

ESSEX COUNTY REFEREES' ASSOCIATION

The Essex County Referees' Association (ECRA) is affiliated to the national body, the Referees Association (RA). For over 100 years our association has looked after the interests of referees within the county and helped in providing post-graduate training to cover the finer aspects of the laws of the game, giving assistance whenever needed.

The main aims of the association are to:

- (i) recruit new members.
- (ii) improve the status and standard of referees.
- (iii) protect members from injustice or unfair treatment.
- (iv) assist and take action, legal or otherwise (with the assistance of the RA where necessary), on behalf of any member who has been unfairly treated.
- (v) promote the interests of referees in general.

Both The FA and the Essex County FA strongly recommend that every referee should become a member of the RA. The first year is free, and the County RA will automatically enrol new referees!

In Essex there are five (5) Local RA's affiliated to the County RA, and they hold monthly meetings throughout the season. At these meetings, guest speakers are invited, in-service training is held to give members the opportunity to refresh and improve their knowledge of the laws, and opportunities are given for members to discuss any problems that they may have encountered during the course of their games.

If you are already a member of the RA then you will not need to be told of the advantages of belonging, and we look forward to you renewing your membership again this season. Even if you are unable to attend meetings on a regular basis, you will be on the mailing list of your local referees' society so that contact can be made to get any changes in the laws and their interpretation to you. Members can open doors for colleagues, providing opportunities non-members will never get.

Included in your annual subscription to your local RA is your affiliation to the national RA and the County RA. This will provide you with automatic cover under the RA Personal Accident Insurance Policy. This policy covers you whilst actually refereeing, travelling to and from matches, attending meetings, organised training and loss of refereeing equipment whilst at a game plus loss of personal clothing and effects. Full details of the benefits are shown on the RA website at membership@the-ra.org.

Members can also purchase a wide selection of referee kit and accessories at much lower prices than can be bought locally in sports shops. This kit is worn by referees at all levels of the game, from the Premier League to the local parks.

Most local RAs have an active social side. Assistance may also be given to members who are unable to work through an accident or illness, upon application to the Benevolent Fund. For the cost of one match fee, you can belong to the RA by contacting the Hon. Secretary of your local society or the Hon. Secretary of ECRA at the addresses in the next section.

ALL NEWLY QUALIFIED REFEREES, AND NEW MEMBERS JOINING THE RA FOR THE FIRST TIME, HAVE FREE MEMBERSHIP OF THE RA IN THEIR FIRST SEASON.

OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

President

BRIAN CHALLIS

Tel: (020) 8504 9088 Email: bchallis@brianchallis.co.uk

Vice Presidents

EM FAIRCHILD

Life Members

BM CHALLIS, FM SMITH, JR QUILTER

Chairman

ANDY FRENCH

Tel: 07841 538976 Email: andylfrench@btinternet.com

Hon. Secretary

JOE WRIGLEY

Tel: 07450 027148 Email: joewrigley21@gmail.com

Hon. Treasurer

AARON FARMER

Tel: 07523 994397 Email: aaron.farmer10@hotmail.co.uk

Membership Secretary

BRIAN CHALLIS (see above for details)

Benevolent Fund Secretary/Treasurer

JIM QUILTER

Tel: (01245) 258501 Email: rogquil.0205@outlook.com

Benevolent Fund Trustees

JR QUILTER, E OSBORNE, BM CHALLIS, FM SMITH, A BERRY

Digital & Social Media Officer

TBA

Hon. Auditors: General Fund

JIM HAYNES

Hon. Auditors Benevolent Fund

ALAN FRIEND and DOUGLAS HUTCHISON

Management Committee Society Representatives

TBA

Essex County FA Representative

ANDY FRENCH (see above for details)

REFEREE SOCIETIES

Basildon

Secretary: Martin Berry, 12 Mill Green, Basildon, SS13 3PA

Tel: 07828 119562, E-Mail: martinberry@blueyonder.co.uk

Meeting Venue: Basildon Sports & Social Club, Gardiners Lane South, Basildon, SS14 3AP
Dates: Third Thursday in each month at 7:30pm from August to May (second Thursday in December)

Colchester

Secretary: David Feline
Tel: 07967 750868 Email: davefel@hotmail.com
Meeting Venue: Stanway Rovers FC, The Hawthorns, New Farm Road, Colchester, CO3 0PG
Dates: Second Wednesday in each month.

Halstead & District

Secretary: Ashley Butler
Tel: 07786 191612 Email: ashley@afppro.com
Meeting venue: Halstead Town FC, Rosemary Lane, Halstead, CO9 3HR
Dates: Fourth Thursday in each month at 7:30pm.

