

## **BGA CLUB MANAGEMENT GUIDES**

### **The Committee**

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## The Committee (or Board of Directors)

An effective and well-run Committee as a group of Committee Members is rewarding and enjoyable to be involved with as together the team of people contribute to the success of the organisation.

To achieve this, a Committee will need to:

- be well led;
- understand its role and agenda;
- encourage and attract capable people to join it; and
- celebrate the progress achieved together.

The size of the Committee does not matter so much as the quality of communication. It is not necessary to have a large committee to get everything done, as long as the committee members are able to liaise and work well with any non-committee members carrying out activities.

There should be a simple but effective process of reporting so that the committee is kept informed about ongoing work.

### Committee Structure

The governing document should specify:

- the size of the committee
- the length of time that individuals can serve
- specific roles and positions
- the process required to elect, appoint, or co-opt, the committee members
- the voting structure within the committee
- any special procedures required for the conduct of business

If your club's governing document does not specify these things, it should be reviewed to understand the reasons, or to amend it so that it does.

There should be no family domination of the Committee - at least three of the people on the governing committee should neither be related to, nor cohabiting with, other committee members.

The governing document provides guidance in times of uncertainty, and uncertainty about how the governing body of an organisation functions is a short route to a lot of future drama.

### Finding new Committee Members and Succession

Using the principles set out in its Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, a healthy and resilient club will have made a commitment to diversity on the Committee, so that decisions it makes are representative of the breadth of membership. The communications when seeking new volunteers will be inclusive and encouraging. A diverse leadership group also makes the club visibly inclusive to people considering joining.

It is useful for the whole committee to take an active role in recruiting new committee members. Ideally, they identify what type of person is needed to fill a gap and they look for someone who best meets the requirement. This is partly a matter of looking, for example, for an accountant who could become the treasurer or someone with knowledge of building to take responsibility for the club's buildings.

A broader way to consider this task is also to consider the nature of people already on the committee and look for people with different characteristics to create a balanced

group which can address a wide range of circumstances. A committee may include, among others, a strong leader, a creative individual, an efficient and effective administrator, someone able to develop and hone ideas and someone else capable of implementing them. If the individuals in such a group are able to 'play to their strengths' the committee is likely to achieve more than a group of people who are all rather similar in their outlook or if the individual members are not encouraged to use their natural instincts and abilities. There is more about this concept in the 'Group Dynamics' Guide.

It is of course sometimes difficult to find enough people to serve on the committee at all, without creating additional constraints. However, even with the people you have, time should be taken to identify the strengths and weaknesses of individuals, their preferred working method and the areas where they can be most effective. Try to position people in roles where their personality as well as their knowledge can be used to best effect.

### **Appointment or election of committee members**

The process for appointing or electing committee members will be set out in the governing document. Invitations to nominate Committee members should be circulated to all members in good time before the constitutional deadline.

It is usual to require a written nomination with confirmation in writing from the nominee that they are willing to stand. This is the normal process for those standing for the first time and it may also be required for individuals standing for re-election, but the detail will be in the club's governing document.

It is good practice, to ask the nominees to provide a brief note of their background and relevant knowledge and experience, plus their reasons for standing for election. This will increase transparency, and as good communication, will make all members feel included in the process of electing their committee. It may also reveal hidden talents among the nominees.

### **Committee Members**

Regardless of the role they hold, all members of the Committee have some key responsibilities:

- To listen to, and represent, the needs of the membership, recognising they have been elected to help run the club *on behalf of* the entire membership.
- To put the needs of the organisation and its members upper most when making decisions. If they are multiple hat wearers, for instance co-opted from other organisations, whilst on Committee business for *this* organisation, they must wear *this* organisation's hat.
- To declare any conflict of interest and remove themselves from discussions where the conflict could be construed as affecting the outcome of a decision.
- Properly prepare for meetings; and read circulated papers.
- Submit reports in good time so that they can be circulated in advance of meetings.
- Abide by the collective decision.
- Support the work of their Committee colleagues and give them credit for achievements that result from their endeavours.
- Support succession by handing over all knowledge, paperwork and notes associated with their role to their successor.

