A warning is to be shouted by the pilot which is to be taken up by other members.
17. In the event of an unexplained loss of control of a model, all transmitters are to be impounded and checked to ensure they are operating on their declared frequency.
18. Before starting an engine the model must be checked to ensure throttle hold is working.
19. Appropriate use should be made of all available pit area, and under no circumstances should engines be set up in the immediate vicinity of the pilots who are flying at that time. Where practical, models should face outward from the pit area.
20. No model helicopters to be run in the pits area at any time.
21. All new or repaired models should be checked out by an instructor or their appointed deputy before being allowed to fly. All models are subject to random safety spot checks which will be carried out by an instructor. If in his opinion a model is unsafe to fly or does not conform to Club rules, it will be grounded until rectified.
22. Members must ensure that they comply with the D of E Noise Code for the Minimisation of Noise from Model Aircraft. "Add on" silencers should be fitted unless the model emits below 82 decibels at 7 metres without them. Notwithstanding if in the opinion of the Committee a model is excessively noisy in the air, then it is to be grounded until rectified.
23. All operational failsafes in use on powered models operated from our Club site must set the throttle to tick-over, not hold, (stopped in the case of electric power) regardless of the other control operations governed by the failsafe. Particular care must be taken when operating on Pulse Code Modulation (PCM) or when swapping from normal modulation (PPM) to PCM to ensure that the Failsafe is correctly programmed. Failsafes are to be checked prior to flight by switching the transmitter off whilst the model is restrained.
24. No person shall attempt to retrieve a model from any land adjacent to the flying site without prior consultation with the appointed safety officers for the day, to ensure that the situation is properly assessed and minimal disruption caused. If it is considered by the safety officers that the landowner's permission should be sought before retrieving the model, it will be the owner of the model and one of the safety officers who must approach them for permission.

25. Mobile telephones should not be kept in close proximity to computerised transmitters and must not be taken onto the flight line.
26. No smoking is permitted in the vicinity of inflammable fuels and materials.
27. Children must be closely supervised at all times and must not be allowed to run around the pit area or runways.
28. Dogs should be kept under strict control at all times.
29. Any accident involving a third party or another member must be reported to the clubs BMFA Delegate as soon as possible, who will then inform the Executive Committee.

**Note: The above is not definitive and additional rules may be required to ensure that other requirements, hazards and risks are managed.**

# GUIDE ON CARING FOR JUNIOR MEMBERS

This guide is not definitive and clubs should be aware it may have to be tailored to meet the club's requirements and possibly the individual needs of junior members. It does, however, provide a starting point for the formulation of club policy and identification of responsibilities. **It should be noted that any disclaimer concerning the care of any member, particularly junior members, is not acceptable in law.**

Responsibility for junior members is shared between the parents/guardians and the club members and should be well publicised to ensure that all are aware of the division of responsibilities. The ideal medium is club rules but for these to be effective it is imperative that a copy of the rules is given to parents/guardians in addition to members and their attention is drawn to them.

Typically club rules concerning juniors could be:

1. A Junior Member is defined as being under 16 years of age.
2. A responsible adult is defined as a senior member or parent/guardian who has the experience commensurate with the type and degree of supervision required.
3. Junior members must be supervised at all times by a responsible adult. The level of supervision is to be commensurate with the junior member's age, maturity, capabilities and levels of experience.
4. Junior members under the age of 16 years shall not start an engine or carry a model with the engine running unless they are supervised by a responsible adult.
5. No junior member under the age of 16 years shall fly a model aircraft unless supervised by a responsible adult *or* the junior member has been authorised to do so by the Club Committee.
6. No senior member is to be expected to assume responsibility for a junior member unless he/she has been specifically requested to do so by the junior member's parent/guardian. If required to do so, he/she is to assume complete and total responsibility for the junior member whilst he/she is in their charge.
7. Notwithstanding the requirements of Paragraph 6, should a member discover a junior member is unsupervised he/she must assume responsibility for the junior member's safety in the first instance. The situation should then be rectified as soon as possible by seeking out the junior member's parent/guardian/nominated supervisor. Any instance of such an occurrence is to be reported to the Committee as soon as possible.
8. Whilst supervising junior members, senior members should be aware of the requirements of The Children Act (1989) and avoid placing themselves in a position that could be open to misinterpretation or question. A leaflet giving advice is available from the BMFA Leicester Office or from the Club Secretary.

It is recommended the club also places the following or a similar statement on the membership application form to ensure the parent/guardian agrees to abide by club policy:

***“Note to parents and guardians:***

This Club does not undertake to supervise junior members other than for the actual act of model aircraft flying and associated pre-flight and post-flight procedures, unless specifically arranged. Our activities at the flying site do not finish at a regular time and it is therefore your responsibility to ensure the well being of your child over and above arranging a predetermined collection time. Should you wish to leave your child at the flying site, it is your responsibility to arrange for one of the senior members to supervise him/her during your absence.

In addition this Club has specific rules relating to junior members and you are required to study them carefully.

This membership form must be countersigned by the parent/guardian if the applicant is under 18 years of age, thereby signifying you accept the conditions of junior membership.”

Finally, caring for junior members is largely a matter of common sense provided everyone is clear on what is expected of them and a few simple principles are adhered to. It is not a responsibility to be feared but is nevertheless essential if we are to ensure we continue to attract youth into model flying.

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