

The British Freediving Association Constitution

Date updated: 3/2/2024



1. Scope

This constitution shall regulate the structure, administration and activities of the British Freediving Association (hereinafter “the BFA”).

2. Mission and Objectives

2.1 The BFA is formed for the purpose of promoting freediving recreationally and competitively, in safe environments. In addition, it is the sole body with the responsibility for selecting a UK team for international AIDA competitions.

2.2. The BFA shall be run by and for its members, and as such it shall not operate so as to make profits or financial gain for any member, or group of members within the BFA.

3. Members

3.1 The Membership year shall be from the first day of January to the thirty last day of December.

3.2 There will be one type of annual membership – full membership.

3.3 Any person aged 18 years of age and over will be eligible for membership.

3.4 Members under the age of 18 shall be admitted to the BFA providing The parent or legal guardian remains responsible at all times, while the member is involved in BFA activities, and has signed an appropriate disclaimer to this effect.

3.5 All members shall have the right to undertake freediving activities with the BFA and to vote on decisions brought to the AGM, an EGM, and from the committee via an email vote.

3.5 Although there is no requirement for a member to have a medical, no-one should dive if they have a medical condition that would jeopardise their safety.

3.6 Members wishing to compete must have a valid medical.

3.7 A member can be suspended from the BFA by a two-thirds majority vote of the Committee for two reasons:

1. Their actions or words could bring the BFA into disrepute;
2. If the committee deems a member’s diving to be unsafe.
 - a) The period of their suspension is to be determined by the committee.
 - b) Should there be a situation where a member is seen to be guilty of the above, they will be given an opportunity to meet the Chairman plus another committee member to discuss the situation. Information will then be taken back to the committee for a decision. That information must be factual and unbiased.
 - c) Any such meeting should be minuted, and made available to the member concerned, so that they know what is being presented to the committee.
 - d) The member concerned may bring a friend to support them.

4. Subscriptions

4.1 Annual subscription can rise in line with inflation each year, and can only be varied by a majority vote of those present at the Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting called for that purpose.

4.2 Any increases must be announced at the AGM

5. Finances

5.1 The financial year of the Branch shall be from the first day of January to the thirty first day of December.

5.2 The Treasurer shall be responsible for the day to day financial activities of the BFA, including all banking procedures.

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5.3 All payments on behalf of the BFA are to be authorised by the Treasurer, up to a delegated limit of £500.

Anything above £500 must be authorised by the Treasurer and the Chair, or the Treasurer and one other Officer in the Chair's absence.

5.4 The Treasurer shall prepare an Interim Statement of Income and Expenditure and a Balance Sheet as at the month prior to the AGM, which shall be made available to each member upon entry to the AGM, and made available on the BFA website after they have been agreed at the AGM. The Treasurer shall also prepare Year End Financial Statements that will be agreed by the Committee and made available on the BFA website.

5.5 Three signatories will be required for bank accounts from committee members: Chair, Treasurer and any third committee members will be these signatories. The first job of a new treasurer will be the responsibility to collate together the new signatures followed by a visit to the bank to arrange the signatory change.

6. Diving

Members are expected to undertake freediving activities according to BFA recommendations.

7. Managing body

7.1 The BFA shall be managed by a Committee, who must be full members of the BFA. The committee agree to adhere to the role integrity as set out in the conflict of interest document.

7.2 The election of each member shall be announced annually at the AGM and shall hold their post until the following year's AGM.

7.3 Any full member of the BFA is eligible for the Committee, except that the Safety and Training Officer shall be a freediving instructor.

7.4 Committee posts will be advertised at least four weeks before the AGM, with any vacancies shown. However anyone can stand for any position, even if the incumbent committee member wishes to remain for the following year.

7.5 Members will be invited to stand and return their nominations to the Chair and Membership Officer with a cut-off date. After that time only nominations for uncontested positions can be accepted.

7.6 A CV / Manifesto plus 2 references from AIDA or instructors or judges shall be published for each candidate, including uncontested positions, by email. Where a position is unopposed by the cut off date, that member will be announced as appointed to the committee. BFA Members then have one month from the date of the AGM to register a vote of no confidence with the Chair if they believe that person to be unworthy of the position. If more than 10 people register a vote of no confidence, then the position will once again be offered for nominations and a full vote of the membership, as per contested positions. If it is the Chair in whom they have no confidence, they should register their vote with the Membership Secretary.

