

# Draft Club Constitution

**1** The name of the Club is: Worthing Gazelles

**2** The Club colours are black and pink

**3** The objectives of the Club are to promote community participation in healthy recreation by providing facilities for running to (a) help improving fitness and health and (b) coaching, competition and other services to support these activities.

**4** The Club shall be affiliated to England Athletics

**5** The Club shall be deemed as non-profit making and, as such, any surplus income or gains shall be reinvested into the Club or donated to local charities. Surpluses or assets cannot be distributed to Club members or third parties.

**6** The management of the Club is vested in a committee comprising a Chairperson, a vice-Chairperson, a Club Secretary, a Membership Secretary, a Treasurer, a Welfare Officer and a Health and Safety Officer.

**7** Election of members to serve on the committee will be at the Club's Annual General Meeting (AGM) by a show of hands. Should more than one person be proposed for an office, and a job share is neither appropriate nor agreeable, the people concerned will be asked to leave the room whilst the vote is taken.

**8** In the event that a member chooses to run against an incumbent committee member, the member challenging needs to win a super-majority of two-thirds of the votes.

**9** To avoid conflicts of interest, members of the committee should either be registered with EA/UKA with the Club as their first claim; or be unaffiliated with EA/UKA. (i.e. They should not be second claim)

**10** Members are eligible to serve on the committee after six months as a full member

**11** The Committee will have the power to co-opt additional members periodically and for specific purposes. Such co-opted members shall have voting rights. Any members co-opted onto the Committee can serve for up to two years, at which point, their continued membership will need to be ratified by the AGM.

**12** Club membership open to amateur athletes as defined by UK Athletics

**13** All members will be subject to the regulations of the Constitution and, by joining the Club, will be deemed to have accepted those regulations, policies and Codes of Conduct the Club has adopted.

**14** To resign, a member should inform the Club Chairperson in writing

**15** Any member found guilty of misconduct will be subject to the Club's Code of Conduct policy

**16** Each member shall pay an annual subscription, which shall be determined at the AGM

**17** The Club's financial year is from 1<sup>st</sup> February – 31<sup>st</sup> January

**18** The Club Membership subscriptions will become due on 1<sup>st</sup> April. England Athletics registrations will also become due on 1<sup>st</sup> April. Both Club and EA subscriptions must be paid by 30<sup>th</sup> June. If payment is not received by this date, membership will assume to be lapsed.

**19** The AGM will be held in February or March

**20** The Club Chairperson must give at least 14 days' notice of the AGM and provide all members with an agenda

The agenda will comprise but is not limited to:

- 21**
- Membership report
  - Financial report
  - Subscription fees

Committee meetings may be arranged as need arise. Representation of half the Committee roles is required for quorum.

- 22**
- If quorum is not met, the meeting should be adjourned and rescheduled by the Chairperson with at least a week's notice. Three Committee members for that subsequent meeting is required for quorum.

- 23**
- Changes to the Constitution may only be made by the Committee and which must be voted on by full members.

- 24**
- First claim members should wear the club strip when representing the club at any race having entered under the UK Athletics "affiliated club" entry option

- 25**
- In the event that the Club is permanently disbanded by over two-thirds majority decision at a General Meeting of the members, then that meeting shall nominate a properly registered charity to receive any surplus of the Club's funds, including proceeds from the disposal of Club assets. Club trophies donated to the Club should be returned to the donor. Club trophies purchased by the Club should be given into the safe custody of a Club member nominated by the meeting. Any Club asset which includes the Club logo (e.g. kit) may only be sold to Club members.

## Glossary of Terms

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>AGM</b>	Annual General Meeting
<b>EGM</b>	Extraordinary General Meeting
<b>England Athletics</b>	England Athletics Limited (company number 05583713) (or its successor body)
<b>General Meeting</b>	A meeting of all the members, being either an AGM or an EGM
<b>UKA</b>	UK Athletics Limited (company number 03686940) (or its successor body)

## Changes and Discussion Points

I used the GRR Constitution as a good starting point. This one is the same as the GRR one, except in the following places:

