



RULES AND CONSTITUTION OF DARLINGTON RIDING CLUB

1. Darlington & District Riding Club

The club will be called Darlington & District Riding Club (Hereinafter known as 'The club') and may also be known as DDRC. Darlington & District Riding Club is affiliated to The British Horse Society. The club may also be registered with appropriate statutory bodies as required by its constitution and organisation.

2. Club Structures / Legal Structures

The Club is a membership organisation run by its members.

3. Aims & Objectives

The aims and objectives of the club will be to undertake the following within Area 2:

- To promote participation in horse riding as a sport and recreational activity within the local community.
- To provide opportunities for coaching and competitive opportunities within the amateur sport of horse riding.
- To promote good fellowship amongst riders.
- To improve and maintain the standard of riding and horsemanship.
- To support and co-operate with organisations that promote equestrianism in all forms.
- To concern itself with any matter which will benefit the horse and horse user in the local community.
- To provide suitable facilities to further the aims of the club.

4. Membership

- a. Membership of the club is open to anyone interested in promoting, coaching, volunteering or participating in horse riding, regardless of sex, age, disability, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, religion or other beliefs.
- b. Senior membership shall consist of persons who have attained the age of eighteen years and over. Junior members shall consist of persons aged seventeen years and under who, having been accepted by the committee, have paid the due subscription for the current period. Honorary membership may be conferred by the committee upon any person deemed by them to have rendered notable service to the club.
- c. To become a member, persons must agree to the conditions of the club and pay the membership fee via the BRC membership portal.

- d. The membership will consist of the following categories:
- Senior Member
 - Junior Member
 - Honorary Member
 - Non-Riding Member
- e. The committee may refuse or remove membership only for good cause, such as conduct or character likely to bring the club, the sport, or The BHS into disrepute. Appeal against refusal or removal may be made to a committee of members established for the purpose. However, refusal of membership due to the lack of available facilities is allowable on a non-discriminatory basis.
- f. All members will be subject to this constitution and by joining the club will be deemed to accept these regulations and any codes of practice that the club has adopted.
- g. The membership runs for 12 months from point of purchase. Once this period is up a member must renew their membership via the BRC membership platform to remain a current member of the club or their membership will expire.
- h. The annual subscription shall be determined by the committee.
- i. The Club may communicate with members electronically, including by email and electronic publication, where appropriate.
- j. The Committee may keep records, accounts, minutes and membership details in electronic form, provided these are stored securely and in line with data protection requirements.
- k. The Club shall comply with applicable data protection legislation. Personal data shall be used solely for the purposes of administering the Club and shall not be shared without lawful basis.

5. 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 of sport 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 everyone equally within the context of their sport, regardless of age, ability, 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 oppose discriminatory behaviour and promote equality of opportunity.
- e. The club will deal with any incidence of discriminatory behaviour seriously, according to club disciplinary procedures.
- f. The Club aims to be an “Everyone Welcome” organisation. Whatever an individual’s ability, background, culture or identity they are welcome to be part of our equestrian community. Please see our [Everyone Welcome Policy](#) for further information.

6. Committee

- a. The affairs of the club shall be conducted by a committee which shall consist of Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and a minimum of three other committee members.
- b. The officers of the committee shall be elected at the AGM.
- c. All committee members must be members of the Club.
- d. If agreed, the committee shall elect a Vice Chair from among its members.
- e. The term of office for the committee shall be three years and members shall be eligible for re-election.
- f. If the post of any officer or ordinary committee member should fall vacant after such an election, the committee shall have the power to fill the vacancy until the succeeding Annual General Meeting.
- g. The committee will be responsible for adopting new policies (including with regard to Safeguarding, Health and Safety and Disciplinary matters), codes of practice and rules that affect the organisation of the club.
- h. The committee will have powers to appoint any advisers to the committee as necessary to fulfil its business.
- i. The committee will be responsible for disciplinary hearings of members who infringe the club rules/regulations/constitution. The committee will be responsible for taking any action of suspension or discipline following such hearings.
- j. The committee meetings will be convened by the Secretary of the Club and be held no less than four meetings per year.
- k. Only the elected officers and elected committee members will have the right to vote at committee meetings.
- l. The quorum required for Committee meetings will be a minimum of 50% of the officers in post at the time of the meeting. No business shall be transacted unless a quorum is present.

- m. No junior member may be a voting member of the club. However, if the club has a junior membership the committee may appoint a junior committee to discuss matters relevant to the junior membership. This committee, through the Chairperson of said committee, may make recommendations to the adult committee for their consideration.
- n. Any Committee member with a personal or financial interest in a matter under discussion must declare that interest and, where appropriate, withdraw from the decision-making process.
- o. Any officer stepping down from their role shall, where reasonably practicable, hand over all relevant records, information and club property to their successor or to the Chair.
- p. In exceptional circumstances requiring urgent action, the Chair, in consultation with at least two other Committee members, may take interim decisions in the best interests of the Club. Any such decisions shall be reported to the Committee within 14 days or at the next committee meeting, whichever is sooner.

7. Finances

- a. The club treasurer will be responsible for the finances of the club.
- b. The financial year of the club will run from 1st January and end on 31st December in each year.
- c. All club monies will be banked in an account held in the name of the club.
- d. An audited statement of annual accounts will be presented by the treasurer at the Annual General Meeting.
- e. Any cheques, BACS or other electronic means of payment drawn against club funds must be authorised in accordance with the Club's dual-authorisation requirements.
- f. All members of the club shall, if it is not an incorporated organisation, be jointly and severally responsible for the financial liabilities of the club.
- g. All payments made from Club accounts must require authorisation by a minimum of two officers of the Club.
- h. No single officer shall have sole authority to approve or make payments.
- i. The Treasurer shall manage Club finances in accordance with the instructions of the committee and shall not make discretionary payments outside agreed Club business.
- j. The Treasurer shall provide regular financial reports to the committee and present a full statement of accounts to the AGM. Financial records shall be made available to the committee upon reasonable request.
- k. All Club expenditure must be authorised in advance and be wholly for the benefit of the Club.
- l. No officer or member may use Club funds for personal expenditure, including but not limited to competition entries, stabling, training, or membership fees, unless explicitly approved in advance by the Committee and recorded in the minutes.

