



THE FRIENDS OF CHESS

Membership Leaflet (2024)

Since 2018 Friends of Chess has continued to give grants to organisers and individuals, albeit at a lower level than previously due to our slowly diminishing membership. Traditionally we have held our AGM on the middle weekend of the British Championships. Although we continue to have many supporters, securing a quorum for this event has always been problematic and since the death of previous secretary John Philpott we have lacked a complete and up to date list of the contact details of our members.

In 2024 the committee has decided to change the way we operate in 2 major ways:

- Future AGMs will be held online using zoom.
- We have increased subscriptions in line with inflation as detailed later in this leaflet

Meanwhile:

- Would current supporters please contact the secretary (Mike Gunn) with your email address and level of support?

The Friends of Chess

“The Friends of Chess” was founded in 1969 with the express objective of restoring Britain to the leading place it had occupied amongst the world’s chess nations in the nineteenth century. The founding members were C H O’D Alexander, David Anderton, Sir Richard Clarke, Harry Golombek, Ralph Hopton and Sir Stuart Milner- Barry. A yearly subscription was instituted in order to provide funds to aid and initiate such chess enterprises as International tournaments, matches and team events and, perhaps most importantly of all, to assist British chess players to take part in suitable international tournaments where title norms were available.

Although affiliated to the English Chess Federation (“ECF”), the Friends represent an organisation that operates and makes decisions independently of ECF. The management of the Friends’ business is carried out by the Committee, comprising the Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary, and between two and five other members. The Committee is elected at the Annual General Meeting which is now held on zoom. Committee members are elected for a one year term, save for the Chairman who is elected for a four year term.

What do the Friends do?

The Friends make financial support available in the chess world in ways which are perceived as making a difference. Given the wide-ranging objects (which are expressed as “to advance, encourage, support, sponsor and promote the playing of chess and all activities and interests concerned with chess” and which contain no geographical limitations) there is no limit on the type of chess-related activity that can be supported. However, the majority of grants awarded in recent years have fallen into one of the following four categories.

Support for individuals seeking titles

This is central to the Friends. A significant proportion of the leading English players who have achieved Grandmaster and International Master status have received financial support from the Friends during the early stage of their chess careers, and the need for such support remains for new generations, particularly in relation to players who have ceased, on attaining the age of 21, to be eligible for support from the John Robinson Trust. Players supported in the past include Keith Arkell, Danny Gormally, Sheila Jackson, Mark Hebden, Glen Flear, Alan Tate, Jovanka Houska, Andrew Greet, Simon Williams, Lawrence Trent, Lorin D’Costa and David Eggleston.

Support for events offering norm or rating opportunities

Assistance to congresses is also a core part of the Friends’ activities, with particular emphasis being placed on new events which are seeking to establish themselves. Events supported recently include Northumbria Masters, Wood Green International, various 4NCL events, Vera Menchik Memorial, Hammersmith Masters, Southend Masters and Muswell Hill International.

Support for teams

This has tended to be concentrated on teams participating in the European Club Cup, which can prove to be a costly venture for clubs. Teams supported in the past include Barbican 4NCL, Hilsmark Kingfisher, Slough Sharks and White Rose.

Support for players with disabilities

Awards have been made to the Braille Chess Association and the London Deaf Chess Association to assist blind and deaf players to participate in individual and team international events.

How are grants funded?

The core income that the Committee is able to allocate is derived from the annual subscriptions paid by members. However, the total grants it has been possible to make in recent years have been significantly boosted by the receipt of one off donations and legacies, in particular from the late Harry Golombek and the late Mike O'Hara. The former bequest has been taken to a separate "Golombek fund" which is used, in accordance with Harry's expressed preferences, to support tournaments in England.

These legacies have enabled expenditure levels to be maintained despite a generally declining membership base, but will eventually be exhausted. The Committee believes that the long term future of the Friends is dependent upon the membership base being expanded. This leaflet is one of a number of initiatives aiming to achieve this.

Joining the Friends

There are three categories of membership:

Friend (minimum subscription £25)

Patron (minimum subscription £60)

Sponsor (minimum subscription £150)

All members are entitled to receive notice of, attend and vote at general meetings and stand for election to the Committee. At a general meeting Patrons and Sponsors have enhanced voting rights on a poll, and Sponsors are identified by name in the AGM reports. Otherwise the higher categories of membership confer no additional benefits beyond the satisfaction of having made a more substantial contribution towards the Friends objectives!

Membership applications using the form overleaf should be submitted to the Secretary, who can himself enrol Friends and Patrons (Sponsors have to be approved by the Committee) together with either a cheque in favour of "Friends of Chess" or the banker's order form.

Data Protection

A register of current members is maintained by the secretary. This contains the member's name, class of membership and contact details (e.g. email address). This list is only available to committee members and is only used for the purpose of contacting members with news and notice of meetings.

How to contact the Friends

Membership applications, requests for support and all other enquiries should be directed to the Secretary:

Mike Gunn
41 Stoke Fields
Guildford
Surrey GU14LT
Email: mikewxyz@gmail.com
Telephone: 01483 571553
Mobile: 07739 518392

THE FRIENDS OF CHESS

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I wish to join the Friends of Chess in the following membership category (please tick one of the following boxes):

- SPONSOR (minimum subscription £150)
 PATRON (minimum subscription £60)
 FRIEND (minimum subscription £25)

I enclose a remittance for £...../I have completed the banker's order form (delete one of these alternatives)

Name

Address

.....Email address

Signed Date

BANKER'S ORDER

If you wish to pay your subscription by banker's order, please complete and sign the form below and return it to the Secretary with the above membership application (i.e do **not** send it directly to your bank). Subscriptions are paid annually.

To: *(insert name and address of bank)*

.....

Please transfer from my account with you, number

the sum of £

(insert the amount in words and figures) to FRIENDS OF CHESS, Account No. 71070487 at HSBC Bank PLC, 65 Packhorse Road, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire SL9 8PH (Branch Code 40 22 05), the first such payment to be made when you receive this Order and annually thereafter until further notice.

Name

Address

.....Postcode

SignatureDate