



**Basingstoke
Sikh Sabha**

SANGAT & MEMBERSHIP POLICY

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Draft A - H	25/02/26 to 2/4/26	Collated and refined by Committee	Kuldip Sangha, Trustee
Version 1	05/04/26	Voted as V1 by the Committee	Kuldip Sangha, Trustee

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a fair, transparent, and democratic framework for the Basingstoke Sikh Sabha (BSS). As we transition from a startup organisation to a permanent charitable institution, this policy ensures that:

- Ownership is shared: The Gurdwara belongs to the Sangat, and this policy defines how that ownership is exercised through voting and engagement.
- Governance is clear: It sets out the specific rights, responsibilities, and eligibility criteria for different types of membership.
- Integrity is maintained: It protects the values of BSS by defining the Code of Conduct and processes for conflict resolution.

This policy applies to all individuals within the community interacting with BSS, specifically:

- The Sangat: Anyone attending programs or events.
- Members: Individuals engaging in the formal voting and democratic process.
- The Leadership: The Trustees and office bearers in their administration of their duties.

This policy applies to all activities conducted under the name of Basingstoke Sikh Sabha (BSS) or Sri Guru Singh Sabha Basingstoke (SGSSB) within the area designated in this policy. It overrides any previous informal membership arrangements.

Key Definitions

- "BSS" means Basingstoke Sikh Sabha
- "Sabha" means assembly or gathering
- "Gurdwara" means the place of worship (can be temporary or permanent location)
- "SGSSB" means Sri Guru Singh Sabha Basingstoke once a principal place of worship has been acquired or secured
- AGM means Annual General Meeting
- SGM means Special General Meeting

1.1 Sangat

- a) Any member of the public who is a Sikh or respects Sikh values can join programmes and events as a member of the Sangat
- b) Must accept the authority of Sri Guru Granth Sahib
- c) Can request BSS / SGSSB membership in accordance with the appropriate categories detailed in 1.3
- d) Can opt to receive regular updates and official communications from the organisation.

1.2 Eligibility

Members must:

- a) Be aged 16 or over
- b) Be a Sikh or respect Sikh values
- c) Accept the authority of Sri Guru Granth Sahib
- d) To ensure your primary commitment is to this community, you cannot be a voting member of another Gurdwara within 40 miles of Basingstoke.
- e) Declare any unspent criminal convictions; Declarations of unspent convictions will be reviewed confidentially by the Committee & Trustees strictly for safeguarding purposes. An unspent conviction does not automatically bar an individual from standard membership or attending the Sangat, unless the Trustees determine it poses a direct safeguarding risk to the BSS community or falls under statutory Charity Commission disqualification rules.

- f) Reside or must have resided for a minimum of three years within the area defined in Appendix A4 i.e. within 12 miles of postcode RG23 7LR (Junction 7 of the M3)
- g) Membership does not confer any advantage or has any bearing on who can attend BSS programmes as a member of the Sangat

1.3 Membership Categories:

1.3.1 All types and lengths of Membership:

- a) The full years fee is payable even when you start membership part way through the year
- b) Renewal on the 1st of April every year
- c) After 180 days you will get full or partial voting rights for elections (dependent on type of membership) for new members
- d) Immediate voting rights for existing members that have renewed their membership as long as there has been no interruption in membership
- e) Non-transferable status - Means the member cannot pass on their membership to anyone else

1.3.2 Individual Membership:

- a) Aged over 18 years
- b) Full membership rights as defined in 1.5 after 180 days
- c) Renewal on the 1st of April every year
- d) Eligible for committee and Trustee positions
- e) Non-transferable status

1.3.3 Annual Youth Membership:

- a) Aged between 16-18
- b) Renewal on the 1st of April every year
- c) You have a voice, but no vote. You can speak at meetings, but you cannot cast a ballot.
- d) Unable to stand as a member of the Management Committee or Trustee
- e) Non-transferable status.

1.3.4 Annual Associate Membership will be open to non-Sikhs who wish to join BSS and are interested in the Sikh religion

- a) Renewal on the 1st of April every year
- b) Partial voting rights as defined in 1.7
- c) Unable to stand as a member of the Management Committee or Trustee
- d) Non-transferable status.

1.3.5 Organisation Membership will be treated as Associate Members

- a) Renewal on the 1st of April every year
- b) Partial voting rights as defined in 1.7
- c) Unable to stand as a member of the Management Committee or Trustee
- d) Each member organisation shall appoint one individual to represent it and to vote on its behalf at meetings of BSS provided that this was notified to the BSS Secretary, in writing, 48 hours before the meeting.

1.3.6 The membership fees to BSS or SGSSB are shown in Appendix 1C, fees shall be determined each year by the Management Committee and approved by the members at the AGM before these can be implemented.

1.4 Registration Process

- a) Complete membership form (Appendix 1A & 1B contains essential information)

- b) Provide proof of identity plus evidence of history of residence in the area if requested
- c) Pay prescribed membership fee
- d) Automatic approval unless a case is presented to the Committee & Trustee with a majority decision taken to decline membership.

