

## Your Constitution

Your Constitution is the document that sets out the purpose and rules of your club. It should simply and effectively detail how your club operates, outlining the functions and rules within which the club and its members will operate.

Your Constitution, alongside the club's policies and procedures, will help ensure your club is able to run smoothly as well as giving authority to your club committee to carry out their functions. A good constitution can provide protection to your members as well as the volunteers who manage the club's affairs.

If you are planning to incorporate your club as a charity or a community company the [Charity Commission](#) or [Companies House](#) as the regulators provide guidance, and if you are looking to apply for Community Amateur Sports Club Status there is guidance [here](#).

## What's the point of a constitution?

A good constitution:

- Explains the purpose of your club.
- Helps to protect members and volunteers.
- Gives guidance on how procedures should work.
- Helps to avoid, clarify and help to sort out internal problems.
- Enables your club to develop and progress, including incorporating if appropriate.
- Shows funders that you exist and what you are about.

## Constitution Essentials

The Constitution should meet your club's particular needs, including the requirements that British Canoeing places upon you. The basics should include:

- **Club name:** State the name of the club and how it is abbreviated, including stating that the club will be affiliated to British Canoeing.
- **Aims and Objectives:** Layout clearly why your club exists, its duty of care to its members, and to provide its services in a way that is fair to all. Will it manage any facilities?
- **Exercise of Club powers: Detail what the club can do. For instance, will this include renting property or employing people?**
- **Membership:** Define the types of membership your club will offer, That members are subject to the constitution, rules and policies of the club, will pay membership fees, and can take part in club business subject to being a member. What is the process/procedure for rejecting a membership application?
- **Safeguarding:** Adopt the British Canoeing [Club Safeguarding Policy](#)
- **Sports Equity:** Explain what sports equity means to your club and that you abide by the British Canoeing [Template Club Equality Policy](#)
- **Committee:** Detail how the committee is constructed and how it looks after the club, this will include laying out the officers on the committee, who is eligible to be an

officer, how they are elected or appointed, and how outside interests will be managed. This might include reference to the [Template Declaration of Interest Register](#), and how any sub committees will work.

- **Finances:** This section explains how the financial matters within the club are managed and provides protection to the committee.
- **General Meetings (Both Annual and Extraordinary):** Explain the process for calling general and extraordinary meetings, The protocols & procedures to follow, including chairing, minutes, and volume of members needing to be present (the quorum).
- **Amendments to the constitution:** Lay out how the club will go about updating the constitution.
- **Discipline and Appeals:** Adopt the [British Canoeing Club Disciplinary & Appeals Policy](#) including detailing that any hearings will be in accordance with the guidance on how to carry out a [Disciplinary Hearing](#).
- **Dissolution:** The procedures on how the club can be dissolved, who makes the decision? Who needs to be told? what happens to any assets & funds (e.g. distribution to other not for profit bodies with similar aims)
- **Declaration:** That the Chair and Secretary annually sign to accept this constitution on behalf of the club as the current guide regulating the actions of members.