

# THE RULES OF THE PONY CLUB

(Text in red type denotes a change from the Rules as printed in the 2019 Handbook)

Any changes made to the Rules of The Pony Club during the year will be made available online at [pcuk.org](http://pcuk.org) and Branches and Centres will be notified.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### Purpose

- 1.1 The Pony Club is a voluntary youth organisation for young people interested in ponies and riding. It is a Registered Charity and is subject to Charity legislation and to regulation by the Charity Commission. The Legal Objects of The Pony Club are set out in clause 4 of the Articles of Association (a copy of which may be obtained from The Pony Club Office upon payment of a fee). The purpose of The Pony Club is:
- to encourage young people to ride and to learn to enjoy all kinds of sport connected with ponies and riding.
  - to give instruction in riding and horsemastership and to educate Members to look after and to take proper care of animals.
  - to promote the highest ideals of sportsmanship, citizenship and loyalty to create strength of character and self-discipline.
- 1.2 The Pony Club Office is at Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth, Warwickshire CV8 2RW from where The Pony Club is managed by a permanent staff responsible to the governing body (the Trustees).

### Health and Safety Policy

- 1.3 The Trustees are committed to ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the Health and Safety of its employees, of everyone who assists The Pony Club, in whatever capacity. Members and their families and members of the public who may be affected by the activities of The Pony Club.
- 1.4 The Trustees will ensure that management procedures and rules are in place to ensure that all Pony Club activities are run with due regard for the Health and Safety of all

those people who may be affected by those activities and to ensure that all statutory duties are met.

- 1.5 Each employee, Area Representative, and District Commissioner/Centre Proprietor shall be given such information, instruction and training as is necessary for them to perform their duties in safety. When tasks require particular skills additional to those of The Pony Club staff and volunteers, a competent person or contractor with the necessary experience and training shall be engaged.
- 1.6 Each employee and volunteer will be expected to co-operate with The Pony Club or District Commissioner/Centre Proprietor to ensure that all statutory duties are complied with and to ensure that all work activities are carried out safely. Each individual has a legal obligation to take reasonable care for his or her own Health and Safety, and for the safety of others who may be affected by his or her acts or omissions. Any person who is concerned about any issue relating to Health and Safety should raise the matter with their District Commissioner or manager at the earliest available opportunity.

### Organisational Arrangements

- 1.7 The Chief Executive and the Pony Club Office shall on behalf of the Trustees
- i. Ensure that Rules and procedures are published and updated regularly to cover all Pony Club activities;
  - ii. Ensure that adequate Employer's Liability and Public Liability insurance cover, as determined by The Trustees of The Pony Club, is obtained;
  - iii. Ensure that adequate training and instruction is provided for Area Representatives, District Commissioners, Volunteers and Employees;

- iv. Maintain a central record of competent Coaches and their attendance at professional development training. Coaches may be deemed to be competent by virtue of qualification, achievement or experience in one or more fields relevant to Pony Club activities;
- v. Ensure that all activities organised by The Pony Club are run with due regard to the Health and Safety of everyone who may be affected by that activity;
- vi. Ensure that adequate safeguarding procedures are notified to Area Representatives, District Commissioners and Centre Proprietors for implementation at all Pony Club activities;
- vii. Maintain effective communications on Health and Safety issues with employees, Area Representatives, District Commissioners and Centre Proprietors;
- viii. Require accidents to be investigated to identify the causes so that actions may be taken to reduce the possibility of a recurrence.

1.8 District Commissioners shall operate their Branches in accordance with the Rules of The Pony Club and statutory requirements and with due regard for the health and safety of their Members, parents and guardians, volunteers and any other person who may be affected by the activities organised by the Branch.

1.9 Area Representatives are responsible for monitoring the Health and Safety performance of the Branches in their area.

1.10 Pony Club Linked Riding Centres are responsible for their own Health and Safety arrangements. These will be monitored by their Area Centre Coordinator and reported to The Pony Club Office as part of the Centre annual visit.

### **Responsibilities of Employees, Officials, Volunteers, Coaches and Contractors**

- 1.11 All persons acting on behalf of The Pony Club or carrying out work for The Pony Club must -
- i. Take reasonable care for their own Health and Safety;
  - ii. Consider the safety of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions;
  - iii. Work within the limits of their own training and competence and the information and instructions they have received;
  - iv. Refrain from intentionally misusing or recklessly interfering with any equipment provided for Health and Safety reasons;

- v. Report any hazardous defects in plant and equipment or shortcomings in the existing safety arrangements to a member of the Branch Committee, or their immediate Pony Club contact, as soon as practicable;
- vi. Report all accidents to a member of the Branch Committee, or their immediate Pony Club contact.

1.12 Health and Safety is to be given priority over any other Pony Club activity.

### **Other Legislation**

1.13 It is also the policy of The Pony Club to take account of, and to implement as required, legislation on human rights, legislation which impacts voluntary youth organisations, and which regulates the care and supervision of young people.

- 1.14 In relation to equity, equality and diversity, The Pony Club
- i. aims to ensure that all people, irrespective of race, gender, ability, ethnic origin, social status or sexual orientation have equal opportunities to take part in equestrianism at all levels and in any roles;
  - ii. seeks to educate and guide Pony Club Members, their employees and volunteers on the ownership, adoption and implementation of its Equity, Equality and Diversity Action Plan;
  - iii. intends to raise awareness of equity, equality and diversity through the implementation of this policy and the adoption of the Equity, Equality and Diversity Action Plan; and, as a result of this process
  - iv. aims to monitor, review and evaluate progress in achieving the stated aims and objectives and to feed back to member bodies on progress made.

1.15 The Pony Club will ensure that its recruitment and selection procedures are fair, transparent and meet the appropriate legal requirements.

## **2. DEFINITIONS**

2.1 In these Rules:

“Area” means a geographic sub-division of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

“Area Centre Coordinator” means the person responsible for supporting Centres within an Area and for advising on Centre Membership issues within that Area.

“Area Representative” means the person responsible for overseeing Pony Club activities within an Area.

“BETA” means the British Equestrian Trade Association.

“BEF” means the British Equestrian Federation.

“Branch” means an operating sub-division of The Pony Club, organising Pony Club activities at a local level.

“Branch Member” means a Member of a Branch.

“Branch Operations Director” means a person appointed by the Management Committee to assist relationships and communication, when required, between Branches and Area Representatives, and the Pony Club Office, and also to mediate in inter-Branch or intra-Branch disputes. He will be appointed for 3 years but may offer himself for re-appointment.

“Centre Member” includes both a Centre Member and a Centre Plus Member unless the context otherwise requires and means someone who is a Member through a Pony Club Linked Riding Centre.

“Centre Membership Scheme” means the scheme for the approval of riding establishments as a Pony Club Linked Riding Centre administered by The Pony Club Office for the membership of Centre Members.

“Centre Plus Member” means someone who is a Member through a Pony Club Linked Riding Centre and who has their own pony and transport.

“Championships” means The Pony Club Championships. Including where the context requires the Pony Club Tetrathlon Championships, The Pony Club Polo Championships and the Regional Championships.

“Charity” means “The Pony Club” as constituted as a Registered Charity.

“Children of the Family” includes siblings, half siblings, adopted children, foster children, and children who have a guardian residing at their address.

“Company Member” means a person who is entitled to vote at general meetings of The Pony Club being the Trustees, the Area Representatives, the Branch Operations Directors and the Chairmen of all National Committees.

“Designated Funds” are funds that have been earmarked by the Trustees or by a Branch Committee including where the context requires the Regional Championships the Pony Club Tetrathlon Championships and the Pony Club Polo Championships for specific projects.

“District Commissioner” means the person responsible for administering Pony Club activities within a Branch.

“Equestrian Professional” means a person who is financially interested in letting out or selling horses, in instructing in equitation or keeping livery or other equestrian facilities.

