

# **CONSTITUTION OF**

## **South Western Dressage Group**

### **(Known as SWDG)**

Revised January 2021

NOTE: Amendments approved at AGM on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2020

## **1. Title**

The Club shall be known as “SWDG” (South Western Dressage Group).

## **2. Objectives**

The objectives of the Club shall be:

2.1 To encourage riding as a sport and recreation, to promote good fellowship amongst riders and to improve and maintain the standard of riding and horsemanship.

2.2 To organise instruction, lectures and competitive events and other activities to further the objectives.

2.3 To be affiliated to the British Riding Clubs (British Horse Society).

2.4 If requested, to investigate the subject of bridle tracks and rights of way with a view to opposing those that have been closed and maintaining and more clearly defining those that are in existence.

2.5 To concern itself with any objective to benefit the horse and horse handler.

## **3. Membership**

3.1 Senior members must have attained the age of 18 years and have paid the full subscription for the current subscription year.

3.2 Junior members can be any age (subject to the year in which they attained their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday) at the time they pay their subscriptions and have paid the junior subscription for the current subscription year. A Junior member may remain a junior member even if they attain the age of 18 during the subscription year.

3.3 The Committee may confer honorary membership upon any person deemed by them to have rendered notable service to the Club. Honorary members shall not be required to pay an annual subscription but will be entitled to vote at meetings of the Club.

## **4. Application Form**

4.1 Anyone who wants to become a member must complete either an online or hard copy application form and submit it to the relevant Committee member with payment of their first year's subscription.

## **5. Subscription**

5.1 The Club's subscription year shall be a calendar year commencing 1<sup>st</sup> January. The annual subscription shall be payable on the first day of the subscription year.

5.2 Members whose subscriptions have not been paid by 31<sup>st</sup> January are not insured at any SWDG activity and will cease to be a member. Any member joining the Club on or after 31<sup>st</sup> October shall be deemed to have paid his/her subscription for the ensuing subscription year.

5.3 On payment of the year's subscription, the member will be deemed to have accepted the Rules and Code of Conduct of British Riding Clubs and will be bound by those Rules and Codes of Conduct.

5.4 The annual subscriptions for the different categories of members of the Club shall be such sum as shall from time to time be determined by the Committee.

5.3 A discount may be applied at the discretion of the Committee for a family of 3, 4 or more members provided that they all reside at the same address.

## **6. Misconduct**

6.1 The Committee may expel from membership of the Club any member who has breached any of the Rules or Code of Conduct of the British Riding Club, or who has, in the opinion of the Committee, been guilty of any conduct derogatory to the character or prejudicial to the interests of the Club. Before expelling him/her the Committee shall call upon him/her for an explanation of his/her conduct and provide a proper opportunity of answering the allegations against him/her.

## **7. Junior Section**

7.1 The Committee may establish a junior section. No junior member may be a voting member of the Club. The junior members may appoint a junior committee to discuss matters relevant to the junior membership. The junior committee through the Chairman of the junior committee may make recommendations to the Committee for its consideration.

## **8. The Committee**

8.1 All powers of management shall be vested in the Committee consisting of the Chairman, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer and a minimum of 5 other Committee members. 4 members of the Committee shall form a quorum at meetings of the Committee.

8.2 At the Annual General Meeting (AGM) each year, one third of the members of the Committee shall retire – the members to retire being those who have been longest in the office. Those who have been in the office for the same length of time shall determine retiring members by lot. Retiring members shall be eligible for re-election, unless, at the time of the election, they shall have served as a member of the Committee for an aggregate of more than 10 years. Unless otherwise agreed by the Committee.

8.3 The Chairman, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer shall be elected annually by the Committee from amongst their number.

8.4 The Committee shall be the sole authority for the interpretation of the constitution and bye laws of the Club and for anything relating to the Club not provided therein and its decision shall be final and binding on the members.

8.5 The Committee may formulate by laws for the detailed running of the Club and appoint sub committees for any special activities of the Club which the Committee may authorise.

8.6 The Committee shall have the power to fill any casual vacancy arising amongst members of the Committee, but any person so co-opted may retain office only until the next AGM and then shall be eligible for re-election.

