

NORTH WEST KENT NETBALL LEAGUE CONSTITUTION

1. NAME

The League shall be called the NORTH WEST KENT LEAGUE (hereinafter called the “League” or “NWKL”).

2. LEAGUE COMMITTEE

(i) The League Committee member responsibilities shall be:

Chairperson, Treasurer, League Secretary, Complaints Officer, Umpiring Secretary, Tournament Secretary, Summer League Secretary, Safeguarding Officer and Data Protection Officer.

The names of current appointed officers can be found on the NWKL website.

(ii) These Committee members must be participants of the League and shall be elected or re-elected at the League’s Annual General Meeting (AGM). Nominations for a Committee position should be received 14 days prior to the AGM, with the nominee having indicated their willingness to stand, along with the name of a proposer and seconder supporting the applicant. Participants of the League will then be entitled to vote for new Committee members.

(iii) League Committee members are expected to attend all committee meetings and the league AGM.

(iv) No less than five members of the League Committee shall form the quorum in any League related decisions.

(v) No member of the Committee who is also a member of a team shall vote or be involved on a matter directly concerning that team.

3. OBJECTIVES

The League is established to:

- (i) Promote and encourage the game of Netball in the North West Kent area and to assist in the national growth of netball.
- (ii) Work to improve the facilities for the League and the game of Netball.
- (iii) Employ the funds of the League in the best interests of the game of Netball.
- (iv) Instil a sense of community between members and clubs of the league.

4. MEMBERSHIP OF THE LEAGUE

(i) At the discretion of the League Committee, participation shall be open to all Netball clubs/teams. Applications to enter the League shall be submitted to the League Secretary in person at the Annual

General Meeting (AGM) each year. Non-attendance at the League General Meeting of existing clubs wishing to maintain their membership may result in their exclusion from the League.

(ii) Clubs/teams must pay the appropriate membership fees to the League each year at the AGM, which cover the expenses of the League. These fees are reviewed each year by the League Committee and published prior to the AGM. Any team withdrawing from the League shall forfeit all subscription monies already paid.

(iii) All clubs entering the League shall be members of England Netball (hereinafter called “EN”) and the local county Kent Netball (hereinafter called “KN”). This membership is arranged and managed by individual teams/members. Confirmation of membership must be sent to the Committee before the first fixture date of the new netball season in September. Failure to do so will result in the immediate withdrawal from the League.

(iv) The minimum age of members allowed to play in the League is 13 years. The onus is on the teams/clubs who play members between the ages of 13 years to 16 years to be liable for their primary duty of care. Teams/clubs must also satisfy themselves that such a young player has the maturity to play against adults.

(v) Individuals may be accepted at any time on payment of the annual subscription and EN and KN fees.

(vi) At the discretion of the League Committee, participation in the league shall be open to past players and others interested in the objectives of the League. These associate members shall affiliate to EN and KN.

(vii) Life membership shall be offered to a person who has given outstanding service to the League. The League shall pay the appropriate EN and KN fees.

(viii) All clubs/teams/members/umpires participating in the League shall be bound by this Constitution, the League Byelaws, the League Codes of Conduct and by current England Netball/INF Rules.

5. WITHDRAWAL FROM THE LEAGUE/INABILITY TO FULFIL FIXTURES

(i) Any team withdrawing from the League must notify the League Committee.

(ii) Any team not fulfilling at least 10 official Winter League fixtures will be withdrawn from the League. All goals scored by the withdrawing team, or a team being withdrawn from the League during the season, will be deleted from the records. All monies will be forfeited.

6. THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

(i) The League shall hold a meeting in May every calendar year, as its Annual General Meeting (AGM). A minimum of 21 days’ notice in writing shall be given to the participants/clubs of the League, specifying the place and date of the meeting, together with a copy of the Agenda.

(ii) The League Committee may also invite any person having specialised knowledge to attend any meeting of the League in an advisory capacity, but without power to vote, if they are not a League participant.

(iii) Business to be conducted at the AGM will include:

- To receive reports and accounts over the past season
- To elect or re-elect the League Committee
- To consider any proposed resolution or changes to the league constitution.

(iv) Any items suggested for discussion or resolution at the AGM must be submitted to the committee by the league member or club 14 days before the date of the meeting.