“Family Membership” means is available up to a maximum of 5 children of the Family living at the same permanent address and must be Members of the same Branch.

“Free reserves” are the assets of the Branch (excluding fixed assets) less its liabilities and less any Restricted or Designated Funds.

“Handbook” means the annual publication giving information about The Pony Club.

“he” means either he or she and “his” means either his or her.

“Health and Safety Policy” means the Policy as stated in the introduction to these Rules.

“Management Committee” means the executive body responsible for the day-to-day operation of The Pony Club, whose membership is defined in Rule 4.10.

“Member” includes a Branch Member and a Centre Member unless the context otherwise requires.

“Membership Subscription Year” means the period of twelve months commencing on the date the Member’s subscription is paid and terminating on the day before the anniversary of this date.

“Non-Riding Member” means a Branch Member who is eligible to take part only in unmounted Pony Club activities (e.g. Horse and Pony Care, Quiz, Triathlon and unmounted rallies).

“Parents” shall include individuals with parental responsibility.

“Pony” means either a pony or a horse, except where the terminology is clearly specific to a pony.

“Pony Club Linked Riding Centre” or “Centre” means a Riding Centre that has been accepted to participate in the Centre Membership Scheme.

“Pony Club Office” or “The Office” means the central office maintained by The Pony Club, which is also the registered address of The Pony Club.

“Pony Club Year” means the period from 1 January to the following 31 December.

“Restricted Funds” are monies that have been given by a donor with conditions on how they are to be spent.

“Riding Member” means a Branch Member who is eligible to take part in all Pony Club activities whether mounted or unmounted.

“Rules” and “Rules of The Pony Club” mean the Rules of The Pony Club, as published in the Handbook, and displayed on the website. The Rules are determined by the Trustees (in the spirit and best interests of The Pony Club and its objectives). The Rules may be added to, cancelled in whole or in part or altered, as the Trustees or the Company Members at a general meeting deem necessary. The Trustees may also make temporary rules for a limited period. Changes or additions to the Rules will be published on the website. Any query about the operation of the Rules or request for clarification should be referred to the Trustees.

“Website” means the website of The Pony Club, available at [pcuk.org](http://pcuk.org)

### 3. PERIOD OF OFFICE

- 3.1 The Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Treasurer shall serve in that capacity for a maximum of two terms of 3 years. No Trustee may serve for more than three consecutive terms of three years. They may then stand again after a period of 3 years has elapsed, up to a maximum of a further three consecutive terms of three years.
- 3.2 In exceptional circumstances, the Trustees may agree to an extension for a person who otherwise would have to retire, but for a maximum of 1 year.
- 3.3 This Rule shall prevail if it is in conflict with any other Rule.

## 4. STRUCTURE

### The Trustees

4.1 The Trustees are the ultimate authority of The Pony Club (subject to review by the Company Members at the Annual General Meeting) and are responsible for the general administration and management of the affairs of The Pony Club. The Trustees may delegate their authority to subsidiary bodies, officials and employees. A register shall be maintained of all delegations and authority limits.

4.2 Reporting to the Trustees will be the Management Committee, the Finance Committee, the Health and Safety and Safeguarding Advisory Committee and the Chief Executive.

4.3 The Chairman of The Pony Club will be nominated by the Trustees after consultation with the Volunteers and Officials Committee. The Trustees' nomination will then be subject to confirmation by the Company Members at the Annual General Meeting. The Chairman will hold office for three years from 1st January after his appointment and, subject to Rule 3, a retiring Chairman will be eligible for re-appointment. The Trustees will also appoint a Vice-chairman of The Pony Club after a similar process of consultation, to assist the Chairman in the performance of his duties. The Vice-chairman shall have the same length of term of office as the Chairman.

4.4 If the appointed Chairman or Vice-chairman is already a Trustee or an Area Representative, he will resign his original position. In such an event, the vacancy shall be filled in the manner described in the Rules.

4.5 The Chairman of the Area Representatives' Committee and the Chairman of the Centre Membership Committee cannot be a Trustee whilst holding that position.

### Honorary Appointments

4.6 The Trustees may make honorary appointments, such as President, or Vice-President. The holders of such appointments will not, by virtue solely of that office, be members of any Pony Club Committee.

### Finance Committee

4.7 The Finance Committee will monitor the integrity of The Pony Club's financial statements and internal controls. It will also review the budgets, the management accounts, the statutory accounts and the risk management systems, and will report on

these to the Trustees at each meeting (so far as applicable). The Committee will also make recommendations to the Trustees in relation to the appointment and remuneration of the auditors.

- 4.8 The Finance Committee will be chaired by the Treasurer and shall include the Treasurer, another Trustee, two members nominated by the Area Representatives, and such other persons of appropriate expertise as may be nominated by the Trustees. The Committee will meet as required, but at least twice each year, and the **Head** of Finance (or other member of staff nominated by the Chief Executive) shall attend each meeting.

### Management Committee

- 4.9 The Management Committee is the executive body charged with the **management** of The Pony Club in accordance with the policies and guidelines established by the Trustees **and for the avoidance of doubt will be responsible for determining any matters which do not fall to be determined by any other committee.**

- 4.10 The Vice-Chairman of The Pony Club will chair the Management Committee and its membership will be:
- The Vice-Chairman
  - The Chairman of the Training Committee
  - The Chairman of the Health and Safety and Safeguarding Advisory Committee
  - The Chairman of the Centre Membership Committee
  - The Chairman of the Area Representatives' Committee
  - The Chairman of the Chairmen of the Sports Committees
  - The Chairman of the Rules and Compliance Committee
  - The Chairman of the Finance Committee
  - The Chairman of the Volunteers and Officials Committee
  - Two members elected by the Area Representatives
  - The Chief Executive
  - Head of Finance**
  - Chief Operating Officer**

- 4.11 Other members of the staff of The Pony Club may attend the meetings at the invitation of the Chairman of the Management Committee
- 4.12 The elected Area Representatives will serve for a period of three years. When required, an election for a new Area Representative member of the Management Committee

will be held at the last meeting in the year of the Area Representatives' Committee, with the appointment to be effective from the following 1st January. Each member of the Management Committee shall have a nominated substitute who shall be entitled in the absence of that member to attend the Management Committee in his stead.

- 4.13 It will not normally be appropriate for a member of the Management Committee who is not a member of staff to hold the same position for more than three consecutive terms of three years but he may stand again after a period of one year has elapsed to a maximum of a further three consecutive terms of three years.
- 4.14 The same Area Representative may not serve in that capacity at the same time as a Trustee and on the Management Committee.
- 4.15 The member elected by the Chairmen of the Committees will serve for a period of three years and may not immediately stand for re-election to the Management Committee.
- 4.16 The Management Committee will meet at regular intervals.
- 4.17 Management Committee decisions will normally be made by open vote. However, the Management Committee may decide to have a secret ballot if a majority of those present so wish. All members will have equality of voting on all matters. The Chairman of the Management Committee will have the casting vote in the event of equality of votes. A quorum will consist of not fewer than five members of the Management Committee entitled to vote.

### Rules applicable to all committees.

- 4.18 Unless specifically provided for elsewhere in these rules, the following Rules shall apply to all committees, with the exception of the Appeals Committee: -
- 4.19 Each committee shall have a chairman, who will normally hold office for three years, terminating at the end of the third Pony Club Year, although he may offer himself for re-appointment.
- 4.20 Nominations for the Chairman can be made by the relevant Committee members and by Company Members. If more than

one nomination is received, the relevant Committee members and the Company Members will vote on the appointment.