## **9. The Financial Year**

9.1 The financial year of the Club shall end on 30<sup>th</sup> September in each year.

9.2 The accounts shall be audited by an appropriately qualified individual from outside the Club.

## **10. Election of President & Vice President**

10.1 The Committee may appoint annually a President and Vice Presidents. They shall not be virtue only of such appointment become members of the Committee.

## **11. Election of Members of the Committee**

11.1 Any full or associate member who wishes to be appointed to the Committee must sign a form of consent to be appointed as a member of the Committee and must be nominated and seconded by voting members of the Club.

11.2 Details of any nomination for election must be sent to members of the Club with the notice of the AGM. Nonetheless a member may be nominated for election at any time before the election takes place even if his/her nomination has not been sent to members.

11.3 If, at the AGM, the number of nominations is equal to or less than the number of vacancies on the Committee, the persons nominated will be elected to the Committee, unless there is an objection from the floor.

11.4 If the number of nominations is greater than the number of vacancies in the Committee an election will be held at the meeting on the basis set out in paragraph 11.5.

11.5 A ballot paper will be circulated to members present at the meeting listing the names of the persons who have been nominated.

11.6 Each member will have one vote for each vacancy which exists, so that if there are three vacancies, each member will have three votes.

11.7 Members should cast their votes by marking on the ballot paper (in the manner indicated on the ballot paper) the candidate/s that he/she wishes to vote for.

11.8 The candidate/s with the largest number of votes will be elected to fill the vacancies.

## **12. Meeting of Members**

12.1 The AGM shall be held in November (or suitable month) of each year to transact the following business.

12.2 To receive and, if approved, to adopt a Statement of the Club's accounts to the end of the preceding financial year.

12.3 To fill vacancies on the Committee.

12.4 To discuss and approve any other business specified in the notice of the meeting.

12.5 Notices convening the AGM shall be sent to the members not less than 14 days before the meeting and shall specify the matters to be dealt with at the Meeting. These notices should be delivered as in paragraph 16 below.

### **13. Extra Ordinary Meeting**

13.1 An Extra Ordinary Meeting may be called by the Committee or by a request delivered to the Honorary Secretary of the Club signed by not less than 20 Club members specifying the business to be discussed. The secretary shall give all members not less than 14 days' notice of the date of such a meeting and shall specify in such notice matters to be dealt with at the meeting. The notice must be delivered as paragraph 16 below.

### **14. Accounts and Expenses**

14.1 The Annual Accounts will be presented at the AGM, for members to receive, approve and adopt if they are in agreement.

14.2 For essential Club related mileage expenses, such expenses shall be formalized in line with the tax free rate as advised by HMRC.

### **15. Notices**

15.1 Notice may be given to any Member by sending it by post to him/her at his/her address in the United Kingdom, or by the Members' email addresses as registered in the records of the Club. If any member has no address in the United Kingdom such member shall not be entitled to receive any notice. The accidental omission to give notice of a meeting to or the non-receipt of a notice of a meeting by any member shall not invalidate the proceedings of the meeting.

### **16. Amendment to Constitution**

16.1 This constitution may be amended or replaced by resolution at any Annual or Extra Ordinary General meeting, provided that no such resolution shall be deemed to have been passed unless carried by a

majority of at least two thirds of the members present and eligible to vote at the meeting.

## **17. Winding Up**

17.1 The Club may be dissolved, and its affairs wound up if a resolution to that effect shall be passed by a majority of two thirds of the members present and eligible to vote at a General or Extra Ordinary meeting of the Club of which not less than 28 days written notice shall have been given to the members, such notice to specify the proposal to dissolve and wind up the Club.

## **18. Dissolving**

18.1 In the event that a resolution shall be duly passed to dissolve and wind up the Club, the Committee shall ensure that the assets of the Club shall be collected in and assets capable of being sold shall be sold and net proceeds of the collection and sale of such assets shall be applied in discharging the Club's liabilities.

18.2 Any surplus of assets over liabilities shall be paid to an equestrian charity nominated by the Members in the resolution of the winding up of the Club.

18.3 In no circumstances will any member be entitled to a return of subscriptions paid or to any share of the net assets of the Club.

January 2021