

# **DARTMOOR SLOPE SOARING CLUB**

## **CONSTITUTION & GENERAL RULES**

### **Constitution**

- 1 Name* The name adopted by members is the *Dartmoor Slope Soaring Club*.
- 2 Object* To promote the construction and safe flying of radio controlled model gliders to the highest standards.
- 3 Affiliation* The Club is an affiliated club of the British Model Flying Association and it is a condition of club membership that each Club member must also be a member of the BMFA.
- 3.1 You may be required by a Committee Member to produce evidence of BMFA membership at events organised by the Club.
- 4 Membership* Categories of Membership will be:-
- 4.1. *Senior Membership. (Members of 18 years of age and above).*
- 4.2. ***Junior Membership (Under 18)***
- 4.3 ***Honorary Members***
- A maximum of 3 persons may be elected as lifetime Honorary Members by the Committee without the payment of the Club subscription in recognition of special services rendered to the Club.
- 5 Fees* Annual subscriptions for Senior and Junior membership will be determined at each Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- 5.1. Club and BMFA subscriptions are due on 1<sup>st</sup> January each year. BMFA membership may be paid as part of the Club subscription or through another BMFA affiliated Club or direct to the BMFA through the 'Country Members' scheme.
- 5.2. Where a Club member fails to pay the subscription by 31<sup>st</sup> January, membership of the Club will be deemed to have lapsed.
- 5.3. New members who join the Club after 30<sup>th</sup> June in any year will pay 50% of the appropriate Club subscription for the remainder of the year.
- 6 Admission* Application for membership will be made by the completion of the Dartmoor Slope Soaring Club application form.
- 7 Election of Officers*
- 7.1 The Committee of the Club shall consist of the following permanent posts: Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Membership Secretary.
- 7.2 Each candidate for election to a post on the Committee must be proposed and seconded by different members of the Club at the AGM.
- 7.3 Where two or more candidates stand for a post, the election will be on a simple majority of the votes of all members present at the AGM. In the event of a tie, the current Chairman will have the casting vote, except in the case of a vote for the post of Chairman, where the outcome in the event of a tie will be decided by the toss of a coin.
- 7.4 The Committee may also co-opt additional members to serve on the Committee at any time during the year.

7.5 In addition to the Committee members set out in 7.4 above, the Club may at the AGM appoint other Officers as it sees fit for the effective management of the Club.

8 *Conduct* It is the responsibility of each member to abide by the Club rules and all relevant BMFA safety codes as contained within the BMFA Members' Handbook and Civil Aviation Publication (CAP) 658. Alleged breaches must be brought to the attention of the Chairman of the Club in writing at the earliest opportunity. In cases of breaches of these rules, the Club Committee may caution or in very serious cases, terminate club membership after giving the member the opportunity to answer the allegations in the presence of at least 3 Committee members.

9 *Dismissal* There may be occasions where a member's conduct falls well below the standards required. Unfortunately, when all else fails, dismissal has to be considered. The process of deliberation of dismissal must be seen to undertaken fairly and without bias or prejudice. The following procedure will be used to dismiss a member:

- a. The member is to be given a verbal warning by an authorised committee member in which the member is made aware of his misdemeanour and what is reasonably required to make amends.
- b. If the member does not respond, or does not accept, or challenges, the validity of the point made in the verbal warning, a written warning by recorded delivery postage will be issued by an authorised Committee member advising of the misdemeanour and what is reasonably required to make amends.
- c. If the member still fails to respond, or responds by challenging the validity of the point made in the written warning, the Committee should invite the member in writing by recorded delivery postage to meet with them at a previously agreed date and time to discuss the situation, advising they are considering withdrawal of membership.
- d. If the member fails to respond to reasoning or fails to attend without reasonable cause, the Committee can advise the person in writing by recorded delivery postage that membership is withdrawn, stating the reasons this decision was reached. The full membership subscription is to be returned.
- e. When the member is advised of withdrawal of membership, a right of appeal must be given. If the member opts to appeal, this would be normally to the Club membership at an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) which the Committee would call on the member's behalf at a previously agreed date and time. The motion to uphold the membership withdrawal or reverse it must be in accordance with the voting procedures set out in this Constitution.

In cases of gross misconduct, elements 'a' or 'b' and 'b' may be omitted but this should only be for exceptional circumstances, when the advice of the BMFA should be sought before any action is taken.

The above process is included in this Constitution to prevent misunderstanding and to advise members of their rights. Dismissal will always be a last resort and consideration will be carried out fairly and with due regard to the law.

## 10 *Safety & Accidents*

10.1 Members are required to acquaint themselves with and abide by the guidelines within the BMFA Members' Handbook with regard to the safe operation of model aircraft, and the appropriate actions to be taken in the event of accidents.