- 4.21 If the chairman of any committee loses the confidence of his committee members, and he is unwilling to resign, then this should be reported to the Management Committee in writing, signed by a majority of the committee members. The Management Committee will appoint a person to investigate fully and, if necessary, report back on the facts. The Management Committee, in its absolute discretion, may end the appointment of a committee chairman or any other committee member at any time upon giving written notice to the individual. The Management Committee will normally seek representations from the individual concerned and will normally give reasons for its decision.
- 4.22 Persons appointed to committees established under these rules are expected to contribute fully to the working of that committee and therefore any persons who, without reasonable excuse, fails to attend (either in person or by conference call) three consecutive meetings of the committee shall cease to be a member of that committee.
- 4.23 Each committee shall include up to two Area Representatives. Every eligible Area Representative shall be offered a place on at least one committee. Area Representatives will serve on a committee for three Pony Club Years. Other than in exceptional circumstances an Area Representative will not be eligible for re-appointment in their capacity as Area Representatives but may be appointed as an ordinary member of the committee.
- 4.24 A newly appointed Area Representative shall not be eligible for appointment to a committee (unless he is already a member of such a committee) until he has served for one complete Pony Club Year as an Area Representative. Other than these new Area Representatives, each Area Representative shall be invited to indicate, no later than 1st August each year, the committees on which he wishes to serve. These should be given in order of preference. The Management Committee shall then allocate the Area Representatives to committees.
- 4.25 Other than the Area Representatives, persons will be invited to become members of committees because of their expertise in a

particular area. They will serve for a period of three years but may offer themselves for re-election. All vacancies must be advertised on The Pony Club website. All candidates must be nominated in writing by a Company Member. If there are more nominations than there are places available, then a vote will be held. Those entitled to vote will be the existing members of the Committee, both continuing and retiring, and the Company members.

- 4.26 A list of the proposed composition of each committee for the coming year shall be submitted to the Annual General Meeting for ratification.
- 4.27 Proposals to fill casual vacancies shall be submitted to the next Management Committee meeting after the vacancy arises.
- 4.28 All members of a committee shall have equal voting rights, except that co-opted advisors shall not have a vote. The chairman of the committee shall have the casting vote in the event of equality of votes. Any three members of a committee will form a quorum.

#### **Area Representatives' Committee**

- 4.29 The Area Representatives' Committee will be chaired by an elected Area Representative and will meet at least twice a year. The voting members of the committee will be the 19 Area Representatives. The Branch Operations Directors shall be entitled to attend meetings of the committee but shall not have a vote.

#### **Appeals Committee**

- 4.30 In the event that any matter cannot be resolved by the Area Representatives, the Area Centre Coordinators, the Branch Operations Directors, the Management Committee, the Centre Membership Committee or the relevant Sport Committee, the Chairman of the Management Committee will establish a committee of three or more Company members, retired Area Representatives or retired Chairmen of a Sports Committee at least one of whom must be an Area Representative. The committee will choose one of their number to act as chairman. The members chosen must not have a conflict of interest.
- 4.31 The Chairman will have the casting vote in the event of equality of votes.
- 4.32 The decisions of the Appeals Committee shall be final.

- 4.33 Any three members of the Appeals Committee will form a quorum.

### Sport Committees

- 4.34 There shall be formed a committee for each Sport comprising two Area Representatives plus other persons with knowledge and experience of each sport. The committee will in each case have responsibility for the administration of their sport within The Pony Club. With the support of The Pony Club Office, the committee is responsible for organising The Pony Club Championships for their sport. They will also maintain a separate Sport Rule Book which is published annually and they adjudicate on any matters requiring resolution within their sport. These Sport Rule Books form part of the Rules of The Pony Club.

Each Committee shall meet each year to consider whether any changes are required to the rules of their sport.

- 4.35 With the approval of the Management Committee, a newly appointed or re-appointed Sport Chairman may ask up to 50% of the Sport Committee to resign.

### Training Committee

- 4.36 The Training Committee has responsibility for **advising the Management Committee on:**
- The training of Pony Club coaches;
  - The training of Pony Club Members;
  - All elements of horsemanship and horsemastership within competitions;
  - The commissioning of coaching and training publications;
  - All aspects of the A, AH and B Tests including the administration of tests;
  - The appointments and removal of assessors to and from the Panel of Assessors for 'A' and 'AH' Tests.
- 4.37 The Training Committee shall meet annually to **recommend** any changes required to the syllabus of each Test, or to the fees charged for 'B' test and above.

### Centre Membership Committee

- 4.38 The Centre Membership Committee has responsibility for **advising the Management Committee on:**
- The administration of the Centre Membership Scheme and all matters affecting the interests of Centre Members
  - The criteria to be met and the standards required of Pony Club Linked Riding Centres to join the Centre Membership Scheme

- The approval for individual Riding Centres to join the Centre Membership Scheme.

- 4.39 To assist in carrying out this responsibility, the Committee will appoint Area Centre Coordinators to assess the suitability of Riding Centres.

### Health and Safety and Safeguarding Advisory Committee

- 4.40 The Health and Safety and Safeguarding Advisory Committee **will meet as required and will have responsibility for reviewing and advising the Trustees on:**
- The Health and Safety Policy of The Pony Club
  - The Pony Club Safeguarding Policy
  - All matters concerning compliance with the requirements of the DBS, Access NI or PVG (as appropriate).

### Rules and Compliance Committee

- 4.41 The Committee will be responsible for maintaining the Rules of The Pony Club and recommending changes to the Trustees as they may be required. The Committee will scrutinise the various rule books to ensure consistency and set codes of conduct and standards to apply throughout The Pony Club. All complaints and disputes will be dealt with by the Committee.
- 4.42 The Committee will elect a Chairman from amongst its number. The Branch Operations Directors will be members of the Committee. Two Area Representatives will also be members and the Committee will have power to co-opt additional members from time to time. It is recommended that one member of the Committee should have legal experience.

### Volunteers and Officials Committee

- 4.43 The Committee will be responsible for the recruitment of volunteers to The Pony Club and for determining and maintaining the processes by which they are elected **and for the appointment of Pony Club Ambassadors**. The committee will also approve and/or ratify new District Commissioners.
- 4.44 The Committee will ensure that suitable training and development is provided for volunteers and that they are duly rewarded and recognised. The Committee will consult with volunteers as it sees fit.
- 4.45 The Committee will elect a Chairman from amongst its number. Membership of the Committee will comprise of persons

appointed by the Company Members in general meeting but must include at least two Trustees and two Area Representatives. The Chairman of The Pony Club shall be ex officio a member of the Committee and may attend at his discretion. The Committee will have power to co-opt additional members from time to time.

### **Treasurer of The Pony Club**

4.46 The Treasurer of the Pony Club shall be appointed by the Trustees and will hold office for a period of three years. Subject to Rule 3, a retiring Treasurer will be eligible for re-appointment for a further term of 3 years. The Treasurer, with the support of the Finance Committee and the Head of Finance, will be responsible for all financial matters affecting The Pony Club.

4.47 Not later than the end of October each year, the Treasurer of The Pony Club will submit to the Finance Committee a draft budget for the following Pony Club Year, together with recommendations on annual subscriptions and capitation fees for that year. The Finance Committee will then forward to the Trustees its recommendations as to the budget for the following Pony Club Year for approval (with or without modifications) by the Trustees.

4.48 At each Meeting of the Trustees, the Treasurer and/or the Head of Finance will give a financial report, during which they will comment on any material variations from the approved budget.

### **Chief Executive**

4.49 The Chief Executive will be an employee of The Pony Club, responsible for administering the activities of The Pony Club and the Office within the policies and procedures established by the Trustees and in accordance with statutory requirements and the approved budget. He will report to the Chairman of The Pony Club and, through him, to the Trustees. He will attend all meetings of the Trustees, and all general meetings and such committee meetings as he may choose. He will have the right to speak at each such meeting but shall not have a vote, except on the Management Committee.

