

# Dinghy Cruising Association Constitution

## 1. Name and Purpose

1.1 The name of the Association is the Dinghy Cruising Association. The Association is divided into local groups whose members sail in the same area. The burgee of the Association is blue with a yellow fly and a white triangle on the blue.

1.2 The purpose for which the Association is formed is to promote and encourage all forms of cruising in sailing dinghies and similar small craft individually or in company at informal meets suggested by members.

## 2. Membership

2.1 Anyone aged 18 or over, whether the owner of a boat or not, who is interested in dinghy cruising is eligible as a candidate for membership. Membership of the Association shall be open to anyone interested in the sport on application regardless of sex, disability, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, religion or other beliefs.

2.2 Honorary membership of the Association may be proposed by members at any time and conferred for such periods as thought fit by the Management Committee.

2.3 Prospective members who complete an application in the Membership Management System or submit an application form to the Membership Secretary, and pay the necessary subscription, will be admitted to the Association.

2.4 Every Member should ensure the Association has an up-to-date postal and email address in the Membership database and any notice sent to any one of such addresses shall be deemed to have been duly delivered in writing.

2.5 Every member is expected to read and familiarise themselves with all DCA Policy documents, particularly the DCA Rally Policy and Procedures and Safety Recommendations.

2.6 Members wishing to leave the Association should notify the Membership Secretary of their intentions. However any member who has not paid their subscription within 30 days of its due date will automatically be removed from the list of members.

2.7 Every member undertakes to comply with the rules set out in this Constitution and any refusal or neglect to do so or any other conduct which, in the opinion of the Management Committee, is either unworthy of a member or otherwise injurious to the interests of the Association shall render the member concerned liable to expulsion by the Committee provided that, before expelling anyone, the Committee shall ask them for an explanation and give them opportunity to defend themselves. The vote on an expulsion shall be by ballot and shall only be carried if not less than three fifths of the members of the Committee vote in favour of the expulsion.

## 3. Subscription

3.1 Annual subscription rates shall be set by the Management Committee and confirmed by a vote at the Annual General Meeting.

## 4. Officers

4.1 The Officers of the Association shall be members with valid subscriptions, nominated and elected at the Annual General Meeting.

4.2 The Management Committee shall be responsible for deciding which Officer roles are required to run the Association. The following table summarises the duties of officers in place in 2026:

<b>Role</b>	<b>Duties</b>
President	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To act as a public figurehead of the Association</li><li>2. To promote dinghy cruising and membership of the Association</li><li>3. To represent the Association at public events</li><li>4. To write a welcome message for new members in each edition of the Journal</li></ol>
Secretary	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. To deal with members' queries and any other correspondence</li><li>2. To set up Committee meetings and take the minutes</li><li>3. To assist in the maintenance of the membership database</li><li>4. To provide the Editor with the number of print journals required</li><li>5. To produce the mailing list for the mailing company and send out the PDF copies to digital subscribers</li><li>6. To set up the AGM and take the minutes</li><li>7. To ensure policy documents are up to date and appropriately stored</li><li>8. To write news announcements for the Journal and prepare the new members page</li><li>9. To facilitate acquisition of any insurance policies required by the Association</li></ol>