- 1** Name as ratified at meeting 8/11/23.
- 2** Club colours as ratified at EGM
- 6** Committee members as discussed at meeting 8/11/23.
- 22** Committee meeting quorum as discussed at meeting 8/11/23. I've added a 'second attempt' clause where the quorum is reduced to avoid the situation where nothing can be progressed due to people's inability/unwillingness to attend.
- 17** This is a change from the GRR constitution, in consultation with the Treasurer. This date range is suggested so that the financial year is concluded and reportable before the AGM. It also includes the income and expenditure for the same year's Hangover 5 event (i.e. not 1<sup>st</sup> Jan – 31<sup>st</sup> Dec) and incorporates all early and late membership payments in the same year as well (i.e. not 1<sup>st</sup> Apr – 30<sup>th</sup> Mar).
- 7** Added in a bit about a job share, so that people can share the role if agreeable and appropriate.
- 8** Obviously this will only be true for new Committee members after the date that this constitution is agreed.
- 9** Unchanged. Clearly a loophole to #9, but that's probably no bad thing for the Committee to be able to overrule that.
- 18** Unchanged. In black and white though that there's a two-month window for people to pay before kicking kicked out of the WhatsApp group.  
  
We have discussed having a Hardship fund, for people that are struggling financially. However, I think that's not for this document; anybody in receipt of this fund is still deemed to have paid.  
  
Can people pay before 1<sup>st</sup> April? Obviously has to be after the AGM, so that the subscription fees have been determined, but immediately after that?
- 3** Changed this to the unimaginative default one suggested by EA. If anyone's got anything more imaginative (but sufficiently vague and futureproof), I'm up for it.

# London Marathon Club Entry Policy

The London Marathon traditionally has a policy of awarding EA-affiliated Clubs a number of places, based on the Club's size. Where the Club qualifies for a place, it will apply for the maximum number of places available.

All members (that are EA-affiliated through the club as their first or only claim) will be invited to apply for the London Marathon club entry places, with at least a two-week window for applications (where possible – i.e. it doesn't clash with other deadlines).

The window should not open until the general entry ballot results have been fully released, so that potential applicants can pursue that option first (and should be encouraged to do so). Applicants are welcome to remove themselves from the Club's selection process at any point before selection takes place to encourage applications (i.e., "Apply now and think later!"); however, this should be in writing to the Chair, such as an email.

## The ballot

In the likely event that we have more applications than places, the Club's selected athlete will be decided by ballot.

The ballot itself can be done physically (i.e., names in a hat) or electronically (i.e., a random generator). However, it should be conducted with as many witnesses as possible.

This is good for a couple of reasons:

- To ensure the full transparency of the balloting process
- As a social event: the London Marathon club ballot should be celebrated, with as many club members and applicants invited to build the tension!

Transparency is absolutely critical here: At the time of the ballot, reasonable efforts should be made to demonstrate that all applicants had equal opportunity.

All applicants will have equal chance. In particular:

- No preference will be awarded due to expected finish time
- No preference will be awarded due to the number of marathons previously completed or booked for the future
- No preference will be awarded due to length of time as a member of the Club
- No preference will be awarded due to having 'won' or consistently 'lost' the ballot in previous years
- No preference will be awarded due to seniority in the club (e.g., part of the committee)
- No preference will be awarded based on whether they also applied for the general ballot, made 'Good for Age' or championship applications, charity places, or other forms of possible entry. (However, they should be encouraged to do so if possible, simply to maximise the number of members that can participate in the race.)

This is not an exhaustive list, but a good indication of our policy on equality of opportunity.

## Expectations of the selected runner

However, there are a couple of rules. The club representative (runner) must:

- Be a full, paid-up member of the club at the time of the ballot and at the time of the marathon (these may be different years)
- Be EA-affiliated with Worthing Gazelles as their first/only claim
- Wear a club kit or club colours for the race, where possible and appropriate
- Make every effort to sign up and pay their entry fee within the timeframes set by London Marathon. (We don't want the instance where the club place is not used with other applicants having wanted the

place.) If paying for the club place in the appropriate timeframe is problematic, please consult the Discretionary Hardship Fund policy.

- Make reasonable efforts to run the race, stay fit and avoid deferring their place. (Of course, this can often not be helped, but every reasonable effort should be made to avoid it.)

Where these rules are not adhered to may lead to applicants being excluded from future London Marathon club entry ballots, in accordance with the appeals process in the club Complaints Policy.

