

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE NORTH DORSET SUB-AQUA CLUB

BRANCH NO. 0975 OF THE BRITISH SUB-AQUA CLUB.

Taking into account and in accordance with the amendments passed at the Committee Meetings held on

13th Sep 2007
29th Jan 2009
4th March 2010
9th Sep 2010
21st July 2011
23rd Feb 2012
24th Apr 2016
7th Jun 2016

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE NORTH DORSET SUB AQUA CLUB

BRANCH NO. 0975 OF THE BRITISH SUB AQUA CLUB.

Definitions

The Club

The British Sub Aqua Club

The Branch

North Dorset Sub-Aqua Club (No. 0975) of the British Sub Aqua Club.

Full Member

Has paid the full subscription. The member is entitled to participate in all Branch activities. A Voting Member.

Associate Member

Has paid the associate subscription. The Member is not entitled to participate in any Branch diving activities. A non-voting member.

Abated Member

Any person who is a relation of a Full Member of the Club and living at the same address. Has paid the appropriate fee. The member can participate in all Branch activities. A voting member.

Dual Member

Any person who is a Full Member of the Club or one of its branches. Shall have paid to the Branch a subscription equal to a full member less the contribution passed to the B.S.A.C. Headquarters. The member is entitled to participate in all Branch activities. A voting member.

Trainees

Trainees are welcomed in the club and must be at least 18 years. We are an active diving club and we mutually rely on each other while diving.

Under 18 year olds

Any person under 18 years of age can only join and train with the branch providing they meet the BSAC requirements and are accompanied by a **parent/guardian** on branch dives and any branch activities.

The Committee

The elected Committee of the Branch: - Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Diving Officer, Equipment Officer and Social Secretary. Non-elected Committee Officer: - Training Officer.

The Constitution

The Constitution of the NDSAC.

Voting Member

A paid-up full member, dual member or abated member.

Chairman

Any person who is invited by the Branch and accepts the position of Chairman, for a stated period of time. The Chairman shall have full Membership status.

Honorary Member

Any person who is invited by the Branch and accepts Honorary Membership for a stated period of time. The Honorary Member shall be of any membership status according to age and circumstances at the time of invitation. Subscriptions paid by the Branch.

Diving Member

A member who is a full member, abated member or dual member. A 50% reduction of NDSAC fees could be offered to family members, but BSAC fees remain

Name

The name of the Association shall be the North Dorset Sub-Aqua Club Branch of the British Sub Aqua Club.

Object

The object of the Club and Branch is to promote underwater exploration science and sport with the emphasis on promoting a uniform standard of safety in the underwater activities through a Club approved training scheme. The Club and Branch aim to exchange as widely as possible the knowledge and experience therein. The Branch seeks to provide safe sport for members when exploring local and 'foreign' waters.

Club Rules

The Constitution of the Branch and Branch Rules shall in no way contradict the rules of the Club, whose rules shall be binding on members of the Branch. If any Branch Rules are in direct contradiction of a Club Rule the Club Rule will take priority.

Diving below 30m

Anybody diving to 30 metres or deeper must carry an independent Alternative air source, i.e. a pony bottle or twinset.

Constitution

The Constitution may be amended by an Annual General Meeting or Special Meeting called, for that purpose and only with the approval of at least a two thirds majority of voting members present.

Branch Rules

The Committee shall in the best interest of the Branch and its Members make and rescind Branch Rules, in accordance with the powers given to the Committee by the Constitution of the Branch. These Rules and the Club Rules shall be binding on all Members of the Branch. All rescissions and additions shall be notified to the Branch Membership as soon as practicable after formulation and the Branch shall keep available for inspection by members of the Branch a record containing Club and Branch Rules. Any alterations to the Rules must be entered in the records within seven days of their enactment.

Management

The Management of the Branch is vested in a Committee of seven elected officers who shall be, Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Diving Officer, Equipment Officer, Social Secretary and a non-elected Training Officer of whom at least two shall be over the age of 21. Any elected Committee Member who fails to attend three consecutive Committee Meetings without good reason and without forwarding his or her apologies for absence to the Secretary and/or Chairman shall be deemed to have resigned.

Annual General Meeting

An Annual General meeting of the Branch shall be held each year during February each year at which the quorum shall be 20 or 50% of the total membership whichever is the less. The business of the AGM shall be to read the Minutes of the previous AGM and of any Special Meetings held since that date. The elected Officers of the Branch shall make their reports and the accounts submitted for approval. The Committee for the subsequent year shall be elected in accordance with this Constitution. The Branch Accounts Reviewer shall be appointed and other business at the Chairman's discretion may be discussed. All motions affecting club policy or having a significant financial effect in the judgement of the Committee, must be filed with the Secretary one month in advance of the AGM and circulated by the Secretary with the AGM agenda to all members. All such motions will, after discussion, be voted on, including any agreed amendments. A simple majority of voting members present shall be required before the motion shall be declared carried. The Branch Secretary will give notice not later than two weeks before the AGM, of the date and place of the AGM. This will be circulated to all members together with an Agenda.

