

VERWOOD TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB

CLUB CONSTITUTION

Version	5.0 — supersedes v04 (2024) and Appendix A (2024)
Basis	The FA Suggested Club Rules template; FA Safeguarding Strategy 2024–28; FA EDI Strategy 2024–28
Status	For committee review and submission to Dorset County FA for written approval before adoption
Submitted to	Dorset County FA for approval: _____

1. NAME

The club shall be called **VERWOOD TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB** (the "Club").

2. OBJECTS

The objects of the Club are to provide facilities, promote the game of Association Football, to arrange matches and social activities for its members, and to foster community participation in the same. The Club is committed to providing a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment for all, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

3. STATUS OF RULES

These rules (the "Club Rules") form a binding agreement between each member of the Club. No alteration shall be made to these rules except at an AGM or EGM convened for that purpose, and only if a two-thirds (2/3) majority of those present support the proposal. No alteration shall be effective without prior written approval by the Parent County Association. The FA and Parent County Association reserve the right to approve any proposed changes.

4. RULES AND REGULATIONS

- (a) The members of the Club shall so exercise their rights, powers and duties and shall, where appropriate, use their best endeavours to ensure that others conduct themselves so that the business and affairs of the Club are carried out in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of The Football Association Limited ("**The FA**"), the County Football Association to which the Club is affiliated ("**the Parent County Association**"), and Competitions in which the Club participates, for the time being in force.
- (b) The Club will operate to FA Charter Standard or the prevailing standard set by The FA from time to time. The Club Committee shall be responsible for reviewing compliance with these standards, including The FA's Safeguarding Policies and Procedures, Codes of Conduct, and the Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discrimination Policy.
- (c) The Club shall maintain a current affiliation to the Parent County Association and shall pay all required affiliation fees promptly.

5. CLUB MEMBERSHIP

- (a) The members of the Club from time to time shall be those persons listed in the register of members (the "**Membership Register**") which shall be maintained by the Club Secretary.
- (b) Any person who wishes to be a member must apply using the Club Membership Application Form. The criteria for eligible classes of membership shall be established by the Club Committee and described on the application form.
- (c) Election to membership shall be at the discretion of the Club Committee and granted in accordance with the anti-discrimination and equality policies in force from time to time. An appeal against refusal may be made to the Club Committee in accordance with the Complaints Procedure. Membership shall become effective upon entry in the Membership Register.
- (d) The Club Committee may establish different classes of membership (for example: playing member, non-playing member, social member) and determine the rights and obligations attaching to each class.
- (e) In the event of a member's resignation or expulsion, their name shall be removed from the Membership Register.
- (f) The FA and Parent County Association shall be given access to the Membership Register on demand.

6. ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE

- (a) The Treasurer shall propose annual subscription rates and any match fees at the AGM. Fees shall be set at a level that will not pose a significant obstacle to community participation. The proposal shall be approved by simple majority of eligible members present and voting. Fees are not repayable.
- (b) In the event that no fee proposal is approved at the AGM, the existing rates from the preceding season shall apply until the Club Committee resolves otherwise.
- (c) The Club Committee shall have authority to levy further subscriptions from members as are reasonably necessary to fulfil the objects of the Club.

7. RESIGNATION AND EXPULSION

- (a) A member shall cease to be a member of the Club if, and from the date on which, they give notice to the Club Committee of their resignation. A member whose annual membership fee is more than two (2) months in arrears shall be deemed to have resigned.
- (b) The Club Committee shall have the power to expel a member when, in its opinion, it would not be in the interests of the Club for them to remain a member. Before expulsion, the member shall be given a reasonable opportunity to make representations. An appeal may be made in accordance with the Complaints Procedure.
- (c) A member who resigns or is expelled shall not be entitled to claim any share of the income or assets of the Club.

8. THE CLUB COMMITTEE

Composition

- (a) The control of the Club shall be vested in the Club Committee. The Club Committee shall mandatorily consist of the following **Executive Officers**, elected at each AGM:
 - Chairperson
 - Club Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Club Welfare Officer(s)
- (b) In addition to the Executive Officers, the Club Committee shall include such additional Club Officers as are required to meet the Club's obligations and operational needs, determined at the AGM each year. These may include (but are not limited to): Fixture Secretary, Registrations Officer, Coaching Coordinator, Fundraising & Events Coordinator, Communications Officer, and Kit & Equipment Manager.
- (c) **One person may hold no more than two (2) Club Officer positions** at any time. The Club Committee is collectively responsible for the management of all the Club's affairs.

Conduct of meetings

- (d) Decisions of the Club Committee shall be made by a simple majority of those attending and eligible to vote. The Chairperson shall have a casting vote in the event of a tie.
- (e) Meetings shall be chaired by the Chairperson or, in their absence, the Vice-Chairperson or Club Secretary. The quorum for Club Committee meetings shall be five (5) members, of whom at least three must be Executive Officers.
- (f) Decisions shall be entered into the Minutes Record maintained by the Club Secretary.
- (g) Any member of the Club Committee may call a meeting by giving not less than seven (7) days' notice to all members of the Club Committee. The Club Committee shall hold not less than eight (8) meetings per year and shall aim to meet monthly throughout the football season.
- (h) Non-committee members may be invited to attend Club Committee meetings at the discretion of the Chairperson but shall not have voting rights unless specifically co-opted by the Committee.