- It is good practise for Committee members to use club role type email addresses (e.g. [chairman@midshiregc.com](mailto:chairman@midshiregc.com)). This assists with succession and makes it clear a person is acting on behalf of the club. It is also essential in cases where the club needs access to email history.

## **Decision Making**

Who makes the decisions? How similar are they to the people who originally established the club and to the broader make up of the club members? Gliding has traditionally been a sport for well off, white men. In the early days the BGA's office was on Park Lane and the Annual Awards Dinner was featured in Tatler. Club Committees tended to be comprised of the great and the good. Everything evolves... but has the representation on the Committee evolved too? The concept of 'lived experience' is a hot topic in modern governance discussions – having an inclusive governing body helps inform healthy decision making.

It may not be possible to have all the groups represented on the Committee, but when making a decision that affects the juniors, people with additional physical needs, or female pilots for instance, how much weight is given to their lived experience of a problem and potential solution? Unconscious bias may render the reported problem invisible to those without that lived experience.

We all have these unconscious biases, they are a fact of life. What is of greater importance is asking more questions when making decisions that affect minority groups within the membership and taking time to understand how the different perspectives are considered.

What information is decision making based on? Consulting the members and carrying out research in order to gain qualified information are an important part of the decision making, strategy development and project planning processes. Some funders will turn down applications for grant funding if there is inadequate evidence of such information. For more information about carrying out consultations see the 'Carrying Out a Consultation' Guide.

## **Conflicts of Interest**

Everybody has their own personal range of experiences and cultural history which they use as points of references during decision making. This is normal. However, when making decisions in the best interests of the members of the club, some attention should be paid to the various interests in play.

For more detail, including information about policies, registers and connected people, see the 'About Conflicts of Interest' Guide.

## **Committee Paperwork**

To aid transparency around decision making, it is advisable and helpful for Committee members, as well as the Secretary, to keep a notebook to record discussions, requests from club members and other business relevant to their role. It is rare for contemporaneous notes to be required, but if they ever are, these notebooks are invaluable.

Committee members should also date, file and retain any Club papers, correspondence, and emails. These papers belong to the club and should be passed on to the successor; they are not private correspondence to be kept or disposed of by the individual. This helps with continuity and ensures that the workings of the

Committee and the Club are transparent and that any transactions can be reviewed later if needed.

Ideally a club policy should be adopted about the length of time to keep different categories of document, so as to comply with legislation (e.g. for financial and tax documents) and to ensure that the club's archive and historic documents are not lost. Failing a formal policy, individuals should consider carefully before throwing away club documents.

### Key Club Roles

Clubs need to have suitably qualified people in the key roles.

They do not all need to be Committee members, if:

1. there is a mechanism for them to report to the Committee on their area of work;
2. they have the necessary level of authority and delegation to fulfil their responsibilities, without constantly having to ask for guidance, approval or funding.

**An organisation chart** or information about the roles, the current people holding them, together with their contact details should be clearly communicated and easily accessible, both at the club and on the club's website. Ideally club email addresses should be used e.g. chair@midshiresgc.co.uk

In a large club, it should be possible for each role to be held by a separate individual.

In smaller clubs, it may be necessary for one person to hold several positions concurrently.

Of greater importance is to avoid overloading any one individual, with the risk that they are unable to do a good job or that they become stressed and overwhelmed by the workload.

The major club roles are (\*the CFI is rarely a committee role with voting rights, but is included here for completeness. At many clubs the CFI attends committee meetings as an observer to facilitate a good mutual understanding of objectives and decisions):

- Chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- CFI\*
- Safety Officer +
- Technical Officer +
- Child Protection Officer +

(+ may not be a 'Committee' role, but will report to the Chair)

Other roles could include:

- Tugmaster and/or winchmaster
- JGC Liaison Officer
- Volunteer coordinator
- New member liaison
- Site and buildings officer
- Mechanical Transport (MT)
- Officer
- Membership secretary
- Social secretary
- PR, marketing and publicity officer
- Newsletter editor

The principal club officers are normally elected either by the membership or by the committee members. Other roles are generally appointed by the committee. The CFI must be approved by the BGA.

