

Constitution of the Exeter Branch of the British Sub-Aqua Club

1. Name

- 1.1. The club shall be called the British Sub-Aqua Club, Exeter Branch.
- 1.2. The club may be informally known as 'Exeter BSAC'.

2. Objects

- 2.1. The objects of the branch shall be those of the British Sub-Aqua Club ("the BSAC") and to provide facilities for sub-aqua diving and social intercourse of members within the Exeter and Devon area.

3. Membership

- 3.1. Membership of the club shall be open to anyone, regardless of sex, disability, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, religion or other beliefs.
- 3.2. Diving Membership shall be subject to the Member passing the medical requirements made by the BSAC.
- 3.3. Diving Membership shall be subject to the available facilities.
- 3.4. There shall be two classes of Membership of the club, Diving Members and Social Members.
- 3.5. Diving Members shall be one of the following 5 categories:
 - 3.5.1. Full Diving Members who shall hold one of the classes of Membership of the BSAC and have paid the full branch subscription.
 - 3.5.2. Snorkel Diving Members who shall hold the Snorkelling class of Membership of the BSAC and have paid the appropriate branch subscription. Snorkel Diving Members may not use SCUBA equipment unless as part of a Try Dive session.
 - 3.5.3. Veteran Diving Members who shall hold one of the classes of Membership of the BSAC and held Membership for fifteen years with this branch, and have paid the Veteran branch subscription which shall be one half of the full branch subscription. Any such Member shall continue to pay their annual BSAC subscription.
 - 3.5.4. Honorary Diving Members who shall hold one of the classes of Membership of the BSAC and have been elected an Honorary Member at the Annual General Meeting. Maximum of one Honorary Member created in any one year. There shall be no branch subscription for Honorary Diving Members. Any such Member shall continue to pay their annual BSAC subscription.
 - 3.5.5. Life Member. Any current Full Diving Member over the age of 25 may purchase life branch Membership as follows:
 - Age 25 to 34 – by paying 17 times the current annual club Membership. Any such life Member shall continue to pay their annual BSAC subscription.
 - Age 35 to 44 – by paying 12 times the current annual club Membership. Any such life Member shall continue to pay their annual BSAC subscription.
 - Age over 45 – by paying 9 times the current annual club Membership. Any such life Member shall continue to pay their annual BSAC subscription.
- 3.6. Social Members shall be one of the following:
 - 3.6.1. Ordinary Social Member who shall be a non-diving Member who has been proposed by a Full Diving Member, been accepted by the committee and has paid the requisite subscription.

4. Entitlements

- 4.1. Diving and Snorkelling Members only shall be entitled to partake in all activities appropriate to their membership grade of the club and vote at all General Meetings of the club.
- 4.2. Social Members shall be non-voting Members and shall be restricted in their right of participation of those activities specifically designated by the Committee.
- 4.3. Diving and Snorkelling Members only shall be entitled to attend any meeting of the committee.

5. Committee

- 5.1. The branch shall be managed by a committee of twelve voting Members which shall consist of eight officers: Chairman, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer, Diving Officer, Training Officer, Social Secretary, Equipment Officer, Records Officer and four other Members.
- 5.2. A Welfare Officer shall be appointed by the Committee, but not be part of it.
- 5.3. The Committee shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting in each year and subject to termination of office by resignation, or otherwise shall hold office until their successors are elected at the next Annual General Meeting.
- 5.4. Retiring Members of the committee shall be eligible for re-election.

6. Vice-Chairman

- 6.1. At its first meeting the committee shall appoint one of its Members Vice-Chairman.

7. Committee Meetings

- 7.1. The Committee shall normally meet once a month on a date decided by the Committee or in the absence of a decision by the Committee, by the Honorary Secretary.
- 7.2. The Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Honorary Secretary are all empowered to call a Special Committee Meeting of all Members, subject to a minimum of four people in accord, any decisions taken at such a meeting must be ratified at the next monthly meeting.

8. Committee Quorum

- 8.1. Six Members of the committee shall form a quorum one of which must be the Chairman, Vice- Chairman or the Honorary Secretary.

9. Committee Voting

- 9.1. Decisions shall be taken by a simple majority except in matters of training qualifications, finance, expulsion of members, suspension and dismissal of branch officers and other Members of the Committee, when a two-thirds majority of the total Committee shall be required.
- 9.2. The Chairman shall not be entitled to vote at Committee meetings except in the event of an equality of votes when he shall have a casting or additional vote.