1.5 Full Membership Rights

Members are entitled to:

- a) Take part in Annual General Meetings or Special General Meetings and vote in elections
- b) Stand for election to Management Committee or Trustee positions
- c) Receive regular updates and official communications from BSS
- e) During Annual General Meetings inspect the organisations administration and financial records and request clarifications
- f) Put forward ideas, support suggestions from others, and nominate candidates for elections.
- g) Access BSS facilities and participate in Sangat activities, events, and services offered by BSS subject to safeguarding and operational policies
- h) Receive a copy of the constitution in English or Punjabi (as requested)

1.6 Voting Rights

1.6.1 What it means:

- a) Individual Members get 1 vote when present.
- b) You cannot vote by proxy or on behalf of another member.
- c) Youth / Student Members: You have a voice, but no vote. You can speak at meetings, but you cannot cast a ballot.

1.6.2. As a Voting Member, you are a "shareholder" of the charity. You take part in the big decisions:

- a) Who leads: Electing the Trustees and Management Committee.
- b) The Major Rules: Approving changes to the Constitution or this Membership Policy.
- c) The Money: Approving the annual accounts and any major spending that changes the Gurdwara's future (e.g., buying land or taking a loan).
- d) The Strategy: Adopting the 10-Year Strategy & Plan.

1.6.3. To use the vote, your membership must be Active. This means:

- a) Your membership fees are fully paid up 30 days before the AGM or SGM.
- b) You have been a registered member for at least 180 days.
- c) You are not currently suspended for breaching the Code of Conduct.

1.6.4. No "Proxy" Voting: If you cannot attend the meeting in person, you cannot vote. You cannot ask anyone else to vote for you. This ensures that decisions are made by those who show up and listen to the debate.

1.7 Partial Membership Rights

May be extended to Associate Members, including non-Sikh individuals and representatives of other organisations, to foster community collaboration and inclusivity. Members with Partial Membership Rights shall be entitled to

- a) Attend and observe General Meetings, including AGMs and Special General Meetings, but without voting rights
- b) Access and participate in community service projects, educational events, and cultural programs organised by BSS

- c) Provide input and feedback during discussions, subject to the Chair's discretion, but not move or second motions/resolutions
- d) Participate in specific committees or working groups, if invited, but cannot hold executive positions or roles within the Committee or as a Trustee
- e) Serve as honorary ambassadors or liaisons between BSS and other community organisations to promote collaboration and goodwill.

1.8 Suspending Membership

A suspension of membership will be considered for any cases of serious misconduct, examples are as follows, but not limited to:

- a) Breach of core values as defined in The Code of Conduct Section 2
- b) Bringing BSS into disrepute as defined in The Code of Conduct Section 2
- c) Behaviour in private or public that is likely to result in a criminal conviction
- d) Behaviour proves detrimental to the interests or progress of BSS
- e) Non-payment of fees

Should any serious misconduct occur, then any two Trustees may with immediate effect, temporarily suspend a member to protect the charity.

This temporary suspension shall be formally reviewed within 28 days by the Management Committee and Trustees as set out in section 1.9, where a final decision will be undertaken.

1.9 In cases of suspension or termination

The Management Committee and Trustees will have the power to revoke membership of any person(s), this will require a majority vote of the Management Committee and Trustees.

1.9.1 The individual, youth, or member organisation for which the membership is suspended will have all member rights withdrawn until a decision is made by the Management Committee and Trustees,.

1.9.2 The individual, youth, or member organisation for which the membership is due to be terminated shall be given 14 days' notice and have the right to be heard by the Trustees and Management Committee, accompanied by one other person, before a final decision is made.

1.9.3 A summary of the decisions and reasons will be sent to the individual concerned within 48 hours and communicated to BSS Members within 7 days, only if the committee considers this is appropriate.

1.9.4 Initial suspension period for a member is 28 days, in which period the review and appeal must take place in accordance with 1.9.2.

1.9.5 Suspensions may be extended beyond the initial 28-day period if an ongoing formal investigation; whether internal, regulatory, or involving law enforcement, requires additional time to reach a fair and fully evidenced conclusion

1.10 Termination of Membership

Membership will be terminated in case of:

- a) Written resignation
- b) Non-payment of fees
- c) Death

d) Written notice by the Management Committee or Trustees.

1.10.1 In case of termination, the Management Committee will decide if any refund of the membership fee is justified.

APPENDIX A: MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION & FEES RESPONSIBILITY OF SECRETARY

1A. New Member Application Form Information:

1. Personal Information:
 - Full legal name, Date of birth, Current address, Contact details (phone/email)
 - Length of residence within Basingstoke area with historical addresses (if relevant)
 - Skills of interest to BSS e.g. cooking, finance, childcare, fundraising etc

2. Religious Information:
 - Amritdhari status, Religious / Preferred Language with qualifications (if any)
 - Details of any other Gurdwara affiliation (past or current)

3. Type of membership / fees requested

4. Declaration Section:
 - Acceptance of constitution
 - Code of conduct agreement
 - Data protection consent
 - Subscribe to news & contact via email and WhatsApp (Tick box for each)
 - Criminal record declaration (tick box)
 - GDPR compliant statement (tick box)

1B. Membership Renewal Form Information:

- Membership number, Update of contact details
- Type of membership / fees requested

Declaration Section:

- Acceptance of constitution
- Code of conduct agreement
- Data protection consent
- Criminal record declaration (tick box)
- GDPR compliant statement (tick box)

1C. Membership Fees

Type of membership	Fee
Annual Individual membership	£21
Annual Youth Membership	£11
Annual Associate Membership	£11
Organisation Membership	£11

1D. 12 mile circle radius from Junction 7 of the M3 (postcode RG23 7LR)

