



BERKHAMSTED STRATHSPEY & REEL CLUB

**Committee
Handbook**

26 January 2025

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FOREWORD

This handbook sets out what the committee have agreed are the current best practices for organising, implementing and managing the club's activities. The need for such a handbook became apparent as a consequence of uncertainties about how some activities had been carried out in the past and a desire to ensure that there was continuity of action between one club administration and another. The descriptions of the practices are not intended to be cast as tablets of stone, but rather as baselines from which development and change, to the benefit of club members, may spring.

Berkhamsted Strathspey and Reel Club Committee 26 January
2025

SECTION 1: ADMINISTERING THE CLUB

PURPOSE, AIMS & RELATIONSHIPS

This handbook is a reference document for use by the committee. It sets out what has been agreed as current best practice for all of the activities undertaken by or on behalf of the committee. Future committees should not see it as restricting them in any way from developing and improving how things are done, provided that any changes instituted do not infringe or alter the precepts of the Constitution, without the approval of the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

It is further intended that the handbook be a guide and information source for new members of the committee and, particularly, for those considering or taking on one of the 'Officer' roles.

GENERAL MANAGEMENT

1. THE CONSTITUTION

The Club's Constitution is set out in **Appendix 1**. Changes to the constitution can only be made with the approval of the AGM or, in exceptional circumstances, by an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM). The provisions for calling such meetings are proscribed by the Constitution, but the key actions required by the committee are outlined under the heading 3. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING below.

2. THE COMMITTEE

As set out in the Constitution, the committee is responsible for 'the good government and efficient management of the club' toward meeting the club's aim of practising and encouraging Highland and Scottish Country Dancing.

MAKE-UP OF THE COMMITTEE

Following the 2018 Annual General Meeting (AGM) the committee comprises six (6) Officers and four (4) ordinary members. Additionally, in alternate years when the Presidency changes, the immediate Past President remains on the committee for that year.

The officers of the club are:

- President
 - Vice-President
 - Secretary
 - Treasurer
- Role descriptions for each of these offices are given in **Appendix 2**, along with a list of other activities undertaken on a regular basis by the committee

- Membership Secretary

Ordinary committee members have no designated duties but may volunteer to take on activities in support of the Officers or activities not covered by any of the Officers' roles.

The term of office for Vice-President is two (2) years before automatically assuming the role of President for a further two (2) years. On stepping down the President remains on the committee as Past President for a further year.

The basic term of office for other Officers and ordinary members is five (5) years after which they must step down from the committee and are ineligible for re-election for a further year. This pattern is overridden when an ordinary member takes on the role of an Officer or an Officer moves from one role to another, in which instances the term of office is reset to five (5) years. As an extreme example the following pattern might occur:

Ordinary member 2 years; Membership Secretary 3 years; Vice-President 2 years; President 2 years; Past President 1 year. Making a total service of 10 years

All committee members are elected by the AGM. Should an ordinary member seek to become an Officer or an Officer change from their current role to another, they must stand for election at the appropriate AGM.

The constitution gives the committee the power to co-opt additional members as deemed necessary.

ADMINISTRATION

The committee meets on a minimum of five (5) occasions throughout the administrative year. Additional meetings may be called at the behest of the President to progress urgent issues that have arisen. The timing of meetings is at the convenience of the majority of committee members and may be morning, afternoon or evening. The meetings are held in members' homes, with the offer to host the next meeting being made at the end of the previous one.

The Agenda for each meeting is the responsibility of the President in collaboration with the Secretary. Suggestions, from committee members and ordinary club members, for agenda topics should be with the Secretary at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting and the agenda should be issued at least two (2) days before the meeting. Recurring topics for the agenda are:

- The ongoing financial position;
- Organising the club's events;
- Consideration of membership issues;

- Progress of ongoing projects.

Minutes of the meetings are noted as decisions taken, action points with clarifications if needed and, where deemed necessary, short summaries of key points discussed. They are not verbatim minutes. The minutes, taken and produced by the Secretary, are checked by the President, whose responsibility they ultimately are. Ideally, they should be circulated for the consideration of committee members within a week of the meeting.

3. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The committee, but in particular the President, Secretary and Treasurer, should be fully conversant with the requirements of the Constitution in relation to calling or administering any General Meeting.

ADMINISTRATION

The club Secretary has the primary responsibility for administering the AGM on behalf of the President and the committee and in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

The Constitution requires that members be given, in writing, at least twenty-one (21) days' notice of a General Meeting, which must be held within six (6) weeks of the financial year end (31 March). To meet this requirement the annual club membership card includes the date of the following year's AGM.

In consultation with the President, the Secretary prepares an agenda for the meeting, which includes a 'nomination to committee' form, an invitation to nominate a charity for the year and a call for submission of motions for discussion. The Secretary must be given seven (7) days' notice of any such motion, including nominations to committee.

At least two (2) weeks prior to the AGM, the Secretary makes available to members the following:

- The Agenda
- The minutes of the previous AGM
- The Secretary's Report (*See below for content*)
- The Treasurer's Report (*See Finance section for discussion of content*)
- The independently examined balance sheet and income and expenditure account

PROTOCOLS FOR THE MEETING

The Secretary ensures that a signing-in sheet is available for members attending.

The President chairs the meeting and sits at a top table flanked by the Secretary and the Treasurer. The Secretary records the minutes of the meeting and the reports of both the Secretary and Treasurer are tabled and questions invited.

Voting on acceptance of reports and motions for discussion is by show of hands, but election to committee is by secret ballot, where the nomination of more than one candidate for a post makes such a ballot necessary. Tellers for both instances need to be identified from committee members beforehand.

The signing-in form completed nomination to committee and proposal for motions forms are all kept as records by the Secretary and held for archiving.

In alternate years the incoming President assumes the Chair following the elections to committee.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

The Secretary's Report is the prime document of record that sets out what the committee has done across the preceding year to meet its responsibilities, under the constitution, for the good government and efficient management of the club. As such, it should refer to events and activities organized, and actions taken to develop and improve services and offerings to members. It should report on trends in club membership and it should acknowledge and thank members who have contributed significantly to the life of the club.

4. COMMUNICATIONS

KEEPING MEMBERS INFORMED

Members are kept up to date with club and Scottish Country Dancing affairs via

- i. Announcements, by the President or their deputy, at the interval during Tuesday evening social dancing
- ii. Noticeboards positioned in the hall each Tuesday evening and kept up to date by the Events Secretary
- iii. The quarterly newsletter as well as regular updates typically published each Monday
- iv. The club website

NEWSLETTER

An editor, who may or may not be a committee member, assembles and distributes the Newsletter using the club's Mailchimp account. The President provides two articles: one giving their reflections on current and future issues relating to the club and Scottish Country Dancing; the other on the current work of the committee. Articles may be submitted to the editor by club members, but the President and the editor retain the right to edit submitted articles as they think appropriate. All additional material is provided by the editor.

WEBSITE

The club website has three primary purposes: 1) to communicate pertinent information to club members, 2) to act as a conduit to the wider Scottish Country Dancing Community for

club members and 3) to act as a conduit to the club and information on Scottish Country Dancing for members of the public.

A website administrator, who may or may not be a committee member, is responsible for the day to day upkeep of the website. Ideally, this person should have an appropriate level of IT skills.

The current website was launched in September 2019 and is expected to have a life span of at least 5-7 years

In addition, the website administrator is responsible for maintaining the resources and information made available to the committee, MCs and teachers, currently through Dropbox, and is also responsible for administering the club's Facebook page, Facebook group and Flickr and YouTube accounts.

In all of this, the website administrator is supported by a deputy administrator, who should be a member of the committee, if the administrator is not.

PUBLICITY

As well as using the website to provide information to the general public on the club, its activities and Scottish Country Dancing in general, from time to time the committee may decide to post notices in public venues (e.g. Surgery Waiting Rooms, Sports Centres, etc) and to take advertisements in local magazines, particularly concerning the recruitment and teaching of new dancers. From time to time, articles with the aim of furthering the club's objectives may also be supplied to local newspapers and publications.

The designated committee member is responsible for publicising the club's ticketed dances to other clubs and RSCDS Branches, and to individuals on a 'Friends' email list. This list should be regularly reviewed to ensure compliance with data protection requirements. Event publicity is through the creation and distribution of flyers and by placing advertisements in publications such as ***The Reel*** and ***Scottish Country Dancer*** (Day School only). Information on events is also made widely available through:

- Email-a-Programme;
- RSCDS SE Scottish Country Dance Diary
- Dance Diary (John Marshall)
- RSCDS Herts and Borders Branch (Ian Stewart)

5. RESOURCES & EQUIPMENT (SEE APPENDIX 5 FOR FULL INVENTORY)

As part of the financial forecasting and budgeting process, the Treasurer is required to oversee an annual stocktake of all of the club's resources and equipment. The Treasurer maintains a full listing the resources and materials including where they are held.

