

Tiverton Swords Fencing Club.

Tiverton Swords Fencing Club, Devon.

Constitution.

1. This Constitution

- A. The **Title** of the club shall be 'Tiverton Swords Fencing Club' hereafter referred to as "Tiverton Swords" or 'the club'.
- B. The **Consitution** sets out the objectives of Tiverton Swords Fencing Club and regulates the actions of its members and officers.
- C. **The Consitution can only be ratified or changed** through agreement by majority vote at a General Meeting (AGM or EGM).

2. Objectives

- A. Tiverton Swords shall be affiliated to **British Fencing (BF)**. The Club shall follow BF rules, guidelines and requirements, utilise BF support and promote individual BF membership.
- B. Provide opportunities to develop skills in **all aspects of Fencing as a sport** including practice, competition, refereeing, armoury and coaching.
- C. Provide coaching in all three weapons – **Epée, Foil and Sabre**.
- D. **Promote participation** as available to all and maintain a good profile in the local community by various means such as outreach and participation in local activities.
- E. **Provide all its services in a way that is fair to everyone**. Ensure that all present and future members receive fair and equal treatment.
- F. Ensure a **duty of care** to all members of the Club.
- G. Provide a **safe and supportive environment** for participation. For this purpose the Club shall maintain appropriate insurance. (Currently included in BF affiliation.)
- H. **To manage Tiverton Swords Fencing Club in a sound manner** ensuring proper administration of funds and the submission of accounts to the general meeting. Keep proper administrative records including minutes of committee and general meetings and make them available to members or relevant sporting bodies. (At this time BF and the South West Fencing regional hub.)

3. Membership

- A. Membership of the club shall be open to anyone interested in the sport on application regardless of sex, age, disability, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, religion or other beliefs. However, limitation of membership according to available facilities is allowable on a non-discriminatory basis.
- B. The club may have different classes of membership and subscription managed on a non-discriminatory and fair basis. The club will keep subscriptions at levels that will not pose a significant obstacle to people participating.
- C. The Secretary will keep a current list of members. Membership requires being up to date with any necessary subscription and each member must sign an agreement to abide by the rules of the Club and the salle.
- D. The Management Committee reserves the right to refuse, suspend or remove membership without giving a reason. The Management Committee may do so only for good and sufficient cause (such as conduct or character not in the interests of the club or likely to bring the club or sport into disrepute). Appeal may be made retrospectively to a General Meeting. (A person not regarded as a member by the Committee is not allowed to call a General Meeting.)
- E. Any member may resign from the Club by providing written notice to the Secretary.
- F. Any person ceasing to be a member forfeits all right to and claim upon the Club, its property and its funds and he has no right to the return of any part of his subscription. [The Management

Committee may refund an appropriate part of a resigning Member's subscription if it considers it appropriate taking account of all the circumstances.]

4. Elections

Nominations must have the consent of the person nominated to serve, if elected. All nominations must be seconded. Decisions are made by a simple majority of those voting.

5. General Meetings

- A. The club's Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be called each June by the Secretary.
- B. The Secretary is responsible for convening the meeting and verifying membership. Not less than 21 days' notice is to be given to all members for a General Meeting. The notice must include details of any proposed changes in the Club rules or Constitution.
- C. Items for discussion must be given to the Secretary in writing 7 days before the meeting.
- D. Copies of the Constitution will be provided and referred to at the General Meeting.
- E. The AGM will receive a report from officers of the Management Committee and a statement of the audited accounts.
- F. Officers and Management Committee members shall be elected at the AGM. Nominations should be sent to the Secretary prior to the meeting.
- G. Decisions are made by a simple majority of votes. Postal/written/proxy votes will be accepted and count towards quorum. The Chairperson shall have a casting vote if voting is indecisive.
- H. Only those fully paid up members of the club who are aged over 15 and have been fencing for more than 6 months are eligible to vote at a General Meeting.
- I. Voting interests of the U15 members shall be represented by 1 parent/guardian for every 15 members. The voters must be nominated and decided before or at the start of the meeting.
- J. The quorum for General Meetings shall be 25% of the membership, plus a Management Committee quorum (3).
- K. Decisions of the General Meeting bestow mandate to the Management Committee.
- L. The Management Committee has the right to call Extraordinary General Meetings (EGMs) outside the AGM. Procedures for EGMs will be the same as for the AGM.