If the club is a CASC, [The Fit and Proper Person Test](#) should be applied before appointing people to roles with general control and administration of the club, especially the direct financial management responsibilities.

For more detailed information about club roles, including role descriptions, see the 'Committee Roles' Guide.

## **Committee Processes**

A gliding club is a complex organisation comprised of a rare mix of:

- business (often long lived)
- not-for-profit volunteer-run organisation
- sport club

With so much complexity, it is vital to take a normal business approach to the Committee work and meetings, enabling the group to achieve more and in less time, leaving more time for flying. People need time to connect, especially if they are working together as part of a team. Rather than lose pace and momentum during meetings, it is healthy to make time for Committee members to chat and socialise before or after the meeting.

An ideal set-up for committee operations should look something like this:

- meetings are scheduled well in advance, generally at a regular date, time and place and as far as possible at times to suit the maximum number of committee members;
- the secretary invites agenda items from committee members and other key people, in good time before the meeting and then discusses a draft agenda with the chair;
- the secretary obtains written reports from committee members with responsibility for particular work;
- the secretary circulates the agenda and other papers and reports in good time, bearing in mind that all the members have other commitments and will need time to get around to reading the committee papers;
- the meeting itself starts on time, with a specified duration;
- the chair considers in advance how much time needs to be given to each item on the agenda and manages discussions so that an appropriate amount of time is given to each topic;
- at the end of each discussion, it is clear what decision has been made, who is responsible for any further action; and the minutes clearly reflect these decisions and action points;
- minutes are circulated to all committee members within a reasonable time – say a week - and are published on the club's notice board or website once they are approved by the committee.
- To increase transparency and allow early publication, informal approval can be achieved by email. Details of sensitive or confidential topics should not be included.

## **Committee Meeting Agenda**

A well thought-out agenda will help the committee to get through the business in the most effective way and in the shortest possible time.

### ***Meeting information***

The agenda should contain:

- The name of your club and the committee or group.
- The day and date of the meeting.
- The starting time and duration or finishing time.
- Venue details.

- Details about access and facilities for people with disabilities if required.
- Details of catering or other relevant services.

### ***Agenda items***

Beginning with the standard openers:

- Apologies for absence.
- Welcome, and introduction of guests.
- Establish if there are any new conflicts of interest.
- Agenda review (very brief overview of the purpose of this meeting and/or the main items to be discussed) and expected time of close.
- Minutes of the previous meeting (to agree whether they are a true record).
- Correspondence information (if appropriate).
- Matters arising from the minutes which are not included elsewhere on the agenda.

Major items of business should follow:

- Give enough information for people to know what the items are about – a single word or phrase is rarely enough information.
- Indicate who will introduce each item, making sure they know in advance.
- Specify the purpose of each item. For example, to report, for discussion, to approve something such as the minutes of the last meeting, to decide a course of action.
- Indicate whether papers have been sent previously or will be available at the meeting. (Wherever possible, avoid the latter.)
- If it works for your Committee, indicate how much time has been allocated to the item.

The final items on the agenda will be:

- Date, time and venue for next meeting as the second last item.
- Any Other Business as the last item.

As a general rule, items taken under AOB should be genuinely urgent or brief and for information only, and the chair should be consulted before including them.

A sample agenda can be found on p.7.

### ***The art of building an effective Agenda***

These notes are particularly relevant for the work of the Secretary and the pre-agenda publication discussion with the Chair, but somebody needs to follow this process:

- Make it clear to everyone how to get their items on the agenda and who to contact. To make it easier, a simple pro forma can be created for this purpose.
- Check with all the key people who might have something to put on the agenda.
- Go through the minutes of the last two or three meetings to find any items that need to be put forward or reviewed as agenda items.
- Keep 'Matters Arising' for items requiring brief and straightforward feedback.
- Check the club's strategic and business plans and annual calendar to find out whether this meeting has to deal with any recurrent business such as financial

reports, the AGM or particular flying events.