## Appeals

As many of us know, not being successful in the London Marathon ballot sucks. Really sucks. Applicants are welcome to appeal (please see the Complaints Policy) but, unless there is evidence of deliberate wrongdoing, it is likely to be unsuccessful.

# Discretionary Hardship Fund

Worthing Gazelles would not want anybody suffering significant financial hardship to be prevented from participating in running. To help combat this, a discretionary hardship fund has been established, in order to cover the costs of such items as membership fees, race fees and Club merchandise. The fund can be accessed by approaching the Welfare Officer in confidence.

The Chair, Treasurer and Welfare Officer will jointly decide by reviewing each case in the following areas:

- The runner's financial circumstances (e.g. low income, student, unemployed, or on benefits due to disability or health)
- The runner's contribution of time and effort to the club and raising a positive profile of the Club
- How the runner can give or has given back in other ways to the local running community.

Successful applications are dependent on there being sufficient funds available.

Applications have no upper limit but are influenced by funds available in the club and the reason for application. Evidence of financial circumstances may be requested.

Repeated applications in a short time period (6 months or less), may be turned down unless personal circumstances have considerably deteriorated. The decision made by the committee is final. The Club reserves the right to distribute any funds as deemed appropriate. Appeals are not possible. For more information on this, please contact the Welfare Officer in confidence or by email via the contact us page.

# Code of Conduct

## Background

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to ensure a safe, secure and respectful environment for all members of the club, and to uphold high standards of ethical behaviour for the club, its coaches, its members and committee. The scope of this document extends to:

- The Club's training schedule and any other organised sessions.
- Post run drinks and meals, socials and other events, international and domestic trips and holidays.
- Races organised by the Club, or where a member represents the club in club kit.
- Social media, including the Club website

## Organisation aim

Worthing Gazelles is welcoming of all prospective members who share our values. We aim to embrace diversity and be inclusive by ensuring we attract, develop, support and retain as wide a range of members as possible. Our Code of Conduct supports this through:

- Promoting a culture of tolerance and mutual respect between members, and with people outside of the Club.
- All members are treated fairly, regardless of personal differences and athletic abilities.
- A zero-tolerance policy of bullying, harassment, discrimination or victimisation of any kind.
- Dealing with any concerns in a fair and robust manner.

Our members must agree to:

- Read and agree to this Code of Conduct.
- Respect the equal rights, dignity and worth of every member of the club, regardless of ability, sex, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability, socio-economic status or any other characteristic.
- Help promote a culture of diversity and inclusivity within the club.
- Be open and honest in dealings with others and respect their confidentiality.
- Respect the club's zero-tolerance approach to bullying, harassment and intimidation of other club members, including the committee and coaches.
- Not act in a way that brings the Club into disrepute or puts its interests at risk.
- Respect the facilities we use, and the staff who work there, and follow the rules and policies adopted by those facilities.
- Raise issues of concerns in an appropriate and timely way, in line with the Code of Conduct complaints process.

## Confidentiality

Details of people and events provided to members are done so for their own use in attending or organising Gazelles events and should not be passed to non-members except to enable them to attend as a guest where invited. The club keeps addresses and other information about members securely, and will never share those details with 3rd parties, except for the purposes of club affiliations.

## Breaches of the Code of Conduct

A copy of our complaints process, as well as the appeals process, can be obtained by request to any member of the committee and/or on the Club website.

## Glossary

In general terms, bullying and harassment means that something has happened to someone that is unwelcome, unwarranted and causes a detrimental effect.

- **Bullying** is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour. Bullying may be an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure an individual, or group of individuals.
- **Harassment** is unwanted conduct affecting the dignity of people or any other club-related environment or situation. It may be related to a protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation), or any personal characteristic of the individual, and may be persistent or an isolated incident. The impact on an individual may be unintentional, but nevertheless be unwelcome and cause offence.
- **Discrimination** is where an individual is treated less favourably because of a “protected characteristic” (i.e. age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation).
- **Victimisation** occurs when an individual is treated less favourably because they have made a complaint or allegation, intend to complain or have given evidence or information about a situation involving discrimination.



# Complaints Policy

Members need to be able to raise any genuine concerns knowing they will be dealt with promptly, sensitively and fairly.