7.7 The voting period will be two weeks. Votes will be returned to a member of the committee (to be nominated by the chair) and a BFA member who is not on committee. These will be counted and the results announced at the AGM.

7.8 All members wishing to stand for a contested post, shall be elected by means of a simple majority vote of all Members.

7.9 The latest deadline for voting will be 00.00hrs on the Saturday before the AGM.

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7.10 In the event of a tie, it will be announced to the membership, and anyone who has not voted has three days in which to add their vote. Otherwise it will be decided at the AGM.

7.11 If there has been no nomination, or a nominee decides not to stand, then nominations can be accepted at the Annual General Meeting.

7.12 A Committee Officer can resign at any time. Members must be informed of the resignation and of the vacant

Committee position. Nominations for the position should be encouraged and, if there is more than one nomination, mid-term elections for that position should take place.

7.13 In the interest of democracy required by AIDA International, no majority may make up the committee from any one club, organisation or entity. (In a committee of 11, no more than 5 should represent any one club.)

7.14 a protracted period of silence from an Officer, assumes that they are no longer able to do the job and will be removed from the Committee to request that another take up the role.

7.15 in matters of voting via email within committee, that a consensus may be presumed unless disagreement is explicitly stated by return of email. In other words we follow a 'Silence Procedure'.

8. Committee and Committee Responsibilities

8.1 The Committee shall consist of a Chairman, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, and a Safety and Training Officer as a minimum

8.2 The Committee Officers shall be

Chair & AIDA Liaison Officer

Competitions Officer

E Media Officer

Membership

Press Officer/Social Media

Secretary and Records

Training & Safety Officer

Treasurer

8.3 No member shall be entitled to vote on a matter where he/she may have a conflicting or vested interest other than the well-being of the BFA.

8.4 The Chair may give permission for members with an interest, to vote on a matter if it will not adversely affect the BFA. If there is any contention about this within the committee, for a particular vote, then it will be on the majority vote of the committee members.

8.5 The Chair will arrange meetings.

8.6 The Membership Officer shall hold an up to date copy of the Constitution.

8.7 A quorum of the Committee shall be 50% of the members thereof.

8.8 Additional non voting members can be co-opted to the Committee at its discretion, as the need arises.

8.9 The Committee shall interpret the BFA Constitution, its rules and regulations as they currently stand. The

Committee may draw-up new rules in connection with any situation but such rules shall only remain in effect until

the next General Meeting of the BFA where their continued validity shall depend upon its ratification at such meeting.

8.10 The Committee shall hold and administer for the benefit of the membership all funds, equipment and property owned by the BFA for the term of their office.

8.12 The Committee, as an elected body from the BFA members, has the delegated responsibility of making decisions. However, on matters of significant impact on the membership and freediving community should be referred to the BFA membership for a vote.

8.13 The Committee should aim to agree on all matters and reach a consensus. In the event of any decision making, each Committee member has one vote. In the event of a tie, the Chair has the deciding vote.

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9 Rules for setting British Freediving Association Records

9.1 The BFA recognises current AIDA International rules as the rules for approving an official British record, with some additional BFA requirements. This includes the current AIDA definition of disciplines as well as the rules

outlining performance requirements for a dive to result in an AIDA ranking.

9.2 Additional rules for UK BFA Records are outlined below:

For ALL records

- The performance of any British Record must be judged according to current AIDA International Rules for

Competitions or Records, as appropriate to the attempt.

- To set a British record the athlete must be: over 18 years of age, a British citizen, a current member of the

BFA on the date of notification and date of attempt, and medically certified as fit to freedive.

- It is forbidden to consume any of the products detailed on the official drugs list published by WADA.