6. The Management Committee

- A. **The Operation of the Management Committee** ('the Committee')
 - I. The club shall be managed by the Management Committee consisting of: **Chairperson, Head Coach, Secretary, Treasurer, Welfare Officer**. Only these officers will have the right to vote at meetings of the Management Committee. The quorum required for business to be agreed at Management Committee meetings will be 3 of these officers. Non-voting officer posts and honorary posts will be invited to Management Committee meetings.
 - II. The Committee shall serve to ensure the development and success of Tiverton Swords and follow its Constitution. The Committee will be responsible for adopting procedures, policy, codes of practice and rules that affect the organisation of the club.
 - III. The Committee will be convened by the Secretary and hold no less than 3 meetings per year.
 - IV. Decisions made by the Committee must have a majority vote of the eligible persons present. (1 vote per person even if they hold multiple Officer posts.) The Chairperson holds the casting vote if committee votes are indecisive.
 - V. The Chairperson may request votes by proxy or by telecommunication. Votes may be taken in this way without a meeting to enable timely decisions by the Committee.
 - VI. The Committee is responsible for audit of the Treasurer's statement of annual accounts which must be examined prior to the AGM. Audit may be done internally or externally depending on legal requirements.

- VII. The Committee will have powers to appoint and give mandate to sub-committees or project teams, and to appoint advisers as necessary to fulfill its business.
- VIII. The Committee will be responsible for disciplinary hearings of members who infringe the club rules/regulations/constitution. The Management Committee will be responsible for taking any action of suspension or discipline following such hearings.

B. Officers

- I. The Club shall have the following Officer posts:
 - Chairperson,
 - Head Coach,
 - Secretary,
 - Treasurer,
 - Welfare Officer (includes the Child Safeguarding Officer role),
 - Under-18 Representative,
 - Under-15 Representative (a parent or guardian of an U15 member).
- II. Only members are eligible to be elected officers and they must be fit and proper persons. Officers will be annually elected from the membership at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). All officers will retire each year but will be eligible for reappointment. One person may hold more than one post. No post shall be remunerated.
- III. Any vacant post will be raised for election at the next General Meeting (AGM or EGM). The Committee may decide to offer any post that becomes vacant to a second place candidate who was nominated for that post at the previous AGM or EGM. Where there is no such candidate the posts will be held vacant (if appropriate) or filled via co-option by the Committee.
- IV. The membership will be given written notice of the Committee appointing a new Officer to the Committee. If a majority of members register their dissatisfaction within 30 days then the post will be held vacant until the next General Meeting.

C. Outline of Roles and Responsibilities

Chairperson: Acts to promote Tiverton Swords and ensure a well managed club. Acts as the principal officer throughout the year, making decisions when the need arises in consultation with other Committee members. Coordinates activities of the Management Committee. Delegates and deputises other duties as the need arises. Chairs club meetings.

Head Coach: The principal person in charge of training at Tiverton Swords. The Head Coach is responsible for all aspects of the sport and takes leadership of fencer performance and development. Ensures the venue and kit are safe, well managed and appropriate to the Club requirements.

Secretary: The principal point of contact for Tiverton Swords, dealing with club correspondence and public communications. Deals with non-financial administration such as membership records. Convenes club meetings and provides the secretariat role by provision of papers or other information; and records minutes, action points and decisions.

Treasurer: The person in charge of financial administration and record-keeping for Tiverton Swords, and management of the club's bank account. Deals with venue booking and payment. Collects fees, membership charges and funds raised. Sets the annual club budget and enables the Committee to monitor budgetary performance by providing details of the club's current financial status and activities.

Welfare Officer (includes the Child Safeguarding Officer role): Ensures the club provides an environment that is safe, supportive, fair and accessible to all. Ensures that Tiverton Swords maintains suitable policy, practice and procedure with regard to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.

Under-18 Representative: Seeks to understand the views and requirements of the under-18 members of Tiverton Swords and advises the Committee to benefit the club.

Under-15 Representative (a parent or guardian of an Under-15 member): Seeks to understand

the views and requirements of the under-15 members of Tiverton Swords and advises the Committee to benefit the club.

D. Honorary Posts

The Club may award Honorary Posts (examples below) whose appointments are decided by the Management Committee. No post shall be remunerated.

Ambassador, Armourer, Coach / Assistant Coach, Event Secretary / Competition Secretary, Fundraising Secretary, President, Social Secretary, Vice-Chairperson, Web Wizard.

7. Finance

- A. All Club finances including fundraising, income and expenditure are the responsibility of the Management Committee.
- B. The club's Treasurer is responsible for administering the Club finances. An audited statement of annual accounts will be presented by the Treasurer at the AGM.
- C. All Club monies will be banked in an account held in the name of the Club.
- D. The financial year of the Club will end on 31 March.
- E. Any cheques drawn against Club funds should hold the signatures of the Treasurer plus at least one other of the Chairperson or the Secretary or the Head Coach. A minimum of two persons must provide signatures; it cannot be one person holding multiple posts.
- F. Cheques shall be used in priority over other expenditure transaction methods. Other expenditure transaction methods such as online purchases must have prior approval in writing by a majority of the Management Committee including the Treasurer.
- G. All surplus income gains or profits are to be reinvested in the Club. No surpluses or assets will be distributed to members or third parties.
- H. Nothing in clause 7.G shall prevent the Club from entering an agreement with a member for the supply of goods or services, or for employment by the Club, provided that such arrangements are approved by the Management Committee (without the member being present) and are agreed with the member on an arm's length basis.
- I. Any contracts or financial arrangements for the Club must be approved by the Management Committee. None are valid until approved.
- II. Any reimbursement of costs must be endorsed by the Management Committee including approval by the Treasurer who has the lead responsibility for finances.
- I. The Management Committee has sole authority with regard to sales, charges made for services, external service providers, fees, fines and membership subscription prices.

8. Assets/property/effects.

These are the responsibility of the Management Committee at all times who shall ensure that they are maintained in good order and will keep an inventory.

9. Dissolution

- A. If at any General Meeting of the club, a resolution be passed (agreed by vote) calling for the dissolution of the club, the Secretary shall immediately convene an Extraordinary General Meeting to be held not less than one month after the discussion and vote on the resolution.
- B. If at the next Extraordinary General Meeting, the resolution is carried by at least two-thirds of the full members attending the meeting or by written proxy vote, the Committee shall thereupon, or at another specified date, proceed to realise the assets of the club and discharge all debts and liabilities of the club.
- C. The Committee shall inform British Fencing (BF) in writing.
- D. The club recognises that individuals purchasing equipment for the club with their own funds deserve reimbursement. If in the event of dissolution this has not taken place, those individuals

have the right to reclaim that equipment equivalent to the outstanding debt with the existing committee's supervision.

- E. All remaining equipment belonging to the club shall be distributed amongst local clubs in the Devon county or in the South West region.
- F. All remaining assets and monies shall be passed to British Fencing (BF) for use in the South West Region; or to a suitable sport charity.

10. Declaration

Tiverton Swords Fencing Club hereby adopts and accepts this Constitution as a current operating guide regulating the actions of members.

Name: _____ . Position: **Chairperson.**

Signed: _____ . Date: _____ .

Name: _____ . Position: **Secretary.**

Signed: _____ . Date: _____ .

End.

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Notes

Grammar

Words denoting the singular number include the plural number and vice versa; words denoting the masculine gender include the feminine gender; and words denoting persons include bodies corporate (however incorporated) and unincorporated, including unincorporated associations of persons and partnerships.

Written communication

Where the constitution refers to votes, notifications and approval "in writing" or "written" this means by a written form of communication which includes email.

Fit and proper persons

Any persons managing the club must be able and trustworthy. As per guidance for charities and community amateur sports clubs, such persons will not have been involved in misrepresentation or fraudulent behaviour, and will not have convictions for such offences (or all previous convictions will be spent).

British Fencing [britishfencing.com]

This is the sport's national governing body. The BF website has registers of Coaches, Referees and affiliated clubs. BF has published rules, guidance on club management and policies on key issues such as child safeguarding. <http://britishfencing.com/clubs/clubdevelopment>