10. Committee Sponsors

- 10.1. The Committee will have the power to co-opt up to four non-voting Members.

11. Committee Vacancies

11.1. In the event of a vacancy arising among the officers by resignation or otherwise, the Committee shall have the power to appoint a temporary replacement from amongst their Members until a new officer is elected by a general meeting. Such a general meeting to be called within one month of the vacancy arising.

12. Subscription

12.1. The annual subscription for the Members shall be the current annual subscription of the BSAC for that particular class of Membership and in addition a branch levy.

13. Visitors

13.1. Branch diving activities shall be open to suitably qualified divers from any agency at the discretion of the Diving Officer, providing that they meet the requirements of Safe Diving to the satisfaction of the Dive Manager.

13.2. Visitors are welcome to attend branch social activities and may use the training pools at the discretion of the branch official in charge of training unless the Committee rules otherwise.

13.3. All visitors shall be notified of Section 23 of this Constitution, which allows the Committee to charge them for damage or loss of club property.

14. Trainees

14.1. A Trainee shall be defined as a Full Diving Member who has not passed the entry level grade practical and theory examinations or any equivalent qualification as defined by the BSAC.

14.2. The Committee shall determine how many Trainees the branch can accept each year.

15. Suspension and Expulsion of Members

15.1. In order to preserve safety and the good name of the branch, the BSAC and its Members, the branch official in charge of a branch diving activity may suspend at his discretion and for the duration of the activity, any Member for misconduct. Any suspension must be reported to the Chairman and Honorary Secretary as soon as possible and must be discussed at the next available meeting of the Committee.

15.2. The Committee shall have the power, by a two-thirds majority, to expel any Member whose conduct shall, in the opinion of the Committee, render them unfit for Membership of the branch.

15.3. Before any suspension is discussed or any Member expelled, the Honorary Secretary or Chairman shall give them seven days written notice to attend a meeting of the Committee, and inform them of the complaints made against them. Any such Member shall have the right of appearing before the Committee and addressing them in answer to such complaints.

16. Suspension and Dismissal of Branch Officers and Members of the Committee

16.1. The Committee shall have the power by a two-thirds majority to suspend or dismiss any Officer or other Member of the Committee from their post for misconduct.

16.2. Before suspension or dismissal, the Honorary Secretary or Chairman shall give any such Officer or other Member of the Committee seven days written notice to attend a meeting of the Committee, and inform them of the complaints made against them. Any such Officer or other Member of the Committee shall have the right of appearing before a general meeting and addressing them in answer to such complaints.

17. Annual General Meeting

17.1. The Annual General Meeting of the branch shall be held not later than the 31st October in every year to transact the following business:

17.1.1. To receive an annual report from each Officer.

17.1.2. To receive and, if approved, to adopt the accounts of the preceding financial year.

17.1.3. To elect the Officers and other Members of the Committee.

17.1.4. To consider and, if approved, sanction any alteration to the Constitution of the branch.

17.1.5. To deal with any motion duly proposed by the Committee or Members.

17.2. Notice convening the Annual General Meeting shall be sent to all fully paid-up Members not less than four weeks before the meeting. Such notification shall include:

17.2.1. Any motion proposed by the Committee.

17.2.2. Reminders that any Member may submit their own motion for consideration, or propose an amendment to the Committee's motion. Any such motion or amendment must be proposed and seconded and delivered to the Honorary Secretary seven days before the meeting.

17.2.3. The names of those Officers and Members of the present Committee willing to stand again and request for any other nominations for the Committee. All nominations must be delivered to the Honorary Secretary seven days before the meeting to be eligible for election, proposed and seconded and signed by the nominee to the effect that they are willing to accept the position if elected. Should there be no nominations for a position received by the Honorary Secretary, the Chairman shall take and accept nominations at the Annual General Meeting.

18. President

18.1. The AGM may appoint a President for the following year and they shall be a non-voting member of the Committee.

19. Special General Meetings

19.1. A Special General Meeting (SGM) may be convened at any time by the Committee or shall be convened within one month of the receipt of a request signed by at least twelve paid up Members and giving the reason therefore.

