



## FIREBIRDS MODEL CLUB CONSTITUTION - (Amended July 2022)

### TITLE

That the Club shall be known as the FIREBIRDS MODEL CLUB.

### OBJECTS

- a. To promote the construction and use of model aircraft.
- b. To facilitate the exchange of information and ideas relating to the hobby.
- c. To make facilities available to members for the use of their models.

### MEMBERSHIP

Membership shall be open to all, subject to restrictions laid down by the Insurance Company supplying the club policy, and by the Committee. All members must belong to the British Model Flying Association, (BMFA). There are three categories of membership, which are:-

Full Membership for which the Senior or Junior club and BMFA subscriptions are paid.

Life Membership for which only the BMFA subscription is paid. Election to Life Membership must be approved by an AGM vote.

Honorary Membership for which no subscription is paid. It may be awarded by the committee, for example to a prominent member whose personal circumstances prevent him from flying or participating in club activities.

Membership will run from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December each year and must be renewed by the following 1<sup>st</sup> January for the member to retain insurance cover from the start of the New Year. The December Newsletter will warn members of this requirement and no other reminder will be given. Members must not fly until they have a subscription receipt from the Membership Secretary, as this is proof of rejoining and without it the member may not be insured.

Subscriptions will be decided at the December club meeting for the following year. Existing members may renew membership in two instalments, the first payable on rejoining. The second instalment must be by a cheque that is post dated April 1<sup>st</sup> and given to the Membership Secretary together with the first instalment.

Applications to join the club from those who were not members on 31 December of the previous year will be considered by at least 3 members of the committee. If they apply after 01 July, they will pay the reduced rate promulgated by the BMFA, and the club subscription will be based on the number of full months remaining in the year.

Applicants who were members on 31 December of the previous year will be deemed to have forfeited their membership, and therefore their right to rejoin, if they have not paid their full subscription by 01 April of the current membership year. Should they wish to join after that date, their applications will be considered by 3 committee members.



Each member is responsible for making sure the Membership Secretary has up to date contact details so that important information such as changes to Club rules, site rules and flying times can be promulgated promptly.

No member shall use the club's name or facilities for commercial purposes. The only exception is the sale of fuel and other items as specifically authorised by the committee.

## NEW MEMBERS FEES

New members not joining at the beginning of the club year will pay the following membership fees.

1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> July - 100% of the appropriate fee.

1<sup>st</sup> August to December 31<sup>st</sup> - 50% of the appropriate fee.

## DISMISSAL PROCEDURE

The member is to be given a verbal warning by a committee member, authorised by the committee to fulfil this task, in which the member is made aware of his misdemeanour and what he is reasonably required to do to make amends.

If the member does not respond, he is to be given a written warning by the Secretary or another authorised committee member to advise him of his misdemeanour and what he is reasonably required to do to make amends.

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.

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. His club subscription for the remaining part of the year will be reimbursed.

When the member is advised of withdrawal of his membership, he must be given the right of appeal. If he opts to appeal, this would normally 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 case of gross misconduct, the first three steps may be omitted but this should only be in exceptional circumstances, having sought advice from BMFA HQ.

Refusal of renewal of annual membership is tantamount to dismissal.

The above process is designed to prevent misunderstanding and to advise members of their rights. Dismissal will only be used as a last resort and must be carried out fairly and with due regard to the law.

## OFFICERS

Officers shall be elected annually at an AGM to include at least a Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Social Representative and Safety Officer. Each committee member is entitled to request a committee meeting.



## VOTING

Nominations for posts on the committee, with the names of the proposer and seconder, should be forwarded in writing to the Secretary at least 7 days before the AGM. Officers shall be elected on a straight vote at the AGM. All other items offered for approval at the AGM or other meetings shall require 2/3 majority of members present for acceptance and must be forwarded in writing to the Secretary at least 7 days prior to the meeting.