MUSIC

The club holds and maintains a large collection of Scottish Country Dance music CDs, all of which have been ripped to the club tablets. Additions to the collection are purchased on an ad hoc basis by the Music Administrator, but not necessarily a member of the committee. The Music Administrator is responsible for all of the club's equipment associated with playing music and MCing, namely:

- The tablets, with their associated cables and mouse
- The speaker, with its associated cables and microphones
- The headset microphone and its associated cables and batteries
- The old Portogram system stored in Potten End Village Hall loft space
- The club's collection of dance description books (see below)

The club does not depreciate capital equipment, so plans to replace items of equipment must be taken into account as part of the annual preparation of financial forecasts and budgets.

DANCE BOOKS

As well as the club's music, the Music Administrator is also responsible for the purchase and storage of dance books associated with the CDs purchased. Hard copy books are kept in the club cupboard at Potten End Village Hall. There is an index to these books, also in the cupboard, which should be updated by the Music Administrator when new books are acquired.

The club also has access to digital copies of many dance books courtesy of Martina Mueller-Franz. The Music Administrator maintains the digital copies of the books in the MCs section of the Sync account which overall is managed by the Website Administrator. In the medium to long term the club should aim to digitize all books currently in hard copy.

For each of the club's ticketed dances, a folder, for use by MCs, of the original descriptions of the dances on the programme, should be assembled.

FOR EVENTS

The club owns a laser printer that is used to print flyers, programmes, tickets and cribs, etc. A volunteer is required to take responsibility for the printer and printing, ideally this should be a member of the committee, but does not have to be.

The club holds a collection of armorial wall plaques for each of the club's Presidents, past and present, along with a free-standing plaque of the club's arms. These together with a number of tartan swags are used as wall decorations at the club's Highland Ball. The club's plaque is displayed on club nights and at any externally held club event.

Gifted to the club by some of the Bateson brothers, the club's swords are used at the Ball in conjunction with the club's plaque. They are also used at any Highland dance classes run by the club.

MERCHANDISE

The club continues to hold and sell a decreasing level of stock of anniversary dance books, CDs and mugs; the mugs are also used as gifts to Teachers and Musicians at our Day School.

Club Polo- and T-shirts are ordered on request, in batches with a designated club member taking responsibility for the process.

DEMONSTRATION TEAM SONG SHEETS & MUSIC

The Demonstration Team Coordinator holds the song sheets used when community singing is called for as part of a display.

6. DEVELOPMENT

FORWARD THINKING / STRATEGY

The committee should keep a ready eye on the future and regularly consider what might be done to promote Scottish Country and Highland Dancing, actively encourage new members and beginner dancers, and enhance the range of benefits offered to club members.

PROJECTS

Any development project proposed, must be set-out in writing and fully costed for the approval of the committee or, if needs be, the AGM. Once a project has been approved an appropriate budget for its implementation should be drawn up.

FINANCE

Following a proposal at the 2019 AGM calling for improvements to the management of the club's finances and in particular the level of reserves held, a small working party was established to consider what might be done. Consequently, the committee have adopted the following guidelines (which were updated at the 2024 AGM) based on the working party's recommendations.

1. POLICY GUIDELINES

- i. Year on year, the club's operating costs should not exceed its gross revenue, unless specifically planned for and agreed by the committee.
- ii. Membership subscriptions are set at an appropriate level to cover:
 - a. The hire of Potten End Village Hall for every Tuesday evening in the club's season;
 - b. The cost of refreshments for those evenings and such catering as is required for any special event evening (e.g. Burns' Night);
 - c. The subsidy for the annual Highland Ball;
 - d. Most of the costs associated with the annual *Members' Tea Dance* and any other special event for club members planned for and agreed in advance by the committee;
 - e. Any subsidies necessary to cover the costs associated with running the Beginners' and Monday Classes;
 - f. The costs associated with maintaining and updating the club's collection of recorded dance music and dance description books;
 - g. The annual costs of maintaining the club website;
 - h. The cost of the club's public liability insurance and any other necessary insurances for the club's equipment and materials;
 - i. Any additional sum necessary to maintain the required minimum level of reserves.
- iii. As required by the constitution, any changes to the membership subscription must be agreed by the members at the AGM.
- iv. The annual *Highland Ball* is not expected to cover its costs from ticket income but the committee is expected to minimise losses of this event.
- v. With the exception of the *Highland Ball*, each of the club's ticketed dance events and its *Day School* are priced to cover their costs, unless specifically agreed otherwise.
- vi. Any surplus generated by the *Charity Dance*, over and above the cost of a musician, is donated to the club's chosen charity for the year.
- vii. The club's Beginners' and Monday classes are priced with the intention that, year on year, they will break even. Variability of attendance, however, makes this difficult to predict. Any deficits produced are subsidised from members' subscriptions; any surpluses generated are added to reserves.
- viii. Merchandise sold through the club is priced to make a positive contribution to reserves.

- ix. From time to time the committee initiates 'one-off' development or special projects, the finance for which may be drawn from reserves. These should be carefully costed, budgeted and separately identified in the accounts.
- x. The club does not follow the accountancy practice of depreciating its physical assets year on year. Consequently, plans for the timely replacement of each asset need to be made, budgeted for and reviewed annually. In an emergency, replacement costs may be taken from the contingency reserve, set aside for just such a situation.
- xi. At the last committee meeting of the club's financial year, the Treasurer will present, for the committee's approval, a draft financial forecast and budget, together with an assessment of the level of reserves (see 2. Financial Reserves, below) required for the year ahead. These should form the basis of any proposed changes to membership subscriptions put forward at the AGM.

2. FINANCIAL RESERVES

The club maintains a substantial cash balance at the bank, commonly referred to as the 'Reserves'. The working party identified three (3) categories of necessary reserve needed by the club:

- i. A 'Critical Reserve' – to cover the club's largest uninsured risk, the Highland Ball
- ii. A 'Contingency Reserve' – to cover unexpected replacement of assets
- iii. 'Working Capital' – required to manage cash flow across the financial year

Any monies remaining over and above these reserves, the 'Surplus', may be considered and proposed by the committee to either defray membership subscriptions or be set aside for planned improvements to the benefit of members.

In any financial year the level of reserves should not fall below the sum of the three categories of reserve identified above. A guideline calculation of reserves can be seen in **Appendix 3**

3. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The Treasurer is responsible to the committee for the appropriate management of the club's financial affairs. This involves:

- i. The management of cash flow in the club through the receipt of payments from all sources and the timely payment of creditors;
- ii. Where required, ensuring appropriate cash floats are available for classes and other events;
- iii. Recording and monitoring all income and expenditure against identified forecasts and budgets (see **Appendix 4** for a discussion of forecasts and budgets);

- iv. The preparation of annual financial forecasts, budgets, accounts and report for the approval of the committee and the Annual General Meeting;
- v. Arranging an annual stock take and assessment of all the club's material assets, and maintaining a full list of the club's holdings and where they are kept;
- vi. Maintaining the club's public liability insurance and ensuring that such other insurances as are deemed necessary by the committee are in place
- vii. Effectively managing the club's bank accounts and arranging for the Treasurer, the President and the Vice-President to be cheque signatories
- viii. Arranging for the Annual Accounts to be audited prior to the AGM
- ix. Maintaining an archive of the club's financial affairs.

MEMBERSHIP

The following notes outline the processes that are required to manage membership of the club. The Membership Secretary is responsible for overseeing, organising and administering these processes, some of which may be implemented by other officers or committee members.

1. PROCESSING OF MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS & RENEWALS

All new members are asked to complete a membership form that complies with the requirements of GDPR (See Appendix 6 for current form). Details from the form are transferred to the membership database and a copy of the form is held electronically. Membership mailing lists are produced/updated and distributed to:

- The Secretary
- The Website Administrator
- The Newsletter Editor

From time to time, members may be called upon to update their forms. The form is available in hard copy from the Membership Secretary or can be downloaded from the website.

2. MANAGING SUBSCRIPTIONS AND MEMBERSHIP

The level of annual subscription is set at the AGM.

The constitution requires that membership renewal subscriptions be paid within seven days of the AGM. In practice a certain leeway is given to members, but those not renewing within two months of the AGM are required, by GDPR, to be removed from the membership list. Should such a situation occur, and the member subsequently wishes to reinstate their

membership, they will be required to re-submit an application form. The Membership Secretary will usually issue reminders to members who are tardy with their renewals.

Where new members join part of the way through the year the treasurer has the option to adjust the subscription to reflect the partial year. For instance, where a new member joins after Christmas a 50% reduction on the annual subscription is typically applied.

Members who decide, for whatever reason, to give up their membership are given the option of remaining on the circulation list for the club's Newsletter as a 'friend of the club'.