4.50 The Chief Executive can only hire or dismiss staff with the approval of the Chairman of The Pony Club.

4.51 In the event of a vacancy for the position of Chief Executive, the Trustees will establish a Recruitment sub-committee to recruit a new Chief Executive. This sub-committee will consist of no more than six members, to include the Chairman of The Pony Club (who will act as Chairman of the sub-committee) and the Treasurer of The Pony Club. The other members of the sub-committee will be drawn from the Trustees. The sub-committee will decide upon the selection policy and methods and will have absolute and irrevocable authority, on behalf of The Pony Club, to make an offer of employment to the candidate that it chooses. In the event of equality of votes, the Chairman of The Pony Club will have the casting vote.

### **The Handbook**

4.52 The Pony Club Handbook will be published annually. It will include these Rules (but not the Sport Rules); annual subscriptions and test fees; names of the Trustees, the committees established under this Rule 4, Branch officials, Area Centre Coordinators and Centre Proprietors; details of Insurance cover and information on Pony Club merchandise. The Handbook may be released in electronic form.

### **Bankruptcy**

4.53 Any Trustee, Company Member or District Commissioner, who becomes bankrupt or makes a composition with his creditors, shall be disqualified from office and his appointment shall be terminated immediately. No person who is an undischarged bankrupt may be appointed to any of these offices. This Rule shall also apply to any officer or member of a Branch Committee who has any responsibility for the financial affairs of the Branch.

## **5. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

5.1 At all levels of The Pony Club, from the Trustees to Branch Sub-Committees, avoidance of any potential conflict of interest must be strictly observed. Whenever an individual has a personal interest in a matter to be discussed at a meeting of a committee of which he is a member, he must: -

- Declare his interest before discussion begins.
- Be absent from the meeting for that item, unless expressly invited to remain to provide information.
- Not be counted in the quorum for that part of the meeting.
- Be absent during the vote and have no vote on the matter.

- 5.2 Normally, a person who is an Equestrian Professional will not be eligible for appointment as an Area Representative or as a member of any committee or sub-committee established under these Rules (except for membership of the Centre Membership Committee or the Training Committee). The Management Committee however, at its discretion, may decide to approve the appointment of an Equestrian Professional and may attach to the approval such conditions as the Management Committee in its absolute discretion considers appropriate. In such a case, the person must submit a written declaration that he has read and understood the Conflict of Interest Policy of The Pony Club, as defined in this Rule, and that he will adhere to it. Equestrian Professionals who are members of any committee (including the Centre Membership Committee and the Training Committee) or the Management Committee must also submit such a declaration. This Rule shall not be applied retrospectively.
- 5.3 A person empowered to take decisions on behalf of The Pony Club must ensure that those decisions are made in the best interests of The Pony Club.

## 6. MINUTES

- 6.1 All meetings of the Trustees, the Finance Committee, the Management Committee, the Health and Safety and Safeguarding Advisory Committee and the committees established under these Rules must be minuted and, subject to rule 6.2, copies of the minutes will be distributed to all members of these bodies, whether they were present at the meeting or not. Copies of the minutes will also be distributed as follows: -
- The Finance Committee – to the Trustees, and Management Committee
  - The Management Committee – to the Trustees, the Rules and Compliance Committee, the Finance Committee, Area Representatives and Branch Operations Directors
  - The Health and Safety and Safeguarding Advisory Committee – to the Trustees, Area Representatives and Branch Operations Directors
  - The committees established under these Rules – to the Management Committee, the Rules and Compliance Committee, Area Representatives and Branch Operations Directors

- 6.2 Where a matter which is confidential (by reason of data protection legislation or otherwise) or the disclosure of which could prejudice the financial interests of The Pony Club is included in the minutes of any meeting, a summarised version of the minute omitting such details as will remove that prejudice, may not be distributed to the relevant persons provided that the minute includes an indication of the general nature of the matter discussed.

## 7. MEMBERSHIP

### Eligibility

- 7.1 Membership is available to anyone until the end of the Membership Subscription year in which he becomes 25 years old. Membership may be as a Branch or as a Centre Member. Membership as a Branch Member may be as a Riding Member or Non-Riding Member.
- 7.2 Where membership is of a Branch, a Member cannot join more than one Branch at one time. Usually Branches accept any application for membership from people resident within their Branch District. Applications to join other Branches must be agreed with the Area Representative.
- 7.3 Membership as a Centre Member is intended for anyone who does not have their own pony, (either owned, hired or on loan), who rides at a Pony Club Linked Riding Centre. However, anyone who owns a pony, keeps it at a Pony Club Linked Riding Centre and has no means of transporting it, may apply to become a Centre Member.
- 7.4 A Centre Member who subsequently acquires a pony, and has transport, should move to become a Centre Plus Member or join a Branch. In such an instance, The Pony Club Office may give a partial refund of the Centre Membership subscription.

### Termination of Membership

- 7.5 If the Renewal Subscription of any Branch Member has not been paid by the end of his Membership Subscription Year, membership is terminated from that date. As insurance cover will also cease at the same time, it is essential that a person whose membership has terminated must not be permitted to take part in any Branch or Centre activities, except those that are open to non-Members, until such time as he renews his membership of The Pony Club.

- 7.6 A District Commissioner may at any time recommend to his Branch Committee that they end the membership of any Branch Member who, in the opinion of the District Commissioner, shows insufficient interest in their Branch. The District Commissioner may, at his own discretion, make a Branch rule that Members, to remain in membership of the Branch, participate in Branch activities, be selected to represent the Branch in any competition or be nominated to represent The Pony Club, must go to a certain number or percentage of the working rallies of the Branch in a calendar year unless prevented from doing so by illness, absence from home or any other reason which in the opinion of the District Commissioner justifies absence.
- 7.7 If it is proposed to end the membership of any Members, notice will be given to the Members, after consultation with their Area Representative who then may make appropriate representations. The Chairman of The Pony Club or the Chief Executive may suspend any Member whose conduct is under investigation.
- 7.8 The Rules and Compliance Committee may expel or temporarily exclude from the benefits of membership, any Member whose conduct is such, in its opinion, as to be injurious or detrimental to the character or reputation of The Pony Club or of any of its Branches or Centres or to the interests of The Pony Club or its Members or whose conduct shall in the opinion of the Committee, makes a Member unfit or unsuitable to continue as a Member. In the case of a Branch Member, the request for such an expulsion will be initiated by the decision of a Branch Committee to recommend to their Area Representative the expulsion of the Member. The Area Representative will then present the case to the Rules and Compliance Committee. In the case of a Centre Member, or Centre Plus Member an Area Centre Coordinator will recommend the expulsion to the Chairman of the Centre Membership Committee, who will present the case to the Rules and Compliance Committee.
- 7.9 Before the Rules and Compliance Committee expels or temporarily excludes a Member, he will be given reasonable notice of relevant meetings, and the full opportunity to defend himself, and to justify or explain his conduct. This will include making representations by way of defence, justification and explanation on behalf of the Member by his parents. **If the Rules and Compliance Committee is of the opinion that the Member** has been guilty of the alleged conduct and that the Member or parents of such Member has or have failed to justify or explain it satisfactorily, the Rules and Compliance Committee shall decide either to expel or temporarily exclude the Member from The Pony Club.
- 7.10 The Rules and Compliance Committee may also terminate the membership of a Member on medical grounds, if it considers that the continuation of membership would be dangerous or detrimental to either the Member himself or to others. In reaching its decision, the Rules and Compliance Committee shall take into account such medical reports that may be available to it, but the absence of any medical reports shall not preclude the Rules and Compliance Committee from terminating the Member's membership.
- 7.11 Before the Rules and Compliance Committee terminates membership on medical grounds, the Member will be given reasonable notice of relevant meetings, and full opportunity to justify his continued membership. This will include making representations by way of justification and explanation on behalf of the Member by his parents and/or by appropriate medical professionals.
- 7.12 If a majority of the Rules and Compliance Committee present at the inquiry is of the opinion that the Member's medical condition satisfies the criteria specified above, then his membership will be terminated.
- 7.13 The Area Representative or the Chairman of the Centre Membership Committee (as appropriate) has the authority to suspend the Member from membership pending the Rules and Compliance Committee inquiry.
- 7.14 On the termination of membership for medical reasons, the Member will be entitled to a pro-rata refund of the subscription and/or fees paid for the current year.
- 7.15 A District Commissioner may refuse to accept an application for membership. With the approval of the Area Representative, he may also refuse to renew the membership of a Member. Reasons for such action would normally be given.