## Informal resolution

If a member believes they are being treated inappropriately, it may be best to try and resolve the situation informally. Raising an issue at the outset may prevent it escalating or prevent a repeat of it. In many cases the person will be unaware that their behaviour is offensive and asking them to stop may be sufficient to resolve the situation.

In some cases, an incident relating to bullying and harassment may be so serious that it is inappropriate to attempt to resolve it informally. If this is the case, members should raise the issue formally with any member of the committee.

## Formal process

- Once raised, the committee member will discuss the issue with the chair/committee as appropriate to the nature of the complaint.
- Confidentiality is an important part of this policy. Everyone involved in this policy – whether making a complaint or involved in an investigation is responsible for maintaining the high level of confidentiality required.
- Details of the investigation and the names of the person making the complaint and the person/people being complained about must only be disclosed on a 'need to know' basis.
- A committee member would normally conduct the investigation unless they are in some way implicated. In these circumstances, the Chair will carry out the investigation. The investigation will be thorough, impartial and objective and carried out with sensitivity to the rights of all involved. The investigation will be undertaken in a confidential manner.
- Consideration will be given to whether individuals could be temporarily suspended from attending any Club training/runs/races/social events until the process has concluded.
- Members who deliberately provide false information or raise issues maliciously could be considered to have breached the Code of Conduct and will be subject to any related consequences
- Members who make complaints or who participate in good faith in any investigation must not suffer any type of victimisation or retaliation as a result.
- Members who have found to have retaliated against or victimised someone for making a complaint or assisting in good faith with an investigation under this policy will also be investigated. If a breach of the Code of Conduct is found to have taken place, following an investigation, the findings of the investigation will be discussed with the member by made the complaint (although they may not be made aware of any sanction). This will be carried out by the person conducting the investigation.
- Any action or sanction deemed necessary to the club member who breached the code of conduct will be carried out by the Chair. Where the breach is less serious, an oral warning maybe given, or if more serious, a written warning will be given.
- If a 2nd occurrence happens, following an oral or written warning, this would result in dismissal from the club.
- If the breach of the Code of Conduct is deemed a serious breach, then the member may be expelled from the club without need for a written warning.

## Appeal process

The subject of any complaint may appeal to the committee in respect of any disciplinary action being taken within 3 calendar months of the decision being made and shall have the right to demand that the matter be re-heard by a panel of 3 arbitrators.

- The arbitrators must not be members of the committee who have been involved with the original decision-making process, or whose knowledge and understanding of the case may impact the appeal process.
- The panel could include a member of the club who isn't a member of the committee, and may include a person from outside the Club, including a representative of a sports body.
- The arbitrators shall have the power to annul the suspension, exclusion or other disciplinary action, or to annul it subject to the performance of any condition, which the arbitrators see fit to impose. The arbitrators' decision is final, and there is no further appeal process.
- Members whose exclusions are upheld on appeal, or who have not appealed within 3 months, may not reapply for membership.
- Where the member in respect of whom the complaint is made is an official on the committee, he or she shall not take part in any committee proceedings outlined above.

# Health and Safety Policy

As far as possible, the Club will aim to protect the health and safety of all members engaged in Club training and participating in Club competition.

## The Policy

- This policy shall be adhered to by all Club members, guests, or visitors.
- The Club take the health and safety of its members and those who come into contact with the Club seriously. The objective of this Policy is to ensure the health and safety of Club members and those who come into contact with the Club through the provision and maintenance of a safe environment and the operation of safe practices, where reasonably practicable. This includes all persons who have not joined the Club but who run with the Club or those visiting for any reason.
- The Health and Safety Officer, in partnership with the Committee and Club members, will take all reasonable steps to achieve this objective in the duties listed below.
- Health and safety are the responsibility of all Club members, and they should ensure their expected duties and responsibilities are understood.

## The Scope

- The scope of the Policy includes scheduled training or coaching sessions and any other recognised training or sessions provided by the Club.
- The scope of this Policy does not cover any activities conducted outside of arranged Club sessions such as social events, races, or any other non-Club related business.
- Whilst using any provided sports or changing facility not owned by the Club, this Policy will be superseded by those facilities own rules, regulations, and policies. These must be followed at all times both before, during and after any Club sessions by all members.

