1. NAME AND OBJECTIVES

The Club shall be called The Birman Cat Club ("the Club"). The objectives of the Club shall be: to encourage a greater interest in Birman cats; to foster a better appreciation of cats in general and to give members advice regarding the breeding and welfare of cats; to hold and to support shows; and to publish, review and maintain the standard of points as approved by the Governing Council of the Cat Fancy (GCCF) through membership of the Birman Breed Advisory Committee (BBAC).

2. MEMBERSHIP

The Club shall consist of:

II. Family members
III. Junior members
IV. Long term members
V. Life members
VI. Honorary members
VII. Honorary life members

and membership may be single or joint.

(a) Application for ordinary, family or junior membership shall be made in writing to the Membership Secretary and must be proposed by a member. The Membership Secretary shall refer all such applications to the Committee for consideration and election if approved. The Committee shall have absolute discretion to approve or refuse an application, and shall not be obliged to give reasons for refusal.

(b) Family membership is one or two adults and the children under 16 years of age, referred to as junior family members, living in the same family unit at the same address as the adult(s).

(c) A junior member shall be under 16 years of age, and shall be sponsored by a member (the sponsoring member) who shall not be a junior member or a junior family member. A junior family member shall be sponsored by an adult of that family membership. At all times the conduct of a junior member or a junior family member shall be the responsibility of the relevant sponsoring member, and the sponsoring member shall be held vicariously liable for any breaches of the rules of the Club committed by the sponsored member. Junior members and junior family members shall not be eligible for any appointment under Rule 5(i) or for any election under Rule 5(b), Rule 5(e), Rule 5(f), Rule 5(g), Rule 5(h) or Rule 5 (i), shall not have the right to vote in any ballot and shall not count towards an AGM or an SGM quorum under Rule 7.

(d) On attaining the age of 16, junior members and junior family members shall become ordinary members.

(e) Long term ordinary membership for a period of five years may be granted by the Committee after two years ordinary membership, on payment of the appropriate subscription.

(f) The Committee may grant life membership exempt from payment of subscription upon persons in recognition of services to the Club.

(g) If, in the opinion of the Committee, the conduct of any member has been prejudicial to the welfare, breeding or exhibiting of cats, or likely to prove injurious to the character, reputation or interest of the Club, the Committee may, after giving such member an opportunity of being heard, determine either:
   i. to give warning to such member if mitigating circumstances should so warrant;
   ii. to suspend such member for such period as it may think fit; or
   iii. to expel such member from the Club.

(h) No such determination under Rule 2(h) shall be made unless the Secretary has given to each member of the Committee and to the member concerned, notice of a meeting of the Committee and of the business to be discussed thereat, such notice to be in writing, and to be given not less than twenty eight days before the date of the meeting.

(i) Any member so suspended or expelled shall have a right of appeal to a Special General Meeting (SGM) of the Club and to attend and state his or her case thereat, and shall be reinstated if such an appeal receives a simple majority of those present and voting. In the event that the appeal does not receive a simple majority of those present and voting, that member shall be responsible for the Committee's costs in holding that SGM. A request for such an appeal must be made in writing to the Secretary, within 28 days of notification of expulsion or suspension.

(j) Any member (including life and honorary members) suspended under Article 12 of the GCCF Constitution (automatic expulsion from the Club), and wishing to rejoin after expiration of the suspension, must apply for re-election to the Committee (Rule 2(a) applies).

(k) The Club shall endorse the GCCF policy in respect of the supply of cats or kittens for resale via pet shops and retail outlets.

(l) The Committee has the power to suspend any member not returning the Club's Cups/Trophies when due.

3. DUTIES OF MEMBERS

Every member shall strive to promote the objectives of the Club (Rule 1) and shall bring to the notice of the Committee any matter contrary to those objectives of which he or she becomes aware. Any such matter, or any other suggestions for improving the Club, must be notified in writing to the Secretary, who shall include that matter in the agenda of the next meeting of the Committee. Membership of the Club shall imply acceptance of the rules and objectives of the Club.

4. SUBSCRIPTIONS

(a) The respective entrance fees for junior membership and single and joint ordinary membership shall be reviewed annually at the AGM.