Each committee member shall have one vote except the Chairman. The Chairman shall have a casting vote in the event of a 'hung' committee

The committee can, by majority vote, order an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM). Additionally, any member can require the Committee to order an EGM provided:-

- a. The Member requesting the EGM has the written support of a minimum of 8 members.
- b. The Member requesting the EGM and his/her supporters must have been paid up members of Firebirds Model Flying Club for a minimum of 12 months.
- c. Only one topic can be debated at the EGM.
- d. The same topic cannot be the subject of another EGM for a minimum of 24 months.

Conditions 2c and 2d can be varied by a majority vote of the Committee

## COMMITTEE PROCEDURE

The Committee shall have powers to settle all points of interpretation of the Club Rules, providing such power shall not overrule a resolution of the AGM. The Committee quorum shall be five. The Committee shall have powers to set up a sub-committee to promote or manage social events or interests, and shall have powers to co-opt members onto such sub-committees. Each year, after their election, the committee will review, and if necessary amend the club rules, and once agreed they will be promulgated to all members.

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 in his capacity as a private individual notwithstanding that he is taking part in club activities but in circumstances where it would be unreasonable for the Club as a whole to ratify his actions then in the former instance i.e., in his representative capacity, the Club will indemnify the Committee member in respect of any fines, damages or costs awarded against the Committee member. 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 forthwith upon receipt by the Committee member that Committee member will pay them to the Club Treasurer.

## FINANCE

The Treasurer shall make an annual financial statement to the AGM, offering all relevant documents for inspection at the meeting.



## WINDING UP

In the event that the club has to wind up, the Committee will arrange for all Club assets to be sold. The proceeds remaining after the settling of all liabilities are to be distributed to senior members who are fully paid up at the time on the following basis:-

- a. One Share for each continuous year of membership from 1985 in which a full senior membership subscription has been paid.
- b. Any member may make a representation to the committee if they feel that a miscalculation has arisen. If a representation is made to the Committee, the Committee's decision will be final.

## FIREBIRDS MODEL CLUB – GENERAL RULES - (Amended January 2018)

### NOISE

All I/C model aircraft must have an effective silencer and be below 82db at 7 metres. The club reserves the right to carry out random noise checks in accordance with BMFA Handbook guidelines.

Members have shared responsibility for keeping noise down to acceptable levels at all times. If one Member believes another member's model is too noisy, they should bring the matter to the attention of any committee member present. In the absence of a committee member, they should express their concern to the owner of the model and if no action is taken they should contact a committee member as soon as possible.

The flying of any Helicopter or Multirotor is not allowed at any time.

### COMPLAINTS

Any complaints from the general public, the site owner or site neighbours should be reported to a committee member as soon as possible with as much detail of the events that occurred as possible, including the name and contact details of the complainant.

### FREQUENCY CONTROL (Not 2.4 GHz Transmitters)

Transmitters shall only be switched on after the operator is in possession of the appropriate frequency and has indicated so by installing a peg on the frequency board that is attached to the windsack pole. When not in use the peg must be placed on the throttle stick as a reminder. If another pilot requests the frequency it must be relinquished within twenty minutes of being asked. 35Mhz transmitters must have an orange pennant displaying the frequency attached to the aerial. For safety reasons, the use of 27Mhz is not permitted.

### Mobile phones

Mobile Phones must be switched to "Flight Mode" or switched off on the flight line.

In the case of an emergency, phone calls may be made as long as all present are made aware, and that no flying takes place for the duration of the call. If a return call is expected this should be taken in the car park unless the circumstances are exceptional.



## PILOT RESPONSIBILITY

The Safety Officer or any elected Committee member, has the authority to stop any person flying if they are found to be contravening the rules. In the absence of any committee members, all members present at the site have a shared responsibility for ensuring that the rules are followed.

Each pilot must comply with all Club rules, BMFA guidelines and safety codes. The pilot is responsible for ensuring the model is airworthy before take-off even if the model belongs to another member. If a member invites another member to fly his model then this is considered to be at the model owner's risk.

Anyone wishing to enter the landing and take-off area for any reason must inform other pilots of his intention to enter the flying strip by calling out "On strip" Landing aircraft must have priority. Transmitters are not to be taken onto the strip.