3. BENEFITS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Membership of the club brings with it the following benefits:

1. Free entry to all normal Tuesday evening club nights;
2. Free entry to 'special' Tuesday evenings: the Christmas Party, the Ceilidh, and Burns Night, but not the Charity Dance.
3. Free entry to Garden Dances through June and July
4. Access to the members' only section of the website
5. A regular Newsletter
6. Access to six pay-for dance events: Charity Dance, Day School, Nice 'n' Easy Dance, Highland Ball, Tea Dance and Spring Dance.
7. Weekly pay-for classes throughout the Season for intermediate, advanced and demonstration team dancers.

In return members are expected to adhere to the constitution, observe the manners and customs of Scottish Country Dancing, and renew their membership subscriptions promptly.

4. MEMBERSHIP CARD

The annual membership card is prepared largely before the AGM and finalized as quickly as possible after it. The electronic 'card' is prepared for by the Membership Secretary and contains information on:

- Annual subscriptions and visitor's fees
- The current committee and contacts
- Classes
- Social Dancing
- Garden Dances &
- Key dates in the club's calendar for the year ahead.

A facsimile of the card can be seen in Appendix 6

5. MEMBERSHIP RECORDS

Records kept on members are held in compliance with GDPR. As new members join, their details are added to the database and revised mailing lists are sent to the Club Secretary and the Newsletter Editor. A fuller list of contact details is sent to the website administrator, for posting in the members area of the website. Members may choose which contact details, other than their name, can be seen on the website.

On the first Tuesday of each month, the Membership Secretary produces name labels for all members to be worn during social dancing. In addition, some MCs request name labels be worn, and they are also produced for the first few weeks of each new term for beginners at the discretion of the Membership Secretary.

6. LIAISON

The Membership Secretary is one of the club's principal points of contact with the public, particularly on issues of learning to dance and joining the club.

She or he is also the members' representative on the committee and responsible for liaising between members and the committee. All committee members have the responsibility of acting as a conduit to the committee for ordinary club members.

7. AWARDS TO MEMBERS

The club has two honours which, at the discretion of the committee, may be conferred on members:

1. The Bateson Medal

The medal is awarded to members who, in the view of the committee, have made an outstanding contribution to the life of the club over a sustained period of time. The recipient will still be dancing in and contributing to the club at the time of the award. This is a singular award, rarely to be given.

2. Honorary Life Membership

Honorary Life Membership may be awarded to long serving members of the club who, in the view of the committee, have made a significant contribution to the life of the club over many years but who, for whatever reason, are no longer able to dance on a regular basis. There is no requirement for the recipient to have previously been awarded the Bateson Medal.

SECTION 2: ORGANISING ACTIVITIES

SOCIAL DANCING

1. CLUB NIGHTS

Held on Tuesdays, in Potten End Village Hall, from 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm, throughout the season, the principal aim of the club night is to provide a weekly opportunity for members to mix socially and enjoy a fun evening of dancing. The evening also provides opportunities to practice dances from the programmes of forthcoming events.

The season begins on the first Tuesday in September and runs through until the last Tuesday in May, with whatever breaks are required by the position in the calendar of the Christmas and Easter holidays.

There is a break during the evening, of approximately 15 minutes, during which water and squash are provided. During the break, the President makes whatever announcements are required.

Club nights are free for members, being covered by the membership subscription. The exception to this is the Club's ticketed Charity Dance, held, generally, on the second or third Tuesday in October.

For social dancing, non-members pay a door-fee, currently set at £4.00 per person (April 2020).

2. ORGANIZATION

VENUE

The committee member responsible for venue bookings is responsible for booking Potten End Village Hall for all club nights and special evenings and for any subsequent liaison required with the Hall Manager. For club nights, the Main Hall is booked from 8:00pm to 10:00pm but the club is allowed, as a regular user of the hall, a 15 minute set up and clear up time.

The Courtauld Room is booked for the Beginners' Class from 8:00pm to 10:00 pm (to be aligned with the main hall) with the actual class time being 8:00pm to 9:00pm but there is flexibility to continue teaching after the break.

Some 'special' Tuesday evening events require time extensions at the beginning and end of the evening and for the Courtauld Room to be booked for 'Bring & Share' suppers (see below for details).

The MC ensures that, during the evening, the club shield is on display.

DANCE PROGRAMME & MCs

Each social dancing evening is led by one of the Club's MCs. Before each season begins, the Club President organises a rota of MCs.

Each MC is responsible for generating their own programme for the evening, usually of 9 or 10 dances, and for creating an associated playlist of music on either the club's tablet or their own device. To create an appropriate programme, the MC should take into consideration:

- Dances that have been done in the preceding weeks;
- Dances on the programmes of forthcoming dance events and Balls;
- Dances of their own choosing that they think members will enjoy.

In structuring the programme, MCs should observe the following criteria:

- The first dance of the evening should be chosen to help dancers warm up. It should be relatively simple and, if possible, avoid slip step and Pas de Basque.
- The first dance after the break should be the dance taught in the beginners' class that evening;
- To encourage new dancers, the second half programme should be of easier dances than the first half.

Generally, all dances on the programme are walked through, but in delivering their programme, MCs should be aware that the club distinguishes between MCing and teaching. Whilst it is inevitable that during the course of a club night some instruction of formations may be necessary, MCs are not expected to teach technique.

On the evening, the MC should arrive early to set up the club's sound equipment.

The MC should provide copies of their programme for posting around the hall during the course of the evening and send an electronic copy to the website manager, for posting retrospectively in the website calendar. Most MCs will publish their programme on the Strathspey Server in advance of the event and the link is shared with the website team to publish on the website; however this is at the discretion of the MC.

Each MC is responsible for collecting the club's tablet from the previous week's MC.

To assist MCs, the website manager maintains an online, running listing of all dance programmes for the season (known as The Red Book) and a Practice Schedule for dances on the programmes of the club's major events.

REFRESHMENTS

A Committee Member sets up and maintains a rota of club members who take responsibility for setting-up and wheeling out the refreshments trolley and for washing up afterwards.

3. SPECIAL EVENINGS

Five Tuesday evenings throughout the season are regarded as 'special', these are:

- **The Christmas Party** – held on the Tuesday before Christmas Eve, with mince pies and mulled wine provided by the committee. An extended booking of 19:30 – 23:00 is made for the Hall;
- **The Christmas Ceilidh** – held on the most convenient weekday evening between Christmas and New Year. An extended booking of 19:30 – 23:00 is made for both the Hall and the Courtauld Room. The evening is a 'Bring & Share';
- **Burns' Night** – held on the nearest Tuesday to 25 January. An extended booking of 19:30 – 23:00 is made for the Hall. A Piper is booked, and a traditional meal of Haggis, Neaps and Tatties is provided, along with a dram of whisky. The Haggis is processed in to the pipes and 'addressed'. The Selkirk Grace is said before the meal is taken;
- **The AGM** – held on the Tuesday towards the end of April, to comply with the constitutional requirement of being held within six weeks of the club's financial year end on 31 March. There is a much-shortened programme of about five dances, three before the meeting and two afterwards.
- **The End of Season Party** – held on the last Tuesday in May. An extended booking of 19:30 – 23:00 is made for the Hall. Strawberries and Sangria are served at the interval. The programme for this evening should be aimed at the new and less experienced dancer.

NB: The Annual **Charity Dance** is 'ticketed' and held on the second or third Tuesday of October. Details of its organization can be found below.

GARDEN DANCES

The club's garden dances are for members, their families and invited guests. They are not open to the general dancing community. Whilst dates are entered in the club's website calendar, details of the venues are only made available in the members' area of the website.

1. ORGANIZATION, VENUES & DATES

The club's garden dances are held, on Saturday evenings in June and July, after the main dancing season has finished. They are hosted by volunteer club members with suitable gardens. The evening is from 7:15 for 7:30 pm, with dancing finishing around 9:00 pm when there is a 'Bring & Share' supper. The evenings usually come to a natural conclusion around 10:00 to 10:30 but may go on for longer at the discretion of the host. Members are asked to bring their own garden chairs. Where there is a likelihood of inclement weather, hosts may book an alternative venue, the cost of which will be reimbursed. Should an alternative venue not be available and there is rain, the President, the Coordinator and the host should discuss the viability of proceeding with only the Bring & Share supper indoors or whether the event should be cancelled. If it is to be cancelled, a notice to that effect should be placed on the website and, if possible, members informed of the cancellation through the Newsletter mailing list.

It is usual for one of the ordinary committee members to take on the role of **Garden Dance Coordinator**. Starting in late March, s/he identifies club members who are prepared to host a dance, allocates them to a mutually agreeable date, determines the amount of help and support they may need and allocates an MC for the evening.

2. MCS

At the same time as identifying garden dance hosts, the Garden Dance Coordinator prepares a rota of available MCs. Some hosts may request a particular MC.

As for a normal club night, the MC is responsible for compiling a programme of dances, bearing in mind their suitability for being danced on grass. A copy of the programme should be sent to the website manager for posting on the website after the event and for recording in the MCs' Red Book.

3. LOGISTICS

The Coordinator needs to organise any additional help that hosts may need.

