



DIPLOMATIC
SPOUSES
CLUB IN
LONDON

CONSTITUTION OF THE DIPLOMATIC SPOUSES CLUB IN LONDON

Approved and Adopted
April 26, 2024

CONSTITUTION OF THE DIPLOMATIC SPOUSES CLUB IN LONDON

ARTICLE 1 NAME AND LOGO

- (1) The name of the group shall be the Diplomatic Spouses Club in London (hereinafter abbreviated as DSCL).
- (2) The logo of the DSCL (as on the header page above) was established via a Logo Design Contest in June 2020. It contains the iconic big ben, a legible typeface with two birds flying above, and has the colour palette in red and black.

ARTICLE 2 MISSION

The mission of the DSCL shall be to:

- **Explore**
- **Network**
- **Collaborate**

ARTICLE 3 AIMS

- (1) The DSCL shall aim to achieve its mission by:
 - (a) Acting as a non-profit organisation serving the social and personal needs of the spouses and partners of:
 - (i) diplomats accredited to the Court of St. James's while in service of their country;
 - (ii) British diplomats from the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO, formerly known as the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, FCO); and
 - (iii) former or retired British diplomats residing in the United Kingdom.
 - (b) Providing spouses and partners the opportunity to network, meet or collaborate with each other and enjoy cultural, educational, social and personal development events;
 - (c) Collaborating with other diplomatic associations; and
 - (d) Forming sub-groups for the needs of spouses and partners.

(2) The aims stated above may not be changed unless the DSCL in its current form is dissolved according to the procedure as provided in Article 12 of this Constitution.

ARTICLE 4 MEMBERSHIP

(1) DSCL Membership is open to anyone:

- (a) who is a spouse or partner of a diplomat who is/was accredited to the Court of St James's; or
- (b) who is a spouse or partner of a British diplomat working for the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO, formerly known as the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, FCO), including those of retired British diplomats; or
- (c) whose partner is/was a member of an international organisation represented in London and accredited to the Court of St James's; and supports the aims of the club; or
- (d) an adult who is a dependant of a diplomat accredited to the Court of St James's and has been granted diplomatic status only if the diplomat is unaccompanied by his or her spouse or partner.

(2) DSCL membership is made up of 2 categories:

(a) **Active Members**

Active Members are those eligible members (as stated in Article 4), who have joined the Club, and have paid their current annual membership fee contribution.

(b) **Alumni Members**

Alumni Members are those who were once an active member but no longer fulfil the requirements as stated in Article 4.

(3) Only Active Members with fully paid membership have the right to vote and participate in regular events (except by invitation).

(4) A list of all Active Members and Alumni Members will be kept and made available to all members of the Board Committee upon request. The membership list shall be maintained by a designated board member.

(5) Members may leave at any time by giving notice in writing to the Club.

(6) **Founding President:** The founder and first President of the DSCL, Ms. Agnes Fenyvesy, receives the title of Founding President of DSCL.

ARTICLE 5 MEMBERSHIP FEE

- (1) Annual membership fee will be agreed and adjusted at the Annual General Meeting and will be payable by all Active Members.
- (2) Annual membership duration is from January to December each year.
- (3) Membership will begin as soon as the membership application is approved and the first annual membership payment has been paid into the Club's account.
- (4) Any member who has not renewed their membership payment within the one month grace period will be converted to an Alumni Member.
- (5) The membership fee should be paid into the Club's designated account. DSCL can accept cash only in exceptional circumstances.

ARTICLE 6 OFFICERS AND BOARD COMMITTEE

- (1) Board Committee (hereinafter BC) ensures that activities of DSCL correspond to the mission and aims of DSCL and interests of its members, as set out in Articles 2 and 3 of the Constitution. This includes making use of DSCL's financial resources for the benefit of its members.
- (2) Every Active Member has the right to apply for a position on the BC. The BC sets forth the application procedure and deadline for submission of the applications.
- (3) BC Members are elected at the Annual General Meeting.
- (4) The BC shall consist of at least six, or at most eight Active Members. Up to two additional members may be co-opted to the BC at the BC's discretion.
- (5) Work and operation of the BC is led and organised by the President, or Vice President in the absence of the President.
- (6) The BC is composed of a President, Vice President (or Co-President), Treasurer and Honorary Vice President. The additional board members can be assigned roles such as, Administrator, Digital Coordinator and Event Coordinators; however, the BC can realign workload based on tasks and availability, including co-presiding. In addition, BC Members may perform more than one function.
- (7) The President and Vice President are elected during AGM. Other posts of the BC may be determined by mutual agreement at the first BC meeting following the AGM.
- (8) In the event of a force majeure situation, the BC can override the election process and nominate the President and Vice President.

- (9) In extenuating circumstances, if no one person assumes the role of the President, by agreement of the BC, the position can be co-chaired.

