

Swindon Harriers Constitution

1 Swindon Harriers

The club will be called **Swindon Harriers** (Hereinafter will be referred to as the Club) and will be affiliated to England Athletics.

2 Aims and Objectives

The aim of the Club is to promote the pursuit of athletic competition in Track and Field, Cross Country, Road Running and Race Walking; to provide the best possible coaching and facilities for its members and to enable them to reach their athletic potential within competitive structures, at all standards and age groups regardless of age, disability, gender, race, ethnicity, religious belief, sexuality or social/economic status.

The objectives of the Club will be:

- To offer coaching and competition in Track and Field, Endurance, including Race Walking and to encourage participation from the whole community, irrespective of ability.
- To promote the development of officials, coaches and volunteers.
- To raise the profile of the Club within the local community and surrounding area
- To manage the coaching and provision of athletic activities in Swindon and surrounding area.
- To ensure a duty of care to all members of the Club.
- To promote the continued development of the Club, including infrastructure and facilities.

3 Membership

- (a) Membership of the Club is open to anyone interested in promoting, coaching, volunteering or participating in Athletics, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, ethnicity, religious belief, sexuality or social/ economic status.
- (b) The Club can refuse or revoke membership on non-discriminatory grounds, where the membership, or continued membership, of the person concerned would be likely not to be in the best interests of the sport or the good conduct and interests of the Club. There is a right of appeal which is described fully in **Section 9 – Discipline and Appeals**.
- (c) The membership shall consist of the following categories:
 - Senior member – any competing athlete having attained 18 years of age, unless he/she is still in full time education.
 - Junior member – anyone under 18 or in full time education
 - Life member – by invitation of the General Committee
 - Associate member – open to ex full members who have left the area and wish to retain contact with the Club or supporters who offer their services on a regular basis for the benefit of the Club (e.g. officials). Associate membership is not open to competing members.
- (d) All categories of membership are entitled to full voting rights although in some cases this voting right may be taken by parents/carers in proxy.

- (e) All members will be subject to the regulations of the constitution and by joining the Club will be deemed to accept these regulations and codes of practice that the Club has adopted.
- (f) Members in each category will pay membership fees, as determined by the Annual General Meeting.
- (g) Individuals shall not be eligible to take part in the business of the Club, vote at general meetings or be eligible for selection for any club team unless the applicable subscription has been paid by the due date and/or membership has been agreed by the General Committee.
- (h) Membership will be considered to have ceased if the member submits a letter of resignation, fails to pay fees or doesn't attend training for 3 months, with no good reason.

4 Sports Equity

- (a) The Club is committed to ensuring that equity is incorporated across all aspects of its development. In doing so it acknowledges and adopts the following Sport England definition of sports equity:

Sports equity is about fairness in sport, equality of access, recognising inequalities and taking steps to address them. It is about changing the culture and structure to ensure it becomes equally accessible to everyone in society.

- (b) The Club respects the rights, dignity and worth of every person and will treat every one equally within the context of their sport, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, ethnicity, religious belief, sexuality or social/economic status.
- (c) The Club is committed to everyone having the right to enjoy their sport in an environment free from threat of intimidation, harassment and abuse.
- (d) All Club members have a responsibility to challenge discriminatory behaviour and promote equality of opportunity.
- (e) The Club will deal with any incidence of discriminatory behaviour seriously, according to club disciplinary procedures.

5 Committee

- (a) The affairs of the Club shall be conducted by the General Committee which shall consist of the following positions:
 - Chair
 - Vice Chair
 - Treasurer
 - Assistant Treasurer
 - General Secretary
 - Assistant General Secretary
 - Membership Secretary (ies)
 - Two representatives of athletes between 8 and 19 years of age

- Officials' Secretary
- Coaching Co-ordinator
- Schools' Liaison Officer
- Press and Media Officer
- Community / Business Liaison Officer (possible link with Swindon County Ground Athletics Track Trust – trustee)
- Health and Safety Officer
- Welfare Officer (s)
- Up to 6 General Committee members

- (b) All committee members must be members of the Club.
- (c) The term of office for the Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, Secretary, Assistant Secretary and General Committee Members will be one year and they are eligible for re-election at the following AGM.
- (d) The Chair and Vice Chair are eligible to serve for two years at which time the Vice Chair will assume the role of Chair. The outgoing Chair will not be able to apply for the role of Vice Chair until the commencement of the next two-year cycle. The Chair and Vice Chair may stand for a further 12 months should there be no nominations for these positions.
- (e) An Executive Committee shall comprise of the Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and the Welfare Officer(s) and is empowered to deal with any urgent matters which may be referred to it by General Committee or which may arise in the interval between General Committee meetings. Any decisions made by the Executive Committee will be reported to the General Committee.
- (f) If the post of any officer or ordinary committee member should fall vacant after the AGM, the Executive Committee shall have the authority to fill the vacancy until the succeeding AGM.
- (g) The General Committee will be responsible for adopting new policy, codes of practice and rules that affect the organisation of the Club.
- (h) The General Committee will have the power to co-opt any advisers to fulfil its business.
- (i) The General Committee will be responsible for disciplinary hearings of members who infringe the Club rules/regulations/constitution. The General Committee will be responsible for taking any action of suspension or discipline following such hearings. Full details in **Section 9 – Discipline and Appeals**.
- (j) A register of interests is established following the election of an officer or ordinary committee member at the AGM and is retained for their term of office. The register, which holds commercial and personal interests is reviewed at each AGM.
- (k) A declaration of interests, relating to agenda items, should be made by committee members before the commencement of any club meeting.

(l) The General Committee meetings will be convened by the General Secretary of the Club and be held no less than 6 times per year. The following Working Groups will meet as required:

- Capital Projects
- Coaching
- Fundraising
- Track and Field

These groups must report back to committee.

Other Working Groups may meet, as and when required

(m) Only those posts listed at Para 5 (a) will have the right to vote at General Committee Meetings. The Chair of the Club shall only hold a casting vote at general and committee meetings.

(n) The quorum required for business to be agreed at General Committee Meetings will be six members, with at least two of these being members of the Executive Committee.

(o) Minutes of the meeting will be taken and approved by the General Committee at the next meeting. A copy of these minutes will be made available on request although items considered to be of a sensitive nature may be redacted.

6 Finance

(a) The Club treasurer will be responsible for the finances of the Club.

(b) The financial year of the club will run from 1st September and end on the 31st August each year.

(c) All club monies will be banked in an account held in the name of the Club.

(d) All members of the Club shall be jointly and severally responsible for the financial liabilities of the Club.

(e) All surplus income or profits are to be re-invested in the Club. No surpluses or assets will be distributed to members or third parties.

(f) The Club financial records should be maintained in an appropriate manner which enables either review or audit by an independent person.

7 Annual General Meetings and Extraordinary General Meetings

(a) General Meetings are the means whereby the members of the Club exercise their democratic rights in conducting club affairs.

(b) The Club shall hold the Annual General Meeting (AGM) by the end of November to:

- Approve the minutes of the previous year's AGM.
- Receive reports from the Chair and General Secretary

- Receive a report from the Treasurer and approve the Annual Accounts.
 - Receive reports from Working Groups, where relevant.
 - Elect the officers to the General Committee.
 - Agree the membership fees for the following year.
 - Consider any proposed changes to the Constitution.
 - Deal with any other relevant business.
- (c) Notice of the AGM will be given by the General Secretary with at least 28 days notice to be given to all members – notices will be sent electronically and posted on the Club noticeboard. This will include notice of any vacancies that need to be filled.
- (d) Nominations for officers of the committee can be submitted to the General Secretary by members at least 14 days prior to the AGM. Any nominations will be notified to the membership for consideration. Where there is more than one nomination for a position there will be a vote.
- (e) Proposed changes to the constitution can be sent to the General Secretary by any member, at least 14 days prior to the AGM. Any proposed changes will be published at least 7 days before the AGM.
- (f) All members have the right to vote at an AGM / EGM. This vote may be taken by the parent/carer for any member under the age of 18 on the day of the AGM/EGM.
- (g) The quorum for an AGM will be 20. In the event of a quorum not being attained 15 minutes after the proposed start time for the AGM a further meeting shall be called within 28 days. The quorum for this meeting will be 8.
- (h) The Chair of the Club shall only hold a casting vote at general and committee meetings.
- (i) An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) must be called by the General Secretary within 14 days of receipt of a request in writing by 10 members of the Club, stating the business to be brought before such a meeting. The General Committee shall also have the power to call an EGM by decision of a simple majority of the committee members.
- (j) All procedures for an EGM shall follow those outlined above for AGMs.
- (k) Draft minutes for the AGM will be published within 28 days of the AGM.

8 Amendments to the Constitution

The constitution will only be changed through agreement by majority vote at an AGM or EGM.

9 Discipline and Appeals

- (a) All concerns, allegations or reports of poor practice / abuse relating to the welfare of children and young people will be recorded and responded to swiftly and appropriately in accordance with the club's Child Protection Policy and Procedures. The Club Welfare Officer is the lead contact for all members in the event of any child protection concerns.

- (b) All complaints regarding the behaviour of members should be presented and submitted in writing to the General Secretary.
- (c) The General Committee will meet to hear complaints within 21 days of a complaint being lodged. The General Committee has the power to take appropriate action, including the termination of membership.
- (d) The outcome of a disciplinary hearing should be notified in writing to the person who lodged the complaint and the member against whom the complaint was made, within 7 days of the hearing.
- (e) There will be a right to appeal to the Executive Committee following disciplinary action being announced. The Executive Committee should consider the appeal within 7 days of the General Secretary receiving the appeal. The final outcome rests with the Executive Committee.
- (f) Any person whose application for membership has been rejected may appeal within one month of advice of rejection. Such appeal is to be in writing and lodged with the General Secretary. The General Secretary will convene an EGM of the Club not more than 21 days after receipt of appeal.
- (g) At any such meeting the appellant shall be given the opportunity to fully present their case and the General Committee, or those members thereof who rejected the application for membership, shall likewise have the opportunity of presenting its or their case. The appeal shall be determined by the vote of the members present at such meeting.

10 Dissolution

- (a) A resolution to dissolve the Club can only be passed at an AGM or EGM through a majority vote of the membership.
- (b) In the event of the dissolution of the Club, any assets remaining after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities shall not be paid to or distributed among the members of the Club, but shall be given, transferred to one or more of the approved sporting or charitable bodies, or held in trust for a reasonable period of time.
 - A registered charitable organisation(s)
 - Another club which is a registered CASC

11 Declaration

Swindon Harriers hereby adopt and accepts this constitution as a current operating guide regulating the actions of members.

Name	Geoff Wickens	Position	Chairman
Sign		Date	29th November 2023

Name	Steve Connolly	Position	General Secretary
Sign		Date	29th November 2023