The first MC of the garden dance season should collect the laptop, sound equipment and club shield from the hall. It is then passed from MC to MC as the season progresses. In June, there is the complication that Monday classes continue and that the laptop and sound equipment may also be needed there. It is the responsibility of the MC to check with the teacher if this is the case and to make any arrangements as necessary and appropriate.

TICKETED DANCES

1. ORGANIZATION

Members of the committee, led by the President, take on the responsibility for overseeing the organization and management of the club's ticketed dances. Among the activities and tasks involved, the following are key:

- Booking venues appropriately in advance of the event date;
- Booking bands appropriately in advance. This will be at least a year but, depending on the reputation of the band and the importance of the club's event, it may be necessary to book two or even three years in advance;
- In conjunction with the Treasurer, forecasting costs and establishing a budget for each event;
- Identifying an appropriate programmer for each event. *See note below on 'programming'*;
- Ensuring that a finalised programme is produced in good time for it be used to publicise the event and to be sent to the band for practice;
- Identifying an MC or MCs for each event. **NB:** *the MC may be, but is not necessarily, the programmer of the dance;*
- Ensuring the production of tickets and/or cribs;
- Ensuring that the event is appropriately catered for;
- Publicising ticketed events to the wider Scottish Country Dance community.

These activities may be delegated in whole or in part to other committee members. The detailed planning and organization of each event is controlled through the **Events Summary Chart** (See **Appendix 7** for example of the chart), which also forms the basis of discussions, in committee, on event organization. For particularly important events, such as significant anniversary Highland Balls, it may be appropriate to establish an organising sub-committee under the leadership of a designated committee member.

THE PROGRAMMING OF DANCES

Designing a balanced programme, at the right level of skill and intensity for the target audience, is one of the more difficult activities of Scottish Country Dancing, and the more important the planned event, the more it is critical that the individual chosen has the appropriate experience.

To ensure that the club has a bank of experienced programmers, novice programmers are encouraged to sit alongside current programmers, especially for the club's major events, before cutting their teeth on simpler ones. It is also helpful for novice programmers to have an experienced programmer to mentor and coach them.

All programmers should submit their programmes to two other experienced programmers for comment, before it is put to the committee for approval. It is usual for the programmer to make their programme available online via the SCDDDB.

2. EVENTS

CHARITY DANCE

The club's annual charity dance is held on the middle Tuesday of October in Potten End Village Hall. Dancing is between 8:00pm and 10:30pm and an extension to the normal hall booking is required. The dance is principally for club members and is a 'Bring & Share' evening.

A committee member is charged with acquiring six or so reasonably significant prizes, which are drawn using the sequential numbers on the ticket cribs. All monies raised through the sale of tickets, over and above paying for live music, and through voluntary donations on the night, is donated to the charity for the year, chosen from members' nominations at the preceding AGM. Depending on budget availability, one or two musicians may be used.

A programmer/MC is appointed at least six (6) months prior to the event, and a single accordionist is identified and booked 6-12 months ahead. The programme for the event should be aimed at the average social dancer in the club. There is no beginners' class on the evening of the Charity Dance.

THEMED DANCE

This dance is normally held annually, at the committee's discretion, on the Saturday in November immediately preceding the club's Sunday Day School. It is usually held in The Memorial Hall, Bovingdon, from 8:00pm to 10:30pm and is 'Bring & Share'. Circumstances may, from time to time, lead the committee to decide not to run it in a particular year (note this event was last run in 2019).

Music is provided by at least one of the Day School musicians playing with another musician of their choosing; Ian Robertson +1 or Ken Martlew + 1 have been the most used and they should be booked to play at same time as they are booked for the Day School.

As this event is externally publicised, the programme needs to be available at least 3 months beforehand. The programmer should be appointed 9-12 months ahead of the event and also be asked to MC. If s/he wishes it, a second MC may also be appointed.

On each occasion the committee decide on an appropriate theme for the dance, for example: Drewry dances; 'vintage' dances; dances from the Carnforth Collections of Derek

Haynes. The programme is aimed specifically, but not exclusively, at Advanced dancers, with an intention that most dances will be recapped, but not walked.

Attendance is by advance subscription, the names of those who have paid being placed on a checking-in list. Pocket cribs are made available on the door. Because of the size of the hall there is a limit of 60 dancers and the dance should be priced to reflect this.

NICE & EASY DANCE

Until 2019 this was known as the **Dance for the Less Experienced (LEx Dance)**, and it formed an integral part of the teaching of those new dancers who start in September. It is still the first formal dance they are likely to attend, but its links to the teaching process have been reduced and the dance's appeal has been broadened to encourage more experienced dancers to come along to a relaxed evening of simple, recapped dances. The programme continues to be created by the teacher taking the first of the season's '**Introduction to Scottish Country Dancing**' courses.

Normally held in Bovingdon Memorial Hall on the first Friday in December from 7:30 pm to 10:30 pm; it is 'Bring & Share'. Ken Martlew is traditionally asked to play for the event with one other musician of his choosing. The lead time for booking the venue and musicians is 12 months. Ticket prices are discussed and set, in committee, 9-12 months in advance.

HIGHLAND BALL

The club's Highland Ball is regarded by many as one of the few remaining 'grand' balls in the SCD Calendar and the club's intention is to keep it as such. The dress code is Highland Dress or Black Tie.

The event is held annually on the second Saturday of February in the Main Hall of Ashlyns School, Berkhamsted. There is a sparkling wine reception from 7:00pm. Dancing starts at 7:30 pm and the evening concludes at midnight. At the interval there is a sit-down meal in the Dining Hall, provided by an external caterer; the menu choices are decided in committee from a range of offerings provided by the caterer.

A big-name band is booked at least two years in advance, as is the venue. Whilst it is normal for a four-piece band to be booked, three- and five-piece bands have also been used. A programmer should be identified at least 9 months in advance and a programme of 22 dances needs to be finalised in sufficient time for it to be publicised in the autumn issue of *The Reel*.

There are normally two MCs for the Ball: The President and Vice-President of the club, or their deutes should either or both not wish to MC.

On the morning of the Ball (or the Friday evening as agreed with the school), a working party is assembled at the venue to clean and set-up both the Main Hall and the Dining Hall.

The set-up for the Main Hall involves the hanging of Tartan Swags and the placing of the Presidential plaques; the detail of what needs to be done is set out in Appendix 8.

In all other respects, the detailed organization of the Ball is as per the Events Summary Sheet (Appendix 7).

HIGHLAND BALL PRACTICE DAY

On the Saturday before the Ball, an all-day practice session is organized at Potten End Village Hall, from 11:00 to 17:00. Recorded music is used. The President (or someone designated by him) is responsible for drawing up a rota of five MCs for the day, for scheduling the dances and for producing the playlist on the club devices. The most difficult dances are scheduled for the first hour (11:00 – 12:00) and beginner dancers advised that they need not arrive before 12:00pm. Participants bring their own lunch. Otherwise, arrangements as per Event Summary.

TEA DANCE

First put on in 2016, it was originally intended primarily as an entertainment for those members who have reached a stage in their dancing where they can no longer participate on a regular basis, the honorary life members being a case in point. Over time this has become a relaxed social event for club members. The dance is subsidised by the membership fee and is for club members and invited guests only. All honorary life members receive a personal invitation from the club President.

Live music is usually provided by Ken Martlew and one other of his choice. Afternoon tea of is provided in an extended interval to give an opportunity for conversation.

It is held in Bovingdon Memorial Hall on an appropriate Sunday in March to avoid Mothering Sunday. A Programmer/MC is appointed at least 6 months in advance, and the programme is expected to be made up largely of dances known to and enjoyed by the longest serving members. It should also bear in mind the age group of many of the older participants. The dances are all walked.

Tickets are not produced; members are asked to sign up to attend. The programme is published on SCDDDB and cribs can be printed from their by those who want them.

SPRING DANCE

Our Spring Dance is held on the third Saturday in May from 7:30 to 11:00 pm and is a 'Bring & Share' event. A three-piece band is engaged 9-12 months in advance. Two MCs appointed at least 6-months beforehand, one of whom will be asked to produce the programme of 20 dances. The standard of dancing aimed at is that of the average social dancer in the club.

Having had difficulties with previous venues (Boxmoor Playhouse and Victoria Hall in Tring) , the Chiltern Hills Academy has become the regular venue for this event.

3. MATERIALS

SHIELDS

The club has had a long tradition of producing a wall plaque (shield) for each President on their election to office. There are now some 23 Presidential plaques plus 15 Armorial Crests of the Scottish Peerage that had been made earlier. The plaques and crests are stored in the roof void of Potten End Village Hall. The Presidential plaques are used once a year to decorate Ashlyns Hall for our Highland Ball; their disposition is described in Appendix 8.