Membership Secretary	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To manage the membership database and GoCardless payment system</li> <li>2. To allocate membership numbers to people joining the Association</li> <li>3. To send welcome messages to new members with a copy of the most recent journal.</li> <li>4. To answer membership queries</li> <li>5. To process and acknowledge membership cancellations</li> </ol>
Treasurer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To set up and manage such accounts as are required by the Association including bank, Paypal, GoCardless and Stripe</li> <li>2. To keep a record of all monies received and disbursed by the Association</li> <li>3. To produce annual accounts to present to the AGM and publish in the journal</li> <li>4. To advise the Management Committee regarding financial decisions</li> </ol>
Editor and Publisher	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To produce a journal for distribution to all members by post or email at regular intervals.</li> <li>2. To ensure that all necessary information, like DCA news, rally programmes and reports, are included in the journal together with more widely ranging articles of interest.</li> <li>3. To publish the journal to a high professional standard that will attract high quality submissions.</li> <li>4. To ensure that an excellent printer is engaged who also offers good value for money.</li> <li>5. To liaise with any sub-editors and proofreaders offering to assist</li> <li>6. To ensure members are informed of cut off dates for content submission and appropriate formats</li> <li>7. To liaise with editors of related publications, e.g. Drascombe Association News, Gaffers Log, Watercraft, Marine Quarterly, Small Craft Advisor</li> </ol>
Librarian	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To house the books and other documents in the DCA Library</li> <li>2. To review and manage the contents of the library on a regular basis according to the acquisitions policy</li> <li>3. To implement the borrowing policy set by the Management Committee</li> <li>4. To keep a running record of all books borrowed and acquired, along with any expenses incurred</li> <li>5. To keep the library catalogue housed on the DCA website up to date</li> </ol>
Public Relations Officer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To ensure the DCA has appropriate publicity material for use at boating events</li> <li>2. To assist in designing and organising DCA stands at dinghy shows</li> <li>3. To assist in the administration of the DCA Facebook group</li> <li>4. To manage the DCA Instagram and YouTube accounts</li> <li>5. To liaise with relevant organisations such as the RYA, DA, OGA, etc.</li> </ol>
Technical Advisor	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To answer questions from members about technical issues related to dinghy cruising and boat maintenance.</li> <li>2. To maintain the boat plans entrusted to the DCA and supply copies to members and non-members when ordered</li> </ol>
Shop Manager	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To establish and liaise with an appropriate online company able to supply DCA branded items directly to members</li> <li>2. To order and maintain stocks of selected merchandise that can be ordered and dispatched to members by DCA volunteers</li> <li>3. In the case of orders processed directly by the DCA, to ensure that an accurate record is kept of orders received, monies received and items dispatched</li> <li>4. To provide an annual summary of DCA shop income and expenditure to the Treasurer.</li> </ol>
IT Managers: Website Editor Forum Manager	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To identify and recommend appropriate software for a website, a members' forum and an automated membership management system.</li> <li>2. To develop and maintain a public website which promotes dinghy cruising and the Association.</li> <li>3. To establish and maintain a member's forum and a member only section of the website.</li> <li>4. To advise and ensure the DCA complies with General Data Protection Regulations</li> <li>5. To manage the process of securing, controlling and maintaining the DCA website's domain name and email addresses</li> </ol>

4.3 Officers shall be proposed and seconded at the Annual General Meeting and shall be elected by a show of hands.

4.4 If the number of candidates duly proposed exceeds the number of vacancies to be filled, the election shall be by ballot.

4.5 The Officers shall hold office until the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting and shall be eligible for re-election. Officers wishing not to continue in post for the following year should, if possible, inform the Chairperson well in advance of the next AGM, so that the vacant post can be advertised.

## **5. Regional Groups**

5.1 Regional groups shall be formed by members for the purpose of arranging opportunities to meet each other and promote dinghy cruising in support of the stated aim of the Association.

5.2 Any member taking the initiative to form or join a regional group can volunteer to coordinate communication between the members of the group and can hand that role over to another member of the group at any time.

5.3 The coordinating volunteer shall be known as the Regional Secretary.

5.4 A regional group may establish sub-groups with their own coordinators if they wish.

5.5 Meetings that involve sailing in company or sailing to an agreed destination are generally known as rallies, although the terms raid or messabout may also be used. A member familiar with a rally venue can volunteer to be the rally host.

5.6 It is essential that Regional Secretaries, sub group coordinators and rally hosts are familiar with and operate in compliance with the DCA Rally Policy and Procedures.

5.7 Regional Secretaries and sub-group coordinators will maintain contact with members who wish to be involved by email, WhatsApp and the DCA Forum. Where possible, meetings can be arranged to discuss potential sailing venues and suitable dates for rallies.

5.8 Regional Secretaries can promote collaboration with local sailing groups to enable members to explore new sailing locations and act as a focal point for DCA members from other areas wishing to join rallies in their area.

5.9 Regional Secretaries should provide relevant details of any planned rallies to the Journal and Website Editors so that the information can be placed in the journal and on the website.

5.10 Every member who participates in a DCA meeting on the water, i.e. a rally, warrants that they have read and accepted the DCA Rally Policy and Procedures.

5.11 Most rally hosts write a report to share with other members in the Journal. Regional Secretaries should check that any reports that have been written have been received by the Journal Editor.