- 7.16 If a District Commissioner refuses to renew a Member's membership, that person may apply to join another Branch. In such a case Rule 8 (Transfers) will apply, save for the following: -
- The Transfer Form does not need the approval of the refusing District Commissioner.
  - The 14 months rule will apply to the Member refused. However, any other children of the family may elect to transfer to the same Branch, without the imposition of the 14 months rule.
- 7.17 On the ending of membership, whether because of age, non-payment of subscription, resignation, expulsion or any other reason whatever, the Member will forfeit all the privileges of membership and all rights against The Pony Club. Subscriptions will not, except as provided above, be returnable and the Member will still be liable for all annual subscriptions that had become due and remained unpaid at the date of ending of his membership.

### Parents and Supporters

- 7.18 The Pony Club publishes on its website information on the role of parents and expects parents and those with parental responsibility to comply with the guidance set out there.
- 7.19 Where the behaviour of a parent or supporter is considered to be detrimental to the conduct of Branch activities it may be necessary first to give a warning and ultimately (although The Pony Club may dispense with a warning in exceptional cases) to ban them from attending Pony Club activities. The parent or supporter should be informed of any such decision by means of a letter from the District Commissioner which should indicate the reasons for the decision and indicate that the parent or supporter can appeal against the warning to the Rules and Compliance Committee. Such appeal must be made within three weeks of receipt of the letter. They should also be informed that the Member with whom they are associated is still welcome at Pony Club activities and that the District Commissioner will indicate on entry forms to competitions run by other Branches that the parent has been banned from attending Pony Club activities.

## 8. BRANCH MEMBERSHIP AND TRANSFERS

### Subscription

- 8.1 The Trustees will set the rate for the Annual Subscription and will publish this in the Handbook or the website. They will also determine the capitation fee, which is that part of the Annual Subscription retained by the Pony Club Office or (as the case may be) paid by Branches to The Pony Club Office. A new Branch is exempted from paying the capitation fee in The Pony Club Year in which it is formed.
- 8.2 **The first annual subscription is due when first applying for membership. Membership runs for twelve months from the date the subscription is received. A renewal reminder will be sent to the Member one month before the end of his Membership Subscription Year. Email Renewal reminders will be sent to the Member in the month leading up to the end of the Membership Subscription Year.**
- 8.3 **Applications for membership or to renew membership may be made online through the approved Pony Club portal or on the official Branch Membership Application Form or the official Branch Membership Renewal Form issued by the Office. If Branches require additional information that is not included on these forms, this may be collected by means of a locally produced supplementary form, but this must be in addition to the official forms, not replacing them.**
- 8.4 For the purposes of this Rule, a renewing Member is one who renews his membership and who has at any time in the past been a Member of any Branch of the Pony Club. His previous branch may not necessarily be the Branch that he is now applying to join.
- 8.5 A new Member is somebody who joins a Branch for the first time and has never previously been a Branch Member (although he could have been a Centre Member).
- 8.6 **Family Membership is available up to a maximum of 5 children of the family (as defined in rule 2). Children to be covered by family membership must all live at the same permanent address and must be Members of the same Branch.**
- 8.7 **Where there are already one or two children in a family who are Members, and additional children of the family join or renew their membership, thereby qualifying**

for Family Membership, the parent may opt either to pay the balance of the Family Subscription (in which case the membership of any additional children will terminate on the same date as the other Members forming part of that Family Subscription, or to pay the individual Annual Subscription for the additional Member(s).

### Visiting Members

8.8 All Branch Members will be welcomed as occasional visitors at working rallies or other Branch activities of a Branch other than their own Branch, provided that the agreement of both District Commissioners is obtained. A Visiting Member cannot represent the Branch that he is visiting in any Pony Club competitions. He may not take tests (other than Achievement Badges) at that Branch without the permission of the District Commissioner of his own Branch.

### Transfers

8.9 Members wishing to transfer between Branches are actively discouraged from doing so, as The Pony Club believes transfers are not in the best interests of The Pony Club as a whole.

8.10 A Member, who changes Branches, other than because of a permanent change of residence, may not compete in any Championship qualifying competition as a Team Member for 14 calendar months from the date of transfer. This does not apply to the Regional Championships, the Quiz, and the Horse and Pony Care competitions. Such a Member may, however, compete as an individual. Any transferred Member ineligible under the 14 months rule to compete at an Area Team qualifying competition shall not be eligible to compete at the later stages of the competition in the Pony Club Year that the restriction expires. A Member may appeal to the Appeals Committee against the imposition of the 14 months rule.

8.11 On permanent change of residence into another Branch's district, a Member may choose either to remain with his existing Branch or transfer to the Branch into whose district he has moved. Provided he requests a transfer within 12 calendar months of the change of residence, the 14 calendar months restriction on competing in any Championship qualifying competition or Championships will not be imposed. Equally, if a Member changes Branches within 12 months of first joining The Pony Club, he

may do so without the imposition of the 14 months restriction.

8.12 If the transfer is requested because the Branch to which the Member currently belongs does not offer the opportunity to take part in Mounted Games, Polo or Polocrosse at any level, be it rallies, friendly competitions or Area Competitions, the fourteen month restriction will not apply to that sport, but it will apply to those other sports in which he could have taken part.

8.13 In the case of a Renewing Member, anyone who applies to join a different Branch is subject to the transfer provisions as set out above and a **current Transfer Request Form** must be submitted. For competition purposes, the new membership will be deemed to start from the date that the subscription is paid, or March 1st, whichever is the later. Individual consideration will be given **by the Area Representative** in cases where membership has lapsed for two years or more.

8.14 Every request for a transfer must be made to the Area Representative **on a current Transfer Request Form**. The Transfer Request Form must be completed by the respective District Commissioners of the Branches concerned and returned, for consideration, by the Area Representative(s). Any transfer agreed by the Area Representative(s) and by both District Commissioners can go ahead without reference to The Pony Club Office. If the proposed transfer is not agreed by the Area Representative(s) and both District Commissioners, an appeal may be made by or on behalf of the Member to the Rules and Compliance Committee, which will have the absolute discretion and authority to approve or reject any transfer and will generally give reasons for doing so. It will determine what, if any, representation of interested parties is appropriate and, in relevant circumstances, reasonable and adequate notice of meetings will be given. The decision of the Rules and Compliance Committee shall be final.

8.15 In the year of transfer, no part of the Annual Subscription of a Member will be payable to the "receiving" Branch, unless the Annual Subscription is paid to the "receiving" Branch after the transfer.

### Centre Plus to Centre Plus

8.16 A Centre Plus Member who changes Centres, other than because of a permanent change of address, may not compete in any

Championship qualifying competition as a Team Member for 14 calendar months from the date of transfer. In other circumstances where the Centre Plus Member changes Centres, cases will be managed on an individual basis by the **Area Centre Coordinator**.

### Centre to Branch

8.17 If a Centre Member wishes to transfer to a Branch, they must contact their chosen Branch and join as a new Member. They may contact the Pony Club Office for a refund on any Centre fee outstanding. The 14 months restriction on competing for the Branch will not apply, but the Member **MUST** meet all other eligibility rules.

