



# CONSTITUTION

## Omagh Lawn Tennis Club

### **1. NAME AND ADDRESS**

The Club shall be known as Omagh Lawn Tennis Club ("OLTC", the Club). Its premises are situated at 1 Crevenagh Road, Omagh.

### **2. OBJECT(S)**

The objects of the club are:

- (a) to provide facilities for and promote participation of the whole community in the amateur sport of Tennis and other amateur racquet sports.
- (b) to provide and maintain Club premises at 1 Crevenagh Road, Omagh (or any future venue) and club-owned tennis equipment for the use of its members and individuals/organisations hiring the club house/courts;
- (c) to provide the ordinary benefits of an amateur sports club e.g. suitably qualified coaches and coaching courses;
- (d) to be affiliated to Tennis Ireland and be governed by their rules and regulations;
- (e) to appoint a Management Committee, ensuring all officers are 'fit & proper persons'
- (f) to do all such other things as the Management Committee thinks fit to further the interests of the Club, to advance and safeguard the interests of the Game, to promote increases in participation at all levels of the Game or as are otherwise incidental or conducive to the attainment of all or any of the objects stated;
- (g) to be non-profit making with any surplus income or gains being reinvested in the Club to ensure delivery of the above objects is maximized. No surpluses or assets will be distributed to members or third parties.

### **3. MEMBERSHIP**

- (a) Membership of the Club shall be open to all persons (irrespective of ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, religion or beliefs; or of age, sex or disability except as a necessary consequence of the requirements of Tennis or other racquet sports) who have been accepted by the Management Committee on the basis of simple majority vote; who have paid the appropriate annual subscription and who have agreed to abide by the Rules and Constitution of the Club.
- (b) Membership of the Club shall consist of Playing Members, Non-Playing Members, Students and Junior Members. The definition of the characteristics of each membership group and subgroup will be proposed annually by the Management Committee for approval at the Annual General Meeting.
- (c) The Club shall refuse membership or expel membership only for good and sufficient cause, such as conduct or character likely to bring the Club or sport into disrepute. Appeal against such a decision may be made to the Club's Management Committee and decided by a majority vote.

#### **4. MEMBERSHIP FEES**

- (a) The Club year runs from 1 June to 31 May of the following year.
- (b) Person(s) applying for new membership of the Club shall complete an application and pay the applicable fee. The initial membership will run for 12 months from the date of activation and then there will be a pro rata charge the following year, taking the membership to the following 31st May. All future renewals will be annually from 1st June.
- (c) Renewal of the annual membership shall be paid before the expiry date of the current membership or by the date of any agreed membership payment plan.
- (d) Non-payment of the annual membership fee, after the expiry date or on the agreed payment plan dates, will result in such members being unable to take any part, active or otherwise, in the affairs of the Club until the outstanding fees have been paid.
- (e) Membership fees will be set annually, being proposed by the Management Committee and approved at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

#### **5. STRUCTURE**

The OLTC is a Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC) and a company limited by guarantee (registered in Northern Ireland NI725376), which will have a minimum of three directors and four Trustees appointed at all times.

#### **MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

- (a) The affairs of the Club shall be managed by a Management Committee consisting of a Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer and no less than a further 6 members and no more than a further 9 members, who shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting. (The Management Committee will consist of 9-12 officers.)
- (b) The Management Committee shall have overall control of all Club activities, finance and of all matters pertaining to the general conduct and welfare of the club. It shall have the power to appoint sub-committees when necessary and to delegate to any such sub-committee any powers except the election or rejection of members.
- (c) Meetings of the Management Committee should ideally be held every month and at least 10 meetings must be held every year, and 5 officers shall form a quorum.
- (d) At all Management Committee meetings the Chairperson, or in their absence an officer selected by the Chairperson, shall take the Chair.
- (e) The decisions of the Management Committee shall be taken by simple majority vote and the Chairperson, or the person selected to the Chair in their absence shall have a second or casting vote. Decisions taken at any meeting may be amended or revoked at any subsequently properly convened meeting by a majority of those present and entitled to vote.

#### **6. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ("AGM")**

- (a) The AGM the Club shall be held not later than the last day of ~~November~~ **March** each year to hear reports of Club activities from the Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer, and any other reports which the Committee considers appropriate.
- (b) The quorum at the AGM of the Club shall be 8 members.
- (c) The AGM shall also:

- (i) consider and if approved, sanction any duly made alteration in the Constitution;
  - (ii) elect the Management Committee and its officers for the coming year (see Section 6 (a) above);
  - (iii) consider such business as the Management Committee desires to bring before the members and such matters as are raised by members at the meeting.
  - (iv) Only adult members of the Club having paid the prescribed membership fee shall have the right to vote at the AGM.
- (d) The decisions of the AGM shall be taken by simple majority vote and the Chairperson, or the person selected to the Chair in their absence shall have a second or casting vote. Decisions taken at any AGM may be amended or revoked at any subsequently properly convened AGM or Special General Meeting by a majority of those present and entitled to vote. Votes by proxy may be permitted when deemed appropriate and necessary by the Management Committee. If Proxy votes are permitted, members will be provided with details and instructions at least two weeks before the AGM.