Additionally, there is a club plaque and stand kept beside the club cupboard in Potten End Village Hall. This plaque is prominently displayed on every occasion the club dances, albeit a Tuesday evening or any one of our other events. There is also a small version of the club shield used specifically to mark the entrance to our garden dances. It is kept in the carrying bag for the club plaque, stored in the PEVH Cupboard.

SWORDS

The club has three Scottish broadswords, with scabbards. Two were presented to the club in April 2017 by one of the club's principal founders, Fergus Bateson, prior to his death later that year (it is assumed that one of these belonged to Simon Bateson). They are always put on display, together with the club plaque, at the club's Highland Ball. The third was presented by George Bateson prior to his death in December 2022. They are also used whenever the club runs a course for Highland Dancing. The swords are currently kept by the club's highland teacher, Joan Desborough.

SWAGS

The Club's tartan swags are used as backdrops to the displays of the club plaques at the Highland Ball. They are stored, with the plaques, in PEVH.

TABLECLOTHS

The club has many tartan tablecloths of varying sizes. They are used whenever there is a 'Bring & Share' event and specifically to cover all the tables at the Highland Ball. They are usually held by the Events Secretary but may on occasion be distributed amongst other committee members for washing and ironing.

CUPS AND PLATES

The committee member who takes responsibility for catering maintains a stock of disposable drinking cups and plates. There has been some investigation into how these might be recyclable, but suitable products have not yet been identified.

LUNCHEES AND WALKS

The original intention behind the lunches was to provide an opportunity for those who were no longer able to dance regularly to get together and stay in touch with the club. Whilst there was little take-up from amongst the target group, the lunches became popular with members generally and a suggestion to include an optional walk beforehand was taken up.

For some time, both the walks and the lunches have been led and organized by Past-President, Robert Baker-Glenn. They are held every 6 to 8 weeks with the walks starting around 11:00am and the lunches at 12:30pm. There is no specified end time.

The venues are Pubs in the villages surrounding Berkhamsted, Tring and Hemel Hempstead, where there is convenient access to country walks from the Pub car park. In late April or early May there is a walk to see the Bluebells of Ashridge, usually from The Greyhound in Aldbury. Generally, the optional walks are a pleasant ramble with conversation, rather than anything more strenuous.

There has not been an organiser for these walks or lunches since September 2021.

CLASSES

1. PURPOSE

The club is required by the constitution to “*encourage the practice of Highland and Scottish Country Dancing*”. The classes provided for all levels of dancer are an expression of this requirement. Their primary purpose is to teach ‘dancing’, as distinct from dances.

Over the last 15 years or so, the classes have played a major part in improving the general standard of dancing in the club and in building and sustaining a large vibrant community of dancers.

2. ORGANIZATION

The detailed planning of all classes is undertaken by the classes organiser, currently Joan Desborough including calling a teachers meeting when needed.

The teachers are free to deliver their lesson, at the required level, as they see fit and are asked to liaise with their musician in advance of the lesson or to provide their own recorded music when a musician has not been assigned. Following a class and to help with continuity between classes, the teacher is further asked to produce a brief report, detailing what was taught and any issues arising, and to post the report in the shared teachers' area of the club's Dropbox account.

In the past live music has been scheduled twice a month, ideally once for an intermediate class and once for an Advanced Class but recent financial constraints have not made that possible.

NEW DANCER CLASS (FROM SEPTEMBER 2020)

In each season, the club runs two '**Introduction to Scottish Country Dancing**' courses for up to 12 new dancers. The first course starts on the second Tuesday of September and the second on the first club night in January. Each course is taken by a different teacher.

The courses last for 10 weeks. The first two weeks are free, to give people an opportunity to find out whether they want to continue, thereafter participants are expected to pay for the remaining eight lessons up front. The fee is £50 and includes membership of the club until the following AGM. Participants may join in weeks 1, 2 or 3, but after that will be placed on the waiting list for the next course. Participants joining in week 3 do so on the understanding that they would be paying for the whole course.

From September 2024 a new structure allowing new dancers to join at any point is being tried with a third course in the Spring.

At the end of the course, participants may choose to either join the Monday Intermediate class and social dancing full-time, or to repeat the Introductory Course with a different teacher, at the reduced fee.

The ethos of the course is to teach dancing, as distinct from dances. To this end the connections to the Nice 'N' Easy Dance (LEx as was) and the Highland Ball, used for the previous system of beginners' classes, are considerably loosened, but the practice of the new dancers joining the Main Hall for the Refreshment Break and the second half of social dancing, in part or in whole, will continue.

MONDAY CLASSES

Classes for different levels of dancer are held each Monday throughout the season, in Potten End Village Hall, from 8:00 to 10:00pm.

On the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month the class is aimed at the intermediate dancer with the purpose of helping them become advanced dancers. The 2nd Monday is a practice session for the club's display team (referred to as the Dem. Pool Class); it is pitched at advanced dancer level and is open to any advanced dancer, with the proviso that all work done will be through the dances and medleys of the display team's repertoire. The 4th Monday is aimed at the advanced dancer and should there be a 5th Monday in the month a General Class, open to all, is held.

The Monday Classes continue throughout June, beyond the end of the Social Dancing Season. Here the first two Mondays follow the standard pattern, but the last two, or possibly three, classes are General ones.

ADDITIONAL TUESDAY CLASSES

The approach now taken with new dancers means that between the first and second introductory courses, and after the end of the second, there are a number of weeks available in which additional classes maybe run.

These classes are open to all club members. Starting after the first dance in the Main Hall, which would be used as a warm-up, the classes would focus on technique, specifically, difficult or unusual figures from forthcoming dances, or on Highland steps for SCD, or on particular Highland Dances. Club members have the opportunity to make requests regarding the content to be taught. Class sizes will be limited to 12 dancers

A small fee is charged for each class.

3. VENUE BOOKING

Tuesday bookings of the Courtauld Room for the Beginners and Highland Classes and the Main Hall for Monday Classes are made by the designated committee member at the same time as the Main Hall is booked for Tuesday evenings. The bookings incorporate the club's grant by the hall committee of 15-minute setting-up and taking-down times but may be varied at the discretion of the committee.

4. TEACHERS' ROTA

The class organiser is responsible for drawing up teaching rotas for both the Monday and the New Dancers' Classes. Under the current arrangements for New Dancers, teachers are assigned to blocks of lessons. For Monday Classes they are assigned to one or two Mondays

per month, depending on availability. The 2nd Monday Dem Pool Class, is taken by the same teacher throughout the season.

The teachers are remunerated by the club at the following rates: New Dancer Classes - £20 per lesson; Monday Classes - £30 per lesson.

5. MUSIC

Teachers are expected to provide their own recorded music for classes, with the exception of one intermediate and one advanced Monday class per month when a musician is provided by the club (should financial circumstances allow this). For recorded music, teachers who do not have an extensive collection of their own may be given access to the club's collection, at the discretion of the committee.

6. WORKSHOP

The Workshop, along with our Highland Ball, is one of our most prestigious events. Currently, it is held in the White Hill Centre, Chesham, on the third Sunday in November, between 9:30am and 5:30pm. There are classes in the morning and in the afternoon. Three levels of class are offered: Elementary; Intermediate; Advanced. The Workshop ends with a short social dance. The organization of the event is led by the designated committee member, with the aid of a small team drawn from the committee and ordinary club members.

Three teachers are engaged some 12 months in advance. Two cover the Advanced and Intermediate classes, swapping over so the groups get experience of both teachers. The third teaches the Elementary class giving some continuity valued by these dancers. All three teachers should be experienced and of repute and standing in the Scottish Country Dance community. Under the right circumstances the committee may judge it appropriate to appoint a teacher for the Elementary Class who is only just beginning to establish a reputation. All teachers are paid a fee of £100 plus travel expenses. One or more teachers may require overnight accommodation.

Likewise, three musicians are engaged and are also paid a fee of £100 plus travel expenses. In most instances, local musicians are used, particularly: Ken Martlew and Ian Robertson. The three musicians are asked to play as a band, with one of them taking the lead, for the social dance at the end of the day. The event lead from the committee ensures that a Programmer/MC is appointed for the Social Dance and liaises with the teachers for their choice of dance to be included in the programme.

The Workshop is priced to break even. Participants can sign-up for either the morning, the afternoon or the whole day. Previously this has been called a Day School but the committee has changed the name in the hope of changing the perception of the event.

OUTREACH OFFERINGS (DISPLAYS)

1. PURPOSE

The club maintains a Demonstration Team for the purposes of giving displays and, generally, promoting Scottish Country Dancing in the communities within the club's catchment area.

2. ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

One of the club's teachers takes sole responsibility for training the team and devising displays but may ask a deputy to lead a specific event in their absence. An administrator, responsible for taking bookings and coordinating the displays, is appointed from among the dancers of the team. The team is generally booked through enquiries made via a dedicated page on the club's website or through word of mouth.

The administrator is also responsible for looking after the team's collection of song sheets and music folders.

Recorded music is mainly used and, if the teacher does not take responsibility for it, a club member may be required to create combination tracks for dance medleys using appropriate software.