- Put the agenda items in a numbered list.
- Order the items logically to create flow to the meeting, for example, decisions to spend money should not come before the financial report.
- Put the agenda items in a helpful order and one that suits your committee. This usually means that substantial items are dealt with first and quick ones later. Alternatively, it can be helpful to alternate big and small items.
- Prepare papers needed for agenda items and get them ready for circulation. Make it clear on the agenda if papers are being sent out or are to be 'tabled' (literally, put on the table!).

However, papers being tabled cannot be effectively discussed if Committee members have not had time to read them, and is poor governance practise.

- Circulate the agenda, together with all supporting papers and reports in good time, usually a clear 7 days, as a means of reminding people of the meeting and giving them time to prepare for it.

### **Effective meetings**

There should be no report reading at meetings! They are there to refer to, during the decision making process, but all papers should have been read ahead of the meeting.

A good meeting begins at the previous meeting, with everyone understanding what actions they need to take, who to talk to, where to get support if there are problems making progress, and how to report back on progress in time for their report to be circulated a week in advance of the next meeting. This gives everyone time to read the papers before the meeting, utilising valuable meeting time for discussing key issues and taking decisions, so that everyone leaves the meeting inspired to act.

### **During the meeting**

The Chair of the meeting (usually the Committee Chair, but not necessarily) leads the Committee through the agenda and announces each item in turn.

If there is a report on a topic or someone responsible for the work, they should briefly introduce the item and set any context pertinent for the following discussion and/or decision making. The discussion can then be opened to others.

The Chair is responsible for ensuring discussion stays relevant to the topic, is not repetitive and that everyone can contribute. They are also responsible for keeping to the timetable that has been set.

At an appropriate time, the discussion on each topic should be drawn to a close, with a vote being taken if needed, agreement on any action to be taken, identifying the person responsible. A sample Action List can be found on p.11.

## Evaluating Meetings

To help ensure meetings are effective and engaging, it is good practise to reflect and make changes as necessary.

This questionnaire is a simple way to evaluate the quality of meetings that you are responsible for or required to attend. Make as many copies of the questionnaire as you need. After each meeting that you attend or organise, fill one in. Give copies to your colleagues, especially for the meetings that you are running. People are very reluctant to criticise their colleagues openly, so keep the forms anonymous.

### Questionnaire

1. Was a clear agenda circulated beforehand? Yes/No
2. Did the meeting start on time, regardless of any late-comers? Yes/No
3. Were there any late-comers? Yes/No
4. Did fewer than half the people present say anything? Yes/No
5. Did you get to the end of the agenda with all action points settled? Yes/No
6. Were some important points rushed because of time pressures? Yes/No
7. Did the meeting end on or before an agreed time? Yes/No
8. Subjectively, did you feel the meeting helped you in your work? Yes/No
9. Did everyone get minutes with action points within a week? Yes/No
10. Were any A-items held over until a future meeting for lack of time? Yes/No

**Score** Give the meeting one point for 'Yes' answers to questions 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, and one point for 'No' answers to 3, 4, 6 and 10.

**0 – 3** A shocker. If you were running the meeting, you wasted a lot of people's time, but you should know what to do now. If someone else was running it, you will need tact and diplomacy to put it right.

**4 – 6** Par for the course. Now that you are aware of the weak points, it isn't too hard to tackle them.

**7 – 8** Pretty good! If the meeting was organised by someone else, let that person and everyone else know how good it was. Flattery does work. As Disraeli said, lay it on with a trowel.

**9 -10** Exceptional. If this is the norm for whoever organised the meeting, they hardly need encouragement. Persuade everyone else that this is the model to be followed.

Keep the forms and repeat the exercise at regular intervals. Are the scores improving? If not, analyse the specific areas that repeatedly fall short and tackle them head on.

*Extract from 'The Time Effective Manager' by Michael Bird*

## **Recording Committee business: Minutes of meetings**

Having a clear record of your committee meetings is important because they are:

- An agreed record of the decisions made by a meeting. They have legal status as documentary proof that decisions were made and in the right way.
- A reminder of action that people have agreed to take, or a means of checking whether an agreed action has been taken.
- A source of information for people who were not at the meeting.