### Centre Plus to Branch

8.18 **The same rules will apply to a transfer from Centre Plus Membership to Branch as apply to a transfer from Branch to Branch.**

### Centre to Centre Plus

8.19 If a Centre Membership comes to an end and the Member transfers to Centre Plus for their subsequent renewal of membership, it must be made clear on submitted renewal documentation. The Centre Proprietor must also be informed. If the transfer from Centre to Centre Plus Membership takes place mid subscription, the Pony Club Office should be contacted who will manage the transfer.

### Branch to Centre Plus

8.20 **The same rules will apply to a transfer from Branch to Centre Plus Membership as apply to a transfer from Branch to Branch.**

### Branch to Centre

8.21 The transfer from Branch to Centre Membership will follow the same procedure as transferring from Branch to Branch.

### Branches outside the UK

8.22 The Rules of The Pony Club apply only to Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

8.23 Any Club situated outside Great Britain and Northern Ireland and having objects similar to those of The Pony Club may, with its approval, be affiliated to The Pony Club and when and so long as it is affiliated it must be known by a name indicating that it is a Branch of The Pony Club.

8.24 Any affiliated Club, Advisory Board or Committee will make any rules for its constitution and organisation as it shall think

fit, but these rules must first be sent to and approved by The Pony Club who may require any amendments and additions and deletions as it thinks proper.

8.25 In any event approval will be withheld unless the rules incorporate the objects and spirit of the Rules of The Pony Club.

8.26 A Member of an affiliated Overseas Branch can transfer to a UK Branch and become a full Member. The same conditions will apply as for British Members (see Transfer rule).

8.27 Affiliated Clubs will contribute an affiliation fee to The Pony Club, which will be set by the Trustees.

8.28 Any approval by The Pony Club given to Affiliated Clubs may at any time be withdrawn when all privileges will be terminated. Adequate notice will be given, along with reasons for withdrawal, in reasonable time. The Pony Club from time to time may also vary the conditions of membership and the Rules of Affiliated Clubs, upon reasonable notice.

## 9. AREA AND BRANCH ORGANISATION Areas and Branches

9.1 The Pony Club's administration in the UK is divided into Areas, which are defined by the Area Representatives Committee. Each Area will be headed by an Area Representative. Areas consist of a number of Branches and the Area Representative will agree the geographical boundary of each Branch. The creation of a new Branch, or the amalgamation of existing Branches, must have the prior agreement of the Area Representative. If a Branch cannot agree its boundaries with the Area Representative, it will have the right of appeal to the Management Committee. It is permissible for Branches to have overlapping boundaries.

9.2 Branches must follow the purposes of The Pony Club, as stated in Rule 1.1 and are governed by the Rules of The Pony Club.

9.3 The Rules and Compliance Committee shall have the power to suspend or expel a Branch or an officer or committee member of that Branch, if it believes there to be a breach of this requirement. Similar action may be taken if it believes that The Pony Club is being brought into disrepute.

- 9.4 Before the Rules and Compliance Committee suspends or expels a Branch, the District Commissioner and Branch Secretary will be given reasonable notice of relevant meetings, and full opportunity to defend the Branch and to justify or explain its conduct.
- 9.5 This will include making representations by way of defence, justification and explanation on its behalf. If the majority of the Rules and Compliance Committee present is of the opinion that the Branch is in breach of its obligations and that its representatives have failed to justify or explain it satisfactorily, the Rules and Compliance Committee shall decide either to suspend or to expel the Branch.
- 9.6 In the case of the proposed suspension or expulsion of an officer or committee member, they shall be entitled to similar notice periods and entitlement to defence.

### Area Representatives

- 9.7 The District Commissioners in each Area will elect, from amongst themselves or from outside, an Area Representative. On a vacancy, or in June of the third year of an Area Representative's term, the Pony Club Office will ask the District Commissioners in that Area to nominate their choice, having confirmed that the person concerned is willing to stand. The Pony Club Office will then organise a vote. District Commissioners can nominate themselves.
- 9.8 **The appointment of a person as Area Representative will be subject to confirmation by the Management Committee.** They will hold office for three years from 1st January after the date of their election and will be eligible for re-election. They will represent their Area on the Area Representatives Committee and will offer help and advice to District Commissioners and/or their committees on the organisation and administration of the individual Branches in their Area
- 9.9 The duties and responsibilities of Area Representatives include:
- To ensure that their Branches are aware of and adhere to the Health and Safety and Safeguarding Policies, and other statutory obligations.
  - To hold at least two Area Meetings per year.
  - To co-ordinate with Branches and Centres in the Area the dates of competitions, coaching courses and training days and to arrange organisers, dates and venues for Area competitions.
  - To find out the views and wishes of their Branches and represent those views when required to the Office.
  - To liaise with appropriate committees and or members of staff.
  - To pass to the Pony Club Office anything in the Area that requires its attention.
  - To advise the Volunteers and Officials Committee of the suitability of new District Commissioners elected by Branches in their Area and of new Branches proposed in their Area.
  - To handle complaints.
  - To give, when appropriate, general advice, help and support to District Commissioners and Centre Proprietors and if necessary, to exercise supervision on;
    - The appointment of new District Commissioners
    - Branch problems
    - Branch programmes
    - Health and Safety and Safeguarding
  - To approve transfers between Branches
  - To advise on the accreditation of Coaches and Nominees for the Visiting Coaches Panel and National Assessors' Panel.
  - To organise or delegate the responsibility of organising Area Training courses for Coaches, Assessors for 'AH' and 'B' Test levels, and candidates for the higher Tests as required by their Branches/Centres.
  - To approve 'A' Test nominations.
  - To have an up-to-date panel of Assessors for 'B' Tests and send it to The Pony Club Office each year.
  - To organise, or delegate the responsibility for appointing, suitable 'B' Test Assessors to attend a study day to make sure there is a level standard of examining for the Test in the Area. Assessors should attend at least one study day every two years to remain on the Area Panel.
  - To keep a record of passes at AH, B+ and all levels of 'B' Tests.
  - To advise the Pony Club Office of any views from their Area on new riding establishments applying to become a Pony Club Linked Riding Centre.
  - To assist Centre Proprietors to find Assessors for Pony Club Tests up to and including 'C+' Standard.
  - To let the Pony Club Office know of any suitable Members from their Area for overseas visits and other events.
  - To inform the Pony Club Office of any suitable students for any nationally organised course, such as the 'A' Test Coaching Camp.

- 9.10 If an Area Representative loses the confidence of his District Commissioners, and he is unwilling to resign, then this should be reported to the Rules and Compliance Committee in writing and signed by a majority of the District Commissioners in the Area.
- 9.11 The Rules and Compliance Committee will appoint a person to investigate fully and, if necessary, to report. The Rules and Compliance Committee in its absolute discretion may end the appointment of an Area Representative at any time upon giving written notice to the individual.
- 9.12 The Rules and Compliance Committee will normally seek representations from the individual concerned and will give reasons for its decision. However, in certain circumstances (which it may in its absolute discretion determine) it may decide not to give reasons.
- 9.13 **Area Representatives will be reimbursed expenses incurred by them in accordance with the Pony Club Expenses Policy.**
- 9.17 If the new District Commissioner is appointed before 1st July in the calendar year, his term will end at the third 31st December after the date of his appointment.
- 9.18 If he is appointed after 30th June, his term will end at the fourth 31st December after the date of his appointment. A District Commissioner does not need to be a member of the Branch Committee before election.
- 9.19 If the retiring District Commissioner is not standing for re-election then he does not have to retire from the meeting and will continue to act as Chairman of the Branch Committee until the end of his period of office.