- m. In the event of concern regarding financial management, the Committee may introduce temporary safeguards, including additional oversight or restricted access to accounts, in order to protect the interests of the Club.

8. Annual General Meetings and Extraordinary General Meetings

- a. General meetings are the means whereby, subject to any other constitutional provisions, the members of the club exercise their democratic rights in conducting the Club's affairs.
- b. The club shall hold the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in the month of January to:
- Approve the minutes of the previous year's AGM.
 - Receive reports from the Chair and Secretary.
 - Receive a report from the Treasurer and approve the Annual Accounts.
 - Receive a report from those responsible for certifying the Club's accounts.
 - Elect the members on to the committee.
 - Agree the membership fees for the following year.
 - Consider any proposed changes to the Constitution.
 - Deal with other relevant business.
 - Confirm details of Insurances.
- c. Notice of the AGM will be given by the club Secretary with at least 28 days' notice in writing (including electronic communications) stating the location of the meeting, its time and a brief description of the business to be transacted shall be given to all members.
- d. Except in exceptional circumstances, one third of the members of the committee shall retire at the meeting, typically based on length of service. Retiring members shall be eligible for re-election.
- e. Proposed changes to the constitution shall be sent to the Secretary prior to the AGM, who shall circulate them at least 7 days in writing before an AGM.
- f. All fully paid-up members have the right to vote at the AGM.
- g. The quorum for AGMs will be 25% of the membership.
- h. Members who are unable to attend the Annual General Meeting may appoint another member as a proxy to vote on their behalf, provided written notice is received by the Secretary prior to the meeting.
- i. Where appropriate, the Committee may also allow voting by written or electronic means in advance of the meeting.
- j. The Chair of the Club shall hold a deliberative as well as a casting vote at general and committee meetings.
- k. An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) shall be called by an application in writing at least 14

days before the appointed date to the Secretary supported by at least 10% of the members of the Club. The committee shall also have the power to call an EGM on 14 days' notice by decision of a simple majority of the committee members. Members shall be sent details of the subject of business of such an EGM.

- l. All procedures shall follow those outlined above for AGMs.
- m. Committee meetings and, where appropriate, General Meetings may be held wholly or partly by electronic means, provided all participants can communicate effectively with one another.

9. Amendments to the constitution

This Constitution may only be amended by a resolution passed by a majority of members voting at an Annual General Meeting or an Emergency General Meeting, provided notice of the proposed amendment has been given in advance.

10. Discipline and appeals

- a. All concerns, allegations or reports of poor practice/abuse relating to the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults will be recorded and responded to swiftly and appropriately in accordance with the **safeguarding policy and procedures of the Club** which shall be approved yearly. The Club Welfare Officer (CWO) is the lead contact for all members in the event of any safeguarding concerns. Safeguarding considerations shall take precedence over all other Club activities and decisions.
- b. All complaints regarding the behaviour of members should be presented and submitted in writing to the Secretary.
- c. Any suspected misuse of Club funds shall be treated as a serious matter.
- d. The Committee is authorised to suspend access to Club finances and take appropriate action including referral to external authorities where necessary.
- e. The committee will meet to hear complaints within 21 days of a complaint being lodged. The committee has the power to take appropriate disciplinary action including the termination of membership.
- f. 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.
- g. There will be the right of appeal to the committee following disciplinary action being announced. The committee should consider the appeal within 30 days of the Secretary receiving the appeal.
- h. All disciplinary matters shall be handled fairly, confidentially and without prejudice.

11. Liabilities, Indemnities and Insurance

- a. Depending upon the Constitution of the club, the committee members may have personal

liability for all liabilities and indemnities of the club. They shall consider carefully their obligations in this regard. If the club is formed with its own legal identity, liabilities will be limited to the value of the shares or membership held by individual members of the club.

- b. Whilst affiliated to the British Horse Society, the club shall be entitled to benefit from Public Liability Insurance and Employer’s Liability Insurance as per the BHS Insurance arranged by SEIB Insurance Brokers Ltd. The insurances provided are subject to the policy terms and conditions. Please refer to the full insurance policy documents which have been provided to you, a copy is available on request from the BHS. The club may also take out Property Owners Liability, Directors and Officer’s Liability/Trustee Indemnity and other insurance as required and shall present details of such insurance to its AGM each year. The club shall seek to take out appropriate insurances, particularly with regard to potential property damage or personal injury claims to which the club may be subject based on its ordinary club activities, and confirmation as to the details of the insurances held shall be presented to each AGM of the club. Please contact SEIB Insurance Brokers Ltd who will be able to discuss arranging additional insurances for you.

12. 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 dissolution, provided that the club is solvent, all debts should be cleared with any club funds. Any assets of the club that remain following this will be transferred and not distributed to the committee, as resolved by the EGM or AGM to a suitable Not for Profit organisation or the British Horse Society.

13. Declaration

Darlington & District Riding Club hereby adopts and accepts this constitution [together with the Articles / other formal constitutional documents presented to it]. This Constitution was adopted by resolution at the AGM held on 23rd January 2026.

Name	Sheila Robinson	Position	Chair
Sign		Date	

Name	Katie Walton	Position	Treasurer
Sign		Date	