

Aycliffe Fell Walking Club

CONSTITUTION AND ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION

The purpose of this document is to set down principles relating to the control and administration of the Aycliffe Fell Walking Club (hereinafter referred to as the Club). The Club represents a sub-section of the INEOS Sports and Social Club (hereinafter referred to as the S&SC) and as such must conform to the regulations governing the S&SC itself. This document shall not be adjusted, where to do so would alter interpretation of its content, without reference to Club members at an Annual General Meeting (hereinafter AGM); acceptance or rejection of changes being expressed via a motion passed at the said AGM, only fully paid-up club members being qualified to vote. Proposed changes must subsequently be ratified by the S&SC, with written approval being issued by the executive committee, before the adjustments can be formally incorporated and adopted.

1. The overall aim of the Club is to promote social interaction for the good of members of the S&SC and the local community. This is to be achieved through the organisation of regular walking activities and other outdoor events. An annual membership fee is to be levied for those wishing to participate in Club activities. The Club's full name as above is to appear on all published documentation including walk notification sheets, meeting agendas and minutes, fund raising schemes including prize draw tickets and whenever recruiting or other announcements are made to the wider public.

2. The Club shall administer its affairs in accordance with good practice and in a democratic and professional manner. Responsible officers namely a Chairperson, a Secretary and a Treasurer, shall be elected along with at least two committee members willing to assist in the running of the Club, especially during Club walks. Elections shall be from within the Club's membership, with those appointed serving in office for an agreed term, such elections being held at the AGM. Further activities that fall outside of recognised core committee duties may also be identified from time to time, and as a result it may become necessary to identify a volunteer individual(s) that would be prepared to take a lead in association with such activities, as would be the case with, for example, First Aiders, Liaison Officers, etc. Some additional activities may occasionally be considered to be transitional in nature. Additional committee meetings shall also be held from time to time, as and when considered necessary by officials and committee members.

3. Applications for Membership of the Club shall be via a Legal Document entitled "Application for Club Membership", which includes a section headed "Release of Liability and Waiver of Claims". It is a precondition of membership that, on joining, all members agree to waive certain legal rights including, but not limited to, the right to sue for personal injury and/or damages, howsoever caused, that may be sustained whilst participating in hill or fell walking, climbing and mountaineering activities organised by the Club. Applicants must sign to release the Club and its officers from all responsibility and liability in regard to the applicant's personal welfare, including injury or damage to third parties and their possessions.

4. Proper books of accounts shall be maintained. The accounting period for the Club shall run from 1st November through to the 31st October the following year. The Treasurer will be the lead signatory for the Club's bank account when raising cheques, with the Chairperson and Secretary being authorised cosignatories should they be needed i.e. in the event of the Treasurer's absence. A single authorised signature is required to validate and raise a cheque for payment. The accounts shall be maintained by the appointed treasurer throughout the accounting period with Year End Accounts being prepared and submitted to all other Club officials and committee members for auditing purposes, prior to their presentation to Club members at the AGM for acceptance and approval.

5. The Club's officials shall prepare an annual statement of fact with regard to the membership and audited Year End Accounts; this statement to be in writing and formally presented to the S&SC committee via an authorised representative of the Club, at an appropriate meeting of the S&SC. In return the S&SC, without prerequisite or prescription may, at their discretion, elect to award a monetary grant intended to help support the Club in maintaining its programme of activities. This grant, if awarded, would normally be transferred directly into the Club's own bank account, which currently resides with Barclays Bank PLC, Newton Aycliffe.

6. Fundraising activities undertaken by Club members and intended to support the Club's financial position are to be encouraged, but in all cases these activities must be conducted with respect to and in recognition of pertinent government restrictions related to fundraising.

7. In recognition of the need to closely control funding levels generated by the Club's activities, a Minimum Reserve is to be maintained to safeguard against the effects of a downturn in membership, which could lead to greatly reduced income. Should such a downturn occur, causing a reduction of funds towards the predetermined minimum level, then action is to be taken by Club officials to maintain, or attempt to maintain, the Minimum Reserve by reducing spend, reducing activities or by recruiting new members during the following year. The Minimum Reserve agreed and fixed for the foreseeable future is to be £6,000 – this figure to be reviewed each year at the Club's Annual General Meeting.

8. Interim accounts shall be subject to inspection by representatives of the S&SC committee at any time throughout the year, subject to reasonable notice being given. Should the Club enter and engage in a winding-up situation then, on cessation of the Club's activities, any and all assets belonging to the Club, including bank deposits, cash in hand and material assets shall be automatically transferred across to S&SC central funds.

9. The Annual General Meeting (AGM) is the vehicle by which all Club members have and must be given an opportunity to openly discuss and exchange views on the control and administration of their Club. The treasurer's audited Year End accounts must be presented for acceptance by members. Democratic voting on issues pertaining to the administration of the Club's affairs is to be facilitated, as well as the democratic election of officers and committee for the forthcoming term of duty. Terms of duty are normally considered to be for a twelve month period, but may be extended if no new or alternative candidates are nominated for election. Votes may be cast by non-S&SC members. Calls for nominations must be made at each AGM.

10. The AGM shall be called within 15 days following the end of the accounting period (i.e. by 15th November each year), and notification to members of the date & venue of the forthcoming AGM shall be accompanied by a proposed agenda and a call for notices of motion. This notification shall be issued to all members giving at least 14 days' notice of the meeting. Notices of motion should be submitted to the Secretary at least 7 days prior to the meeting. The AGM shall operate with a quorum of not less than 12 fully paid-up members, including at least two of the three Club officials. If insufficient members are in attendance notices of motion shall be held in abeyance, year-end accounts cannot be considered for acceptance by the membership, and there can be no election of new officers. Instead, an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) must be called for the purpose of conducting elections etc., the same quorum being a statutory requirement of the meeting. This EGM should be called within 14 days of the failed AGM.

This document was drawn up and its contents agreed by Aycliffe Fell Walking Club officials & committee members in post at the time. It was presented for discussion and approval by Club members at the AGM held Wednesday 6th November 2013 – 30 Club members attending. It was later ratified & accepted by the Sports & Social Club executive committee and was adopted on 25/2/2014. Further additions were proposed (Para 7 regarding minimum funding levels) December 2016.