Southend & District

Secretary: Paul Falvey
Tel: 07725 993 954 Email: paul@falvey.co.uk
Meeting Venue: Len Forge Centre, Eastwoodbury Lane, Southend-on-Sea, SS2 6UH
Dates: First Thursday in each month at 7:30pm except in August and January.

Thurrock

Secretary: Rhys Battye
Tel: 01375 375443 Email: rhys.battye25@hotmail.com
Meeting Venue: Lakeside Sports Ground, Arterial Road (A1306), Chafford Hundred, Grays, RM16 6DN
Dates: Third Monday in each month at 8:00pm from August to May.

Please Note: Any member wishing to attend any of the above Local RA meetings should firstly contact the secretary as dates and venues could be subject to change.

Essex Central

Referees who have no local Referees Society near to where live can become a member of The Referees Association and Essex County Referees Association by paying their fee directly to Essex Central. Contact the Administrator, Brian Challis, via E-Mail at bchallis@brianchallis.co.uk to request a membership form.

CONSTITUTION OF THE ESSEX COUNTY REFEREES ASSOCIATION

As approved at AGM January 2024

1. Title

The Association shall be called the Essex County Referees Association (ECRA).

2. Objectives

To represent the interests of members of any Local Referees Associations (LRAs) who are registered with their County Football Association (CFA) or involved in refereeing under its auspices or control.

To act as a channel of communication between member LRAs and the Essex County Football Association (ECFA).

To recruit and retain football referees as members.

To work with the National RA to promote the status of match officials at all levels.

To provide guidance, advice and support for members.

To support members and prevent them suffering from injustice and unfair treatment in matters related to refereeing.

To ensure that the assets of the Association are managed in accordance with Rule 14.

To ensure the provision of a Benevolent Fund to provide financial support for members and/or their dependants in need.

3. Membership

Membership of the ECRA shall be open to Members of all LRAs whose headquarters are within the territory of the ECFA. Members may also be admitted to LRAs from adjacent CFA areas, providing they are also members of their CRA and paid the necessary fees to both Associations. LRAs shall annually provide the ECRA with a copy of their current Constitution. All referees and ex-referees who have been or still are in membership of a Local RA shall be classed as Full members and shall pay the full RA and Essex RA fees plus the insurance premium depending upon their age.

4. Officers

The Officers of the ECRA shall be: President, Vice President(s), Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Secretary, Benevolent Fund Secretary/Treasurer, Membership Secretary and ECRA Representative on the Essex County FA.

All Officers must be Full members of The RA via their LRA or Life Members of The RA or CRA and will be elected to serve for 12 months from the Annual General Meeting (AGM). No one Officer may hold more than two (2) positions.

5. Election

All Officers (as defined in Rule 4) shall be elected annually with the exception of the ECRA Representative on the Essex County FA who shall serve for a period of four (4) years. Retiring Officers shall be eligible for re-election without nomination. All other nominations for Officers shall be submitted to the Secretary of the Association by a LRA on the appropriate form not later than 21 days prior to the AGM each year. The Nomination Form must include the signature of the proposing and seconding LRA and the nominees consent must also be incorporated. A Job Description shall be made available to all nominees.

6. Life Members and Vice Presidents

Life Members and Vice President(s) may be created in appreciation of exceptional services rendered to the Association. Nominations to be submitted in writing to the Secretary of the ECRA not later than 30th April. Subject to the approval/recommendation by the Management Committee these Nominations will be submitted for approval at the AGM.

7. County Committee

In accordance with the National RA rules, the County Committee shall consist of the Officers

of the Association and one (1) Delegate/Representative from each LRA, who shall be a Full member of The RA. A Delegate /Representative must attend all meetings or appoint a deputy to attend in their unavoidable absence or attend by virtual means.

8. Management Committee

In accordance with the National RA rules, the Management Committee shall consist of: President, Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Benevolent Fund Secretary/Treasurer, Membership Secretary and ECRA Representative on the Essex County FA plus one (1) Delegate elected by the LRA's plus a Youth member with a maximum age of 25 years; all must be Full members of The RA and members of the Committee of their LRA. The Committee shall have the power to co-opt.

9. Meetings

A County Committee/Delegates meeting shall be held in October, January and May of each year. An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) will be called as the Management Committee may decide for a specific purpose. An EGM shall also be convened upon the written request of at least two (2) LRAs to the Association Secretary. At least fourteen (14) days clear notice shall be given for an EGM.

An Emergency Meeting (EM) may also be convened at the discretion of the Chairperson and Secretary to which all Officers and Delegates will be invited by the most expeditious manner available. At least seven (7) days clear notice shall be given for an EM. Voting shall be in accordance with Rule 11.