## FLIGHT LINE

All pilots with models in the air should stand together to facilitate easy communication.

A maximum of 4 models may be flown at any time, of which no more than two can be I/C powered models. Models must not be allowed to take-off or taxi towards the flight line or pits area. Additional guidelines for ensuring flight line safety are given at ANNEX A



## OUT OF BOUNDS AREAS

Flying beyond the designated flight area, or over the pit area, car park, near people or livestock is strictly forbidden.

Flying should be performed inline with the picture below.





## LANDING

All pilots must shout "LANDING" when landing. If the engine stops in the air, call out "DEAD STICK".

## BEGINNERS

All beginners must obey the Club rules and fly only under the strict supervision of a Club Instructor. Before any beginner is allowed to fly solo, he must be vetted by two Club Instructors. The standard to be applied is given at ANNEX C.

All new members will be deemed beginners until they have been checked by two Club Instructors. If they produce an A or B certificate they only need to be checked by one club instructor or a committee member.

## VISITORS

All visitors attending the site must be warned of the hazards of model flying. Under no circumstances should they be allowed to enter the flying area (defined as the pits, flight line, take-off/landing strip and the areas of field above which models are flying) .

## GUEST PILOTS

Member's guests wishing to fly must show proof of BMFA insurance and will be the responsibility of that Member. They must also be treated as a beginner until such time as they have been checked by a Club Instructor or committee member. Inviting guests to fly at Firebird sites should not be a regular event. As a general rule, members would not be expected to invite more than 2 guests per year, with 2 visits per guest at most.

## LITTER

Broken models and all litter must be removed from the site.

## CARE OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

The policy for the care of children and vulnerable adults is given at ANNEX D.

## ANNEX A

### FLYING SITE SAFETY GUIDELINES - (Amended January 2022)

The following guidelines are intended to improve flying site safety by standardising procedures at the most dangerous times i.e. take-off and landing. These guidelines comply with recommendations in the BMFA Handbook

Basically members should not put themselves in danger unnecessarily. The aim is to:

- a) Minimise time on the strip;
- b) Ensure awareness of what other people are doing e.g. preparing to land;
- c) Ensure clearance is requested from those already on the flight line;
- d) Give priority to pilots already flying, who may be intending to land or have a 'deadstick' while someone is taking a long time preparing to take off;



- e) Follow club and BMFA rules regarding transmitters not being taken onto the strip.
- f) Ensure that nobody enters the strip whilst flying is in progress unless they have good reason to do so.

Complying with these aims should ensure that anyone flying and approaching the end of their charge/fuel has landing priority, rather than have someone shout "on the strip" and then walk straight out, leaving the pilot no option but to dump their model.

## All aircraft

1. Pilots should first move to a point downwind of the pilot box at the edge of the strip to carry out final control and engine checks. This will ensure that the strip is clear for anyone to land while the checks are being made. The checks can of course be done in the pit area, which in some cases may make the following steps easier.

## Aircraft that can be taxied

1. Carry out step 1 checks (see All aircraft above).
2. Walk to the pilot box and request clearance from the other pilots. In the case of IC planes, it will be easy to hear their response because you will be near the pilots rather than your running engine.
3. Once clearance is agreed, visually check that it is safe, then shout "on the strip" and taxi the plane out.
4. Shout "taking off" and take off, upwind and away from the pilot box.
5. Landing/aircraft recovery:
6. If the aircraft can still be taxied after landing:
  - a. Taxi to the edge of the strip (not towards anyone in the pilot box or anyone else in or near the flying area).
    - i. Kill the motor and recover the model.
    - ii. Shout "Clear", when the model has been recovered.
    - iii. If the aircraft cannot be taxied after landing:
  - b. Leaving your transmitter in the pilot area, request clearance from the other pilots.
    - i. Visually check that it is safe to enter the strip and shout "on the strip".
    - ii. Recover the model.
    - iii. Shout "Clear", when you are clear of the strip.
    - iv. Retrieve your transmitter.