(v) Voting:

- At any Annual General Meeting a resolution or change in the constitution will be put to the vote by a show of hands from those representative members of League teams.
- Persons eligible to vote at a General Meeting shall include League members and life members. There is one vote per team. Or one vote per life member or League Committee member. Members may vote in one capacity only. (Associate members are not entitled to vote).
- No member of the Committee who is also a member of a team shall vote on a matter directly concerning that team.
- In the case of an equality of votes the Chairman of the meeting shall be entitled to the casting vote.

7. EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING

An Extraordinary General Meeting may be convened:

(i) By order of the League Committee. Or;

(ii) Upon written request to the committee from one third or more of those entitled to vote at a General Meeting. Each requisition shall state the purpose for which a meeting is required and shall set out any resolution, which it is desired to propose. The meeting shall be held within 28 days of receipt of the requisition by the League Secretary and 14 days' notice of the meeting and resolution proposed shall be given to every member entitled to vote. If the meeting has been convened by either the League Committee or by the members, the quorum shall be two thirds of the voting members.

8. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION & BYE LAWS

Proposals to alter the League Constitution and Bye Laws at the Annual General Meeting shall be submitted in writing to the League Secretary no later than 14 days before the Annual General Meeting, either by the League Committee or proposed and seconded by two members entitled to vote at the General Meeting.

9. DISCIPLINARY POWERS, PROCEDURES AND APPEALS

- (i) All league participants shall be liable to disciplinary action in any failure to abide by the terms of the League Constitution, its Bye Laws and Codes of Conduct or due to behaviour that is not in keeping with the aims of the League (*specifically 3 iv*).
- (ii) In the case of any dispute or complaint the complaints/disciplinary procedure outlined in *Bye Law 6* should be followed.
- (iii) The submission of a complaint should include reference to which *NWKL Code (s) of Conduct* has been breached.
- (iv) Any dispute/complaint concerning teams or participants of the League must be submitted to the Complaints Officer (or Committee) within 48 hours of the incident. Any complaint submitted outside of this time frame is only considered at the discretion of the League Committee if deemed to be of a serious nature.
- (v) According to the complaints/disciplinary bye laws any participant of the League that does not submit a match or incident report within 1 week (7 calendar days) of the request may be suspended from the league in all capacities (playing, coaching and umpiring) until the report is submitted.
- (vi) The contents of all requested match reports will remain confidential; however, the Committee reserves the right to disclose aspects of the original complaint if this serves to conclude the investigation with the best interest of all parties involved. This will not include specifically naming any League participant or club.
- (vii) The Committee aims to conclude all complaints/investigations within 2 weeks of the original complaint. However, where this is not possible, they will update all parties involved within this 2-week time frame.
- (viii) The Committee will review the complaint/dispute submitted and will agree on any disciplinary action deemed fit. Disciplinary action may include a verbal warning, a written warning, a deduction of team point(s) (up to a maximum of 5 points), temporary suspension or expulsion from the League. This action will be decided based on evidence collected from appropriate participants of the League including team captains, players, umpires and spectators. The original complainant does not have to be informed of the details of this disciplinary action, unless they directly involve them or their club.
- (ix) In the case of any participant of the League mis-using social media in a detrimental or offensive way towards another participant, a club or the League they will be suspended from the League for a period of three games (playing and/or officiating). Should there be a re-occurrence by the same member they will be expelled from the League.

If a team wishes to film or photograph a match they must seek prior permission from the opposing team and state the purpose that it will be used for (whether that be for training or club promotion) and how it will be shared.

(x) The League participant/club that has been the subject of disciplinary action by the League Committee has the right to appeal within 1 week (7 calendar days) of the complaint conclusion. In this case an Appeals Committee will be formed consisting of three persons who have no direct association with the League Committee or said member/club. The Appeals Committee will review all evidence provided by the League Committee and gather new evidence if appropriate or possible. Such an Appeals Committee may affirm, vary or rescind any action decided by the League Committee. The decision of the Appeals Committee will be deemed as final.

(xi) Any participant or team suspended or excluded from the League shall forfeit any subscription monies paid.

10. INDEMNITY

Any League Committee Member shall be indemnified by the League against all costs and losses he/she may incur or sustain in relation to the execution for or with the authority of the League Committee.

11. LIABILITY

The League accepts no responsibility for injury to any member, any loss, or damage of equipment or property belonging to its members. Members must arrange their own insurance at their own discretion.