## **7. SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING**

- (a) A Special General Meeting may be convened by the Management Committee as often as it deems necessary or by the Secretary at any time on the receipt of a requisition in writing signed by not less than 8 members.
- (b) The notice convening such a meeting shall be issued to Club members at least seven days before the date fixed for the meeting and it shall state the business to be considered at the meeting.
- (c) Such a Special General Meeting shall exercise the powers of an AGM upon such stated business.
- (d) The quorum at a Special General Meeting of the club shall be 8 members.
- (e) The decisions of the Special General Meeting shall be taken by simple majority vote and the Chairperson, or the person selected to the Chair in their absence shall have a second or casting vote. Decisions taken at any Special General Meeting may be amended or revoked at any subsequently properly convened AGM or Special General Meeting by a majority of those present and entitled to vote. Votes by proxy may be permitted when deemed appropriate and necessary by the Management Committee. If Proxy votes are permitted, members will be provided with details and instructions at least two weeks before the Special General Meeting.

## **8. CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT**

- (a) Omagh Lawn Tennis Club is fully committed to safeguarding the well-being of its members. Every individual in the club should at all times show respect and understanding for their rights, safety and welfare, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the Club and the guidelines contained in the Safeguarding Children and Young People in Tennis Manual.  
  

“children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence; they must be kept safe from harm, and they must be given proper care by those looking after them”  
(Article 19 - UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)
- (b) All children’s sport should be conducted in an atmosphere of fair play. Ireland and the UK have adopted and are committed to the European Code of Sports Ethics, which defines fair play as:  
  

"much more than playing within the rules. It incorporates the concepts of friendship,

respect for others and always playing within the right spirit. Fair play is defined as a way of thinking, not just a way of behaving. It incorporates issues concerned with the elimination of cheating, gamesmanship, doping, violence (both physical and verbal), exploitation, unequal opportunities, excessive commercialism and corruption." (European Sports Charter and Code of Ethics, Council of Europe. 1993)

**The Childcare Act 1991 (ROI) and The Children's (NI) Order 1995** are based on a clear and consistent set of principles designed with the common aim of promoting the welfare of children.

- (c) Children have the right to be safe. All coaches should ensure that this fundamental principle takes precedent over all other considerations.
- (d) To ensure that best practice is being followed by this club we shall work closely with our Governing body. In order to promote the best practice in children's sport, we shall comply with guidelines set out in Section 2.7 of the Code of Ethics and good Practice for Children's Sport ("C.o.E.") which are:
  - (i) Adopt and implement the C.o.E. as an integral part of its policy on children in the Club
  - (ii) Have its constitution approved and adopted by club members at an AGM or EGM
  - (iii) Permit all members over 16 years of age to vote, where possible, in the running of their junior section. One parent/guardian should have one vote for all their children under 16 years of age, where relevant
  - (iv) Ensure that the Club Management Committee is elected or endorsed by registered club members at each AGM
  - (v) Adopt and consistently apply a safe and clearly defined method of recruiting and selecting Sports Leaders
  - (vi) Clearly define the role of the committee members, all Sports Leaders and parents/guardians
  - (vii) Appoint/reappoint at least one Children's Officer at the AGM as outlined in the C.o.E. In the event that a club caters for both boys and girls, one children's officer of each gender should ideally be appointed
  - (viii) Appoint one of the Children's Officers to act as Designated Officer to liaise with the Statutory Authorities in relation to the reporting of allegations or suspicions of child abuse. Any such reports should be made according to the procedures outlined in this Code/Children's First
  - (ix) Ensure best practice throughout the club by disseminating its code of conduct, including the disciplinary, complaints and appeals procedures in operation within the club to all its members. The club's code of conduct should also be posted in all facilities used by the club
  - (x) Have in place procedures for dealing with a concern or complaint made to the Statutory Authorities against a Committee Member or Sports Leader
  - (xi) Regulations should stipulate that a Sports Leader who is the subject of an allegation which has been reported to the Statutory Authorities, should stand aside while the matter is being examined. S/he should be invited to resume full duties immediately if s/he is vindicated
  - (xii) Ensure that relevant Sports leaders report to the Club Management Committee on a regular basis

- (xiii) Encourage regular turnover of committee membership while ensuring continuity and experience
  - (xiv) Develop effective procedures for responding to and recording accidents/incidents
  - (xv) Ensure that any unusual activity (high rate of drop-out, transfers., etc.) is checked out and reported by the Designated Officer to Tennis Ireland
  - (xvi) Ensure that all club members are given adequate notice of AGMs and other meetings
  - (xvii) Ensure that all minutes of all meetings (AGMs/EGMs/Committees) are recorded and safely filed
- (e) This policy applies to all those involved in Omagh Lawn Tennis Club including coaches, administrators, officials, volunteer drivers, parents and young people.
  - (f) Copies of the full policy and detailed guidelines on recruitment, reporting, recording accidents/incidents, bullying, away trips and use of photography are available from the designated person or any club official.
  - (g) All members will have access to the relevant Code of Conduct, the Club's Child Protection Statement and the Constitution. On annual renewal of membership all members agree to abide by the Code of Conduct, the Constitution and the Child Protection Policy. All junior club members and coaches should sign their respective Codes of Conduct.