Election of Officers

Not later than four weeks before the AGM the Secretary shall display on a nomination sheet on the website. Voting Members shall nominate other voting Members of the Branch for elected Committee positions in the Branch. The name of the nominee together with the proposer and a seconder shall be forwarded to the Secretary. The nominator must ensure that the nominee is prepared to stand for that particular office before he enters the name on the proposal sheet. No Voting Member may stand for more than two positions on the elected Committee. If elected the Voting Member may not hold more than one position on the elected Committee. At the AGM the Branch Secretary shall organise a ballot to elect the Committee of the Club for the forthcoming year. Only paid up Voting Members will be allowed to vote. Voting members may vote for one candidate for each office. The election shall take place in the following order: - Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Diving Officer, Equipment Officer, Social Secretary. A proxy vote would be allowed by the Branch provided the absent voter nominated his proxy at least one week before the AGM in writing to the Secretary.

Special Meetings

A Special Meeting of the Branch shall be called within one month of the receipt by the Chairman or Secretary of the Branch of a written, reasoned request supported by the signature of at least five members of the Branch. All members shall be notified of the meeting and the reason for it by the Secretary at least one week in advance. The quorum shall be 20 or 50% of the total club membership whichever is less. The Meeting shall be kept primarily to the matter causing it, but provided this matter has been resolved finally by a vote (a simple majority being required to pass any motion) the Chairman may have discretion to pass on to other brief matters.

Power of the Committee

- (a) The Branch Committee takes office immediately after the AGM electing it, and unless a member resigns or is dismissed, each member elected holds office until the next AGM.
- (b) The Committee shall normally meet 6 times every year. The Quorum shall be four. A Meeting however, may be called by any two members at any time, at least seven days' notice being given to the Secretary.
- (c) All Committee meetings and minutes thereof to be circulated to the whole membership.
- (d) The Committee shall arrange activities in accordance with the object of the Club and Branch and charge fees as it deems proper to meet expenses and liabilities.

- (e) The Committee shall hold and administer all funds to act on its behalf in administering and maintaining individual items of equipment for the benefit of the entire Branch in accordance with the Constitution.
- (f) The Committee may fill a casual vacancy in its membership other than a vacancy giving cause to, or caused by a Special Meeting, which vacancy shall be filled by vote at the said meeting.
- (g) Subject at all times to consistency with the Club Rules and this Constitution the Committee may interpret rules, make, alter or repeal rules for the good management of the Branch, which rules shall be binding on all members, unless and until set aside by a Special Meeting or an AGM.
- (h) The Committee may reimburse out of pocket expenses incurred by the Branch members in conducting Branch business; in exceptional cases an honorarium may be awarded to a member for professional services to the Branch which would otherwise have necessitated the employment of an outside contractor.
- (i) The Committee shall have the right to suspend members from participating in Branch affairs or refuse renewal of membership, subject to the rights of appeal outlined in the appendices
- (j) Diving Marshalls and Expedition Leaders appointed by the Diving Officer with the approval of the Committee may act on behalf of the Committee and suspend any member for the duration of the diving activity where there is reasonable cause and report such cause to the Committee.
- (k) The Committee may by a simple majority suspend or require the resignation of any one of its Officers. Failure to comply within seven days shall be regarded as equivalent to resignation, provided that prior to suspension or resignation the Committee member be given an opportunity of appearing before the Committee to hear reasons for such action and explaining his position. The said member shall still be expected to give a report to the next AGM.
- (l) Members shall have the right to raise grievances officially via the grievance procedure outlined in the appendices.

Duties of Officers

Note Where he or his is read, also read/she or/her.

The Chairman and Vice Chairman

The Chairman presides at the AGM, the Special Meetings and Committee Meetings. In his absence the Diving Officer presides and in the absence of

both, the meeting elects a Committee member to preside. The Chairman is entitled to represent the Branch at all times in matters affecting its interests.

The Secretary

The Secretary keeps the Branch Minutes, summons Meetings, conducts Branch correspondence and keeps administration records. He reports to the AGM and draws up the nomination sheet and ballot papers for the Committees election.

The Treasurer

The Treasurer is responsible to the Committee for all the Branch finance, profits or losses made in the Branch name. He keeps proper books of account of all moneys received or paid on behalf of the Branch. He arranges for all such moneys to be deposited at such a Branch of such a Bank and/or Building Society as the Committee may direct. Cheques or other money orders shall be signed by not less than two Officers. He is responsible for collecting debts and subscriptions from members and discharges all liabilities of the Branch out of Branch funds as the Committee may direct. He prepares a Statement of Account of income and expenditure with a Balance Sheet for the year which he causes to be audited by the Branch Accounts Reviewer and presents to the Committee for submission to the AGM. The Treasurer is responsible for collecting all monies relating to the hire of equipment and compressed gas fills.

Diving Officer

The Diving Officer advises the Committee on all aspects of Diving and is responsible for Diving arrangements on Branch activities. At his discretion, the Diving Officer can appoint a Training Officer. He is able to delegate authority for the aforementioned organisation to the Training Officer, subject to the Committee's approval. He reports to the AGM on the year's calendar and on matters of safety and training. The Diving Officer appoints Diving Marshalls to control any and each diving activity.