12. INSURANCE

Members holding trophies owned by the League shall arrange to include the full value of such trophies in their own household insurance, to cover loss or damage by fire, burglary, or accident. Should any trophy be lost or damaged the Club or individual holding such trophy shall be responsible for replacement at full value.

NORTH WEST KENT NETBALL LEAGUE BYE LAWS

1. REGISTRATION OF PLAYERS

(a) All players must register in their appropriate clubs and teams no later than the first League Match.

(b) No player may play for more than one Club for League games during the season. However, on written application to the League, a player may leave a club and re-register for another Club within the League, no later than the third League date of the season. The appropriate EN and KN fees must be paid.

Note: On written notification to the League Committee of the disbanding of a team, the players of that team shall be eligible to re-register for any other team in the League. The appropriate EN and KN fees must be paid.

(c) All players must carry a photo id, which must be produced on demand (at any time, before, during and after the game) by a League Committee member, umpire or opposition captain. Failure to produce such identification before the game will result in that player being unable to take part in that League Match. Failure by one or more players to produce such ID, during or after the match, will result in that team forfeiting the match.

(e) Where a Club has more than one team the following rules apply:

- A club may play one or more players from one of the Club's teams in any one match providing that the player(s) is from a lower team.
- A player playing for a team in their Club other than the one for which they are registered, must be declared on the result card, stating which team they are 'playing up' from.
- If a player plays on three occasions for a higher team, than that for which they are registered, they are deemed to be a member of the team in which they play the third game and are registered accordingly. This includes a substitute player regardless of the length of their involvement in the game.
- The result of a game is voided if an unregistered player (non England Netball member) plays or if a player plays down from a higher team. The non offending team will gain the points if a game is voided.

(f) Any additions to team lists should be registered with the Committee in writing.

(g) After serious illness or injury resulting in a long layoff from playing, a player may apply to the Committee in writing to be re-registered in a lower team in their Club.

(h) Individual player(s) registered as a Premiership or Regional player in the current season may play no lower than division 3, with the exception of under 16 regional players.

2. FORMATION OF LEAGUE DIVISIONS

- (a) The formation of the League Divisions shall be at the discretion of the League Committee, such decisions being final. The normal format to be followed is a “two up/two down” promotion/relegation procedure.
- (b) Should a vacancy occur in a Division, then the vacancy shall be filled at the discretion of the League Committee.
- (c) A new team entering the League shall enter the lowest division or may be placed in a higher vacancy at the discretion of the League Committee.

3. RULES OF PLAY

- (a) All League matches shall be played under the rules of EN and shall be played at the League Centre. All matches shall consist of four quarters of 15 minutes each with an interval of 3 minutes between the first/second, and third/fourth quarters, and an interval of 5 minutes at half time. Summer league game lengths will be shorter at 12 minutes per quarter.
- (b) All matches must begin on time; the onus is on the teams to comply. Failure to do so will result in either or both teams forfeiting the points, depending on which is late. The Umpires and Captains must certify this on the result card, prior to any friendly match being played.
- (c) Both teams shall wear identification bibs, and all teams should provide a ball and first aid kit at all matches.
- (d) Both teams shall submit a results card at the end of the match, with the names of players clearly printed and signed by both umpires. Failure to correctly complete a scorecard will result in a 1-point penalty deduction for every incomplete card.
- (e) Points will be awarded as follows:
 - 5 points Win
 - 4 points Draw
 - 3 points Losing by 1 goal
 - 2 points to the losing team who gain 50% or more of the winner's goals
- (f) Any team that has to cancel a game will be penalised by the deduction of 2 points, as long as they inform the opposition, their umpire and the League Committee; at least 48 hours before the fixture, i.e. 12 noon on the Thursday prior to a Saturday fixture.
- (g) Any cancellation after the 48-hr time frame will result in a total deduction of 5 points from the offending team.

Any team failing to notify the opposition that they have cancelled the game, and the opposition turn up to play, will be deducted 10 points in total.

- (h) Where a team cancels a fixture, they will be penalised by the appropriate deduction of points (See Rule 3 f and g). If the Committee then has cause to invoke Rule 4 (a) due to inclement weather and/or for the safety and duty of care to players, officials and spectators, for a specific court(s); the said fixture is still deemed to be cancelled and the original deduction of points for the cancellation will stand.
- (i) A player may not play a League Match after the 12th week of pregnancy.
- (j) Players must complete an accident form if any injury occurs.