## **9. CHILDREN'S OFFICERS**

- (a) The club shall appoint on a yearly basis, if possible, a male and female who have remit as Children's Officers.
- (b) It is recommended that these positions be reviewed regularly i.e. 2-3 years while maintaining consistency on the committee. This will include attending relevant training courses, liaising with relevant agencies when necessary and bringing to the attention of the Management Committee any incidents or information deemed appropriate. At least one of these Children's Officers should sit on the Management Committee.
- (c) Photographs of the Children's Officers should, if possible, be displayed on the club's notice board and website. Names of Children's Officers shall be made known to young members, coaches and parents alike as the Designated Persons to whom concerns will be addressed. If the concern is about the Children's Officer please report to Club Chairperson.
- (d) The club has procedures in place to deal with any concern or allegation of abuse either within the club or externally, but the first point of contact for a child, parent/guardian or coach should be the Children's Officer, although any individual has the right to contact HSE / Social Services or the Police if they have a concern about a child's safety.

## **10. EQUALITY STATEMENT**

- (a) All children should be valued and treated in an equitable and fair manner regardless of ability, age, sex, religion, social and ethnic background or political persuasion. Children, irrespective of ability or disability should be involved in sports activities in an integrated and inclusive way, whenever possible, thus allowing them to participate to their full potential alongside other children (Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport 2000)
- (b) Omagh Lawn Tennis Club recognises the additional vulnerability of some children and the extra difficulties they may face when seeking help, i.e.,

- (i) Dependency due to disability may make some children feel powerless
- (ii) On occasions possible limited ability to communicate their feelings
- (iii) A negative self-image can make children vulnerable to manipulation by others

To address this vulnerability coaches will seek guidance on working with children with a disability from external agencies, parents/guardians and the children themselves.

## **11. EQUITY POLICY**

- (a) This 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 Northern Ireland 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.”**

- (b) 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.
- (c) The club is committed to everyone having the right to enjoy their sport in an environment free from the threat of intimidation, harassment and abuse.
- (d) All club members have a responsibility to oppose discriminatory behaviour and promote equality of opportunity.
- (e) The club will deal with any incidence of discriminatory behaviour seriously, according to club disciplinary procedures.
- (f) Please refer to the club's Equity Policy for more information.

## **12. DISCIPLINE AND APPEALS**

- (a) 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 Child Safeguarding Policy, Statement and associated procedures. The club welfare/designated officer is the lead contact for all members in the event of any safeguarding concerns.
- (b) All complaints regarding the behaviour of members should be presented and submitted in writing either by email to 'contact@omaghltc.com' or addressed to The Secretary. Omagh Lawn Tennis Club, 1 Crevanagh Road, Omagh BT79 0EQ
- (c) The Complaints & Disciplinary Policy sets out the procedures in full including those for appeals. The Disciplinary Committee will meet to hear complaints within 14 days of a complaint being lodged. This committee has the power to take appropriate disciplinary action including the termination of membership.

- (d) The outcome of a disciplinary hearing should be notified in writing to the person who lodged the complaint and the member against whom the complaint was made within 14 days of the hearing.
- (e) There will be the right of appeal to the Management Committee following disciplinary action being announced. No member previously involved in the decision to refuse or remove membership may be part of any Appeal Committee. The committee should consider the appeal within 14 days of the Secretary receiving the appeal.

### **13. CLUB ASSETS**

- (a) The Club's assets and finances shall be used solely to further the objects of the Club. At no time or under no circumstances shall the assets of the Club be distributed among members or third parties either on an interim or on a winding-up basis.
- (b) The Club's appointed trustees (minimum of 4 required) would assist and guide the Committee in the event of winding-up.

### **14. DISSOLUTION**

- (a) A special resolution to dissolve the Club shall be passed only at a Special General Meeting specifically summoned for the purpose of such a resolution, if supported by not less than four-fifths of those present and entitled to vote and the Trustees.
- (b) In the event of the dissolution of the Club, any assets remaining after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities shall not be paid to or distributed among the members of the Club, but shall be given or transferred to one or more of the following approved sporting or charitable bodies:
  - (i) A registered charitable organisation(s).
  - (ii) Another Club which is a registered Community Amateur Sports Club.
  - (iii) The sports national governing body for use by them for related community sports.

### **15. AMENDMENTS OF CONSTITUTION**

This Constitution may be added to, repealed or amended by resolution at any Annual or Special General Meeting provided that no such resolution shall be deemed to have been passed unless it is carried by a majority of at least three-fifths of members voting thereon.

### **16. DECLARATION**

It is hereby certified that this document represents a true and the most up to date version of the Constitution of Omagh Lawn Tennis Club Limited.

Signed ..... Chairperson (Jim McCann)

Signed ..... Treasurer (Bridget Collins)

Date: