

Constitution of the Totnes Branch of the British Sub-Aqua Club No. 598

TITLE

The title of the association of persons interested in Underwater activities shall be:-
Totnes Branch of the British Sub-Aqua Club, known as "The Branch", hereafter.

SCOPE

This Constitution shall regulate the structure, administration and activities of the Branch.

OBJECTIVES

The aims and objectives of the Branch shall be to provide for its members facilities, opportunities and training for diving in accordance with the standards of the British Sub-Aqua Club, together with related social activities.

MANAGEMENT

1. The Branch shall be managed by a Committee of Five Executive Officers, and Two Non-Executive Officers (who will be expected to assist the Officers in their duties) elected at each Annual General Meeting of the Branch. All the Committee members will have full voting rights and be elected at each AGM.
2. The Officers of the Branch shall be: Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, Diving Officer and Equipment Officer.
3. The Officers may co-opt up to three members for any special purpose and to fill a vacancy of an Officer position which occurs in their term of office. The Officers may also appoint Branch members to undertake other, non-committee, roles such as membership secretary or records officer (but this does not preclude the Officers from undertaking these roles in addition to their duties)
4. The Officers shall hold and administer, for the benefit of the membership, all funds, equipment and property owned by the Branch.
5. The Officers shall meet within four weeks following the AGM and then on a regular basis. The Officers will be given 3 days notice by the Secretary. Any Officer can ask the Secretary to call a meeting.
6. In the absence of the Chairperson, the Diving Officer shall preside at a meeting.
7. The Officers shall appoint, administer and dismiss sub-committees and prescribe rules for their conduct. Sub-Committees have no power of implementation or decision on any policy without the minuted approval of the main Committee.
8. The Officers may, from time to time make, repeal and amend all such regulations (consistent with these rules) as they may think suitable for the internal management and well-being of the Branch. All regulations made by the Officers under this rule shall be binding upon all members until repealed by the Officers or set aside by a resolution of a General Meeting of the Branch.
9. A simple majority of voting committee members shall form a quorum for a committee meeting; provided, however, that no quorum shall be formed without the presence of either the Chairman, or the Secretary. A quorum once

formed shall not be lost even though, as a result of the departure of a member during the meeting, the number of voting members falls below the number required to open the meeting.

- 10 The committee may adopt no resolution unless:
 - a. It has the votes of a simple majority of those members present and entitled to vote, and;
 - b. The number of such votes is at least equal to a simple majority of the number of members required to open the meeting at which the resolution is proposed.
11. No member shall be entitled to vote on a matter in which his interest differs from that of the Branch as a whole, and he shall withdraw from any meeting during the period of discussion of such interest.
12. The Officers shall hold informal quarterly meetings of the Branch for the exchange of ideas. Notice of each meeting shall be posted on the Branch notice board at least two weeks beforehand.
13. The Office of a member of the Committee shall be vacated if, by notice in writing to the Committee, the Officer resigns their office, or if the Officer fails to attend 3 consecutive committee meetings to which they have been invited without due cause having been given for their absence. Notwithstanding this rule, all Officers shall be deemed to have resigned at the AGM, in accordance with the AGM rules.

CHAIRPERSON

The Chairperson shall be the spokesperson for the Branch. They shall take the chair at all meetings of the Branch at which they are present and co-ordinate the working of the subcommittees. Subject to the provision of these rules their decision on matters of procedure shall be final.

DIVING OFFICER

The Diving Officer derives their authority in training and diving matters from the National Diving Officer (NDO) of the British Sub-Aqua Club. They shall have responsibility for the safe conduct of training and diving activities of the Branch and shall ensure that these activities are carried out in accordance with the current BSAC guidelines. The Diving Officer will delegate training duties to the Training Officer and shall be responsible for their performance. The Diving Officer's decision in respect of diving and training activities in the Branch shall be final.

- Candidates for Diving Officer shall hold qualifications at least equivalent to BSAC Advanced Diver and BSAC Open Water Instructor.
- In the event that no member with these qualifications is willing to stand for the post of Diving Officer, then members holding the qualification of at least Dive Leader shall be able to stand.
- In the event that the member elected to be Diving Officer does not hold qualifications equivalent to BSAC Advanced Diver and Open Water Instructor, they shall appoint a Lead Instructor who does meet these criteria. In this event the Lead Instructor will be responsible for training and awarding BSAC qualifications in accordance with the authorisation granted by the NDO. If no member with the right qualifications is willing to be appointed Lead Instructor, the Regional Coach should be asked to perform this role.