## **6. Management Committee**

6.1 The Management Committee (hereinafter referred to as 'the Committee') shall consist of the Officers of the Association and the Regional Secretaries, the Chairperson being nominated from among their number and elected by the Committee for a period of two years. The quorum shall be six.

6.2 The Committee may co-opt a member to fill a casual vacancy caused by death or resignation.

6.3 The management of the Association shall be under the exclusive control of the Committee excepting only the making and alteration of rules. The Committee shall manage the affairs of the Association according to the rules and all surplus income will be reinvested in the Association. No surpluses or assets will be distributed to members or third parties except for small donations to registered charities active within our sport such as the RNLI.

6.4 The Committee shall meet at least every 6 months using video conferencing software. Voting shall be by show of hands. In the case of equality of votes the Chairperson shall have a second and casting vote.

6.5 The Committee may appoint such sub-Committees as it may deem necessary and may delegate such of its powers as it may think fit upon such terms and conditions as shall be deemed expedient.

6.6 A member of the Committee, of a sub-Committee or any officer of the Association, in transacting business for the Association, shall disclose to third parties that he is so acting. Only the Committee are empowered to enter into agreements or arrangements with other sailing Associations or Clubs.

6.7 No one shall, without the express authority of the membership in General Meeting, borrow money or incur debts on behalf of the Association or its Membership.

6.8 In pursuance of the authority vested in the Committee by Members of the Association, members of the Committee shall be indemnified by the Members of the Association out of the assets of the Association from and against any liability, costs, expenses or payments whatsoever which may be properly incurred or made by them or any one of them in the exercise of their duties on behalf of the Association wherever the contract is of a duly authorised nature or could be assumed to be of a duly authorised nature and entered into on behalf of the Association.

Should the assets of the Association be insufficient to satisfy such liability, costs, expenses or payments the Committee shall be entitled to a personal indemnity from the individual Members of the Association. The limit of any individual Member's indemnity in this respect shall be a sum equal to one year's subscription at the then current rate of that category of Membership unless the Committee has been authorised to exceed such limit by a General Meeting of the Association.

6.9 The Committee shall be sole authority of the interpretation of these rules.

## **7. Verifying the Accounts**

7.1 At the Annual General Meeting each year a member shall be appointed to check and verify the accounts of the Association for the current year.

## **8. General Meetings**

8.1 An Annual General Meeting shall be held at some place to be named or online using video conferencing software and on some day to be fixed by the Committee. Notice of the date of such meeting and its agenda shall be delivered to the membership at least 28 days before.

8.2 At any general meeting of the Association the currently elected Chairperson of the Committee or, in their absence, a Chairperson elected by those present, shall preside.

8.3 No business shall be voted on at the meeting unless included in the Agenda. Voting shall be by show of hands.

8.4 At any general meeting of the Association each member shall have one vote. Thirty members entitled to vote and present in person or online shall form a quorum. In case of an equality of votes, the chair shall have a second or casting vote.

8.5 The Committee may, on giving 28 days notice, call a special general meeting of the Association for any specific business the nature of which shall be stated in the summons convening the meeting, and the discussion at such meeting shall be confined to that business only.

8.6 The Committee shall also call a special general meeting on the written request of twelve members.

## **9. New rules, amendments and alterations**

9.1 Major alterations and additions to the rules shall only be carried out at a general meeting called by the Committee. Minor adjustments to wording can be proposed and authorised by the Committee.

9.2 Notice of any major alteration or addition to the rules proposed by a member of the Association shall be given to the Secretary in writing at least 28 days before any general meeting at which the same is to be brought forward, and full particulars of any such major alterations or additions shall be set out in the notice convening the meeting.

9.3 All such major proposed alterations or additions and any amendments to them which may be proposed and seconded shall be put to the vote of the meeting, and provided that on a show of hands, a majority of two thirds of the votes of those members present and entitled to vote shall be cast in favour of any proposed alterations, additions or amendments then the same shall be deemed to be carried.

## **10. Application of assets on dissolution.**

10.1 Upon dissolution of the Association any remaining assets shall, at the direction of the Committee, be given or transferred to a registered charity and/or the sport's governing body for use by them in related community sports.