

CLONARD Swimming & Water Polo Club

Rules & Constitution



A.S.C. 1921

CLONARD
Swimming & Water Polo Club

Rules & Constitution

CONSTITUTION

1. NAME AND HEADQUARTERS

The name of the club shall be the Clonard Swimming & Water Polo Club, hereafter referred to as 'the Club', and its Headquarters shall be Falls Swim Centre, Falls Road, Belfast. The Club colours shall be green and white.

2. OBJECTIVES

- a) To promote the teaching and practice of swimming and water polo
- b) To strive to compete at the highest levels.
- c) To promote the club within the community.
- d) To provide a positive, safe and fun environment for young people and all its members.
- e) To promote the development of physical, moral and social qualities associated with sport, within the participants.
- f) To accept and enforce the rules and regulations set down by Swim Ireland regarding [discipline] in accordance with the affiliation status afforded to the club.
- g) To provide a positive and safe environment for all its members and staff.
- h) To ensure sport for young people in the club is fun, and conducted in an encouraging atmosphere in line with Swim Ireland guidelines and best practice.
- i) To provide equal opportunities whenever possible for successful participation, irrespective of ability or disability, so as individuals can be involved in sports activities in an integrated and inclusive way.

The Club is fully committed to safeguarding the well being of its members. Each individual should, at all times, show respect and understanding for the rights, safety and welfare which refer to themselves and others and adhere to the principles and the guidelines contained in the *Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children's Sport* (Source: SportNI & Irish Sports Council) and 'Swim Ireland Guidelines for Safeguarding Children' (Source: Swim Ireland).

3. AFFILIATIONS

- a) Swim Ireland (SI)
- b) The Irish Water Polo Association (IWPA).
- c) Swim Ulster (SU)
- d) Ulster Branch Irish Water Polo Association (UBIWPA).

Through the above the Club will also be affiliated to the Ligue Européenne de Natation (LEN), the European governing body for the aquatics and the Fédération Internationale de Natation (FINA), the world governing body for the aquatics.

4. MEMBERSHIP

All members are subject to the rules and constitution of the Club and rules and regulations of UBIWPA, Swim Ulster, Swim Ireland, IWPA LEN and FINA.

The club shall comprise of all fully paid up members who abide by the rules of the Club and the afore mentioned organisations

Application for Membership is open to everyone and will be subject to ratification of the club Committee. Acceptance of a membership application is at the sole discretion of the elected Club Committee

Application Procedures for Club Membership

- a) All prospective members must complete an application form and pay the necessary fees.
- b) Applicants who are under 18 years of age must have the signed approval of a parent or legal guardian. Members are required to renew their membership on an annual basis.
- c) All Members must commit to compliance with Swim Ireland rules by agreeing to and signing Swim Ireland codes of conduct

Membership Categories

Members shall be enrolled in one of the following categories:

- a) **Competitive Members** who engage in competitive events
- b) **Non competitive Member** – Those who wish to participate in club activities but do not wish to compete. This includes committee members, officials, coaches and volunteers.

Fees for each category of membership are determined by the club committee each year and are available on the Club website and shall be calculated on the basis of the following;

Senior Members (Over 18)

Junior Members (Under 18)

Life Members

A family membership fee will also be available.

The schedule of fees will be published on the Club web site.

Membership fees will be set annually and will be agreed by the Clubs Executive.

Membership fees will be paid monthly by standing order unless agreed with the Treasurer or Registration Secretary.

Club Membership Information

The Club Committee shall publish a Membership Booklet which will include (but not limited to) Club rules and Constitution. It will include copies of codes of conduct for members, coaches and officials. The information will be reviewed annually. It will be available on the Club website and a hard copy will be made available to all new members.

Termination of Membership

A member who wishes to resign must inform the Club Secretary in writing or verbally and if this person wishes to renew membership at a later date they must re-apply. No subscription monies will be refunded upon resignation from the Club.

Full membership status is only valid where a subscription has been paid in full or in a manner agreed by the Club Committee.

Equality Statement

In accordance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998) and any subsequent updates to this legislation, Clonard Swimming and Water Polo Club shall not discriminate against any persons or visitors within the Club. No discrimination of any kind against employed or voluntary staff, membership applications, members and individuals within the general public, will be tolerated.

