

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF ROUND
TABLES OF GREAT BRITAIN AND
IRELAND**



**GUIDE TO TABLE EXTENSION, RE-
GENERATION, MERGER AND CLOSURE**

1) OVERVIEW

This short guide offers assistance to Tables and Areas in handling changes to their status in terms of forming a new Table, the “re-birth” of two or more Tables who are joining together to form a new one, the restarting of one that has closed in the past, the merger between two Tables and the closure of a Table.

The Guide explains the following Scenarios:

- i) Re-birth of say two or more existing Tables who join together to form a new Table - out of the ashes of the old ones. (“Phoenix”)
- ii) Resurrection of a Closed Table – back from the dead! (“Lazarus”)
- iii) Merger
- iv) Closure

The Guide offers a step by step explanation on how to deal with the various changes and gives example forms for use.

It is not intended to replace the advice and assistance that can be offered by both the National Honorary Secretary and Marchesi House but does deal with many of the more basic issues.

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Area 7 National Councillor
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2) NEW TABLE EXTENSION

This is the process of forming a New Table where there has not been one before. This has to be a detailed process, which goes through a number of steps, to ensure the new Table has sufficient members to be sustained.

The procedure to be adopted is as follows:

- a) Once a Table decides it wishes to extend and assist with the formation of a new Table then it is recommended early contact is made with the Area Secretary to advise him of the intention and request an initial meeting with the Area Chairman / Area Secretary.
- b) The initial meeting will be held with the Area Executive Officer who will determine if this is an extension that can logistically proceed.
- c) The Area Secretary will then give formal notice to the National Membership Officer of an intention to proceed with the Extension.
- d) The proposed new Table may now hold further meetings in it's own right with the Area Executive Representatives to ensure that it has the necessary platform for a successful Table. Issues to be considered will be it's membership, identified future members, a proposed timetable for the Inaugural meeting, Charter Meeting etc. in accordance with the National rules.
- e) The Table and Area Secretary shall arrange completion of the new Table Extension form and for formal approval of the Application by the Area at the next Area Council Meeting.
- f) Following Approval by the Area the Table shall send the completed and signed Extension form to the General Secretary at Marchesi House.
- g) The Table shall have appointed an Acting Secretary who shall deal with all initial correspondence. The Acting Secretary shall make arrangements to ensure all meetings are minuted and a record of attendance is kept.
- h) The National Membership Officer and/or the National Secretary shall put the application for Extension forward to the National Executive and National Council.
- i) Upon the approval of National Council the National Membership Officer shall notify approval to the Acting Table Secretary, and confirm the Table name and number allocated.
- j) The Table Secretary shall furnish headquarters with minutes of the Inaugural meeting and a full list of Officers and their details.
- k) The Table shall adopt, by resolution, the National Rules and Standing Orders (Specimen Standing Orders are available from Marchesi House). Copies shall be furnished to the Area Secretary including a copy of the resolutions and Rules for approval.
- l) After at least six months and not less than twelve meetings the Table may make an application for a Charter of Affiliation to the National Association. The Table shall arrange a proposed date for the presentation of the Charter and that date shall be approved by the Area Council.
- m) The Application for Charter will be submitted by the Area Secretary to National and must be accompanied by the Tables Attendance record to show it has held the requisite number of meetings over the time period and has the number of members as specified in National rules.

- n) The Table will need to order its Regalia once the Application for a Charter has been granted and proceed with its Charter Night.
- o) The Table will then be formally Chartered and will have completed its formation.

3) RE-BIRTH OF A TABLE – “PHOENIX”

The Phoenix Tables, where two or more are joining together to create a new Table with a new Charter and Table number, find themselves in broadly the same situation as a new Table with a few important differences regarding the timescales for meetings etc. Because it is being formed with members from existing Tables who are closing down and creating a new Table the timescales for attendance and the number of meetings can be relaxed. Accordingly the procedure for New Tables above must be followed with the exception of a few important deviations:

- a) At the stage of the decision to resurrect the Table an initial meeting should be held to consider the viability of the proposal. Questions such as; Can the membership be maintained? What was the reason for the original decline? How can you ensure it does not re-occur? need to be considered
- b) Assuming the Tablers have made a positive decision to then the steps identified above must be followed.
- c) It must be decided whether a new Table number or retention of an old number is required. This must be requested from the National Honorary Secretary on the Phoenix form.
- d) If the Application is granted the Table needs to decide about the Charter date – will it be the date of the old Table Charter or a new Charter date? The Table will have to locate the old Regalia and utilise this or order new Regalia from Marchesi House.
- e) There are still timescales that apply before the new Table can have its Charter but these are reduced to three months and six meetings.

4) TABLE BACK FROM THE DEAD – “LAZARUS”

This is the situation where a Table has closed and is now restarting. This has broadly the same considerations as a “Phoenix “ situation and the process to be followed is similar to that detailed above.

5) MERGER

Where a Table feels it cannot exist any longer on its own a merger is always preferable to closure.

If Merger is to be pursued then the following procedure should be followed:

- a) Both Tables should engage in informal discussions regarding the proposed Merger.

- b) If there is a general agreement, a formal meeting should be held between the two Tables to consider and vote upon a formal Resolution to merge the Tables, due notice having been given to all members. (It is essential you involve the Area Secretary in the meeting)
- c) If the Table members pass the Merger Resolution then the Area Secretary must then give notice of the proposed merger and the name and Table number requested to the National Honorary Secretary who places it before the National Executive and National Council for approval.
- d) If approved the National Honorary Secretary shall notify approval to the Tables.
- e) The Tables shall then meet to make arrangements for merger giving full consideration to officers, regalia, charters etc.
- f) The Table is then formally recognised and assumes its merged identity.

The same basic procedure applies for transfer of Tables between Areas with the additional proviso that each Area Council must approve the decision before it is placed before the National Council.

6) CLOSURE

This mechanism should be invoked in all cases where a Table is closing, whether there is a "merger" or not.

1. The Table should pass a Resolution at a Special General Meeting to close the Table at a date a little in the future under Rule 5(g). This in essence involves surrender of its Charter.
2. The Table should try to ensure that all members transfer to other Table(s) before the final closure date. On that date, they cease to be members, so theoretically lose their automatic right of transfer. Please do not allow members "to think about it", as they are so often lost to the Movement.
3. Before closure, the Table must empty and close its bank accounts. The general account belongs to the members who can decide how to disburse it. The charity account must be used for charitable purposes (in accordance with the trust deed if registered with the Charity Commission) which could mean distribution to causes in the local community, or transfer to the charity account of another Table.
4. It must prepare final accounts and must satisfy the Inland Revenue in respect of Corporation Tax.
5. It must wind up its registration with the Charity Commission.
6. It should return its regalia for safe-keeping to Marchesi House (where it will be held in security in case a new Table is chartered one day which can use the Table's number and name) unless there is a "merger"

when the Tables may have other ideas about what they wish to do with the regalia; National must be informed of its whereabouts for the records.

7. It must keep Area and National informed (particularly the Membership and Development Committee and Marchesi House) of the timing of closure, and particularly of the destination of all Active Members.
8. Stress the positive nature of a merger, or a consolidation, in dealings with the local press and media.

The procedure outlined above is a practical one to be employed, which strictly departs a little from the provisions of Rule 5(h). If not done by the Table before closure, the Area is responsible (under that Rule) to carry them out

If you have any queries, please consult the National Honorary Secretary, National or Area Membership and Development Officer or Marchesi House.