ARTICLE 7 THE RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE PRESIDENT AND BOARD COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The President

- (1) The President shall be an Active Member, whose spouse or partner is not a British diplomat and whose posting to the UK will continue at least until the end of current year. The President shall:

- (a) Preside, when possible, at all regular and special meetings of the DSCL;
- (b) represent the DSCL vis-a-vis third parties;
- (c) ensure the DSCL's growth and promotion;
- (d) coordinate the works of the DSCL;
- (e) sign official correspondence on behalf of the DSCL;
- (f) oversee financial matters;
- (g) act as host, when possible, for functions sponsored by the DSCL;
- (h) maintain all communication to ensure that members are continually informed of all actions taken by the DSCL.

Vice President

- (2) The Vice President shall be an Active Member and is responsible for assisting the President in the running of the work of the DSCL. The Vice President shall:

- (a) preside at all meetings of the DSCL and of the BC in the absence of the President;
- (b) monitor all DSCL sub-committees to ensure that they perform within their authorised mandate;
- (c) succeed to the Office of the President in the event of the vacancy of the latter, for whichever cause.

Honorary Vice President

- (3) The Honorary Vice President will be elected upon invitation of the DSCL. This position comes with the collaboration and link between the DSCL and Diplomatic Service Families Association (DSFA) of the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO, formerly known as the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, FCO). The Honorary Vice President shall:

- (a) lend credibility to the DSCL and help promote the Club;
- (b) establish and maintain connections with the DSFA to increase the popularity of the DSCL or of a specific DSCL event;
- (c) Facilitate British cultural events/activities for the DSCL through the FCDO;

- (d) fulfil other functions that may be requested by the BC;
- (e) provide support to the President.

Treasurer

(4) The Treasurer shall be an Active Member. They shall have custody of all DSCL funds and have access thereto. The treasurer shall:

- (a) maintain all financial records with due care and keep them available for inspection by any Active Member;
- (b) act as a point of contact for enquiries on membership fee;
- (c) report on the DSCL's financial status at each BC meeting and AGM;
- (d) be responsible for ensuring financial stability;
- (e) work with the BC to develop the budget;
- (f) pay the DSCL's bills.

(5) The following are examples of positions that could be assigned; however, the BC can realign and share workloads based on tasks and availability.

Administrator

(6) The Administrator shall be an Active Member with computer, record keeping and note taking skills. The Administrator shall:

- (a) maintain general administration which supports the BC;
- (b) keep accurate records, membership lists, and governing documents and;
- (c) assist the President in the DSCL's correspondence with third parties and members.

(7) If no Administrator is named, this role may be shared amongst BC members.

Digital Coordinator

(8) The Digital Coordinator shall be an Active Member, who shall:

- (a) create and post content on the Club's website and social media platforms;
- (b) ensure a cohesive style, brand and voice for the Club;
- (c) post accurate information and reminders for events in a timely manner;
- (d) possess working knowledge of web tools and applications
- (e) ensure security measures are in place on the Club's online presence; and
- (f) Facilitate the Club's web and social media needs and requirements with the BC and third party provider;

Event Coordinator

(9) the Event Coordinator shall be an Active Member, who shall collaborate with the

other BC members to :

- (a) organise and facilitate a range of social and cultural events and activities on a regular basis, so that an active social calendar is available to DSCL members;
- (b) liaise with external event providers, overseeing the registration procedures and acting as a point of contact for communication with members; and
- (c) plan events and activities for families and children whenever possible during school breaks.

(9) This role may also be shared amongst BC members.

(10) The title of **Honorary Patron** has been created. The spouse of the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom (or any other prominent personality residing in the United Kingdom related to diplomatic services) shall be invited to assume the position of Honorary Patron of the DSCL. This role is honorary and has no executive function. Activities may include 'ceremonial' duties.

(11) BC Members may perform more than one function.

(12) The BC will meet as necessary, and no less than four times a year.

(13) Each BC Member has the duty of promoting the DSCL. An annual strategy shall be created and implemented by the BC with a view to foster the DSCL mission.

(14) The BC meetings shall be open to any DSCL member who wishes to attend on request. Those attending members do not have a vote in the decisions taken by the BC.

(15) At least half plus one of the BC, one of whom must be either the President, the Vice President or the Administrator, attending a BC meeting, shall constitute a quorum and can make decisions on behalf of the BC.

(16) In the event that a BC Member steps down during that Committee's term, a replacement shall be elected in the next AMG; or that position shall be filled by co-opted members by the BC pending election at the AGM.

(17) Any BC Member absent from attending a Board Committee meeting without prior notice on more than three occasions shall be contacted by the BC and asked whether they wish to resign.

(18) All meetings will be conducted in a respectful and professional manner.

ARTICLE 8 MEETINGS

Annual General Meeting (hereinafter AGM)

- (1) An AGM will be held within thirteen months of the preceding AGM, where the General Assembly meets annually.