## Committee responsibilities and duties

As required, the Committee shall review all health and safety matters at the Committee meetings. This will include:

- All issues, concerns, incidents, and/or accidents which have been reported to the Health and Safety Officer (HSO).
- Actions which are required to be taken to ensure compliance with all risk assessments carried out by the HSO on behalf of the Committee.
- The HSO will complete any risk assessments, as required, for all Club runs, training, coaching or events on behalf of the Committee.
- Dynamic risk assessments will be continually carried out by all run leaders, coaches, or responsible persons before, during and after any runs, training, coaching or events as advised by the HSO.
- The HSO will maintain records of any incidents, accidents or emergencies for the statutory period required. This will include any investigations carried out on behalf of the Committee that resulted from incidents and/or accidents.
- The HSO will ensure that the Policy is available for all members in either an electronic or printed version as well as being available via the Club's website. The HSO will also bring the Policy to the attention of new Club members upon joining or as a refresher to exiting members upon renewal of membership as notified by the Club Secretary.
- The Committee will encourage all members to report any and all health and safety concerns or issues to the HSO as soon as is practicably possible.
- The Committee will review the Policy annually as a minimum requirement.

## Member's responsibilities and duties

- Members must familiarise themselves with the Policy.

- All members will take reasonable care for their own health and safety and any others who may be affected by their acts or omissions such as other members and/or the general public.
- Members should ensure they are aware of the planned route; any hazards present and their own level of fitness, before embarking on any run. All routes and their associated risk assessment will be made available to all members. This is as well as a briefing given by the run leader prior to commencement of the session.
- Members participating in any run will be considered to have declared themselves medical fit and as such will not hold the Club or Committee responsible for any incident resulting from a personal medical condition or injury.
- Those members who suffer from any medical condition should ensure they have with them all relevant details about the nature of their condition and a contact name, address, and phone number for use in the event of an emergency.
- Voluntary disclosure of medical conditions shall be the responsibility of the individual member in circumstances where they consider an individual risk assessment may be appropriate for their health and safety. In these instances, the HSO will contact them to discuss the matter further.
- Members should understand the value of wearing appropriate clothing for the time of year and appropriate footwear for any variations in conditions or terrain.
- Members should take responsibility for making themselves highly visible when running in the dark by wearing bright clothing, preferably with fluorescent or reflective strips as drivers may find it difficult to see them.
- Members should consider wearing head and/or chest torches during the autumn and winter months to improve visibility when running and to also make themselves more visible to any drivers, cyclists, or members of the public they may encounter.
- Member must always give priority to other pedestrians or slower runners.
- Members should exercise caution when crossing roads as oncoming road traffic may not be obvious to them due to blind bends, poor street lighting or reduced visibility due to weather conditions, for example. Any road crossing will be noted on the risk assessment for the route and all run leaders will ensure that members have safely crossed, where practicable.
- As a majority of running incidents/accidents are usually associated with slips, trips and/or falls, members should exercise additional care when running together along narrow pathways/pavements, whilst ascending or descending on routes, travelling over uneven surfaces and during trail runs.

## Incidents and accidents

- Members should familiarise themselves with any individuals who hold a recognised first aid qualification within the Club. These individuals will also be highlighted to new members upon joining the Club, or guests when joining a session.
- In the event of an incident or accident, member(s) should assess whether the member involved has sustained any type of injury and if so, locate the nearest first aider, where possible. It is advisable to have two members remain with the injured person(s) and not to move them unless there is an imminent threat to life. If required, a member must contact the emergency services via 999 or if using a mobile phone 112. The HSO and/or a member of the Committee must also be notified as soon as is practicable after the incident or accident has been resolved.
- Once the HSO and/or a member of Committee has been made aware that an incident or accident has occurred they will.
- Keep a formal record for future reference.
- Notify other members, when appropriate/required.
- Carry out an investigation of the incident/accident, reporting any findings and recommendations for improvements/actions required, where necessary.
- If a member becomes aware of any health and safety issues or concerns, they should raise this with the HSO as soon as it is practicable.

- The HSO will consider all health and safety issues, or concerns raised and report them to the Committee for any action that may be considered necessary.

## Endorsement

The Policy is accepted and endorsed by its members and is reviewed by all Committee members annually.