- 10.2 The Committee will seek to appoint Club Instructors to instruct members in accordance with the BMFA 'Flying Training Manual'.
- 10.3 Where sites are shared with 'people carrying' aviation users, priority must be given to those users in accordance with the BMFA Handbook. [See also *General Rules* below].
- 10.4 In the event of a club member being involved in an accident or incident where a third-party is injured (whether another member of the club or a non-member of the club), or where third-party property is damaged, the club member must (a) act in accordance with the guidance given in the BMFA Members' Handbook; and (b) if the accident or incident was on Dartmoor or Little Haldon, advise a member of the Committee of the accident or incident at the earliest opportunity.

#### *11 Proceedings at AGM, EGM, Ordinary Meetings & Committee Meetings*

- 11.1 The Chairman shall take the chair at all meetings unless in his absence another Committee Member is elected by the remaining Committee Members to replace him as Acting Chairman for the purposes of the meeting. The Chairman (or Acting Chairman as aforesaid) will have a casting vote at all ordinary and Committee meetings.
- 11.2 A quorum for the AGM, an EGM called by the Committee in accordance with 12.1 below and Ordinary Meetings where decisions are taken is 8 members present.
- 11.3 A quorum for an EGM called in accordance with 12.2 & 12.3 below is 50% of the current membership of the club.
- 11.4 A quorum for any Committee Meeting where decisions are to be taken is the Chairman and Treasurer [or acting Treasurer, if appropriate]; together with either the Secretary [or acting Secretary, if appropriate] or the Membership Secretary [or acting Membership Secretary, if appropriate], i.e. a minimum of three Committee members.
- 11.5 At any meeting (other than Committee meetings) all fully paid-up members attending will be eligible to vote irrespective of membership category. Decisions will be taken by majority vote.
- 11.6 Changes to the Club Constitution may only be made at the Club's Annual General Meeting (AGM) which shall take place in November unless otherwise decided by the Committee. Any proposals for changes in the Constitution shall be notified to all Club Members in writing not less than two weeks before the AGM.

#### *12 Rules for Calling an Extraordinary General Meeting*

- 12.1 Following an appropriate resolution of the Committee, the Secretary shall call/convene an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) of the Club. 21 days written notice of the EGM has to be given to all members (written notice may include by email if available) stating the business to be discussed and the venue for, and time of, the meeting.
- 12.2 On receipt of a request in writing delivered to any member of the Club Committee for an EGM signed by not less than 8 club members, stating the grounds for the request, the Secretary (or another Committee member) shall call an EGM of the club. 21 days written notice of the EGM (written notice may include by email if available) has to be given to all members, stating to all members the business to be discussed and the venue for, and time of, the meeting.

- 12.3 When a request for an EGM is made in accordance 12.2 above, and the Secretary or other Committee member fails to call an EGM within 14 days, the proposers may themselves call an EGM of the Club by giving 21 day's notice in writing to all members, duly setting out the purpose for which the meeting has been called. Any resolutions passed at such a meeting shall have the same force and effect as if they were passed at a meeting convened by the Committee, subject to the requirement set out in 10.3 above for a quorum for a member-sponsored EGM.

### *13 Dissolution of the Club*

- 13.1 In the event of it being considered necessary or desirable to dissolve the Club, the Committee will call an EGM and propose a motion to that effect. If a quorum fails to attend, the meeting will be adjourned and a further EGM must be called. The second meeting will proceed even if a quorum is not present and the motion will then be decided by a simple majority vote in favour. In the event of a tied vote, the Chairman shall have the casting vote.
- 13.2 On dissolution of the Club, and after the sale of assets, the settlement of all outstanding debts and the refund of subscriptions for the remaining part of the year to the paid-up members, the funds remaining will be distributed to local charities and/or the BMFA and/or another local club with similar objectives, as determined by the members attending the meeting. In the event that there remains a net liability, a decision on the course of action to be taken in relation to the shortfall in funds shall be taken by those attending the meeting, with the Chairman having the casting vote. All members of the Club will receive a final statement of accounts.
- 13.3 If after the sale of assets and the settlement of all outstanding debts, the final accounts are less than is required to refund the subscriptions to the members, the total money remaining will be donated to local charities and/or the BMFA and/or another local club with similar objectives, as determined by members attending the meeting. All members of the Club will receive a final statement of accounts.

- 14 Accounts* Club accounts will be maintained by the Treasurer who will have these available for inspection by members at Club Meetings.