For all records set outside of an AIDA-recognised competition

Any British Record attempted outside of an AIDA competition must be announced to the BFA Records Officer at

least 14 days prior to the day of the attempt. This announcement should be made in writing by the athlete them-

selves only and include details of:

- The discipline/s to be attempted

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- Name, age and address of the athlete

- A copy of the athlete's UK passport identification page

- A copy of the athlete's medical stating they are fit to freedive and signed by a physician (who is not the

athlete themselves) within 12 months of the date of the event

- BFA membership number

- The names of the two AIDA judges supervising the attempt (There may not be a close relationship be-

tween the judge and athlete [e.g. family, trainer])

- Location of the record attempt

- The date(s) of the attempt(s)

- Whether the attempt can be published on the BFA website in advance

- A predicted depth (for depth disciplines). The final attempt must be within a maximum 15% deviation of

this announcement.

- Report on the methods, devices and personnel to be used for the record attempt

As soon as possible following any attempt made outside of competition, BOTH judges should independently con-

tact the BFA Records Officer in writing to confirm the success or otherwise of the attempt. A

record will be declared broken when the depth attained is greater than the previously recognised record by at least one metre or

the breath-time extended by at least 1 second.

9.3 AIDA world championship team selection will be by AIDA ranked points dated from 18 months prior to 3 months before the competition entry deadline. In case of candidates wishing to be considered who do not have

AIDA ranked points a performance witnessed by an AIDA Judge or AIDA UK Instructor will stand at 80% of the resulting outcome.

The team captain will be chosen by the team athletes in a vote prior to travelling to the World Championships.

Anyone wishing to put themselves forward as a team coach must apply to the BFA committee in writing. The committee will forward on the applications to the team captain (or one of the more

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experienced athletes if the captain has not yet been chosen), who will invite the team to vote 'yes' or 'no' to each candidate.

10. Meetings

10.1 The newly elected Committee shall assume its responsibilities as from the end of the AGM.

10.2 The AGM will be held yearly in the month of January, in a location which is as convenient as possible to the BFA membership, and may also be held partly, or wholly online, if reasonable technology is in place to enable all members to attend should they so wish.

10.3 An Extraordinary General Meeting may be summoned at any time by the membership officer on the request

of the Committee, or of at least ten members in writing. At least fourteen days notice must be given of the meet-

ing, which should be communicated in writing to each member.

10.4 The Committee shall meet as often as the business of the BFA necessitates

10.5 Any committee member can request a meeting, should the need arise.

10.6 Any full member of the BFA may take part in a committee meeting providing that prior notification has been

given to the Chair and that member shall only be present as an Observer.

10.7 The Membership Officer shall prepare minutes of each Committee Meeting which shall be agreed by the

Committee. A copy of the agreed minutes shall be posted on the Web Site as soon as possible after agreement.

11 Annual General Meeting ("AGM")

11.1 Notice of the meeting and the positions shall be communicated in writing, to all paid-up members of the BFA at least four weeks before the meeting.

11.2 The Agenda will be sent to the members at least one week before the AGM.

11.3 The AGM shall include the following:

- (i) Notification of Committee Members for the following year;
 - (ii) Presentation of the statement of income and expenditure for the year to 30th September;
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- (iii) Reports from all committee members;
- (iv) Ratification of any rules, or rule changes;
- (v) Announcement of any fee changes;
- (vi) Changes to the constitution (when applicable).

12 Extraordinary General Meetings ("EGM")

12.1 Any General Meeting of the BFA other than the AGM shall be known as an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM).

12.2 Notice of an EGM shall state the reasons for the meeting and shall include the text of any motion to be proposed for consideration. Amendments to such motion may be proposed at the meeting.

13 Welfare

Any welfare issues will be brought to the committee, who will ensure that any concerns of this nature are investigated and resolved. If someone is guilty of abusing the welfare of the vulnerable, they will be expelled from the BFA (under the banner of bringing the BFA into disrepute).

14 Dissolution of the BFA

14.1 The BFA can only be dissolved where a Membership Decision has been taken to take this course of action.

14.2 Membership Decisions require a majority vote of all the listed Members.

14.3 After it has been decided to dissolve the BFA, the BFA funds (if any remain after settlement of outstanding



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-debts and liabilities), and the effects and property of the BFA shall be dealt with in such a manner as shall be prescribed by the majority of the members.

15 Amendments and Alterations to the Rules

Alterations and amendments to these rules shall be made by the Committee at an Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting called for that purpose.

16 Selection of UK Champions

Selection of the annual UK Champions will be made by collating points earned across all eight competitive disciplines between 1st January to 31st December.