4. CANCELLATIONS and REARRANGEMENTS OF LEAGUE GAMES

- (a) Due to severe weather conditions no fewer than two League Committee members must decide on the fitness of the court and whether the extreme weather conditions prohibit play.
- (b) In the event that a game has to be abandoned (as agreed by the umpires and/or committee member) due to serious injury (i.e. an ambulance is called) then the whole game must be replayed on a date and time determined by the Committee.
- (c) If matches are cancelled the League Committee will decide the date(s) matches will be played.
- (d) A team may apply to the Committee, in writing, to request to rearrange a League fixture due to their involvement in an E.N. recognised Netballing Event falling simultaneously with a League fixture date. Such rearrangement, should it be authorised by the Committee, will be at no cost to the League or opposing team; all associated court costs must be borne by the requesting team, and the fixture must be played prior to the affected League fixture date. It is then the responsibility of the team making the request to contact the opposition and inform the Committee in writing prior to the rearranged fixture, of the agreed date and time. In the event of a failure to reach an agreed date for fulfilling the League fixture with the opposing team, the Committee reserves the right to decide a date by which the match must be played.

5. UMPIRES

- (a) All umpires must be members of EN by 1st September of the current membership year.
- (b) Umpires are required to hold the appropriate EN/International Federation of Netball Association (hereinafter called IFNA) qualifications, along with the appropriate League recognised re-assessment.
 - For Division 1 & 2 Current “B” Award Umpires or above are required.
 - Remaining Divisions Current “C” Award Umpires or above.

-C Award Trainee Umpires (or beginner Award Umpires) may umpire Division 11 and 12 of the Winter Season or Division 4 of the Summer Season without their mentor present, as long as this has been agreed by their county mentor in writing to the League Committee. At the discretion of their county mentor and with the permission of the League Committee trainee umpires may also umpire a higher division than 11/12, with their mentor present throughout the game.

(c) The Committee reserves the right to use any suitable league fixture for any C or B Award Pre-Assessment, Assessment or Re-Assessment. Any team involved will be notified by the Committee in advance and these teams will not be required to pay the umpire (except in the case of a re-assessment).

(d) In order to uphold high umpiring standards within the league, NWKL umpires agree to be monitored or observed throughout the season by an official EN assessor. The assessor will be present at various league fixtures throughout the season, and will provide feedback and recommendations. The NWKL committee will act on any recommendations provided by the assessor as appropriate. All costs will be covered by the league.

(e) No game shall be counted as a League game unless two umpires with the stipulated qualification are present. If necessary, a player holding this qualification shall drop out of that team to umpire. The team not able to field an appropriately qualified umpire will be deemed to have forfeited the game. Full points will be awarded to the non-defaulting team and a friendly may be played.

(f) An umpire must complete the whole match except in the event of injury or illness resulting in an umpire being unable to continue. If not, then the game should be abandoned. The umpire may take no further part in the match. No team should be forced to drop a player to umpire under these circumstances.

(g) An umpire may not umpire a League Match after the 20th week of pregnancy.

(h) Umpires are required to notify the League Committee of any NWKL player that they warn, suspend or send off. This should be recorded on the back of the score card or emailed to a Committee Member. This information will be held in line with GDPR only for the current season.

(i) Umpires should make every effort to wear neutral clothing when umpiring for their own club.

(j) Umpires are bound by INF/EN rules as well as the *NWKL constitution, its Bye Laws and Code of Conduct*.

6. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

(a) Any dispute/complaint must be submitted to the Complaints Officer (or Committee) within 48 hours of the incident (as outlined in the Constitution).

(b) Any dispute/complaint should include full details of time, location, match details and any league participant involved. The complaint should also include reference to which League Code(s) of Conduct has been breached.

(c) The incident will be investigated by the Complaints Officer/League Committee and is likely to include the gathering of evidence and further information via match/incident reports from team captains, players, umpires and any other league participant.

(d) Where League participants are requested to submit a report, they are required to do so within 1 week of the request or *Constitution 9 (v)* may be enforced.

(e) The Committee will seek to reach a conclusion to the complaint within 2 weeks or, as a minimum update all parties involved within this time (*see Constitution 9 vii*).

(f) Please see *Constitution 9* for further details regarding time frames, privacy of information, potential action, the appeals process and the misuse of social media.

*The League Committee reserves the right to rule on anything not specifically covered within this *Constitution* and *Bye Laws**

The league adheres to current Safeguarding Practices and GDPR regulations as laid out by England Netball