### *15 Press, Public Relations & Dealings with Outside Bodies*

- 15.1 The Committee will be the sole members to liase with the media, to promote the Club and to represent the views of the Club in dealings with outside bodies (including the BMFA and Dartmoor National Park) unless otherwise agreed by the Committee.
- 15.2 Nothing in 15.1 above shall prevent an individual member from expressing to the BMFA his views on the conduct of club business, but in such circumstances, the club member is requested (but not required) to provide a courtesy copy of any appropriate written material to a member of the Committee.

### *16 Membership Details*

Unless a Member notifies the Membership Secretary in writing to the contrary, details of name, address, email and telephone information provided on his application form may be made available to other members of the club. Any information provided is not to be passed on to a third party.

- 17 Club Equipment* The Treasurer shall draw up a list of club property with an initial valuation and depreciation rate for each item (Club Property Book). A Club Member borrowing equipment will be responsible for its safe keeping and return in full

working condition to the Club or liable to the sum indicated in the Club Property Book.

18 Privacy Policy In accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation which came into force on 25 May 2018, the Club shall implement a Privacy Policy to safeguard the data of all members of the Club. The Policy is to be communicated to new members of the club and is to be made generally available to all members on the Club's website. It shall be reviewed from time to time, as felt necessary by the club Committee.

## General Rules

### 1 Laws & Byelaws On Dartmoor

All land is owned by someone and their permission is normally required for flying models (and for parking in off road locations). On Dartmoor, exceptions are made in respect of commons and open areas which are designated as *Access Land*. Here, members of the public are permitted access on foot (and horseback) for recreation purposes. **If you are not on Access Land, you are required to have permission from the landowner to fly a model glider.**

The designated *Access Land* is shown on the Ordnance Survey 1:25000 Outdoor Leisure Map for Dartmoor, edged in purple. Access to these open spaces is regulated by the National Park Byelaws: **Byelaw 18** deals with kite and model flying and says:

(1) *No person shall fly a kite or model glider from the Access Land in such a manner as to give reasonable cause for annoyance to any other person, or in such a manner as is likely to startle or disturb stock on the land.*

(2) *No person shall release any power-driven model aircraft for flight, or control the flight of such an aircraft, on or over Access Land unless he is authorised to do so by the Council.*

(3) *For the purposes of this byelaw 'model aircraft' means an aircraft which either weighs not more than 5 kilogrammes without its fuel or is for the time being exempted from the provisions of the Air Navigation Order and 'power-driven' means driven by the combustion of petrol vapour or other combustible substances, or by one or more electric motors.*

A Dartmoor National Park publication has summarised the Byelaw concerning vehicular access as follows:-

*Do not drive onto the moorland or park more than 15 metres from the road.*

### 2 Conduct When Flying On Dartmoor

On the Commons, there are agricultural occupiers who have legal rights for grazing livestock. Be careful not to scare or frighten livestock and wildlife. If you meet landowners, occupiers, or staff from the Dartmoor National Park or the National Trust, be polite, friendly and co-operative.

Exercise extreme caution when members of the public are around, and fly safely and well away from them. If you are about to land, tell them. Have full visibility of your model when making a landing.

If you are sharing a site with hang-glider or para-glider pilots, discuss with them how you will share safe use of the site, and keep a safe distance at all times. Neither the hang-glider pilot nor the Club can afford any accident.

Take all of your rubbish home including if necessary all parts of damaged models. Remember that no-one should see you have been there!

Never light any fire.

Ensure all gates are closed after use.

**Remember we share the use of Dartmoor with occupational and other recreational users and we must recognise and respect their interests. Do nothing which could compromise our sport of gliding on Dartmoor.**

### 3 Little Haldon

Please remember at all times

- ❖ This land is in private ownership. We fly on it with the kind co-operation and goodwill of the owner.
- ❖ In the interests of security and with the agreement of the landowner the car park is for the use of DSSC members only (unless otherwise authorised) and must be kept padlocked at all times except for access and egress.
- ❖ It is a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and we must take care not to disturb the flora and fauna around the site. Particularly in the bird nesting season, March to July inclusive, please keep out of adjoining heathland as much as possible.

A **Code of Conduct** has been written in consultation with other local model aircraft clubs and others who use Little Haldon for recreational purposes. All members of Dartmoor Slope Soaring Club using this site are requested to abide by the following guidelines:

- Please treat all other users with respect at all times
- Please do not overfly horse-riders
- Please do not fly low over other users of Little Haldon
- Please do not overfly the golf course (to the south)
- Please do not overfly the main road (to the east)
- Please do not leave any litter whatsoever
- All engines used **MUST** conform with Department of the Environment Code of Practice for the Minimisation of Noise from Model Aircraft
- Note: where club members are flying with 35Mhz radio equipment, they are expected to fly on even frequency numbers at Little Haldon.
- **Please follow the country code at all times**