(b) The respective subscriptions for junior membership, single and joint ordinary membership and family membership shall be payable on election and annually thereafter on 1st January, except that a grace year is given for such memberships starting on or after 1st October. The respective amounts shall be reviewed annually at the AGM.

(c) The respective subscriptions for single and joint long term ordinary membership (subject to Rule 2(e)) shall be equivalent to four times the corresponding subscriptions for single and joint ordinary membership, and shall be reviewed from time to time at the AGM.

(d) If a subscription, due on 1st January, remains unpaid by 31st January, then the corresponding single or joint ordinary membership shall be deemed to have lapsed on that due date. Lapsed members must apply for re-election.

5. MANAGEMENT

(a) The Honorary Officers of the Club shall be a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer.

(b) The business of the Club shall be managed by a Committee consisting of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer, together with twelve (12) ordinary Committee members. The Officers shall be nominated from and elected by the membership. Should no nominations be received from the membership (Rule 6(a)), the offices of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer shall be filled by election from the Committee and ratified by the membership at the AGM. The Secretary and the Treasurer shall be elected for a period of three years, after which time they shall be eligible for re-election. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman shall be elected for a period of three years. Should the membership so wish, the Chairman, and likewise the Vice-Chairman, may be elected for a second period of three years after which time he or she must stand down from office, but may then stand for election as an ordinary Committee member and after three years as an ordinary Committee member will then be eligible to stand for election as Chairman or Vice-Chairman if they so wish and have been nominated in the normal way in accordance with the rules of the Club. No two persons from the same household shall be allowed to be Officers of the Club at the same time.

(c) Neither the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the club can serve as an officer or as a committee member for any other club catering solely for the Birman breed. The only restrictions on the other officers and committee members is that they are not to hold either the Chairman or Vice -Chairman position for any other UK Birman Breed club.

(d) No Officer or ordinary Committee member required to resign from office as the result of a motion put to an AGM or an SGM shall be eligible for re-election for a period to be determined by the relevant meeting, that period to be at least ten years.

(e) A Show Cup Secretary, an AGM Cup Secretary, a Show Support Secretary, delegates (and substitute) to the GCCF and representatives (and substitute) to the BBAC shall be elected annually at the AGM from the membership.

(f) A Membership Secretary shall be elected at the AGM from the membership for a period of three years, after which time they shall be eligible for re-election. The Membership Secretary may collect and bank subscriptions if delegated by the Treasurer.

(g) A President and Vice President(s) shall be nominated by the Committee and elected by the membership at the AGM for a period of three years, after which time they shall be eligible for re-election. No duties are imposed upon them apart from loyalty to the Club and sympathy with the objectives of the Club.

(h) Patrons shall be nominated and elected by the membership at the AGM in recognition of their services to the Club. No duties are imposed upon them apart from loyalty to the Club and sympathy with the objectives of the Club.

(i) Four (4) of the ordinary Committee members shall retire annually in rotation and shall be eligible for re-election. All Committee members, i.e. ordinary Committee members and Officers, may not be on more than two other cat club committees. In the event that a Committee member becomes a lapsed member, he or she shall be deemed to have resigned from office. In the event of a vacancy arising on the Committee, the Committee may co-opt a member until the next AGM, and that co-opted member shall have full voting powers. The vacancy shall be filled by election in the normal manner at that next AGM, and the person elected to fill that vacancy shall hold office only for the unexpired portion of the term of office relating to that vacancy.

(j) The Committee may appoint such sub-committees or working parties or additional positions as is deemed necessary, and the persons so appointed need not be Committee members. Such sub-committees or working parties shall report their findings to the Committee.

(k) The Committee shall have the power to make such bylaws as are not inconsistent with these rules, to cover any matter arising in the management of the Club, and to deal with any question not provided for by these rules. Such bylaws to come into effect immediately, and to continue if ratified by the following AGM.

(l) To ensure the smooth running of the club, the Committee shall have the power to confer and vote by electronic means on urgent matters. Any decisions made this way to be ratified at the next Committee meeting.

6. VOTING

(a) Nominations proposing and seconding eligible persons as officers, ordinary Committee members, delegates or representatives, together with the written consent of the person so nominated, must reach the Secretary not later than the date specified by him or her for that purpose. An existing member who is agreeable to stand for re-election must notify the Secretary to that effect not later than that specified date. In the event of two or more candidates for any vacancy, voting shall be by postal ballot. Voting papers shall be sent to all eligible fully paid-up members, who shall each have one vote, and must be returned to the independent scrutineer named thereon not later than the date specified for that purpose. The scrutineer, who shall not be a Club member, shall provide the result of the ballot to the Secretary, who will then notify the members accordingly. In the event of a tie for any vacancy, a ballot shall take place by the same method between the candidates who have tied.