### ***Role of the Secretary***

As well as producing a record of the meetings, normally the Secretary also has to:

- Be well prepared for the meeting – for example:
  - know the agenda,
  - bring the minutes of the last meeting for signing as a true record,
  - record attendance at the meeting and
  - organise travel expense forms.
- Know the club's governing document and policies, e.g., to be aware of when a meeting is quorate.
- Plan ahead, e.g. a schedule of future meetings.
- Liaise with the chair and develop a good working relationship with them.

### ***Taking the Minutes***

Little known fact: 'Minutes' derives from 'minute', as in small, rather than minutes as a measure of time. Taking the Minutes of a meeting involves reducing the discussion to a small set of notes that captures the whole. This can be taken by anyone; it does not have to be done by the Club Secretary.

Taking the minutes is normally done in two parts – taking notes during the meeting, followed by writing up the minutes in a finished form after the meeting.

Helpful tips to taking good minutes include:

- Listen more than you write! Follow the meaning not just the words.
- Summarise discussions, noting key points and decisions made.
- Use a pro-forma that you can slot your notes into.
- Use symbols and abbreviations of your own.
- Use a star or red pen to note action points.
- Do not hesitate to check that you have understood the points being made

When writing up the finished minutes:

- Use the ABC of minute writing – be Accurate, Brief and Clear.
- If using jargon, combine with an explanation.
- Write in short sentences with one idea per sentence.
- Keep paragraphs reasonably short – one paragraph per topic.
- Write impersonally, e.g. 'The meeting noted the information provided'.
- Use the passive case, e.g. 'It was decided' rather than 'We decided'
- Use bullet points for lists.
- End each minute with a decision and an action, including who will take action and the anticipated timeframe.
- Be aware of who could read the minutes and of any consequences.

Adopt a clear structure for writing minutes:

- Ensure headings and numbers match the meeting agenda.
- Set the scene – who presented and whether it involved a proposal or report.
- What happened next in general terms – discussion, questions?
- If it's a report, did additional information emerge in response to questions? If it's a proposal, summarise the arguments for and against.
- What were the decisions and do the reasons for the decisions need to be recorded?
- Who has to take action, what must they do and by when?

Finally, as this is a legal document, check that the Minutes contain:

- Name of the club.
- Description of the meeting.
- Date.
- Place.
- Members present.
- Other people present.
- Who chaired and who took minutes.
- Apologies.
- Corrections if any to minutes of previous meeting.
- A record that minutes of previous meeting were signed as a true record (corrected if appropriate).
- Matters arising.
- Separate minute for each agenda item.
- Date, time and place of next meeting.
- Minutes of Any Other Business.

A sample set of Minutes can be found on p.8.

## Sample Committee Documents

### Sample Agenda

#### Midshires Gliding Club

There will be a Committee meeting starting at 5 p.m.  
on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019 in the Clubhouse

#### Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. New Conflicts of Interest
3. Minutes of the meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> November
4. Matters arising from the Minutes (other than those on the agenda)
5. Reports – to receive and note reports (attached)
  - a. Secretary
  - b. Treasurer
  - c. CFI
  - d. Membership Secretary
  - e. Technical, aircraft maintenance and workshop
  - f. Safety Officer
  - g. Development Officer  
To agree any further work required
6. Flying and other activities programme for 2020  
CFI to present proposed flying activities
7. Secretary to present proposed social activities  
To discuss and agree preliminary programme
8. Budget and pricing for 2020  
Treasurer to present draft budget and prices for approval
9. Strategic plan – to agree process for preparing new 5-year plan  
Chair to outline proposed process and timescale
10. Date of next meeting
11. Any Other Business

Fred Brown  
Secretary

Telephone 01234 567890

Email: ....