### Area Meetings

- 9.14 At least twice per year, Area Representatives will hold meetings with the District Commissioners (or their representatives) in their Area. If so wished, these may be open meetings. The purpose of these meetings shall be to provide a forum for debating areas of concern. Area Representatives should obtain the views of their District Commissioners on these matters, whilst recognising the independence of individual Branches to conduct their own activities, subject to the ultimate authority of the Management Committee. One of the meetings shall be held in the autumn, prior to the Annual General Meeting.
- 9.20 A retiring District Commissioner may not serve as a Committee member of the same Branch for a period of one year from the date of his retirement except in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Rules and Compliance Committee.
- 9.21 In the event of there being more than one candidate for District Commissioner, the election will be by secret ballot and it will be the responsibility of the Secretary of the Branch Committee to provide a sufficient number of ballot papers for each Committee member present to vote. All candidates nominated for District Commissioner will retire from the meeting when the ballot is taking place and will not return until all the votes have been counted and the result given to the Chairman of the meeting. Candidates will not have a vote. The newly elected District Commissioner will take office on the next 1st January, unless the position of District Commissioner is vacant, in which case he will take office immediately.

### District Commissioners

- 9.15 Each Branch will be managed by a Branch Committee under a District Commissioner. The first District Commissioner of a Branch will be appointed for three years by the Volunteers and Officials Committee on the recommendation of the Area Representative.
- 9.16 When the term of office of a District Commissioner is due to expire, the Branch Committee will elect his successor, although the retiring District Commissioner may offer himself for re-election. If he is offering himself for re-election, the retiring District Commissioner cannot vote in this election, and must retire from the meeting whilst the election and
- 9.22 The appointment of the District Commissioner elected will be subject to the approval of the Volunteers and Officials Committee which will take the opinion of the Area Representative into account. If the new District Commissioner has not yet attended a 'Branch Officials' training day, his

appointment will be conditional, and will not be confirmed until he has attended such a day. If the new District Commissioner has not attended a District Commissioners' Training Day within 12 months of receiving conditional approval, his Area Representative must either revoke his appointment or grant him an extension of time. The maximum extension allowed is one further period of 12 months. Until the approval and training process is completed, a new District Commissioner will run the Branch in an acting capacity.

9.23 In exceptional circumstances, and at the discretion of the Volunteers and Officials Committee, two Joint District Commissioners of a Branch may be appointed. However, in this event, one of the District Commissioners must agree to accept the ultimate responsibility for carrying out the duties and responsibilities of a District Commissioner, as detailed in Rule 9.28 below.

9.24 **Normally a person who is an Equestrian Professional will not be eligible for appointment as a District Commissioner. The Volunteers and Officials Committee however, at its absolute discretion, may decide to approve the appointment of an Equestrian Professional as a District Commissioner and may attach to the approval such conditions as the Volunteers and Officials Committee in its absolute discretion considers appropriate. In such a case, the person must submit a written declaration that he has read and understood the Conflict of Interest Policy of The Pony Club, as defined in Rule 5 and that he will adhere to it.**

9.25 If any person ceases to be a District Commissioner for any reason, or if a District Commissioner elected by a Branch Committee is not approved by the Volunteers and Officials Committee, the Branch Committee will immediately hold a committee meeting and will elect a District Commissioner to take the place of the existing one. The District Commissioner thus elected will hold office for three years. Such an election will be subject to the approval of the Volunteers and Officials Committee and the training process as detailed above.

9.26 The Volunteers and Officials Committee generally will, but is not required to, give reasons for not giving its approval of the appointment of a District Commissioner elected by a Branch Committee. It may allow representations from the candidate.

9.27 A District Commissioner is not allowed to make cash or other financial contribution towards the expenses of his Branch. This does not preclude a District Commissioner from waiving repayment of his travelling or out of pocket expenses, if he so wishes.

9.28 The duties and responsibilities of District Commissioners are to ensure that:

- His Branch complies fully with the Health and Safety and Safeguarding Policies, and other statutory obligations.
- He is familiar with The Pony Club's Health and Safety Rule Book and Safeguarding Policy and that a copy is given to every Camp Organiser.
- Camps, Rallies, lectures and other events are organised for the Branch Members,
- A record is kept of all Members of the Branch on the on-line Membership Database.
- Joining fees and Annual Subscriptions are collected.
- All returns and money required by the Rules are sent to the Pony Club Office according to the established timetable.
- The names of Coaches used by the Branch, and their qualifications, are entered on the Coach Directory section of the Pony Club database.
- Minutes are taken of all Branch Committee Meetings and Annual Meetings and are kept in a Minute Book.
- Simple financial accounts for the Branch are kept and arrangements made for the inspection of them if required by the Trustees. A financial statement should be produced at each meeting of the Branch Committee.
- Accounts are audited yearly by an appropriate person or reviewed by a member of the Branch Committee who in either case is not related in any way to the Treasurer and does not live at the same address as the Treasurer.
- Annual accounts are sent to The Pony Club Office on the form provided. The accounts of all Sub-Committees, Parents' Associations or Support Groups must be included in the Branch Return.
- A register is kept of all the fixed assets (land, buildings, vehicles, caravans, trailers, jumps, trophies and other equipment belonging to the Branch, whether or not the Branch capitalises fixed assets in its accounts. Items costing or valued (whichever is the greater) less than £100 need not be entered on the register. Property comprising a set should be priced

as a set, not as individual items. This register must be physically checked at least once every year.

- The Branch Committee is made aware of all, important information from the Pony Club Office.
- Any other tasks and responsibilities that are given by the Management Committee are carried out.

### Branch Committee and Committee Members

9.29 The Branch Committee will consist of no fewer than five people including the District Commissioner **and will be responsible for appointing the following Officers of the Branch: Branch Secretary, Branch Treasurer, Health and Safety Officer, and Branch Safeguarding Officer who will be members of the Branch Committee. A person, including the District Commissioner, may hold more than one appointment, except that the Treasurer may not be the District Commissioner, nor may he be anybody residing at the same address as the District Commissioner. Additionally, the Committee may appoint an Assistant District Commissioner.**

9.30 **No person may be appointed or re-appointed to the Committee of more than one Branch.**

9.31 All Officers of the Branch and all other members of the Branch Committee will be appointed for a three-year term, terminating at the third 31st December after the date of their appointment, but may offer themselves for re-appointment. A Branch Committee can at any time increase or reduce its number provided that it will not be lower than five. To do this or to fill casual vacancies, the Committee can at any time elect new members to join the Committee.

9.32 In exceptional circumstances, after consultation with and with the approval of the Area Representative, a newly appointed District Commissioner who has attended a Branch officials training day, may ask up to 50% of the Branch Committee to resign.

9.33 The District Commissioner will be the Chairman of the Branch Committee. However, if he is unable to be present at a Committee meeting, the Assistant District Commissioner (if appointed) will be the Chairman. Otherwise the other members present shall choose one of their number to chair the meeting. The Branch Committee of each Branch will meet at least four times

each year. A quorum will consist of not less than three members. Questions at any meeting will be decided by a majority vote. In the case of an equality of votes the Chairman will have a casting vote. If a member of the Branch Committee cannot attend a meeting, they cannot nominate an alternate person to attend on their behalf.

9.34 The Branch Treasurer must present an Income and Expenditure Account and a Balance Sheet for the previous Pony Club Year, for approval by the Branch Committee. This should be done no later than the first Branch Committee meeting after the end of **the relevant Pony Club Year.**

9.35 The accounting records of the Branch (including, but not limited to, ledgers, bank statements, invoices, cheque books and counterfoils, paying in books and counterfoils, pass books and computerised records) are the property of the Branch. Should the accounts be kept on a computer, then the rights to use any proprietary software (including serial numbers and activation codes) must be owned by the Branch. Accounting records kept in a computer must be securely backed up at regular intervals, at least monthly. If the computer system is password protected, the password must be known by another member of the Branch Committee as well as the Treasurer.

NB Regulation of charities has become increasingly strict, particularly in regard to the management of finances. A pamphlet "Guidelines for Branch Treasurers" is issued to all Branch Treasurers and District Commissioners and is also available on the website. This gives advice on the duties and responsibilities of Branch Treasurers.

