

Oxfordshire Softball Association: Constitution

8 August 2024.

Section 1: Format and Objectives

1.1 The Name

The organisation will be called The Oxfordshire Softball Association (OSA).

1.2 The OSA

The OSA shall be run by a Committee. The Committee shall consist of non-elected team captains and an Executive Committee arising from annual elections.

The OSA will be affiliated to the national governing bodies: The British Softball Federation (BSF) and Baseball Softball United Kingdom (BSUK).

The OSA will be run as a non-profit making organisation.

All Committee members will be considered to be volunteers and will not be paid for their services.

1.3 The Objectives

The objectives of the OSA shall be:

1. To foster and promote the playing of softball at all levels whether in competitions or otherwise.
2. To provide opportunities in coaching and training for teams, clubs and members.
3. To encourage the development of softball within Oxfordshire and more generally in the United Kingdom.
4. To organise a schedule for at least one annual League, and administer the League(s).
5. To publish a set of playing rules for games played under OSA organisation.

1.4 Statement of Liability

It is stated that all officers, representatives and agents of the OSA and of any other parties, bodies, persons representing softball officially and with due authorisation, shall not be held liable for any damage, injury, loss or theft to persons or items, whether publicly or privately owned, under any circumstances whatsoever, and that advice is hereby given to all players and officials alike to ensure that they are adequately covered by relevant insurance. Teams and their principal organisers must see that insurance is in place, and is suitable in nature for the sport and all reasonable consequences.

1.5 Association Dissolution

In the event of the OSA being wound-up and dissolved, the standing assets of the OSA will be distributed to like-minded softball or associated organisations with the following priorities:

1. Other constituted and BSUK affiliated Softball associations/leagues as nominated by BSUK.
2. Other constituted and BSUK affiliated Baseball associations/leagues [as wording above] within the Southern Region (as defined by the governing body) BSUK.

1.6 Alterations to the Constitution

Alterations to the OSA Constitution may only be at an Annual or Special General Meeting, convened with the required written notice of the proposal. Any alteration or amendment must be proposed by a Full Member of the OSA and seconded by another Full Member. Such alterations shall be passed if supported by not less than two-thirds of those Full Members present at the meeting, assuming that a quorum has been achieved.

Section 2: Membership and the Committees

2.1 Membership in the OSA

Membership shall be open to any person, team or club completing a membership application form and paying the relevant subscription/joining fees as determined for teams/clubs by the Full Committee of the OSA. Individual players will be required to join a team/club and pay subscriptions as required to the team/club. The detailed procedure is listed in section 4.

2.2 The Executive Committee

2.2.1 The elected Executive Committee shall consist of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Players Representative.

2.2.2 The Executive Officers shall be elected at an Annual General Meeting of the OSA, from, and by, the Members of the OSA.

2.2.3 The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer will normally serve a term of two years and thus come up for re-election every other year

2.2.4 The responsibilities of each Executive Committee officer are outlined in "Accompanying note: job descriptions", which can be updated by agreement of the Committee.

2.2.5 The Executive Committee may co-opt additional members to positions of responsibility as they feel necessary. Co-opted members shall not be entitled to a vote as Committee members. Examples of coopted posts are included in "Accompanying note: job descriptions".

2.3 The Full Committee

2.3.1 The Full Committee shall consist of up to one representative from each team (usually captain/coach/vice-captain) and the Executive Committee as outlined above.

2.3 Statement of Accountability

The above stated officers are accountable for their given responsibilities, but the Full Committee is responsible for the smooth running of the Association.

2.4 Expenditure

- The Executive Committee plan expenditure for the upcoming year at the start of the season, and present this to the full committee for agreement.
- During the running of OSA, the Executive Committee are tasked with delivering the plan to the agreed budget. Should the Executive Committee predict an overspend by more than 10%, then this revised plan will need to be approved by the full committee.
- All OSA financial transactions (and hence money owed) must be reported to the Treasurer on a timely basis.