## Aircraft that cannot be taxied

1. Carry out step 1 checks (see All aircraft above).
2. Request clearance from the other pilots. Ensure that you can hear the response from all pilots. For IC planes, this may mean leaving your plane at the edge of the strip and getting nearer to the pilots – be prepared to do so, they have priority.
3. Once clearance is agreed, visually check that it is safe to walk out, then shout "on the strip" and carry the plane out leaving the transmitter in the pilot box.
4. Walk back to the pilot box, recover transmitter and shout "taking off". Then take off, upwind and away from the pilot box.
5. Landing/aircraft recovery:
  - a. Leaving your transmitter in the pilot area, request clearance from the other pilots.
  - b. Visually check that it is safe to enter the strip and shout "on the strip".
  - c. Recover the model.
  - d. Shout "Clear", when you are clear of the strip.
  - e. Retrieve your transmitter



## Hand-launched aircraft – launched by helper

In order to follow rules about transmitters not being taken onto the strip, it is desirable and recommended that hand launched aircraft are launched by a helper. This also ensures that the pilot is easily able to communicate with other pilots and has both hands on the controls.

As some hand launch aircraft can be 'tricky' to control in the first few seconds of acceleration, it is highly recommended that the launch spot chosen gives significant leeway for the aircraft to veer without endangering the pilots already flying.

1. Carry out step 1 checks (see All aircraft above).
2. Walk to the pilot box and request clearance from the other pilots.
3. Once clearance is agreed, signal your helper who then visually checks that it is safe to walk out, shouts "on the strip" and carries the plane out upwind of the pilot box.
4. Shout "taking off" and signal your helper to launch, upwind and away from the pilot box.
5. The helper should then clear the strip as quickly as possible.
6. Landing/aircraft recovery:
  - a. Leaving your transmitter in the pilot area, request clearance from the other pilots.
  - b. Visually check that it is safe to enter the strip and shout "on the strip".
  - c. Recover the model.
  - d. Shout "Clear", when you are clear of the strip.
  - e. Retrieve your transmitter.

Note: There is an assumption in these guidelines that the helper is a pilot themselves or at least is fully aware of club rules, BMFA rules and hazards regarding model flying.

## Hand-launched aircraft – launched by pilot

It is recognised that some pilots prefer to launch their own aircraft and are adept at doing so. In these cases taking the transmitter onto the strip is unavoidable so please do everything you can to minimise the time spent on the strip with your transmitter.

As stated in the previous section, some hand launch aircraft can be 'tricky' to control in the first few seconds of acceleration so it is highly recommended that the launch spot chosen gives significant leeway for the aircraft to veer without endangering the pilots already flying.

Carry out step 1 checks (see All aircraft above).

1. Walk to the pilot box and request clearance from the other pilots.
2. Once clearance is agreed, visually check that it is safe to walk out, then shout "on the strip" and carry the plane out upwind of pilot box.
3. Shout "taking off" and launch, upwind and away from the pilot box.
4. Return to the pilot box as quickly as possible.
5. Landing/aircraft recovery:
  - a. Leaving your transmitter in the pilot area, request clearance from the other pilots.
  - b. Visually check that it is safe to enter the strip and shout "on the strip".
  - c. Recover the model.
  - d. Shout "Clear", when you are clear of the strip.
  - e. Retrieve your transmitter.

## Trainees learning to take off

It is recognised that the first few take-off attempts can be nerve-wracking for the beginner and the instructor may feel it best to have the trainee stand behind the aircraft to aid steering orientation. It is



recommended that this is done with as few other pilots in the air as possible (preferably none). If there are other pilots flying, the instructor should make their intentions known and get agreement before commencing the take-off. Once the take-off is complete, the instructor and trainee should clear the flying area as quickly as possible and return to the pilot box area.

## FLYING ALONE

Flying alone is not against club rules, but is not advised as serious accidents can occur. It has been known for members to cut themselves so badly that they couldn't drive themselves to hospital. On one occasion a member was so severely injured that the Air Ambulance had to be summoned by the paramedics who initially dealt with the incident! Searching for a lost model alone is also not advised, particularly if the model has to be rescued from a tree. The consequences of breaking a leg whilst climbing a tree or negotiating a ditch could be very serious if no help was on hand. If alone and flying or searching for a model, make sure your mobile phone is with you and switched on.