All meetings will be held by virtual means whenever necessary.

10. Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held during the month of August in each year at which Officers and Verifiers shall be elected and when the Annual Reports and Statement of Accounts shall be presented. Members of LRAs shall be entitled to attend the AGM and speak thereat, but voting shall be in accordance with Rule 11. Not less than twenty-one (21) days' notice shall be given to LRAs of the meeting.

The meeting shall be held by virtual means whenever necessary.

11. Voting

Voting on all matters shall be by the show of hands. Each LRA shall have one (1) vote that will be counted at the meeting. LRAs not present can vote by proxy to be received by the Association Secretary three (3) days prior to the meeting in writing. The Officers of the Association shall also be afforded one (1) vote with the Chairperson having the casting vote if necessary. Voting on all matters shall be decided by a simple majority.

In the event of meetings held by virtual means, votes shall be sent by electronic communication to the Essex RA Secretary to arrive not less than seven (7) days prior to a meeting.

12. Finance

The Affiliation Fee (to be decided at the Annual General Meeting), shall be paid by each member of the LRA for the current season. The Affiliation Fee shall be due as from the 1st

June each year.

A Statement of Accounts shall be presented annually by the Association Treasurer and a Costings Review presented at each Management Committee/Delegates Meeting. Duly verified Accounts to be sent to each LRA twenty-one (21) days prior to the AGM. Any deficit at the end of the season shall be paid pro-rata by each LRA in accordance with their paid-up membership as at 29th September of the current season such payments to be made within 28 days. LRAs must maintain a register of its members.

A spreadsheet of LRA members as at 30th September in each year will be sent to each LRA Secretary and Treasurer for their information.

LRA Treasurers must advise the Membership Secretary of the number of fees remitted together with the names of members covered in the payment. Affiliation Fees must be submitted to the Essex RA within fourteen (14) days of them being paid by the member to their LRA. Local RA Members shall have the option to pay the Fee by Bank Transfer. Local RA Treasurers shall submit Essex RA fees by Bank Transfer only,

The Financial Year of the Association shall end as at 31st May each year.

13. Alteration to the Constitution

Any proposed alteration/addition to the Constitution shall be submitted in writing to the ECRA Secretary by not later than 31st May in each year. The Secretary will forward any such proposals to each LRA for consideration, and any amendments must reach him or her by not later than 30th June. Amended proposals will be sent to each LRA soon after this date and not less than 21 days before the AGM. Any proposed alterations/amendments must be seconded at the AGM in order to be considered.

14. Claimable Expenses

The travelling expenses incurred by the Essex RA Management Committee and Local RA Delegates in attending meetings arranged by the Essex CRA may be reimbursed by the Essex CRA at the rate of 25p per mile. Where public transport is used, the most economical fare should be purchased, supported by a receipt or ticket. Details to be submitted to the Treasurer of the Essex CRA on the Claim Form provided. The above expenses shall also be claimable by one member of the Management Committee when required to attend the National RA AGM/Conference or meeting of County RA Secretaries organised by the National RA.

The Essex CRA Secretary and Treasurer may claim re-imbusement of Postage and 30% of Telephone Calls plus VAT including Internet Broadband charges supported by receipts or Telephone Bill. Any other out of pocket expenses incurred by the Secretary and Treasurer for the purchase of stationery, printer cartridges shall be reimbursed supported by an itemised receipt. Any purchase of equipment for use by the Essex CRA Secretary and Treasurer over the amount of £150, must be firstly authorised by the Management Committee.

15. Banking

An Account in the name of the Essex Referees Association and the Essex Referees Association Benevolent Fund shall be opened at a convenient branch of a Bank as designated by the Management Committee. The drawings from the accounts shall bear the signatures of two (2) of any three (3) Officers elected at the AGM. An Investment Account shall also be opened and maintained as required.

16. Quorum

In accordance with the National RA rules, one third of the members of the County Committee shall form a quorum at the AGM and Delegates meeting. Four (4) members shall form a quorum at a Management Committee meeting.

17. Awards

Long & Meritorious Service Award. This Award may be awarded to those members of LRAs and the ECRA who have rendered meritorious service to the LRA and ECRA for a period of not less than fifteen (15) years, (not necessarily consecutive) as an elected Officer or Committee person. Applications must be made on the form provided and returned to the Secretary of the ECRA by not later than 1st March in each year for ratification by the Management Committee. Those members who are approved shall be the recipient of an engraved memento to be presented by an Officer of the ECRA.