2.5 Financial Responsibility

- The OSA Executive Committee is responsible for all financial matters.
- Signatories to the OSA's bank account will be the Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, and will be required to provide a guarantor (who is not another executive committee member). A single signatory is required to action payments that are included in the agreed budget. Exceptional items not included in the budget require approval by the majority of the Executive Committee.

Section 3: Meetings

3.1 Meetings

There are four types of meeting: An Executive Committee Meeting, A Full Committee Meeting, an Annual General Meeting (AGM) and a Special General Meeting (SGM)

Executive Committee Meeting

1. The Executive Committee will meet as often as is required to ensure the effective running of the OSA. They will arrange the Full Committee meetings.
2. Quorum: A minimum of three elected members
3. Voting: One vote per elected member by a show of hands

Full Committee Meeting

1. A Full Committee Meeting will be held at least two times a year, and will primarily focus on delivering the League, as well as other matters relating to the general running of the OSA.
2. Quorum: At least two thirds of the committee, and representation from half of the teams.
3. Voting: One per team representative present, and one for each of the elected Executive Committee positions. (Executive Officers may not represent their team or club and personally vote twice.) In the event of a tie, the Chairperson may cast an additional vote as a tie breaker. By default, voting will be conducted by a show of hands. At the discretion of the Chairperson, voting may be conducted by secret ballot.

Annual General Meeting

1. An AGM will be held annually, usually after the completion of a season's competitive games.
2. Notice of the AGM shall be given a minimum of 14 days prior to the event.
3. The agenda shall be compiled by the Chairperson in liaison with the Secretary and should contain the items below plus any matters arising.
4. The Secretary shall circulate or give notice of the agenda for the meeting to Members not less than 7 days before the meeting.
5. Voting in the AGM is open to all registered players in the OSA. One vote per player. By default, voting will be conducted by a show of hands. At the discretion of the Chair, voting may be conducted by secret ballot.
6. Decisions made at an AGM or SGM shall be by a simple majority of votes from those Full Members attending the meeting (other than changes to the constitution- see Section 1.6). In the event of equal votes, the Chairperson shall be entitled to an additional casting vote.
7. A quorum for an AGM or SGM shall be 30% of Full Members and 3/5 of the OSA Executive Committee.

8. At all General Meetings, the chair will be taken by the Chairperson or, in their absence, by a deputy appointed by the Association or by Full Members attending the meeting.
9. Nomination of candidates for election of Officers shall be made in writing to the Secretary in advance of the Annual General Meeting date. Nominations can only be made by Full Members and must be seconded at the AGM by another Full Member.
 - a. Nominees must be over 18, and have been registered to an OSA team for at least 6 months.
10. Any motion which is clearly intended to be put to a binding vote must be received in writing by the Secretary 7 days prior to the meeting and should be included on the agenda.

The Agenda of the AGM should include the following:

- a. Confirm the minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting and any Special General Meetings held since the last Annual General Meeting
- b. Officers Reports
- c. Chairpersons and other officers' reports
- d. Accounts for the year from the Treasurer, with narrative.
- e. Indicative draft budget for the coming season
- f. Elections
 - If the Secretary is standing for re-election, a volunteer returning officer takes over the meeting for election business
 - Elect the Officers of the Association i.e. Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and other Committee Members)
 - Retiring Officers stand down and elections take place by secret ballot, if deemed necessary by the returning officer
- g. Transact such other business received in writing by the Secretary (as outlined above) and included on the agenda

Note: The agenda may provide for "Any Other Business", but Members should be encouraged to refer other items to the Committee and give the required notice for important Annual General Meeting business.
- h. Constitutional changes, amendments, and additions
- i. Any other business

A Special General Meeting (SGM)

1. An SGM may be called at any time by no less than either three Executive Committee members or three teams making a written application to the Executive Committee. These meetings will be convened to cover issues arising which affect the smooth running of the Association and League.

3.2 Meeting Records

All Executive Committee meetings are to be minuted by the secretary and copies made available to any OSA member on request. All other meetings are to be minuted by the Secretary, and circulated to the full committee.