- The Diving Officer may appoint as many Training Officers as they see fit to assist them in their duties. The Diving Officer must inform the club of their appointment(s) at or after the AGM.
- During their tenure, the Diving Officer may dismiss their Training Officers as they see fit, subject to the conditions above. If this occurs the Diving Officer must inform the club of any changes.

SECRETARY

The Secretary shall maintain the Branch records and shall compile the minutes of all meetings. They shall be responsible for the Branch communications with third parties and shall keep the members informed of matters relating to Branch activities.

TREASURER

The Treasurer shall be responsible for dealing with all monies received or paid on behalf of the Branch and shall make any investment of Branch funds as approved by the Officers. They shall keep records of financial transactions conducted in the Branch's name and shall regularly prepare, for the Officers consideration, a statement of income and expenditure. They shall compile a balance sheet after 30/11 of each year for auditing by the Branch auditors and for submission to the Annual General Meeting.

EQUIPMENT OFFICER

The Equipment Officer shall oversee the maintenance, repair and service of Branch equipment and the boatshed. They shall advise the Officers of the current state and future requirements for Branch equipment and boatshed.

TRAINING OFFICER(S) (non-committee role)

The Training Officer(s) shall co-ordinate the training activities within the Branch and derive their responsibility from the Diving Officer.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY (non-committee role)

The Membership Secretary shall be responsible for joining new members to the Branch and BSAC, dealing with membership renewals, advising the Diving Officer if a member's TSAC or BSAC membership has lapsed and for maintaining the branch membership records.

SAFEGUARDING OFFICER (non-committee role)

The Safeguarding Officer shall take the lead with regard to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults within the Branch and will be the initial contact to which concerns should be raised and discussed.

MEMBERSHIP

1. There shall be eight classes of membership:
 - a) FULL DIVING member shall be any person aged 12 or over. Young people under the age of 18 shall only be admitted to membership of the club at the discretion of the Diving Officer who needs to be satisfied that there is adequate parental support and supervision to allow the

- young person to complete their training and participate in diving activities.
- b) DUAL member shall be a full diving member of more than one branch.
 - c) JUNIOR/STUDENT membership is open to any FULL DIVING member between the ages of 12 and 21 who meets the BSAC eligibility requirements for Junior or Student membership. Junior/Student members shall have full voting rights but must be at least 18 to hold a committee position.
 - d) JOINT member shall be a full diving member who lives at the same address as another full diving member paying full subscription.
 - e) REDUCED membership shall be a person who pays a reduced price subscription to the branch and is restricted to a maximum of six branch dives and will have no voting rights and therefore cannot be able to hold a Committee position.
 - f) TEMPORARY member shall be a potential new member or visiting guest diver meeting the provisions of the TSAC Temporary Membership policy.
 - g) SNORKELLING member shall be any person not entitled to take part in any activity involving the use of a breathing set.
 - h) ASSOCIATE member shall be of any age, but not entitled to take part in snorkelling or any activity which involves the use of a breathing set.
 - i) HONORARY member shall be any person invited by the Officers, in their absolute discretion, to become such a member.
- 2. The Officers may delegate the responsibility of accepting and renewing applications but still reserve the right to refuse membership.
 - 3. Persons joining or rejoining shall pay the appropriate Headquarters subscription plus the Branch subscription.
 - 4. Branch membership subscription shall be in such amount, shall be payable on such dates, and shall be subject to such terms and conditions as may be determined from time to time by the Officers.
 - 5. A member shall retain his membership until he has resigned or is deemed to have resigned in accordance with this paragraph or the Bye-law on "Discipline" below. If payment of his Branch or National Headquarters subscriptions, if any, in respect of any period is 30 days or more overdue, a member shall be deemed to have resigned.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- 1. The Annual General Meeting of the Branch shall be held in December of each year. Notice of the meeting and the agenda shall be given to paid-up members by the Secretary not less than 3 weeks beforehand.
- 2. Nominations and notice of motions shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary 6 weeks beforehand.
- 3. Members shall have up to 10 days from the date of the notice to notify the Secretary of any amendments to the details of the motions.
- 4. Nominations must be signed by the nominee, proposer and seconder. The Officers shall all resign and stand for re-election if desired.
- 5. Motions must be signed by the proposer and seconder.
- 6. At least 20% of voting members must be present at the meeting to form a quorum, but once formed shall not be lost despite the departure from the meeting of any member or members.