- (2) All Active Members of the Club will be invited to take part in the AGM and will be notified in writing of the venue, agenda and time of the meeting, at least two weeks prior to the date of the AGM.

- (3) Nominations for the BC and proposals for issues of discussion at the AGM may be sent to the Administrator/President at least one week prior to the AGM.

- (4) The quorum for the AGM shall be 10% of Active Members, or 10 Active Members, whichever is greater in number.

- (5) At the AGM:
 - (a) the BC shall present a report of the work of the DSCL over the previous year;
 - (b) the Treasurer shall present the accounts of the DSCL of the previous year;
and
 - (c) the new officers will be introduced and the President and BC members shall be (re-) elected.

Extraordinary General Meeting (hereinafter EGM)

- (6) The President can schedule an EGM at the request of the majority of the BC or at least eight other Active Members giving a request in writing to the President, stating the reason for their request.

- (7) The meeting will take place within twenty-one days of such request.

- (8) All members will be given at least 2 weeks notice of such a meeting, indicating the venue, date, time and agenda.

- (9) The quorum for the EGM will be 10% of the Active Members or 8 Active Members, whichever is greater in number.

General Meetings

(10) General Meetings, such as Coffee Mornings, are open to all active members and will be held at least once every three months or more often if possible, excluding the summer period.

(11) All members will be given at least one week's notice of such a meeting, including the venue, date, time and agenda.

ARTICLE 9 RULES OF PROCEDURE

(1) All questions that arise at any meeting shall be discussed openly. The meeting's aim is to reach agreement by everyone present. If a consensus cannot be reached, a vote shall be taken. A decision shall then be made by a simple majority of present members. If the number of votes cast on each side are equal, the President or the member presiding the meeting shall have an additional vote.

(2) The BC shall be informed of all the business carried out. No agreements can be made in the name of or on behalf of the DSCL with third parties without the BC's permission or acknowledgement.

ARTICLE 10 FINANCES

DSCL Account and Signatories

(1) An account shall be maintained on behalf of DSCL at a bank agreed by the Committee. Three cheque signatories will be nominated by the BC from among the President, the Treasurer, and one of the Board Members that provides the business address for the account. Any two of these signatories are required for signing every cheque. The signatories must not be related.

(2) The President is authorised to supply the Bank as and when necessary upon request, with a list of persons who are authorised to sign, give receipts and act on behalf of the DSCL.

(3) The signatories are not authorised to write any cheques that will place the DSCL in debt to the Bank. A cheque must be written only when there is a credit balance in the account. There is no overdraft facility on the Club's bank account.

(4) In the event that a signatory is to be relieved of their signing power, the Bank will be notified immediately by the President or the other signatories.

- (5) In order to maintain the financial health of DSCL, the BC (specifically the Treasurer and the authorised signatories) are responsible for ensuring that the account be kept in credit balance at all times. The balance of the account should not fall below £50 for any period longer than one month.

Audits

- (6) The accounts shall be audited by a person approved by the BC (who could be an Active Member of the DSCL), either annually, or upon change of Treasurer. The DSCL Financial Report will be provided annually for the DSCL AGM. The financial accounts will be made available for the DSCL for independent examination and verification.

Contributions to the DSCL

- (7) The DSCL can accept cash contributions, in exceptional circumstances, for which the Treasurer shall issue a receipt on behalf of the DSCL.
- (8) Monetary donations and event sponsorship can be accepted by the Club.

ARTICLE 11 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

- (1) Amendments to the constitution may only be made by the BC and confirmed at the Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting, and they shall require the majority of those present and entitled to vote. The BC shall then ratify the Constitution.
- (2) Any proposal to amend the constitution must be given to the Administrator and the President in writing. Thereafter, any proposal of amendments must be circulated among the Active Members with the notice of the AGM or EGM.

ARTICLE 12 DISSOLUTION

- (1) If a meeting, by a two-thirds majority, decides that it is necessary to close down the DSCL it may call an Extraordinary General Meeting to do so. The sole business of this meeting shall be to dissolve the DSCL.
- (2) If it is agreed to dissolve the DSCL, all remaining money and other assets shall be donated to another existing diplomatic organisation, once outstanding debts have been paid. The chosen organisation is to be agreed upon at the meeting which agrees to the dissolution.

This Constitution was amended and proposed to the Board Committee of DSCL on 11 April 2024. The Constitution was adopted on 26 April 2024 following the approval of the DSCL membership via an Extraordinary General Meeting vote conducted online.

Signature Full Name: Board Position: President	Signature Full Name: Board Position: Vice President
Signature Full Name: Board Position: Treasurer	Signature Full Name: Board Position: Board Member
Signature Full Name: Board Position: Board Member	Signature Full Name: Board Position: Board Member
Signature Full Name: Board Position: Board Member	Signature Full Name: Board Position: Board Member