This club is committed to ensure that equity is incorporated across all aspects of its development. In doing so it acknowledges and adopts the following Sports Northern Ireland definitions of Sport Equity:

“SPORTS EQUITY IS ABOUT FAIRNESS IN SPORT, EQUALITY OF ACCESS, RECOGNISING INEQUALITIES AND TAKING STEPS TO ADDRESS THEM. IT IS ABOUT CHANGING THE CULTURE AND STRUCTURE OF SPORT TO ENSURE IT BECOMES EQUALLY ACCESSIBLE TO EVERYONE IN SOCIETY”

- The club recognises the rights, dignity and worth of every person and will treat everyone equal in the context of their sport.
- The club is committed to everyone having the right to enjoy their sport in an environment free from the threat of intimidation, harassment and abuse.
- All club members have a responsibility to oppose discriminatory behaviour seriously, according to club disciplinary procedure.

5.MANAGEMENT OF THE CLUB

The management and general affairs of the club shall be exercised by the Club Committee.

The Club Committee

The Club Committee is made up of:

Executive Officers:

- Chairman
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Registration Secretary
- Club Captain
- Press/Public Relations Officer
- Designated Officer
- One representative of each Club Sub-Committee (Such as Finance, Junior Coaching and Development, Parent Liason)

Officers will be elected annually at the AGM. All officers will retire each year but will be eligible for re-appointment.

6. DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE CLUB COMMITTEE

The duties of the club committee will be to control the affairs of the club on behalf of members.

Duties of the Chairperson

- a) To promote the interest of the Club at all times and act as the official spokesperson for the club.
- b) To ensure the principles of due process and natural justice are applied in all decisions made by the committee, to maintain order and prevent unnecessary disruptions.

Duties of the Treasurer

- a) To keep a record of all financial transactions concerning club business.
- b) To keep appropriate books of record on club business.

- c) To identify all income received and all expenditures.
- d) To act as co–signature on cheques along with the Chairperson/Secretary.

Duties of the Secretary

- a) To record the minutes of all committee and club meetings.
- b) To keep records of membership, complaints and contracts regarding the dealings of the club.
- c) To set out meetings including agenda details, notice period and any other necessary information.
- d) To deal with all club correspondence.

Duties of Registration Secretary

- a) To ensure memberships are paid up and that all members are correctly registered and licensed with the appropriate bodies.
- b) To ensure all affiliation fees are paid.

Role of Club Captain

The Club Captain's role is to provide the link between the administration of the club and the athletes.

Role of Press/Public Relations Officer (PRO)

The PRO shall be to publicise and promote the clubs ethos and activities to the members, the public. This includes providing information through our webpage and to the press of upcoming events, progress of teams and information on various competitions and events in which the club is involved or is sponsoring.

Duties of Coaching and Teaching staff

- a) Those included, but not limited to Coaches, Teachers and Leaders, will comply with the guidelines set out in 'Swim Ireland Guidelines for Safeguarding Children 2008' or most recent edition.
- b) All coaching and teaching staff and anyone who deals directly with children will undergo a police vetting in accordance with 'Swim Ireland Guidelines for Safeguarding Children 2008' or most recent edition.

Child Welfare and Codes of Conduct

In line with its commitment to Child Welfare and Codes of Conduct the Club will appoint, as required by Swim Ireland, a 'Designated Person' and two 'Child Protection Officers'.

- a) The Club is fully committed to safeguarding the well being of all its members. Members should conduct themselves in accordance with the guidelines and principles contained in the “Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Children’s Sport” (Source: SportNI and The Irish Sports Council). and ‘Swim Ireland Guidelines for Safeguarding Children’ (Source: Swim Ireland)
- b) Where parents ‘drop-off’ their children at the Leisure Centre or other location for a training session they must understand that the Club will only be responsible for their child until the session is over. In the changing room, children become the responsibility of parents/guardians. Parents must ensure prompt collection of the child at the end of the session and leave clear instructions as to how they can be contacted in an emergency.
- c) Whilst the above applies in the circumstances where Club Coaches/Team Managers are in charge, parents must wait at the pool or other location until they are satisfied that the Coach or Team Manager (if there is an away event) is present and that there is no problem with the pool or other facility eg; contaminated water or some other problem resulting in the session being cancelled.
- d) Club training times for the different groups are published on the Club website and it should be noted that these arrangements may be amended from time to time..

Designated Person

As required by Swim Ireland the club shall have a Designated Person whose duty is to report any allegations of child abuse to the statutory body and to oversee compliance with Swim Ireland Code of Ethics. This individual shall be part of the Club Committee and can be any member of that committee who holds a current Child Protection Certificate.

Child Protection Officers

The club shall appoint two Child Protection Officers (one of whom must be female) who will have access to the Club Committee, but not be members of it. (Swim Ireland has a mandatory requirement for one CPO to be appointed within the Club).