The team does not charge for any of its offerings but does ask for a donation to the charity currently being supported by the club.

3. REPERTOIRE

As well as the primary offering of formal and informal displays of Scottish country dances, the team is also able to provide:

- Ceilidh dances for weddings, fund raisers and other special occasions;
- Scottish entertainments of music, song and recitations;
- Talks on Scottish Country Dancing and its associated regalia;
- The 'Address to a Haggis' at Burns' Celebrations;
- Dance sessions for youth groups;

or any combination of the above.

4. TRAINING & REHEARSAL

The second Monday class in the month is reserved for Demonstration Team training and rehearsal. It is run as an advanced class, which is open to any club dancer wishing to dance at that level, whether they intend to dance with the team publicly or not. Recruitment to the team is mostly by self-election from those dancers that choose to attend the class.

For obvious reasons, teaching focuses on those dances and medleys currently in the team's repertoire or on dances being introduced to the repertoire.

SECTION 3: APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: THE CONSTITUTION *(as at 24 April 2018)*

1. The name of the Club shall be “Berkhamsted Strathspey & Reel Club”.
2. The objects of the Club shall be to practise and to encourage the practice of Highland and Scottish Country Dancing.
3. The Club shall be a members’ club and shall consist of ordinary members and junior members. A member shall be a junior member so long as that person shall remain a student. No person shall be deemed to be a member of the Club unless that person has paid their annual subscription.
4. The officers of the Club shall be:
 - President
 - Vice-President
 - Secretary
 - Membership Secretary
 - Treasurer
5. The Committee shall consist of the five officers and five other members. In addition, the President for the previous year will continue as a committee member for one more year.
6. The Officers and Members of the Committee shall be elected by the members of the Club at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The President and the Vice-President may each serve for two years, the Vice-President assuming the office of President after two years. The Treasurer and the two Secretaries may serve in that office for a term of not more than five years. The other committee members may each serve for a term of five years.
7. The Committee shall have the power to co-opt additional members as may be necessary, either to fulfil specific tasks, or to fill casual vacancies until the next AGM.
8. On completion of their term of office, an officer or committee member shall be ineligible for re-election for a period of one year, unless no nomination is received for that position and the individual is willing to serve for a further year.
9. The annual subscription for ordinary members and junior members shall be determined at the AGM.
10. The Committee shall be empowered to make such regulations as it thinks fit to ensure the good government and efficient management of the Club, provided that such regulations in no way vary, infringe or set aside in whole or in part, the provisions of this Constitution.

11. The Committee shall be empowered to delegate to the Officers or to sub-committees such powers as it shall think fit. Whilst the Committee retains overall responsibility for finance, operational responsibility lies solely with the Treasurer. In exceptional circumstances (usually related to the non-availability of the Treasurer) the Committee can use its powers to make alternative arrangements. The accounts of the club shall reviewed by an independent examiner appointed each year at the AGM.
12. The Committee shall be empowered to make such arrangements and to undertake on behalf of the Club such contracts, engagements or other liabilities as it shall think to be in the interests of the Club and to the furtherance of its objects. In all such matters the Committee shall be deemed to act as the agent of all members of the Club.
13. The Committee shall ensure the preparation of annual accounts of the Club made up to the year ended 31 March and their independent examination.
14. The Committee shall be collectively responsible to the members of the Club for the good government and efficient management of the Club and for any action taken by it or by Officers or other members of the Club or by sub-committees on its authority or under powers duly delegated by it.
15. The Officers and sub-committees shall be responsible only to the Committee for the prompt and efficient discharge of their duties and for actions taken on the authority of the Committee or under powers duly delegated by it.
16. The members of the Club shall indemnify the Committee and any Officer or other member of the Club whether acting on the authority of the Committee or under powers duly delegated by it or not, against any loss or liability whatsoever or howsoever caused, provided that the Club shall in no circumstances indemnify the Committee or any Officer or member of the Club against any loss or liability arising from his or their wilful misconduct or from activities not reasonably in the interest of the Club or to the furtherance of its objects.
17. There shall be an AGM convened within six (6) weeks of the financial year end on 31 March.
18. A quorum at the AGM shall be 25% of the members of the club at that time.
19. Matters which must be discussed at the AGM shall be:
 - a. The Secretary's report
 - b. The Treasurer's report, including the presentation of an independently reviewed balance sheet and income and expenditure account for the year ending 31 March.
 - c. The election of Officers and members of the Committee
 - d. The annual subscription.

20. Matters which may be discussed include:
- a. The alteration of this Constitution
 - b. Any other business
21. The election of Officers and members of the Committee at the AGM will be by secret ballot with each member having one vote for each vacant position. In the event of more than one ordinary committee vacancy, the nominees with the highest number of votes will be elected.
22. All other decisions taken at a General Meeting shall be by majority vote. In the event of a tie, the President will have a casting vote.
23. An Extraordinary General Meeting shall by order of the Committee or upon written notice given to the Secretary, signed by 12 members of the Club and specifying the matter or matters to be dealt with, be convened by the Committee within two months of such order or such notice.
24. A quorum at an Extraordinary General Meeting shall be 20% of the members at the time and two members of the Committee, one of whom shall be an Officer, or 30% of the members of the Club.
25. Twenty-one days' notice in writing shall be given to each member of the Club, as far as is reasonably practicable, of any General Meeting.
26. Seven days' notice of any motion to be discussed at any General Meeting (including the nomination of Officers and members of the Committee) proposed and seconded by members of the club, shall be given to the Secretary in writing, signed by the proposer and seconder. The Chairman of the meeting shall have absolute discretion to accept or reject motions of which proper notice has not been given.

APPENDIX 2: KEY ACTIVITIES BY COMMITTEE AND OTHER ROLES

The handbook is an attempt to describe all of the activities that need to be undertaken by the committee to ensure the good government and efficient management of the Club. In the main body of the handbook, the activities are described, largely, without attribution to any particular committee member; here key activities are ascribed to specific officers of club, and some to the general area of Ordinary Committee Members. These are not intended to be hard and fast role descriptions, but rather an identification of who takes initial or primary responsibility for ensuring appropriate action.

Also described below are sets of activities that may be undertaken, *ex officio*, by club members other than those currently on the committee. These activities do not presently have a time-served limit attached to them.

Please refer to the current 'Who does what' document to identify the individual covering the specific role or function.

1. COMMITTEE ROLES

PRESIDENT

- Generally, acts as the official face of the club
- Convenes and chairs committee and club meetings
- Convenes and chairs meetings of the Club's MCs
- Sets the MCs' rota
- Convenes and chairs meetings of the Club's teachers
- Sets the teachers' and musicians rota
- Commissions programmers and MCs for dance events
- Produces the annual membership card in conjunction with the Membership Secretary
- MCs half of the Highland Ball (or appoints a depute)

NB: When the committee vote on decisions, in the event of a tie the President has a casting vote.

VICE-PRESIDENT

- Deputises for and assist with all aspects of the President's role
- MCs half of the Highland Ball (or appoints a depute)
- Leads or undertakes special projects as required by the President and committee

NB: *The Vice-President is, essentially, President-in-waiting and as such their key activity is to become thoroughly familiar with all the issues and concerns of the club and to be the principle thread of continuity from one administration to the next.*

SECRETARY

- At the direction of the President, produces the agenda for committee meetings
- Produces all paperwork required for the AGM
- Writes a synopsis of the club's year (The Secretary's Report) for presentation at the AGM
- Records and produces the minutes of committee meetings and the Annual General Meeting
- Circulates minutes and such other papers as may be required for meetings
- Acts as the principal respondent for all queries from outside sources
- Liaises with the RSCDS on matters connected to the club's affiliation with that body
- Responsible for the upkeep and amendment, as necessary, of the Committee Handbook
- Responsible for liaising with the club Archivist to maintain a comprehensive record of all the club's activities

TREASURER

- Responsible for ensuring the effective financial management of the club as detailed in the body of the handbook under Finance, 3. Financial Management, items i. to ix.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

This role was added to the list of club officers at the 2018 AGM and, consequently, is the most clearly defined of the committee roles.

The main purposes of the role are:

- To manage the addition/renewal/withdrawal of club members.
- To create, maintain and administer membership records.
- To promote ways to increase club membership

Achieving these purposes involves:

- Collecting and recording annual subscriptions from members and issuing new membership cards.
- Forwarding all membership subscriptions to the treasurer.
- Providing reminders, where required, to members for overdue subs.
- Processing applications from new members in accordance with current regulations.
- Producing and maintaining a record of members' contact details and promptly identifying changes to others who require them (e.g. for newsletter distribution, website updates to members' contacts and sign-ons, etc.).
- Promoting and raising the number of memberships in the club.
- Dealing with any enquiries relating to membership.
- Reporting membership updates to committee including any issues raised by members that require discussion.
- Understanding and being able to explain rules and privileges of membership.
- Co-producing the membership card in conjunction with the President

ORDINARY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Some specific roles are assigned to committee members (such as venue bookings or publicity) but in addition activities occur, from time to time that are not assigned to any particular Officer, and these may be taken on by individuals in this group. Additionally, Officers requiring help and support may need to delegate particular tasks or activities to the ordinary committee members or to ask them be part of working parties or project groups.