3.3 Proposing a Motion

Motions can only be proposed when the required quorum is present to validate the meeting. Once a motion has been proposed it must be seconded. The motion is then opened for discussion and amendments to any motion put to the floor. These amendments must be voted upon, only then can a vote be taken to accept the motion. In the event of change, amendment, or addition to the constitution there must be a majority of two thirds in favour. All other votes just require a clear majority.

3.4 Elections

Elections will be held at an AGM, or at an SGM if agreed by the Full Committee. The Secretary or a volunteer returning officer may administer elections. All candidates must first be proposed and then seconded. If two or more candidates are proposed then a vote must be taken immediately to determine the post. If a position becomes vacant or is not filled, the Executive Committee may appoint a caretaker to that post. The member appointed holds all the voting rights of an elected Executive Committee member.

Section 4: Registration

4.1 Registration

A club or individual team, and their related players wishing to contest in any division must be registered with the OSA, and ultimately with BSF. They may only register once within the OSA league structure. Players may only register with one League team at any given time.

The OSA reserve the right to refuse entry of any Club, Team or person to the Association and League. Any refusal will be carried out in writing to the persons concerned.

4.2 Team Requirements

Teams are required to register with the Association in writing by the deadline set by the Executive Committee. Failure to do so may result in the loss of their Association membership.

The following information and items are required from teams wishing to register, with the OSA each year:

- a. full team name (all names are subject to Executive Committee approval)
- b. the names of 3 team members, not living at the same address, who can act as team contacts (to include name, address, telephone number and e-mail address)
- c. a non-refundable deposit may be required.
- d. all teams must be registered with the BSF, according to the BSF requirements.

Once application for OSA membership has been accepted, each Team will be included in the League organised by the OSA. The above details should be submitted on a copy of the application form supplied.

4.3 Player Registration

A person wishing to play for a team in the OSA must provide the information required by the BSF for national registration and state the team which they will represent. A person may only register for one League team at any time, but once registered may change to another team by complying with the rules as issued by the Full Committee.

The above details should be submitted on the relevant BSF registration form or on their website. A player is officially registered once the BSF Registration Officer or website has received all the above information.

4.4 Club Status

Teams wishing to affiliate together into a Club must notify the Executive Committee of this intention. Clubs wishing to register must provide the following to the OSA with their application:

- a. A copy of the Club's constitution complete with full details of the Clubs' committee members
- b. The full names of the teams belonging to the Club

- c. The objectives of the club - long and short term

This information must be submitted to the Executive Committee and, subject to approval, Club status will be awarded. Attendance at Full Committee meetings is the same as for Teams not affiliated to a Club i.e. one voting representative per team.

4.5 Club Teams

The Teams within a Club must field Teams and players in accordance with the rules as defined by the Executive Committee.

If any Club is found not to have complied with the above, their Club status may be revoked, depending on the views of the Executive Committee.

4.6 Fees

Fees and payment schedule will be set according to the budget produced for that season. Non or late payment may result in the offenders being suspended from the Association until payment is received.

While a Team is suspended all their fixtures during that period may be forfeited.

Section 5: The Oxfordshire Softball League(s)

5.1 League Structure

The structure of the Leagues will be agreed by the Full Committee.

5.2 Field Rules

Our national governing body selects the field rules to which the OSA largely adopts (currently set by the WBSF). Exceptions to those rules will be agreed by the Full Committee prior to the start of the season.

5.3 Constitution

Once teams are registered with the Association they will be bound over to abide by the OSA constitution (this document).

5.4 Rule Infringements

Failure to abide by these rules will incur penalties at the discretion of the Full Committee.

5.5 Conduct

The conduct of registered players is the responsibility of the team to which they are registered. Acts of violence, indecency, lawlessness or other inappropriate behaviour committed while representing a team or present at an OSA event may be referred to the Executive Committee. See below for the OSA's Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.