(b) If a motion calling for the resignation of any Officer or ordinary Committee member is put to the AGM and the motion is supported by a simple majority, it shall be the duty of the Secretary to hold a postal ballot of all eligible members and if a simple majority of the members voting in that postal ballot support the motion, the person whose resignation is sought shall resign his or her office immediately. In the event that the motion calls for the resignation of the Secretary, then the duties of the Secretary for arranging that postal ballot shall be undertaken by a member selected by the Committee.

7. MEETINGS

Committee Meetings

The Committee shall meet not less than four times in any Club year. All meetings may be held via virtual means. The quorum for Committee meetings shall be at least 50% of the total number of committee member and officer positions filled at that time) of which two (2) of those present shall be Officers. The Presiding Officer shall be the Chairman or in his or her absence the Vice-Chairman. In the absence of the aforementioned, the Chair is to be taken by an Officer or ordinary Committee member elected from the Committee. Every Committee

member present at a meeting shall have one vote excluding the Presiding Officer. In the event of equal voting, the Presiding Officer shall have the casting vote. Any member of the Committee who fails, without reason considered sufficient by the Committee, to attend at least half of the meetings called during the Club year, shall cease to be a member of the Committee, and shall not be eligible for re-election for three years. He or she shall be informed of the decision of the Committee by the Secretary. Delegates who fail, without reason considered sufficient by the Committee, to attend at least half of the meetings of the GCCF during their term of office shall not be eligible for re-election for three years.

General Meetings

A General Meeting of the Club to be called the Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be called no sooner than 1st April in each calendar year, and as soon as possible thereafter. The Presiding Officer shall be the Chairman or in his or her absence the Vice-Chairman. In the absence of the aforementioned, the Chair is to be taken by an Officer or ordinary Committee member elected from the Committee. The agenda for the meeting, together with the minutes of the AGM and a statement of the accounts for the preceding year ending 31st December, shall be sent to each household not later than 14 days before the date of the meeting. The quorum for the AGM shall be 10 members (subject to Rule 2(c)). Including at least 50% of the total number of committee members and officer positions filled at that time being present and least 2 of those being officers of the club. Any member wishing to have an item placed on the agenda, must inform the Secretary, not less than 6 weeks before the date fixed for the AGM. Subject to Rule 2(c), every member present at a meeting shall have one vote excluding the Presiding Officer. In the event of equal voting the Presiding Officer shall have the casting vote.

Special Meetings

A Special General Meeting (SGM) may be held at any time the Committee considers it expedient, and shall be held upon receipt by the Secretary of a written request signed by at least 10 per cent of the current membership of the Club, not including junior members or junior family members, stating precisely the business to be discussed thereat, or of an appeal from a fully paid-up member under Rule 2(j). The SGM is to be held as soon as is convenient, and not less than 14 days written notice of any SGM shall be sent to each household by the Secretary, together with a notice specifying the business to be discussed thereat. No other business shall be allowed. The quorum for an SGM shall be fifty members, not including junior members or junior family members. If the stated business is or includes a motion calling for the resignation of any Officer or ordinary Committee member and the members present and voting at the SGM support the motion by a simple majority, the person whose resignation is sought shall resign his or her office immediately. In the event that the motion calls for the resignation of the Secretary, then the duties of the Secretary for organising the SGM shall be undertaken by a member selected by the Committee. An independent Chairman may preside at an SGM if the members present so wish.

8. EXAMINATION OF ACCOUNTS

An independent person, who shall not be an Officer or an ordinary Committee Member, shall be appointed by the membership at each AGM to examine the accounts for the club and shall be eligible to be re-appointed.

9. AMENDMENT OF RULES

With the exception of bylaws made under Rule 5(k), no new rule shall be made, nor shall any rules be amended or rescinded, unless notice of the proposed changes has been given on the agenda of the AGM, and unless the proposed changes shall have received the assent of at least two thirds of the members present and voting, not including junior members or junior family members, at the AGM.

