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| **squareone.jpg**  **Square one** |
| **CONSTITUTION** |
| **2024** |
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| Adopted by the membership at the Extraordinary General Meeting of the club on 20th April 1994 and incorporating amendments agreed at the Annual General Meeting of 13th July 1994, 7th June 1995 and 21st June 2006, reworded in September 2023 and amended at the Annual General Meeting on 10th July 2024 (*in italics*). |

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**Introduction**

The Square One Club is a non-profit making organisation whose purpose is to provide a social facility for unattached people aged 45 yrs and above in Swindon and the surrounding communities. It has existed in its present form since July 1991. The club is run by a committee elected by the club members.

**Membership**

Initial and continuing membership of the club is at the discretion of the committee. Members are those who have been accepted by the committee and set up their monthly subscription standing order.

*Members who become a couple can retain their membership as long as they wish, and participate in club activities, after all they have friends at the club. We ask that couples respect the sensibilities of unattached members and that they continue to mix socially at the club and at club events. It remains that people cannot join the club as a couple.*

**Activities**

The club meets once a week at a fixed venue, where information about regular and future activities is available. Weekly meetings are normally attended by at least three members of the committee.

Activities for general member participation are arranged on a regular basis. Constructive suggestions and offers of assistance from members are always welcome. All events will be open to all members on a first come first served basis but only paid-up members will be eligible for subsidies.

Guests may be admitted to club meetings and events at the discretion of the committee subject to payment of any charges applicable to the event.

**Composition of the Committee**

The committee will comprise of a minimum of five paid up members, all elected at the Annual General Meeting. The committee will then elect a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary.

Committee members may be elected at either an Annual General Meeting or an Election Meeting. In either case, each committee member will be appointed for a term of one year. There will be no limit to the number of times an individual may serve on the committee, but those wishing to continue for another term must submit themselves for re-election at the appropriate meeting.

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The Chairperson will, in normal circumstances, be appointed by the committee at the first meeting, for a term of one year.

Holders of all offices will be determined by the committee. The committee may also co-opt willing club members for specific purposes at any time. All committee members will act in accordance with decisions of the committee in all matters.

Should an office become available between the Annual General Meetings then the committee can appoint a temporary replacement until the next Annual General Meeting as long as the temporary office is no longer than three months.

Members may be co-opted onto the committee as required. Nominations for committee members should be posted with proposer and seconder at least 4 weeks before the Annual General Meeting.

**General meetings**

The Annual General Meetings will be held annually and advised to the membership two months beforehand and will be held for the following purposes.

* Presenting financial and activity reports.
* Agreeing any amendments to the constitution.
* Electing committee members.
* To answer questions from the floor which should be submitted in writing one month beforehand.
* Any other business which may be deemed desirable by the committee or requested by the membership

A quorum for voting at an Annual General Meeting is one third of the members.

To agree amendments to the Constitution, any proposals must be made in writing by at least two paid-up members and be put before the meeting and voted on by a show of hands.

Requests from members for topics to be discussed at the Annual General Meeting must be presented to the committee at least one month in advance in order to allow time for any necessary research and publication. Discussion of any items raised without such prior notice will be at the discretion of the meeting Chairperson.

Once the new committee has been formed at the Annual General Meeting from those members newly elected for one year, a chairperson will be appointed by the committee from among the committee members willing to undertake this office.

A half year Election Meeting will be held, if required, between five and seven months after the last Annual General Meeting to appoint additional and/or replacement committee members. The quorum for an election meeting will be one quarter of the paid-up members.

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Extraordinary General Meetings may be called by the committee, or sufficient club members to form a quorum, at not less than 4 weeks’ notice. It should be limited to the specific item for which it was called. This will not include amendments to the constitution which can only be changed at a full Annual General Meeting.

Proxy votes will be allowed. They should be sent to the chairperson.

An Election Meeting may be combined with an Extraordinary General Meeting at the discretion of the committee.

**Elections**

Detailed arrangements for forthcoming elections will be published at least four weeks in advance. Nominations, supported by a proposer and a seconder, will be accepted up to one week prior to the election, at which time the final list will be displayed. Nominees, proposers and seconders must all be paid-up members.

Individual club members may raise an objection to any nomination with the committee, in confidence, stating full reasons. The committee’s decision to uphold or reject the objection will be final.

Where there are more nominees than places to fill on the committee, elections will be by paper ballot, with each voting member having as many votes as there are places to fill. Voting papers will be distributed to all paid-up members attending the meeting. Those unable to attend will be able to notify their vote in advance to the chairperson in writing, but not to appoint a proxy to decide and cast their vote for them.

**Finance**

The use of funds for administrative and publicity purposes will be at the discretion of the committee.

The club’s financial year will run from 1st May to 30th April. The treasurer should keep a proper book of accounts and after auditing will present a summary to the Annual General Meeting. All members are entitled to inspect the books at all times, after giving reasonable notice.

An account in the name of Square One will be made at a local bank and three committee members will be signatories. Each cheque will be signed by two of these three. No financial commitment will be entered into unless there are sufficient funds to cover it.

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**Honorarium**

An annual payment will be made to the treasurer to cover administration and sundry costs. This will be reviewed annually by the committee.

**Dissolution of the club**

In the event of the committee wishing to dissolve the club, such a motion must be put to the Annual or Extraordinary General Meeting and be endorsed by not less than two thirds of the total paid-up members. The disposal of any club assets will be determined at that meeting.

**Data protection**

All data held by the club is not to be used for any other purpose than for club related correspondence and voting rights. It is not lent, sold or distributed to anyone outside the committee.

**Executive power**

Any affairs of the club not specifically determined otherwise in this constitution will be in the executive domain of the committee provided that any changes in membership conditions or club format, which would fundamentally change the nature of the club, will be put to a General Meeting of the club for approval by a majority vote of members.

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**The Responsibility of the members – the ‘Code of Conduct’**

* To promote a pleasant and social atmosphere which all members can enjoy.
* To protect and enhance the reputation of the club as much as possible, both at club events and in contact with outside bodies.
* To be responsible for the reasonable behaviour of guests brought to club events, for any guest charges for the evening and for their introduction to other members.
* To pay any monies due on time.
* To refrain from promoting business interests at club events, or otherwise attempting to exploit fellow members.
* Respecting confidentially among fellow members.
* To respect the sensibilities of other members as regards smoking, language etc.
* Not to harass, intimidate or cause any kind of physical or mental stress to other members.
* To abide by such conditions of membership which the committee may deem necessary to put into effect from time to time, whilst being free to challenge any of the conditions. Where there is any conflict with this constitution six or more paid-up voting members can call for an Extraordinary General Meeting to put the matter to a vote.
* To be committed to the principle that all club activities are equally available to all members and to actively support a policy of equal opportunities within the club, opposing all forms of discrimination.

Significant breaches of the Code of Conduct will be dealt with by the committee fairly and discretely, but at its sole discretion. Expulsion from membership of the club will be the last resort, requiring a two-thirds majority vote by the committee.

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**The Responsibilities of the committee**

* **Programme**: to provide an interesting and balanced programme of activities for the club and to keep paid-up members informed of future events
* **Finance**: to safeguard the financial interests of the club with a mind to economy and fairness in expenditure of club funds, budgeting wisely and keeping accurate and up to date accounts.
* **Membership**: to maintain and enhance the viability and appeal of the club and its activities by attracting new members and encouraging their integration.
* **Conduct**: to ensure that members are aware of the Code of Conduct and to take effective action in the event of any unsuitable behaviour.
* **Records**: to maintain accurate and up-to-date membership records.