The CPO’s act in an advisory capacity to the Club Committee, and must report to and update the Committee regarding Child Welfare matters.

The CPO’s duties and responsibilities will include the establishment of a child centred ethos within the Club and to be a link between adults and children.

The CPO must hold an up to date safeguarding/child protection certificate

All Committee Members

- a) Club Committee members are responsible for the smooth day to day running of the Club.
- b) The Executive Committee can agree amongst themselves the additional rules required, to be carried out by Committee Members.
- c) In addition to the duties and powers expressed or implied by the Laws of the Swim Ireland, the committee shall have specific powers of Appointment, Decision, Election, Filling Vacancies, Fixing Dates and Venues, Imposing Penalties, Publishing, Removal from Office and Requalifying Penalties.

Rights and Duties of the Executive Committee

- a) The Committee have the power to appoint such sub committees as they may consider necessary.
- b) The Club Committee shall be responsible for the management of all assets of the club.
- c) The Club Committee, in conjunction with the Child Protection Officers will be responsible for formulating Club policy in accordance with the 'Swim Ireland Guidelines for Safeguarding Children 2008, or most recent edition, and on the direction the Club takes in the future in all its activities.
- d) The members of the Club Committee shall be indemnified by the members of the club against all liabilities properly incurred by them in the management affairs of the club.
- e) Committee members must declare any personal or business interest, which may conflict with their duties as a member of the Club Committee.
- f) The Club Committee will be expected to follow codes of conduct in relation to their obligations to club members. These include, but are not limited to, confidentiality, objectivity, loyalty, fairness and a constant awareness of their obligations to the Club and its members.

Removal from Office

The Club Committee are empowered to remove from office, by a two-thirds vote of members voting at a general meeting, any officer or member of the Committee who,

by neglect of duty or by conduct tending to impair his usefulness as an officer or member, shall be deemed to have forfeited his position.

Vacancies

The Club Committee may fill any vacancy, which occurs amongst officials until the next Annual General Meeting.

Imposition of Penalties

The Club Committee may impose penalties on Members by way of disqualification, suspension, and any lesser penalty they may deem to be appropriate. Examples of breaches may include but are not limited to:

- a) For an infringement of any applicable Law of the Swim Ireland, or any Law, Byelaw, Rule or Regulation of the IWPA or the Ulster Branch of the IWPA.
- b) For conduct likely to bring the club or sport into disrepute or prejudicial to the interests of the club.
- c) For non payment of club levies.

Interpretation of Club Laws

The interpretation of any of Club Laws shall be reserved exclusively to the Club Committee which will take advice as appropriate from Swim Ireland and whose decision shall be conclusive and final.

7. MEETINGS OF THE CLUB COMMITTEE

Quorum

At all meetings of the Club Committee, four of whom, at least two are Executive Officers, shall form a quorum.

The club committee will meet regularly through out the year and the Chairperson and Secretary shall have the discretion to call further meetings of the Committee if they consider it to be in the interests of the club.

Chairperson

The Chairperson of all meetings of the Committee shall be the Chairperson of the Club. In his/her absence the meeting shall elect a Chairperson.

He/she will have the right to vote on every motion and a casting vote in the event of an equal number of votes being recorded.

Annual General Meeting

The club year shall end on the 30 June and the Annual General Meeting shall be where possible held on or before that date at a place to be decided by the Executive.

The purpose of the AGM will be:

- a) to receive and deal with Reports from Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer, Hon. Competitions Secretary, Sub Committees, Club Coaches.
- b) to elect club Officers
- c) to appoint two delegates to the Swim Ireland Annual General Meeting, and delegates to UBIWPA.
- d) to appoint child protection officers and the Designated person in accordance with Swim Ireland regulations.
- e) To decide any other matter brought before them.
- f) Members who are fully paid up and over 16 years of age are eligible to vote.
- g) No voting by proxy is permitted.
- h) Parents shall hold one vote on behalf of their child/children within the club. Only one parent may exercise this vote and this must be so agreed between the parents (that is one vote only and not one vote per child). Parents who are club members in their own right may vote with this right for themselves and also cast one vote on behalf of their child/children
- i) Voting shall be conducted via a show of hands, which will be counted by the Secretary. The Committee may, however, recommend that a vote should be held in a secret ballot format owing to the context of the vote.
- j) No business shall be transacted at a general meeting unless a quorum is present. A quorum of at least 12 of the eligible voting members is the number required at least 2 of these must be members of the Club Committee. If this quorum is not fulfilled the General Meeting can be suspended for exactly one week.
- k) Nominations will be passed at AGM's by simple resolution of 50% plus one.
- l) Motions for a change to the [club] Constitution must be passed by a special resolution of 75% of persons present at the meeting entitled to vote.
- m) The Chairperson will have a casting vote if there is an equality of votes