Term of office and vacancies

- (i) Each Club Officer and Club Committee member shall hold office from the date of appointment until the next AGM and may be re-elected. Any vacancy arising between AGMs shall be filled by a member proposed by one and seconded by another of the remaining Club Committee members, approved by simple majority of the remaining Club Committee members.
- (j) The position of a Club Officer shall be vacated automatically if such person is suspended by The FA from holding office or from taking part in any football activity relating to the administration or management of a football club.

President and Life Vice-Presidents (honorary)

- (k) The Club Committee may appoint a President in a non-executive, honorary capacity. On retirement, the President may be nominated as a Life Vice-President (LVP) by Club Officers and approved by majority ballot of all Club Officers. Privileges of LVP shall be determined by the Club Committee.

9. ANNUAL AND EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETINGS

An AGM shall be held each year, normally within three months of the end of the Club's financial year, to:

- i. Receive a report of the Club's activities over the previous year;
- ii. Receive and approve the annual Financial Statement;
- iii. Elect members of the Club Committee for the forthcoming year;
- iv. Approve any proposed changes to the Club Rules; and
- v. Consider any other business submitted in advance.

Nominations for election as Club Officers or Committee members shall be made in writing by a proposer and seconder (both existing members) to the Club Secretary at least twenty-one (21) days before the AGM. Notice of any resolution shall also be given to the Club Secretary at least twenty-one (21) days before the meeting.

An EGM may be called at any time by the Club Committee and shall be called within twenty-one (21) days of receipt by the Club Secretary of a written requisition signed by not fewer than five (5) members, stating the purpose and proposed resolutions.

The Club Secretary shall give notice of any General Meeting, together with the agenda and proposed resolutions, at least fourteen (14) days before the meeting. Notice shall be sent by email to members' last recorded email addresses and published on the Club website.

The quorum for a General Meeting shall be ten (10) members.

The Chairperson, or in their absence a member selected by the Club Committee, shall chair General Meetings. Each eligible member has one vote. Resolutions shall be passed by simple majority, except alterations to the Club Rules which require a two-thirds majority. The Chairperson shall have a casting vote in the event of a tie.

The Club Secretary, or in their absence a member of the Club Committee, shall record the minutes of all General Meetings in the Minutes Record.

10. CLUB TEAMS AND SUB-COMMITTEES

Club teams

- (a) The Club operates such number of football teams as are agreed at the AGM each year, set out in the Club's Organisation Proposal presented to and approved through the AGM. The Club Committee may approve additional teams between AGMs by simple majority resolution.
- (b) At its first meeting following each AGM, the Club Committee shall confirm the appointment of a responsible individual for each team. The appointed member shall manage the affairs of the team and shall, if requested, present a written report to the Club Committee at its last meeting before each AGM.

Sub-committees

- (c) The Club Committee may establish sub-committees to support the delivery of specific areas of club activity. The Club recognises the following standing sub-committees:
 - **Adults Sub-Committee** - responsible for adult football operations.
 - **Youth Sub-Committee** - responsible for youth football operations.
 - **Further sub-committees** may be established by the Club Committee from time to time.
- (d) Each sub-committee shall operate within the authority delegated to it by the Club Committee and shall not act in a manner that contradicts the Club Rules, FA rules or applicable competition rules. Sub-committee decisions shall be reported to the Club Committee at the next available meeting.
- (e) **Financial integration:** Sub-committees shall, over a transition period agreed by the Club Committee, progressively integrate their financial accounts and records into a single consolidated Club financial structure. The timeline shall be reviewed and agreed at each AGM until consolidation is complete.

11. SAFEGUARDING

- (a) The Club is committed to the welfare and safety of all children, young people and adults who participate in or support its activities. Safeguarding is a responsibility for every member of the Club.
- (b) The Club shall appoint at least one **Club Welfare Officer (CWO)** as a Club Officer. The CWO shall hold a current FA-accepted Enhanced DBS Check (renewed every three years) and a current FA Safeguarding Children qualification. The CWO shall be the designated safeguarding lead for the Club.
- (c) The Club Committee shall ensure that all adults working in regulated activity with under-18 players hold a current FA-accepted Enhanced DBS Check.
- (d) The Chairperson and Club Secretary shall complete The FA's Safeguarding for Committee Members course and keep it current, as required for clubs with under-18 teams.
- (e) The Club shall maintain and annually review a Safeguarding Policy in line with FA requirements. The CWO shall report on safeguarding at every Club Committee meeting.
- (f) All safeguarding concerns shall be referred to the CWO, who shall follow the Club's Safeguarding Policy and The FA's Safeguarding Procedures. If the concern involves the CWO, it shall be referred to the Chairperson and the Dorset FA Designated Safeguarding Officer.

12. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

- (a) The Club is committed to ensuring that football at VTFC is a game for everyone. The Club will not tolerate discrimination on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010.
- (b) The Club shall maintain an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy aligned with The FA's current EDI strategy, reviewed annually by the Club Committee.
- (c) The Club Committee shall take active steps to promote diversity and inclusion in membership, coaching, volunteering and governance, and shall report on EDI matters at the AGM.

13. DATA PROTECTION

- (a) The Club shall comply with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- (b) The Club Secretary shall act as the Club's nominated data controller. Personal data shall be used only for purposes related to the Club's objects and shall not be shared without consent, except where required by The FA, the Parent County Association, applicable law, or to safeguard a child or vulnerable adult.
- (c) The Club shall maintain a Privacy Notice available to all members. Accounting records shall be retained for at least six (6) years. Safeguarding records shall be retained in accordance with the Club's Safeguarding Policy.

14. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

- (a) Any Club Officer or Committee member with a personal, financial or other material interest in any matter before the Club Committee shall declare that interest before discussion begins and shall not vote on any resolution relating to it. This includes any discussion or decision relating to teams in the same age group as a team the member manages, coaches or has a child participating in.
- (b) The Club Secretary shall maintain a register of declared interests, reviewed annually.

15. COMPLAINTS AND DISCIPLINE

- (a) The Club shall maintain a Complaints & Disciplinary Policy and a Whistleblowing Policy, reviewed annually by the Club Committee.
- (b) Complaints about the conduct of the Club or its Officers shall be made in writing to the Club Secretary (or to the Chairperson if the complaint concerns the Club Secretary). The Club Committee shall acknowledge within seven (7) days and seek to resolve within forty-two (42) days.
- (c) Disciplinary matters relating to on-field conduct shall be dealt with in accordance with FA and competition rules. Off-field disciplinary matters shall be handled in accordance with the Club's Disciplinary Policy. Any suspension or expulsion may be appealed under the Complaints Procedure.

16. CLUB FINANCES

- (a) A bank account shall be opened and maintained in the name of the Club (the "**Club Account**"). Designated account signatories shall be the Chairperson, Club Secretary and Treasurer. No sum shall be drawn except by a method requiring the authorisation of at least two of the three designated signatories. All monies received shall be deposited in the Club Account by the Treasurer.
- (b) The Club Property shall be applied only in furtherance of the objects of the Club. Distribution of surplus to members is prohibited.
- (c) The Club Committee shall have the power to authorise the payment of reasonable remuneration and expenses to any member of the Club (but not for playing).
- (d) The Club may provide sporting and related social facilities, sporting equipment, coaching, courses, insurance cover, medical treatment, away-match expenses, post-match refreshments and other ordinary benefits of Community Amateur Sports Clubs as provided for in the Finance Act 2002.
- (e) The Club shall keep accounting records sufficient to disclose its financial position at all times, retained for at least six (6) years.
- (f) The Club shall prepare an annual "**Financial Statement**" in such format as The FA requires from time to time. The Financial Statement shall be independently examined and approved by members at the AGM. A copy shall be forwarded to The FA on demand.
- (g) Club Property other than the Club Account shall be vested in not fewer than two (2) and not more than four (4) Custodians, one of whom shall be the Treasurer (the "**Custodians**"), who shall deal with Club Property as directed by the Club Committee. Entry in the Minutes Record shall be conclusive evidence of any such direction.
- (h) Custodians shall be appointed at a General Meeting and hold office until death, resignation or removal by resolution at a General Meeting. On the death of a Custodian, any Club Property vested in them shall vest automatically in the surviving Custodians. If there is only one surviving Custodian, an EGM shall be convened as soon as possible to appoint another.
- (i) Custodians shall be entitled to an indemnity from Club Property for all expenses and liabilities reasonably incurred in carrying out their duties.

17. COMMUNICATIONS

- (a) All official communications to members may be sent by email to their last recorded email address or published on the Club website. Members are responsible for keeping their email address current with the Club Secretary.
- (b) The Club shall maintain a Social Media Policy governing the conduct of all members when communicating as representatives of the Club.

18. DISSOLUTION

- (j) A resolution to dissolve the Club shall only be proposed at a General Meeting and shall be carried by a majority of at least three-quarters (75%) of the members present.
- (k) The dissolution shall take effect from the date of the resolution. The Club Committee shall be responsible for winding up assets and liabilities. Any surplus assets remaining after discharge of all debts and liabilities shall be transferred to another club, a Competition, the Parent County Association or The FA for use in connection with community sport. No surplus shall be distributed to members.

19. GENERAL

- (l) Any matter not covered by these Club Rules shall be dealt with by the Club Committee, whose decision shall be final and binding, subject to any right of appeal under the Complaints Procedure.
- (m) The Club Rules shall be reviewed by the Club Committee at least every two years. Proposed amendments shall be submitted to the Parent County Association for written approval before being put to members at a General Meeting.

Verwood Town Football Club is affiliated to Dorset County Football Association. This constitution is subject to approval by Dorset County FA before adoption.