Among the activities most likely to be taken on by ordinary members are:

- Booking of and liaison with venues and dance bands
- Arranging publicity for all the club's dance events
- Providing detailed organizational plans and checklists of event organization for discussion and approval in committee (See Appendix 7 for example)
- Organising and maintaining a rota of club members responsible for setting-up and wheeling out the Tuesday evening refreshments trolley and for washing up afterwards
- Organization of the summer garden dances
- Supporting the Events Secretary as needed
- Catering for club dance events
- Keeping records of past events for the club archive
- Organising the Charity Dance raffle, including obtaining suitable prizes

A list of 'who does what' is maintained by the President and shared with the committee.

2. EX OFFICIO ROLES

NOMINATED TRUSTEE – POTTEN END VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- Represents the club on the PEVH Hall Management Committee

NB: Whilst the club's nominated trustee should have at some point served on the club committee, their tenure as a trustee may continue after their service on the club committee has ended.

MUSIC ADMINISTRATOR

The Music Administrator has the primary responsibility for the club music and associated equipment. This involves:

- Maintaining the club's music collection and suggesting additions to it for approval by the committee.
- Transferring new recordings to the tablets
- Ensuring each MC is aware of new music that has been added
- Ensuring that the tablets are transferred between MCs when needed.
- Ensuring the sound equipment is available to MCs and Teachers
- maintaining the collection of dance books, actual ones in PEVH and digital ones on the MCs section of the club Dropbox site
- Updating the index to the dance book collection in PEVH

WEBSITE MANAGER

Has the primary responsibility for developing and maintaining the club's website, which involves:

- Keeping the website up to date with, for instance, software releases and security updates;
- Ensuring the website reflects the requirements of club members;
- Populating the calendar with internal and external events and providing linked pages where needed;
- Creating special notices for the Home Page, when necessary;
- Uploading photos and videos to Flickr and YouTube;
- Administering the club's Facebook Pages;

As some of the updates to the website are time critical, it is important that a Deputy Website Manager is appointed to cover for any time the Website Manager is unavailable.

Whilst it is not essential for the Website Manager or Deputy to be a serving member of the committee, it would be helpful if one of them were.

Additionally, the Website Manager is responsible for updating and maintaining the MCs' 'Red Book' and the Dance Event Practice Schedule.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Produces the club quarterly Newsletter in Mailchimp, with additional newsletters and notifications as required at the discretion of the editor and President, for circulation to all club members and to 'friends of the club' who have requested a copy.

DEMONSTRATION TEAM COORDINATOR

- Takes bookings for displays and other activities within the remit of the Demonstration Team;
- Checks availability of Demonstration Team members currently via 'Doodle';
- Holds the Song Sheets used for community singing and ensures they are taken to displays requiring them.

ARCHIVIST

- Maintains an historical record of all the club's activities
- Collects and stores papers from committee meetings and Annual General Meetings
- Collects and stores memorabilia such as dance programmes & tickets, photos, videos, newsletters, etc
- Digitizes past written records
- Creates presentations of the club's history for display on special occasions

APPENDIX 3: LEVELS OF FINANCIAL RESERVES

1. CRITICAL RESERVE

The Critical Reserve is required to cover the club's largest uninsured risk, which is assessed to be the sudden unavailability of the Highland Ball venue, necessitating the return of all monies received for tickets, plus full payment of both the catering and the band costs (£2800 in 2025).

Level assessed for 2025 - £2800

2. CONTINGENCY RESERVE

The Contingency Reserve is needed to cover the cost of replacing the unexpected loss of one or more items of club equipment or materials.

The following tables give the anticipated replacement cost of each of the club's assets, as at July 2024, and also indicates which are insured.

<i>INSURED ASSET</i>	<i>APPROXIMATE REPLACEMENT COST</i>		<i>UNINSURED ASSET</i>	<i>APPROXIMATE REPLACEMENT COST</i>
CDs	£1,350		Defibrillator	£1000
Swags and tablecloths	£3,100		Printer	£150
Portable PA	£200		Presidential Shields ¹	£1000
Tablets	£400			
Microphone	£100			
Total Insured:	£5,150		Total Uninsured:	£2,150

In any one year, it is not anticipated that more than half of the uninsurable items will be subject to sudden loss, therefore the Contingency Reserve is set at half the total replacement cost.

Contingency Reserve: £1,075

3. WORKING CAPITAL

In any particular year, set at half the Critical Reserve. **For 2025 - £1,400**

4. TOTAL REQUIRED RESERVE

Total for 2025 is £2,800 + £1,075 + £1,400 = **£5,275**

¹ Nominal sum allowed. Shields are considered irreplaceable, see Section 1: 5. Resources & Equipment

APPENDIX 4: FINANCIAL FORECASTS AND BUDGETS

The Financial Working Party, set up following the 2019 AGM, recommended that...

...the Treasurer provides, for agreement by the Committee,

- *at the last Committee meeting of each year, a budget for the coming year*
- *at subsequent Committee meetings, actual & forecast income & expenditure against budget.*

The Working Party further recommended that each 'event' and planned 'one-off project', in any one financial year, should have its own clearly identified budget.

As committee members may have little or no background in finance or accountancy, the following notes are intended as a clarification of the terms 'forecast' and 'budget'.

FINANCIAL FORECASTS

Forecasts set out to identify by how much it is anticipated that current expenditure will rise in the coming year. Increases may be the result of a number of factors: inflationary pressures; increasing numbers of people to be catered for; changes in the supply chain and so on.

Such forecasts can rarely be more than a best estimate, so it is advisable to build-in a contingency component, the size of which is largely conditioned by an organization's tolerance for risk.

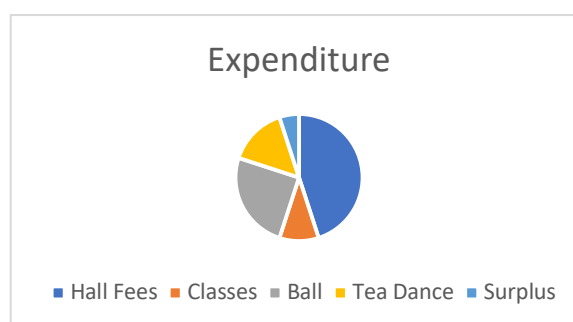
For the club, the annual forecast will play a major part in determining whether or not members' subscriptions need to be increased, but it is not the sole consideration – this is where budgets come into play.

BUDGETS

Budgets are concerned with how the club's revenues will be apportioned between the various activities planned for the year ahead.

In this very simplified example, it can be seen that if the plan is to make a contribution to increasing the reserves (the surplus), this constrains the proportion of income that can then be spent on the other activities. If, however, the plan is to break even the income that would have gone to the surplus can be allocated elsewhere.

Having made a decision on an allocation, this then becomes a cap on expenditure for that activity. By monitoring actual income and expenditure against forecasts and budgets, as



recommended by the Working Party, the committee can make better informed financial decisions, both as the year progresses and year-on-year.

The production of forecasts and budgets have to go hand-in-hand and it is the combination of the two that is used to determine any changes to subscriptions required for the year ahead.

APPENDIX 5: MEMBERSHIP FORM & CARD

Berkhamsted Strathspey & Reel Club Member's Details



The details that you give below will be held by the club for the duration of your membership.

Members of the club committee will have access to your full details for the duration of your membership. These will only be used for the purpose of contacting you with club newsletters, events details and other club information.

By ticking the appropriate boxes below you can choose how much information you wish us to display on the club website Members Page.

Your details will never be shared with a 3rd party.

When you have completed the form please return it to the Membership Secretary.

Surname:		Forenames:	
Name Known By:			
Address:			
		Post Code:	
Telephone:		Mobile:	
Email:			
<u>PLEASE TICK THIS BOX</u>			
I agree that the Berkhamsted Strathspey and Reel club may keep a record of my personal details (as shown above) for the duration of my membership <input type="checkbox"/>			
<u>PLEASE TICK THE APPROPRIATE BOXES BELOW</u>			
I agree that the following information may be displayed on the Members page of the Berkhamsted Strathspey and Reel Club website:			
My name : <input type="checkbox"/>			
My address: <input type="checkbox"/>			
My telephone number: <input type="checkbox"/>			
My email address: <input type="checkbox"/>			
I do not wish to have any of my details displayed on the club website <input type="checkbox"/>			
Signed:		Date:	

For Webmaster only

Members Page Created:			
Password:		Sent:	
User Created:			

CLASSES...