## ANNEX B

### SOLO QUALIFICATION STANDARD (January 2015)

1. Beginners must be vetted by two Club Approved Instructors before being allowed to fly solo. To ensure there is no misunderstanding, the Committee has agreed the following standard to be achieved:-
2. The beginner must be aware of the requirements of the current Air Navigation, and in particular the terms of the article 16 exemption and have a good knowledge and understanding of the General Model Safety and Radio Control Flying Safety rules laid down in the BMFA Members Handbook The beginner must also have a good knowledge and understanding of the Firebird Club General Flying Site Rules and the additional rules for each flying site. Questions on the above can be expected from the Approved Instructors.
3. In the opinion of both Approved Instructors, the beginner must have sufficient flying experience before being considered for the solo qualification. The beginner must carry out pre-flight checks in accordance with BMFA Radio Control Flying Safety rules.
4. The beginner must demonstrate a safe, controlled take-off, before climbing the model to a safe height. Hand launching is acceptable if the model is not designed to take-off from the ground.
5. The beginner must demonstrate well controlled right and left hand rectangular circuits, whilst maintaining a reasonably constant height. One leg of each circuit should overfly the take-off and landing area.
6. The beginner must demonstrate a recognisable "figure of eight" course whilst maintaining a reasonably constant altitude. The Approved Instructors will make appropriate allowance for difficulties caused by wind direction and strength during this manoeuvre.
7. The beginner must demonstrate a safe, controlled landing on the take-off and landing area. The model should remain flyable after the landing.
8. The beginner must be fully aware of the out of bounds areas and a solo qualification will not be awarded if the model strays into one of these areas during the assessment by the Approved Instructors.



## After Going Solo

Even after gaining a solo qualification, it is recommended that pilots ask an Instructor to test fly and trim a new model, particularly if it represents a significant change from previous models flown (e.g. a large I/C model when the pilot qualified solo on a small "foamie").

## ANNEX C

### FIREBIRD MODEL CLUB POLICY FOR THE WELFARE AND CARE OF CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS - (August 2004)

Reference: BMFA Policy, Procedures and Guidelines for the Promotion of Welfare and Care of Children and Vulnerable Adults in Model Flying (Issue 1, November 2003)

## AIM

The aim of this policy is to promote the welfare and care of children and vulnerable adults who are either members of the Firebird Model club or are visiting one of the club's flying sites or meetings.

## DEFINITIONS

A child is defined as a young person under 18 years of age.

A vulnerable adult is defined as a person of 18 years or over but through mental or physical attributes requires a higher level of supervision than would normally be commensurate with an adult.

In the following paragraphs, the word "child" should be taken to include vulnerable adults.

A responsible adult is defined as an adult who has the permission of the parent to supervise their child on their behalf.

## RULES

All children under 16 must be supervised at the club's flying sites and meetings by a parent or responsible adult at all times. This is particularly important in the case of small children who are unlikely to appreciate the inherent dangers of operating model aircraft.

Children aged between 16 and 18 may attend the club's flying sites or meetings without a parent or responsible adult, providing the parent has given permission. However, in these circumstances at least two adults must be present.

If a child under 16 is under instruction the parent or responsible adult must stand alongside the child and instructor throughout the instruction session.

## **Notes:**

If the responsible adult is the instructor another adult must stand alongside the child and instructor throughout the instruction session.

# Firebirds Model Club

Constitution & Rules - published July 2022



If a child aged between 16 and 18 is under instruction then in addition to the Instructor another adult must be on site throughout the instruction session.

Any member who has any concerns about the welfare of a child at a club site or meeting should report the matter to the Secretary.

If any issue relating to the welfare of a child at the club's flying sites or meetings is not covered by the above rules or cannot be resolved satisfactorily then guidance will be sought from the Reference.