## Sample Minutes

### Midshires Gliding Society

#### Minutes of the Committee Meeting

Held in the Clubhouse at 5 p.m. on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2019

<b>Present:</b>	Chair	Don Henley (DH)
	Secretary	Angela Harris (AH)
	Treasurer	Mark Cooper (MC)
	Membership Secretary	Ian Roberts (IR)
<b>In attendance:</b>	Development Officer	Andy Brown (AB) ( <i>ex officio</i> )
	CFI	Rachel Masters (RM) ( <i>ex officio</i> )

Item	Action or Comment	Who	When

#### 1. Apologies for absence:

Vice Chair	Jim Hutchins (JH)
Technical Officer	Chris Smith (CS)
Safety Officer	Tim Henry (TH)

#### 2. No new conflicts of interest were brought to the committee's attention

#### 3. Minutes of the previous meeting – accuracy and approval

The minutes of the previous meeting were circulated and there being no corrections, were signed by DH.

#### 4. Matters arising from the previous minutes

Minute 3 (v) **Trophies** ongoing

Minute 3 (vi) **Combination** Has xxxxxxxx ... IR to purchase two combination locks.  
ACTION: IR

Minute 3 (viii) **Fundraising** No progress.

Minute 3 (ix) **Signage** AH passed details to DH today. ACTION: DH

Minute 3 (x) **Newsheet** Ready for distribution

#### 5. Reports

a. **Secretary's Report** - Report attached

b. **Treasurer's Report**

(i) **Financial statement:** MC gave an update of figures, will email to AH ACTION: MC

Bank Statement as of end of August: Balance £xxxx

- (ii) **Rate relief:** The club is to apply for discretionary rate relief. ACTION: MC
- (iii) **CASC:** AB to progress CASC application on our behalf. He will email forms to AH or The Company Secretary as appropriate. The local authority has already agreed that a certain amount of the remaining rates bill will be given relief. ACTION: AB
- (iv) **New Constitution:** AH sending signed minutes of EGM to the Company Secretary who will amend with Companies House. DH to get Mem & Arts amended (typed up). ACTION: AH

**c. CFI's Report – report attached**

RM reported on the instructor training program for 2020.

**d. Membership Secretary's Report**

Subscription income figures from 2019 were presented. This year to date we have done x launches and x hours on x days out of x available. The average time of first launch is...

IR passed new members' forms to AH for file.

IR amending 3-month member forms to include year of birth.

**e. Technical Officer's Report Not present**

**f. Safety Officer's Report Not present**

**g. Development Officer's report**

- i) "Thermal Uplift" project is reinstated. The local authority will provide funds towards equipment ACTION: AB
- ii) Sports Development Action Plan - AB has spoken to Joe Bloggs, the local authority Sports Development Officer, who has been very helpful. Will email the template plan for us to fill in. AB progressing. ACTION: AB

**6. Flying and other activities programme for 2020**

RM presented detailed plans for proposed flying activities, which were welcomed

ACTION RM to progress

**7. Proposed social activities**

AH presented the plans, which were welcomed and approved.

ACTION AH to progress

**8. Budget and pricing for 2020**

MC presented the draft budget and prices, which were discussed and approved for submission to the AGM.

**9. Strategic plan – to agree process for preparing new 5-year plan**

DH outlined the proposed process and timescale. The plans will be presented to the AGM.

**10. Date of Next Meeting**

23th January 2020, 5.30 pm in the Clubhouse

Deadline for Agenda items and reports – 13<sup>th</sup> January

**11. Any Other Business**

There was no other business

Meeting closed at 6.55pm.

### Sample Action List

Item	Action	Who	When	Date complete
Combination Locks for clubhouse	Purchase two combination locks	Ian Roberts	18-Dec	
Rate relief	Apply for discretionary rate relief.	Mark Cooper	18-Dec	
CASC	Progress CASC application	Andy Brown	11-Dec	
etc etc ....				

### Sample Conflict of Interest Register

Name	Role	Organisation / individual	Nature of Conflict	Risk: Low / medium / high
Ron Jones	Treasurer	Ron Jones Building Supplies Ltd, Owner	Potential supplier for club project	High
Ron Jones	Treasurer	Local youth club, treasurer	An interest in another local organisation	Low