7. The right to vote at the AGM shall be restricted to Full, Joint and Dual diving members. They must be either present at the meeting or have submitted a postal vote to the Secretary at least 5 days before the meeting. The procedure for postal voting will be held by the Secretary.
8. The Officers of the Club shall be elected at the meeting by a ballot, unless unopposed, when they shall be deemed to have been elected. The holder of a particular Executive Officer position can stand for re-election for a maximum of 2 consecutive years, i.e. 3 years in the position, after which they should stand down in favour of other nominations. In the event of no other nominations being forthcoming immediately prior to the relevant closing deadline, the incumbent Officer can then, with their consent, be automatically re-nominated.
9. Voting on any given motion shall be by a show of hands or ballot as the Chairperson shall decide. Motions shall be carried by the affirmative vote of a simple majority of the votes cast.
10. The current Branch rules shall be read and voted on for re-adoption.
11. If a member who has been proposed for election to the committee decides to withdraw their nomination after the closing date for nominations has passed, this withdrawal shall be submitted in writing to the Secretary (which means shall include fax or email) and shall be binding. Any subsequent re-nomination shall be in accordance with sub-clauses 2 and 4 above.

SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

1. Any General meeting of the Branch other than the AGM shall be known as a Special General Meeting.
2. The Officers may call a Special General Meeting at any time, giving not less than 3 weeks' notice to all paid-up members. The notice shall state the reason for the meeting and details of any motions. Amendments to any such motions should be presented in writing to the Secretary at least 11 days before the meeting.
3. The Officers shall call a Special General Meeting upon the signed request of not less than 20% of paid-up members. The request must state the reason for the meeting and contain details of at least one motion. Amendments as described in paragraph 2.
4. The business of a Special General Meeting should be that for which it is called and no other.
5. The voting procedure shall be the same as for any motion at the AGM.

BRANCH ACTIVITIES

1. All diving and training activities shall be in accordance with current BSAC guidelines and safe diving practices and Totnes Branch rules.
2. At the discretion of the Diving Officer, Branch diving and training activities shall be open to members of other Branches and guests.
3. If a member wilfully or negligently damages or loses Branch equipment the Officers may charge the member the cost of repairing or replacing the article.

DISCIPLINE

1. Temporary Suspension from Participation:

In order to ensure the safety and good name of the Branch and its members, the person in charge of a Branch activity may suspend, at their discretion and for the duration of the activity, any member who misconducts themselves. Any such suspension shall be reported as soon as possible to the Diving Officer and discussed at the next meeting of the Officers.

2. Suspension and Loss of Membership:
The Officers shall have the power by a two-thirds majority to suspend the membership of any member of the Branch.
3. The procedure for suspension shall be kept in the Secretary's Branch File.

INTERPRETATION

The answer to any question as to the interpretation of the constitution and Branch rules, shall be determined by the Officers. They may also rule for any occurrence not catered for by these rules provided that an appropriate motion is submitted at the following AGM.

DISSOLUTION

1. The Branch may only be dissolved by vote at a Special General Meeting.
2. A proposal to dissolve the Branch shall be subject to ballot and in order to be carried it must receive the affirmative votes of 60% of the voting membership of the Branch.
3. If the motion is carried the Officers shall proceed without delay to realise the assets of the Branch and to discharge its outstanding liabilities. Any net assets remaining shall be distributed in such a fashion as the meeting has decided.
4. If the Branch has assets acquired in part or in full with grants from agencies such as the Lottery Sports Fund or Foundation for Sport and the Arts, those agencies should be informed of the proposed dissolution, for they have a right to recover a proportion of the current value of the assets, and/or to advise on their disposal, perhaps to another worthy user.

AMENDMENTS

1. These bye-laws shall only be amended at an Annual or Special General Meeting in accordance with the affirmative vote by ballot of 60% of the votes cast.

B.S.A.C. RULES

These byelaws are made in compliance with the Rules and Articles of Association of the BSAC.