The Training Officer (If appointed)

The Training Officer controls all aspects of training in accordance with the Diving Officer and Club recommendations. He is responsible to the Diving Officer in the first instant and thereafter the Committee. He should appoint Training Marshalls, and lecturers, and should ensure that at all training activities there is a competent diver in charge and to this end should draw up all the necessary notices and lists. He is at all times to ensure that a high level of standardised training and instruction is given by instructors involved in the training classes. Although a member of the Committee he shall have no vote.

The Equipment Officer

The Equipment Officer is responsible to the Committee for all Branch Equipment. He is able to delegate authority for such work as he may see fit subject to the Committee's approval. He is responsible for ensuring that all equipment is kept in good order and is to ensure that it is returned after use promptly and in good condition. He is to ensure that all the equipment is adequately insured at all times for the uses it will be put to and should advise the Committee as to his needs in this direction.

He reports to the AGM on the condition and usage of the Branch's equipment. He should hold an up to date list of all equipment for which he is responsible and not earlier than four weeks before the AGM should muster this equipment in the presence of the Treasurer a verified list being produced so that details of all equipment held may be handed on to the succeeding Equipment Officer. Any equipment issued after the Muster must be listed in detail with the name of the hirer and presented to the succeeding Equipment Officer.

Social Secretary

The Social Secretary is responsible for promoting and organising all social events for branch members and to account for any income and expenditure to the Treasurer.

Finance

The financial state of the Branch shall be open to the scrutiny of any member subject to the consent of the Chairman and one weeks' notice to the Treasurer. In the event of any doubt about the conduct of the finances, this should be reported to the Chairman or Secretary who will request a Balance Sheet from the Treasurer with one week's notice. If the doubt be not resolved to the Chairman's satisfaction he will suspend the Treasurer forthwith, and call a Special Meeting to examine the complaint, following which the Treasurer shall be exonerated or asked to resign; in which latter case a new Treasurer shall be elected.

Dissolution

The Branch shall be declared dissolved if a motion to that effect be carried at an AGM or Special Meeting with a two-thirds majority vote of voting members present where the quorum shall be 50% of the total membership.

After such dissolution the Committee shall pass Branch assets to the British Sub-Aqua Club subject to the Club Rules being observed.

Honorary Members

The Committee shall have power to invite, and on acceptance, to appoint no more than five Honorary Members of the Branch. This shall be done to advance the wellbeing and interests of the Branch. Such appointees shall be

able to attend meetings of the Branch but shall have no vote. Appointments shall in general be for one year, and renewable.

Retiring Committee

After the AGM or Special Meeting, the retiring Committee and the new Committee will agree the Minutes and if correct they will be signed by the retiring Chairman.

Appendix

BREACHES OF BRANCH/BSAC RULES

In the rare event that a member breaks the rules, or is accused of breaking the rules of the branch or BSAC, the Committee are invested with the power to pursue a branch rule BREACH procedure.

In the event of minor breaches this will be dealt with by having a quiet word with the individual. The Chairperson will take the lead in respect of non-diving related matters, and the Diving Officer in relation to Diving or Training matters (another committee member) may be empowered to have that conversation if delegated by the Committee).

In the event of a major breach or persistent minor breaches of branch/BSAC rules a Committee member will be delegated to investigate the situation before any actions are taken. In exceptional circumstances another member of the branch may be asked to undertake the investigation.

The Committee will be empowered to temporarily suspend a member from the Branch or from diving related activity if the incident is of a suitably grave nature or if there is a clear medical problem which needs clarification.

If it is decided to pursue further action, the member in question will be notified in writing of the issues and asked to attend a meeting, which may or may not be a Committee meeting, where the situation will be discussed. The individual may be accompanied by another member of the branch.

After that meeting the Committee will notify the member of the outcome.

Outcomes will include: -

- The matter is explained to the satisfaction of the Committee and no further action is necessary;
- The Committee may choose to verbally censure the member;
- The Committee may issue a written warning over the situation;
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The Committee may suspend a member from diving activities and/or branch activities for a period of time, which will be specified;

- The Committee may decide that membership of the branch will be terminated.

The affected member may appeal against the decision by submitting a written request to the Committee and an appeal hearing will be heard. The grounds of appeal should be: -

- The outcome was too harsh;
- There is new evidence which needs to be taken into account.

A further hearing will be arranged where the member may be accompanied by another member of the branch, and may bring along any new evidence and/or ask for witnesses to attend to present practical evidence.

After the appeal discussion the Committee will notify the member of the outcome in writing. The original decision could be amended.

The affected member or the Committee may ask for a special open meeting. The member will be required to put their case to the membership, and the Committee will explain why it reached the decision it has taken. Where the issue is discussed before the assembled membership of the branch and if necessary a vote would take place to decide whether the branch as a whole feels the decision is correct. This vote will be final and binding on all parties.

If at any stage of the procedure the breach is considered to be unfounded then the matter will be considered closed.