Long Service Certificate. This Certificate shall be awarded to any person who has been a member of their LRA for a period of 10, 20, 30 and 40 years (not necessarily consecutive). Nominations shall be submitted on the Application Form provided and returned to the Secretary of the ECRA for the consideration of the Management Committee. Nominations will be accepted at any time of the year. Those members approved shall be the recipient of a Certificate to be presented by an Officer of the ECRA.

The Essex RA shall maintain a Data Base of dates when RA and Essex RA Long Service Awards are due to members and will notify the Local RA. If the nomination is not submitted by the Local RA of the member eligible, the Essex RA will proceed to submit the nomination.

18. Exclusion of Members

The ECRA may refuse admission to any person or exclude any member whose conduct makes it desirable that such person or members name should not be on the roll of members. The ECRA shall not exclude a person or member under this Rule unless:

- (a) The motion to exclude is made by the Management Committee without further disclosure of specific detail.
- (b) At least four (4) days' notice has been given to the members LRA of any proposal to exclude the person or member concerned and that he or she has received by Recorded Delivery a letter giving at least ten (10) days clear notice that such a motion for exclusion is on the agenda of a Management Committee meeting in order for he or she to present their case.
- (c) Should a member wish to present their case to a delegates meeting, only then will the information be released and that individual be advised accordingly.

An excluded member may not be re-admitted without the approval at the AGM.

19. Emergency Situations

The Management Committee shall have the authority to deal and make decisions on any matters not covered in the Constitution.

20. Appeals Against Decisions of this Association

Any member of a LRA dissatisfied with any decision of the County Committee, other than a

decision to amend, or not, the Constitution, may appeal against the decision in writing to the Board of The RA within four (4) weeks of the decision, in accordance with RA rules. A copy of any appeal lodged with The RA must be sent to the Secretary of the ECRA within seven (7) working days.

All parties shall be bound by the decision of the Appeal Panel appointed by the Board of The RA.

21. Dissolution of a Local Referees Association

(a) Should a LRA propose to dissolve, such a proposal must be placed on the agenda of its AGM or EGM.

(b) Upon the LRA members agreement to dissolve the LRA, any net assets of the LRA that are left after all debts have been paid shall be distributed as provided for in the Rules of the LRA.

(c) Details of how the assets have been distributed shall be made available to the Essex Referees Association.

(d) Should there be no provision in the Local RA rules for distribution of the net assets, they shall be transferred to the Essex Referees Association and held in trust for a maximum of five (5) years pending the reformation of the Local RA or creation of a new Local RA in the same area. The Essex RA Management Committee will have sole discretion in deciding that the above have been fulfilled and will return the funds held in trust to the new LRA. Upon the expiring of the five-year period with no Local RA having been formed, the Essex RA Management Committee at its absolute discretion use the assets of the former Local RA for the benefit of refereeing within the county.

22. FA Cup Final Tickets

Allocation of FA Cup Final tickets to members of Local RAs shall be determined as follows:

Each Local RA in membership of the Essex CRA will be invited to apply to the Essex CRA Secretary from 1st to 31st December in each year for two (2) tickets accompanied by payment of fee dictated by The FA which will be refunded if no tickets are allocated. Local RAs must not apply direct to the Essex County Football Association for tickets.

The Essex CRA Secretary will apply to the Essex County FA between 1st and 14th January in each year for the number of tickets requested. Should the full allocation of tickets not be received, each Local RA will be put into a draw to determine who shall receive two (2) tickets each. The Draw to be witnessed by an independent person and LRAs to be informed immediately after the Draw as to whether their application is successful.

Receipt of tickets by the LRA must be acknowledged within 5 days and names of the members purchasing the tickets must be retained and notified to the Essex CRA Secretary. The ticket or ticket stub must also be retained up to 12 months as checks could be made by The Football Association.

23. Register and Data Protection

(a) A Data Base of current members as and when they renew their membership or new members joining shall be maintained by the Essex RA Treasurer and Membership Secretary and shared with the Essex RA Chairperson and Secretary.

(b) Any other information provided by members about themselves shall be retained for the purpose of maintaining the membership of and support for the Essex Referees Association.

(c) The Essex Referees Association shall comply with the requirements of the General Data Regulations (GDPR) of May 2018, or any statutory re-enactment thereof. Data identifying any member shall not be disclosed except for purposes that the Management Committee has decided is necessary to maintain the membership of, or support for, the Essex Referees Association.

(d) A Data Sharing agreement between the Essex County Football Association and the Essex Referees Association is in place for the purpose to maintain the membership of, and support for the Association. Contact relating to Referees Under 18 years of age must initially be made with the parent or guardian.

January 2024