10. FINANCE

The financial year of the Club shall end on the 31st December in each year; to which date the annual accounts of the Club shall be balanced. The property of the Club shall be vested in the Committee. Payments, with the exception of sums under £100 shall be authorised only by the signature of any two Officers.

11. MEMBERSHIP OF THE GCCF

The delegates to the GCCF shall be nominated by the Committee and shall be elected by the ballot at the AGM and shall hold office during the immediately succeeding official year of the GCCF. If a delegate dies or resigns his or her office as a delegate, the Committee shall have the power to co-opt a member to hold office only for the unexpired portion of the term of office of the person in whose place he or she is co-opted. The members of the Club shall be bound by the rules and disciplinary powers of the GCCF.

12. SURRENDER OF BOOKS, RECORDS ETC.

All Officers or members of the Club who, under these rules or in pursuance of these rules, have custody of any books, documents, accounts, property or monies belonging to the Club, shall, on request, by the Committee, return them to a member of the Committee within 28 days.

13. DISSOLUTION OF THE CLUB

Any proposal to dissolve the Club shall be considered only at an SGM upon not less than 14 days written notice to members. If the motion to dissolve the Club is confirmed by at least two thirds of the total Club membership, not including junior members or junior family members, the Club's liabilities shall be discharged and any balance of funds shall be divided equally among all fully paid-up members of the Club. Trophies shall be returned to their donors wherever possible and those not so returned may be distributed to other clubs at the discretion of the Committee. At this SGM, but at no other meeting, members shall be allowed to vote by proxy. Any member wishing to vote by proxy shall obtain a proxy form from the Secretary.

14. DUTIES OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The person presiding at a meeting shall ensure that such meeting is conducted in a proper and orderly manner in accordance with the Club rules and rules of debate. He or she can request the withdrawal of any person who is in his or her opinion guilty of grossly improper behaviour, always providing that he or she issues to such person a prior warning. He or she shall preserve an impartial and fair attitude in all matters of debate, put all motions to the vote and declare the results which shall thereafter constitute the official results of such voting.

The Secretary shall run the Club generally with the support of the other Officers and ordinary Committee members. He or she shall: keep minutes of meetings; ensure that ordering is carried out for everything relating to the Club; check accounts and pass them to the Treasurer for payment; send the necessary paperwork to the GCCF Office each year; and be responsible for notifying members of the Club events and meetings etc.

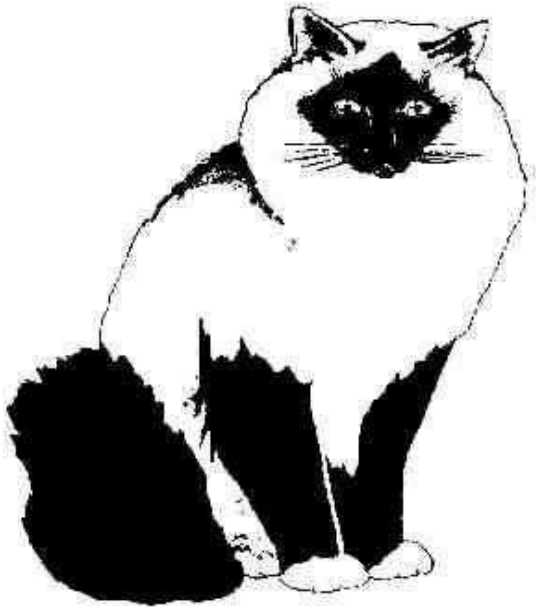
The Treasurer shall: bank received monies and may delegate collection and banking of subscriptions to the Membership Secretary; issue receipts; pay invoices, having checked that these are in order; notify the Committee if over-spending occurs; prepare the annual accounts and arrange for an examination of accounts to be done each year and send a copy of this, together with fees and an analysis of the membership, to the GCCF Treasurer by 1st May each year; pay expenses and send receipts to members; and keep financial books in order.

The ordinary Committee members shall support the Officers, help and represent the members.

BYLAWS

1. Other than an appellant under Rule 2(j), only members may attend General Meetings.
2. If a Special General Meeting is inquorate the motion shall be lost.

THE BIRMAN CAT CLUB
(Member of the GCCF)



Rules v16 dated May 2024

This issue supersedes all previous issues