Special Meetings – Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM)

A Special Meeting of the club may be convened:

- a) If a resolution to that effect is passed by the Committee at the Annual General Meeting
- b) On the receipt by the Hon. Secretary of a written request from 12 bona fide members stating the reasons for such a Meeting.
- c) At the request of two-thirds of the Executive Committee.

- d) Unless otherwise instructed by the Committee, a Special Meeting shall be held within 28 days of the passing of the resolution or receipt of the request. Any item, not included in the published Agenda, shall not be discussed at a Special Meeting.

Notice of Meetings

- a) At least seven days notice, stating where and when it will be held shall be sent to all those entitled to attend a Committee meeting. Each Notice of Meeting shall be accompanied by an Agenda.
- b) Seven clear days notice shall be sent for the adjourned meeting of the Committee. It shall not be necessary to circulate an Agenda.

Decisions of the Committee

- a) Decisions of the Club Committee shall take immediate effect and its instructions shall be acted upon by each member. No decision shall be valid unless passed when a quorum is present.
- b) A copy of all decisions of the Committee shall be sent by the Hon. Secretary to every member.
- c) The Club Committee may also decide upon and adhere to acceptable means of communication used, during periods between meetings, to ensure the day to day running of the Club.

Other Committees

The Executive Committee shall where it deems necessary appoint sub- committees to deal with matters of finance, coaching or discipline matters.

Ex-Officio Members of Committees

The Chairperson, Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer may be ex-officio members of all committees unless the Committee directs otherwise.

Team Appointments

Team coaches for each competitive unit will be appointed by the AGM (or EGM if decided by the committee). Any appointee must be a fully paid up member of the club. Unless agreed otherwise by the AGM (or EGM convened for the purpose of appointing a coach).

8. FINANCE

Currency

The currency of the club shall be Sterling.

Funds

The control and management of the financial affairs of the Club shall be vested in the Club Committee who shall have powers to create special funds for any specific purpose consistent with the objectives of the club.

All funds or other property of the club shall be applied to the furtherance of the objectives of the stated aims of the club or for any charitable purpose approved by the executive. No fund or other property of the club shall be paid to, or distributed among members of the club.

Dissolution

In the event of dissolution the funds and assets remaining shall be applied for appropriate sporting or charitable purposes.

Bankruptcy

In the event of the Club becoming bankrupt, all voting members shall equally responsible for all liabilities.

Club Fees

Club fees fixed by the Club Committee shall be paid to the Honorary Treasurer of the club. Members shall be notified annually of fee payment arrangements.

Hardship

When fixing Fees, the Club will operate a charging structure which provides affordable access to Club activities for all and will include discounted rates for 'unwaged' persons.

Penalties for Non-Payment

Persons failing to pay their membership or weekly fees on time will be deemed to have ceased to be members of the club. The executive will in exceptional cases review that position.

10 COMPLAINTS

Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures

The Club will deal with complaints as laid out in Swim Ireland's 'Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures', and shall adopt SI procedures in this regard. Any issue involving members under 18 must also be brought to the attention of the Child Protection Officer.

Definition of a complaint

- a. A complaint is a formal expression of dissatisfaction, by any person with regard to an action of any club member, or person in connection with the or club.
- b. A complaint may be lodged either verbally or in writing to the Chairman or Honorary Secretary; it should reach either of these people not more than 14 days after the incident.
- c. Before Formal Complaints procedures are instigated Members should consider whether the matter can be dealt with informally first. If the Informal Complaints procedure does not lead to a satisfactory conclusion then the Formal Complaints procedure shall be adopted as laid out in Swim Irelands "Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures".
- d. The procedure at a hearing shall be flexible and at the discretion of the Chairperson of the Disciplinary Committee. The purpose is to secure expeditiously, a just outcome.
- e. Failure of any party to attend, or offer an explanation of their absence, to the meeting to which they have been summoned will not render the meeting invalid and the hearing will proceed in their absence.
- f. Within 10 days of the hearing the Chairperson will inform the parties in writing of the decision of the meeting.
- g. A member has the right to appeal in any disciplinary decision made by the club. This must be within 10 days of the member being notified of any decision.