...for the following categories are held from September through to and including June, in Potten End Village Hall

New Dancers

Termly, Tuesday 8:15 to 9:30 pm
Terms commence September & February

Intermediate Dancing

1st, 3rd & 5th Mondays 8:00 to 10:00 pm

Demonstration / Advanced Dancing

2nd Monday 8:00 to 10:00 pm

Advanced Dancing

4th Monday 8:00 to 10:00 pm

Two classes are set aside in early Autumn focusing on the RSCDS's annual publication of new dances

Two **General Classes** are held toward the end of June

CLASS FEES

New Dancers: £4.00; Others: £5.00 per lesson.

Contact for new dancers:

RUTH BARRETT
01442 875 105
membership@berkhamstedreelclub.org

President:
MARJORIE BROWN
01494 758 601
andrewmarjorie@btinternet.com

Vice-President:
ANNE NEWTON
01923 857 230
Apnewton60@gmail.com

Secretary:
ANN DODD
01442 267 869
secretary@berkhamstedreelclub.org

Treasurer:
MIKE AYLWARD
01442 832 061
treasurer@berkhamstedreelclub.org

Events Secretary:
DAWN DORMAN
01727 853 908
events@berkhamstedreelclub.org

Membership Secretary:
RUTH BARRETT
01442 875 105
membership@berkhamstedreelclub.org

Committee Members:

ANNE BRADBURY
GERARD ELLIOTT (Past President)
LIZA ESSEHIGH
GRAHAM EYLES
IREEN GOULDING

Berkhamsted Strathspey & Reel Club

AFFILIATED TO THE
rscds



Scottish Dancing in Berkhamsted since 1952

Membership Card 2019-20

Name:

Annual Subscription: £32

Visitors' Fee per night: £4

www.berkhamstedreelclub.org

SOCIAL DANCING

Tuesdays, from September to the end of May
8:15 to 10:15 pm
Potten End Village Hall, HP4 2QG

Social dancing is led by a team of MCs each of whom takes responsibility for 4 or 5 evenings during the season. Dances are recapped and walked.

The current team is:

- Robert Baker-Glenn
- Andrew Brown
- Gerry Elliott
- Alan Goulding
- Ken Martlew
- Jeremy Newton
- Carole Stoker
- Stephen Webb

Full details of the social dancing programme can be found on the Club's website.

GARDEN DANCES

Informal dances are held in the gardens of members during June and July.

Saturdays: 7:15 for 7:30

Details of the dances can be found on the club's website. A printed schedule is available on request.

Please, inform the hosts of your intention to attend and bring refreshments to share.

It is also helpful to take a chair with you.

KEY DATES: 2019 – 2020

18 May 2019: SPRING DANCE
19:30-23:30 | Bring & Share
Venue: Boxmoor Playhouse, Hemel Hempstead
Band: *Craigievar*

28 May 2019: DANCE SEASON CLOSURES
MC: Gerry Elliott

June & July 2019: GARDEN DANCE SEASON

3 September 2019: NEW DANCE SEASON OPENS
MC: Andrew Brown

15 October 2019: CHARITY DANCE
In aid of 'Headway Hertfordshire'
20:00-22:30 | Bring & Share
Band: *Chris Oxtoby* | MC: Robert Baker-Glenn

16 November 2019: CARNFORTH COLLECTION DANCE
20:00-22:30 | Bovingdon Memorial Hall
Band: *Ian Robertson et al*

17 November 2019: DAY SCHOOL
09:30-17:00 | White Hill Centre, Chesham, HP5 1AG
Teachers: Atsuko Clement, Joan Desborough, Lizzy Conder
Musicians: *Ken Martlew, Ian Robertson, Callum Mitchell*

6 December 2019: LEX DANCE
19:45-22:45 | Bring & Share
Venue: Bovingdon Memorial Hall, HP3 0HJ
Band: *Ken Martlew et al*

17 December 2019: CHRISTMAS PARTY
MC: Gerry Elliott
Mulled Wine & Mince Pies

27 December 2019: CELIDH DANCE
MC: Stephen Webb | Bring & Share

21 January 2020: BURNS' NIGHT
MC: Alan Goulding | Piper: *Michael Ormiston*
Haggis, Neaps & Tatties | Address

1 February 2020: HIGHLAND BALL PRACTICE
11:00-17:00
Potten End Hall | Bring your own Lunch

8 February 2020: HIGHLAND BALL
19:30-00:00 | Dinner included
Venue: Ashlyns School, Berkhamsted, HP4 3AH
Band: *Ian Robertson's Edinburgh Dance Band*

22 March 2020: TEA DANCE
14:30-17:30 | Afternoon tea provided
Venue: Bovingdon Memorial Hall, HP3 0HJ
Band: *Ken Martlew et al*

21 April 2020: AGM | MC: Ken Martlew

16 May 2020: SPRING DANCE
19:30-23:30 | Bring & Share
Venue: TBA
Band: *Callum Mitchell's SCD Band*

26 May 2020: DANCE SEASON CLOSURES
MC: Jeremy Newton

APPENDIX 6: EVENT SUMMARY CHART (PLANNING & ORGANIZATION)

This is an excerpt from the full chart as an example of the chart's detail. Full copies of the updated chart are distributed by the Events Secretary for discussion at each committee meeting.

2020-04-27 BSRC EVENTS SUMMARY

BLACK = DONE
 RED = TO DO
 DISCUSS AT NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING

First Social Club Night 01/09/2020 20.15-22.15	PEVH; Book Main Hall 20.00 - 22.15 Dawn/Ireen	Prog; Marjorie/Andrew	MC; Marjorie/Andrew			Refreshments; squash		
Charity Dance 13/10/2020 20.00-22.30 £110	PEVH Main Hall & Courtauld Room with extension 19.30-23.00 (Ireen)	Prog; Tickets/cribs;	MC;	Music; Chris Oxtoby (solo) Provisional booking made £150. Send Programme; Ireen		Refreshments; Bring & Share - set out, uncover & clear up food. Plates, napkins, tablecloths, cling film bin bags etc (Ireen & Anne B)	Tickets/cribs produce & sales; Door Duty; Raffle Prizes;	Adverts; Newsletter, website (Marjorie) Email 'friends of BSRC' & local clubs; Ireen
NO Speciality Dance 19.30-22.30 14/11/2020	? Bovingdon Memorial Hall (?provisionally booked); Mike CANCEL							
Day School 15/11/2020 09.30-17.30 ££	White Hill Centre, Chesham, Provisionally booked(Dawn) Confirm ; Ireen 08.30-18.30, Estimated cost £548	Liaison teachers & Musicians; (Ireen) Social dance Prog; Applications; floor lists/class lists;	Teachers; (Ireen)	Music; (Ireen)	First Aid Kit, Defibrillator Shield & stand from PEVH;	Catering/ Refreshments; Tea/coffee/cups/sugar/milk/biscuits/spoons/napkins/tablecloths/cups & squash; Cake volunteer list; Guest Lunch – eg Costco Water jugs, cups & squash; Gift Mugs for teachers & musicians;	Door Duty; Directions/signs; Name Labels;	Adverts; RSCDS Scottish Country Dancer magazine (Dawn) Newsletter/website; (Marjorie/Andrew) Details needed in July for advert in Sept Reel Publicity at Summer School Email 'Friends' and clubs, email-a- programme and Dance Diary (Ireen) Flyers/Application forms; (Ireen/Mike)
Lev/Nice & Easy Dance 04/12/2020 19.30 – 22.30 £?	Bovingdon MH 18.30-23.00 ? Provisionally booked (Mike)	Prog; Send to musicians; Tickets/Cribs;	MC; Dem;	Music; Ken & Barbara £110 + £75 Send Prog;	First Aid Kit, Defibrillator Shield & stand	Refreshments; Bring & Share Squash, cups, plates, forks, napkins, tablecloths, cling film, bin bags, sharp knives Water jugs, Drinks for Musicians;	Door Duty;	Adverts; Newsletter, website Email 'friends of BSRC' & local clubs Flyers; (Ireen)
Christmas Party (Tues) 22/12/2020 20.00-22.30	PEVH Main Hall & Courtauld Room with extension 19.30 -23.00 (Ireen)	Prog;	MC;	Music; Recorded		Refreshments; ?Mulled wine & non-alcoholic punch; Insulated cups & napkins; 65 Mince Pies (All Committee bring 6-12) Wine/Christmas Gift for Gary Byren, email invite to evening		Adverts; Newsletter, website

APPENDIX 7: HIGHLAND BALL – DRESSING THE MAIN HALL

There is a short paper available, compiled by Stephen Webb and held by the Event Secretary, which shows how the club's Presidential Plaques and Tartan Swags are displayed in the Main Hall of Ashlyns School.

Among the key requirements are:

- the plaque of the current President is displayed on the backdrop of the stage,
- the Bateson plaque is always displayed and
- the plaques of all the Past Presidents, who are present at the Ball, should be on display

The paper shows how they are to be arranged.

A copy of the booklet is also held by the Archivist.