



Document Details

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NORTH DOWN SOFTBALL CLUB CONSTITUTION

1. Name

The Club will be called **North Down Softball Club** (NDSC), and will be affiliated to the regional governing body.

2. Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the club will be:

- 2.1.** To operate as a not-for-profit, offering coaching and competitive opportunities in Softball.
- 2.2.** To promote the club within the local & wider Softball community.
- 2.3.** To create opportunities for members to develop at all levels of the sport.
- 2.4.** To ensure a duty of care for all members.
- 2.5.** To provide all services in a manner that is fair and inclusive.
- 2.6.** To guarantee fair and equal treatment for all current and future members.

3. Membership

3.1. Composition

Membership will consist of officers, and members of the club.

3.2. Acceptance of Regulations

All members will be subject to the regulations of the constitution, and by joining, will be deemed have accepted the regulations and codes of practice that the club has adopted.

3.3. Membership categories

Members will be enrolled in one of the following categories:

Full	May vote, hold office, and participate fully in club activities.
Associate	May participate in club activities, but does not hold voting rights.
Life	Honorary recognition for exceptional service; retains full rights without payment of fees.

3.4. Good standing

A member is considered in good standing if:

- They have no disciplinary actions against them.
- Their subscription fees are fully paid and up to date.

Members not in good standing:

- Cannot vote or propose business at the AGM.
- Cannot address the AGM.
- May observe proceedings at the council's discretion.

4. Membership Fees

4.1. Annual determination

Membership fees will be set annually by the Organising Committee, and confirmed at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

4.2. Payment schedule

Fees will be paid in full by the opening day of the Softball Ulster league, or by instalments if agreed by the Treasurer.

5. Officers of the Club

5.1. Council positions

- Chair
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Any other position as directed by the Organising Committee

5.2. Election process

Officers will be elected at the AGM by the membership

5.3. Term of office

Officers shall serve a term of two years, after which they will retire, but are eligible for re-appointment.

In the event that a position becomes vacant, or goes unfilled, the organising committee may co-opt a member into the position until the next AGM, at which point the position will be subject to election.

6. Committee

The club will be managed through the Organising Committee consisting of:

6.1. Composition and Voting rights

- Chairperson
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Officers with portfolio

Only these positions will hold voting rights at Committee meetings.

6.2. Meetings and Quorum

- Committee meetings shall be convened by the Secretary.
- Minimum of 4 meetings per year.
- A Quorum of four (4) is required for committee meetings.

6.3. Responsibilities

- The Organising Committee will be responsible for adopting new governance, policy, codes of practice and rules affecting club operations.
- Appoint sub-committees as required, and appoint advisers to support the Organising Committee in the execution of its business.
- Conducting disciplinary hearing investigations where misconduct has been alleged.
- Taking appropriate actions inline with the disciplinary procedures detailed within the Bylaws

7. Finance

7.1. Banking and Accounts

- All monies will be banked in an account held in the name of the club.
- Account signatories will include the: Treasurer, Chair & Secretary.

7.2. Financial Oversight

- The Club Treasurer will be responsible for the finances of the club.
- The financial year of the club will end on December 31st.
- An independently examined statement of annual accounts will be presented by the Treasurer at the AGM.

7.3. Authorisation of Transactions

- Any transactions drawn against club funds should hold the authorisation of the Treasurer plus one other officer.

7.4. Financial Tools and Opportunities

- The club will avail of electronic banking facilities wherever possible.
- The club will avail of grant funding & sponsorship opportunities that arise.

8. Annual General Meetings

8.1. Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The council shall convene an AGM before the 31st March of each year, members shall receive no less than 21 days' notice prior to the AGM.

Business shall include: Reports from officers of the Organising Committee, a statement of the independently examined accounts, elections & other votes.

Nominations for officer positions must be submitted to the Secretary in advance of the meeting, & be seconded by another member in good standing.

If no nominations are received, nominations will open to the meeting attendees. If a position remains vacant, the council may co-opt a member to the role, who will be subject to ratification at the next AGM.

Elections will take place at the AGM; all members in good standing may vote. A Quorum of 25% of members in good standing is required for the meeting to be considered proper.

Proxies are allowed for the purpose of voting in the event an individual is unable to attend, providing the Secretary has been informed in writing in advance of the meeting.

8.2. Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM)

EGMs may be called by the Organising committee outside of the AGM cycle, & shall follow the same procedures with regards to notice, quorum and voting.

8.3. Virtual meetings

AGMs and EGMs may be held virtually, at the discretion of the Chair.

9. Safeguarding

9.1. Commitment to wellbeing

The club is committed to safeguarding the well being of all members, including vulnerable adults.

9.2. Members conduct

Members must show respect and understanding for their rights, safety and welfare of others, and conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of the club and the guidelines provided by our governing body.

9.3. Safeguarding policy

The club will adopt the most recent version of Softball Ireland Safeguarding Policy, unless voted otherwise at a General meeting.

10. Equity Policy

This club is committed to ensuring that equity is incorporated across all aspects of its development.

In doing so it acknowledges and adopts the following Sport Northern Ireland definition of sports 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.”

- 10.1. The club respects the rights, dignity and worth of every person and will treat everyone equally within the context of their sport, regardless of age, ability, gender, race, ethnicity, religious belief, sexuality or social/economic status.
- 10.2. The club is committed to everyone having the right to enjoy their sport in an environment free from threat of intimidation, harassment and abuse.
- 10.3. All club members have a responsibility to oppose discriminatory behaviour and promote equality of opportunity.
- 10.4. The club will deal with any incidence of discriminatory behaviour seriously, according to club disciplinary procedures.
- 10.5. The club seeks to move beyond avoiding discrimination and actively seeks to promote/intervene to ensure greater inclusion and diversity.

11. Discipline and Appeals

All concerns, allegations or reports of poor practice or abuse relating to the welfare of members will be recorded and responded to swiftly and appropriately in accordance with the club's safeguarding policy.

The club Designated officer is the lead contact for any safeguarding concerns.

Complaints procedure:

11.1. Submission of Complaint

All complaints must be submitted in writing to the Secretary.

11.2. Hearing of complaints

The Organising Committee will meet to hear complaints within **20 working days** of receipt.

11.3. Disciplinary Action

Following the hearing, the committee holds the authority to take appropriate disciplinary action, which may include the termination of membership.

11.4. Communication of Outcomes

Disciplinary hearing outcomes will be communicated in writing to relevant parties within **15 working days** of the hearing.

11.5. Right of Appeal

Members have the right of appeal, which must be submitted to the Secretary following within **10 working days** of receiving an outcome decision.

11.6. Appeal consideration

The committee will consider the appeal within **10 working days** of receipt, and render a final decision after consideration.

12. Dissolution

- 12.1.** A resolution to dissolve the club can only be passed at an AGM or EGM, where quorum has been met, through a majority vote of the membership present.

- 12.2.** In the event of dissolution, any assets of the club that remain will become the property of Softball Ulster, or if SU no longer exists, to another local sports or community organisation with similar aims, as determined by the membership.

13. Amendments to the Constitution

The constitution will only be changed through agreement by majority vote at an AGM or EGM, where quorum has been met.

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