19.2. For all SGMs the Committee shall give fourteen days notice to all paid-up Members.

19.3. The business of an SGM shall be that for which it was called and no other.

20. Quorum and Voting

20.1. A quorum at all meetings shall be one quarter of the total Membership entitled to vote. Voting shall be by ballot or show of hands and a simple majority shall take decisions. A two-thirds majority is necessary for a motion to be passed on any matter affecting the Constitution or Rules of the branch.

21. Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer and Records Officer

21.1. The Honorary Secretary shall:

21.1.1. Maintain and update a record of all decisions taken by the general Committee meetings.

21.2. The Honorary Treasurer shall:

21.2.1. Prepare a statement of income and expenditure and a balance sheet for the club year, which shall run from 1st August to 31st July, which they shall cause to be inspected by an independent person as shall be appointed in writing by the Committee.

21.2.2. Maintain public liability insurance for the branch to be fixed each year, insurance for the branch buildings and property and all other insurance the Committee shall direct.

21.3. The Records Officer shall:

21.3.1. Maintain appropriate Membership information as provided to BSAC HQ.

21.3.2. Be solely responsible for ensuring medical records held by BSAC HQ are current.

22. Cheques and Electronic Payments

22.1. Cheques shall be signed by any two of the following officers; Honorary Treasurer, Chairman, Honorary Secretary or Diving Officer.

22.2. Electronic payments may be enabled by the Honorary Treasurer with the express agreement of one of the following officers who should not be a payee; Chairman, Honorary Secretary or Diving Officer.

23. Club Buildings and Properties

23.1. All club buildings and property shall be properly insured for its full value.

23.2. However, when a member damages club buildings or loses or damages club property, the Committee reserve the right to charge that Member the cost of replacing or repairing the article. Any such Member shall have the right of appearing before the Committee and addressing them as to why they should not be so charged

23.3. Private equipment lent to the branch for use on branch diving activities shall be treated in the same way for the purposes of Section 23.

23.4. Visitors may be charged for damage or loss of club equipment.

23.5. The property and funds of the Club cannot be used for the direct or indirect private benefit of its members other than as reasonably allowed by this rule.

24. Dissolution

24.1. If at a general meeting a resolution for the dissolution of the branch shall be passed by a majority of members present, an SGM shall be held not less than one month thereafter. Such an SGM shall have not less than half of the fully paid-up members present. The resolution to be confirmed by two-thirds of the members voting thereon. The Committee shall thereupon, or at such future date be specified in such resolution realise the property of the branch.

24.2. After discharge of the club's debts and all other obligations the branch shall allocate the net surplus to another club with similar sports purposes or the BSAC HQ for the use of related community sports.

24.3. If the branch has assets acquired in part or in full with grants from agencies, those agencies should be informed of the proposed dissolution, for they have the right to recover a proportion of the value of the assets, and/or to advise on their disposal.

24.4. Any person acting as a financial guarantor for the branch shall be a preferred creditor in the event of the dissolution of the branch.

- 24.5. If the branch has assets acquired in part or in full with grants from agencies, those agencies should be informed of the proposed dissolution, for they have the right to recover a proportion of the value of the assets, and/or to advise on their disposal.
- 24.6. Any person acting as a financial guarantor for the branch shall be a preferred creditor in the event of the dissolution of the branch.
- 24.7. No clause in this Dissolution Section 24 shall be revoked without the prior agreement of all guarantors liable.
- 24.8. Until completion of the dissolution of the branch all persons who have been Members in the preceding twelve months shall remain responsible for the debts and all other obligations of the branch. All such members shall contribute equally to any deficit if the debts and any other obligations of the branch exceed its assets.
- 24.9. If, however, a single act brings about the dissolution then all persons who are Members subsequent and during the act shall be equally responsible.

25. Members Bound by the Constitution and Rules and Decisions of the Committee

- 25.1. A copy of the Constitution and Rules of the Committee will be provided to every new Member. Any alterations to be notified to the members in writing.

26. Interpretation

- 26.1. The Committee shall be the sole authority for the interpretation of this Constitution and any Rules made by the Committee. The decision of the Committee upon any question of interpretation or upon any other matter affecting the branch, and not provided that any appropriate Constitution amendment thereto is moved by the Committee at the next AGM, shall be final.
- 26.2. Interpretation of all the Constitution and Rules must be consistent with statutory requirements.

27. Effective Date – 18th October 2024 (AGM)