5.6 Disputes, disciplinary hearings and appeals

These are outlined in the OSA's Disciplinary Policy and Procedures. See the Resources section of the website.

Accompanying note: Job Descriptions

Job Descriptions of the Executive Committee Positions

The following job descriptions provide a guide to the responsibilities of each of the Executive Committee positions. The elected Executive Committee may re-allocate responsibilities amongst the members of the Executive Committee as they consider most appropriate for any given year.

Chairperson

- Chair all meetings and Disciplinary Hearings (unless implicated in the grievance)
- Liaise with the Secretary regarding meeting agendas
- Co-ordinate Committee members
- Liaise with Baseball Softball UK (BSUK) and British Softball Federation (BSF)
- Attend BSUK AGM
- Casting vote holder (see Section 3 Meetings)
- Monitor and produce proposals for constitutional changes
- Provide League/Association information to governing and affiliated bodies
- Is normally an OSA account signatory

Vice-Chairperson

- Provide support to the Chairperson
- Lead on any initiatives as agreed by the Executive Committee

Secretary

- Set and agree a Committee Meeting schedule at the beginning of each season
- Circulate Committee Meeting agenda and relevant papers prior to the meeting
- Take minutes of Committee Meetings, and other meetings of sub-committees
- Circulate draft minutes and summary paragraphs to Committee members (by e-mail) for comment.
- Circulate final minutes and summary paragraphs to captains (by e-mail) for distribution to the Association members.
- Act as a central location for distribution of various other information across the Association and Committee.
- Keeps a record of all:
 - OSA correspondence
 - OSA staged events (cup, tournaments, socials)
 - League/Association history and PR materials

Treasurer

Objective: To manage the financial transactions of the OSA to ensure effective day-to-day operations and continuing development of the Association.

- Manage the OSA bank account
- Be a signatory on the account
- Maintain the list of signatories on the account (register new people if others move away etc.)
- Keep clear records of bank account transactions

- Agree an annual budget with the Full Committee (e.g. team subscriptions, pitch hire, softball kit, safety items, trophies, etc.) at the start of the season, and plan and oversee expenditure to keep to the planned budget.
- At the beginning of each season, collect annual subscriptions from all teams in the Association and register the OSA with BSUK.
- If/where appropriate, arrange for match fees to be collected during the season e.g. to cover pitch hire for games not included in the season's league schedule.
- Take a lead in making league purchases, such as pitch hire and equipment.
- Present reports on the financial status of the OSA at regular intervals, but formally at least once a year.
- At the end of the season, produces a report outlining the expected income/expenditure for the upcoming season.
- Attend OSA Committee Meetings and generally contribute to the operation and development of the OSA.

Players representative

- Represent the views of players, particularly those groups which are not represented by other Executive Committee members (for example players of Division 2 teams).

Examples of Co-Opted Positions

Umpire-in-Chief

- Oversee the management and appointment of umpires for each game
- Act as the final arbiter and reference point on queries relating to rules

Statistics Officer

- Compile a draft statistics plan including details on collection, collation and delivery. Plan to be agreed by the Executive Committee.
- Formulate the League / divisional team standings and make these available to the teams and the media, especially through close liaison with the web officer.

Web Officer

- Maintain the Association's web page ensuring that information on standings and fixtures is up to date through liaison with the Fixtures and Results officer.

Development Officer

- Work with the BSUK national Development Officer to encourage the growth of the League and Association
- Provide information on development activities (i.e. coaching etc) to teams requesting it □ Progress youth and adult training including coaching/batting/fielding/pitching □ Liaise with nearby existing slow pitch and fast pitch Associations/Teams/Leagues.

Internal Comms

- Look after social media and play a role in liaising with captains and all members of OSA
- Compile and distribute (by e-mail) draft newsletter to captains for comment (typically every three weeks).

External Comms

- Liaise with outside bodies, listing organisations and local press

Fixtures and results officer

- Assist with drawing up the league schedule and ensuring game results are recorded adequately