9.36 Should it appear that a Branch Treasurer or any other person carrying out the functions of a Branch Treasurer, or any other person performing financial functions for the Branch (such as cheque signing or handling cash), is not providing the required level of financial stewardship, the Rules and Compliance Committee may suspend them from office, and order that all of the Branch's financial records and documents should be surrendered to a named person. In the period between Rules and Compliance Committee meetings, the Treasurer of The Pony Club may initiate the suspension.

- 9.37 The Rules and Compliance Committee shall order an investigation into the complaint against the suspended person. Depending on the outcome of this investigation, he may either be reinstated or removed from office. In the latter case, he shall have the right to appeal to the Appeal Committee, the decision of which shall be final.
- 9.38 **If a Branch Committee passes a Vote of No Confidence in the District Commissioner or any other member of the Branch Committee, and he is unwilling to resign, then this will be reported to the Area Representative. The Area Representative will arrange for an investigation into the matter to be undertaken either personally or by some other person appointed by him and for the result of the investigation to be reported to the Rules and Compliance Committee for a decision as to whether to terminate the appointment of the individual concerned. Pending a decision by the Rules and Compliance Committee the District Commissioner or Branch Committee member concerned shall be suspended from acting in that capacity.**
- 9.39 The Area Representative or the Rules and Compliance Committee may also initiate an investigation into the conduct of a District Commissioner or other Branch Committee member. The Committee may deem it appropriate that a person other than the Branch's Area Representative should carry out any investigation. The Rules and Compliance Committee, in its absolute discretion, may end the appointment of a District Commissioner or Branch Committee member at any time upon giving written notice, both to the individual and to the Branch Secretary. The Committee would normally seek representations from the individual concerned and would give reasons for its decision. However, in certain circumstances (which it may in its absolute discretion determine) it may decide not to give reasons.
- 9.40 A Branch Committee may create one or more sub-branches in outlying parts of the District covered by the Branch. These sub-branches will be managed by the Branch Committee who can appoint a sub-committee for that purpose. The District Commissioner and at least one other member of the Branch Committee will be members of any sub-committee or any Parents' Associations/ Support Groups, etc established.
- 9.41 The funds of any sub-branches, Parents' Associations, or any other Support Group and their use are under the control of the District Commissioner and the Branch Committee, and they may instruct that all or part of such funds shall be transferred to the Branch account.
- Parents' Meeting**
- 9.42 Each Branch must hold a Parents' Meeting annually, open to Parents and Members. As a minimum, the Meeting must include a report from the District Commissioner on the activities of the past year, the presentation of a simple financial statement by the Treasurer, and questions and opinions from the floor. Other reports may be given as appropriate, and awards may be presented. This Meeting has no authority to impose decisions on the Branch Committee **but the Branch Committee shall in making any decision have due regard to any views expressed at a Parents' Meeting.**
- Branch Presidents**
- 9.43 A Branch Committee may have a Branch President, but a person shall not by virtue only of being the President become a member of the Branch Committee. Presidents shall serve for a three-year term, terminating at the third 31st December after the date of their appointment. They can be re-appointed by the invitation of the Branch Committee.
- Amalgamation and closing of Branches**
- 9.44 **If the Management Committee, in its absolute discretion considers that a Branch has become so small as to be unable to provide an adequate quality or variety of activities to its Members or that the continued operation of the Branch will prejudice the effective, efficient and economic management of The Pony Club, the Management Committee may require the Branch to amalgamate with an adjoining Branch.**
- 9.45 **The Management Committee shall not exercise its power in Rule 9.44 to require a Branch to amalgamate with an adjoining Branch unless it has first given to the District Commissioner and Branch Secretary of both Branches, notice of its intention to do so. The notice may include details of any improvement(s) the Management Committee would consider a Branch needs to make to avoid the Management Committee taking such action and of any reasonable period within which such improvement(s) must be made.**

The District Commissioner and Branch Secretary will be given reasonable notice of relevant meetings, and full opportunity to present reasons why the Branch should not be amalgamated with an adjoining Branch.

- 9.46 If a Branch, for whatever reason, ceases to exist it is the duty of the District Commissioner, or if there is not a District Commissioner then of the Secretary of the Branch Committee, to send the following to The Pony Club Office: -
- All the funds of the Branch and of any sub-branch(es) under the management of the Branch Committee.
  - All the Branch membership records, including those of any sub-branch(es).
  - All financial books and statements of the Branch and any sub-branch(es)
  - The Minute Books of the Branch and of any sub-branch(es).
  - All other significant documents held by the Branch and any sub-branch(es).
  - An inventory of all equipment held and owned by the Branch and any sub-branch(es).
- 9.47 The Management Committee shall decide the disposition of Branch equipment and assets, although it may delegate this decision to the Area Representative.

## 10. BRANCH ACTIVITIES

### Scope

- 10.1 Branches have the right to arrange their own programme of activities, subject only to compliance with these Rules and to any directions that may be given by the Area Representatives Committee or the Management Committee. A Branch Programme, listing forthcoming activities approved by the District Commissioner, should be given to all Members at regular intervals.
- 10.2 A Branch will not hold an activity in the District of any other Branch (unless it is in shared territory) except by invitation or permission of the other District Commissioner. This should not unreasonably be refused. This Rule shall not apply to commercial premises.

### Welfare

- 10.3 At Pony Club Rallies and other mounted activities, the following are unacceptable: -
- ponies that are aged under four years.
  - ponies that are infirm through old age;
  - ponies that are ill, thin or lame;

- ponies that are a danger to their riders or to other Members or their ponies;
- mares that are heavy in-foal, mares in milk and mares with foal at foot;
- obese ponies.

- 10.4 Stallions can only be ridden at Pony Club events by Members if they obtain written permission from their District Commissioner and must wear identifying discs on their bridle in the interests of safety.
- 10.5 All ponies are expected to be properly groomed and well turned out, with correctly fitting tack.
- 10.6 If Branches incur expenses to pay for Coaches and/or facilities, it is permissible to charge Members a commensurate fee for attendance at an activity. Membership of The Pony Club does not confer any right to free rallies, although these may be given if funds permit.

### Working Rallies

- 10.7 Rallies must be advertised at least seven days prior to the date of the rally, and authorized by Branch Committees. Nobody can hold a Rally or coach at a Rally unless authorized by the District Commissioner.
- 10.8 A working Rally is one at which coaching is given and which is open to all Members of the Branch within the age range or ability level for which it is intended. It may be either a mounted or dismounted Rally. Team practices/coaching do not qualify as Working Rallies.
- 10.9 For Area Competitions and above, Members must have been to a minimum of three working rallies since the previous 1st July, to be eligible to represent their Branch. Camp counts as one Working Rally. Horse and Rider – The District Commissioner or Centre Proprietor has discretion in the case of those who are working or in further education. Individual sports may adopt more stringent requirements. Below this level, Branches may adopt their own policy.

### Practices

- 10.10 Practices for the various sport competitions shall be announced in the Branch Programme, so that all eligible Members wishing to take part may do so. Any additional practices that are arranged within the period covered by the current Branch Programme, but after the Programme has been distributed, must have the approval of the District Commissioner.

## Pony Club Camps

- 10.11 A Camp is an assembly of The Pony Club Members, together with ponies, held over a period of several days, usually during the summer holidays. It may be either residential or non-residential for both Members and ponies. The object of Camp is to provide an instructional holiday for Members and their ponies. Training should be given each day, but the holiday element must not be neglected and there should be a balanced mix of enjoyable activities and competitions. Not all of these activities and competitions need to be equestrian in nature. Camp is intended to be fun.
- 10.12 In view of the additional responsibilities for the Health, Safety and Safeguarding of the Members that arise from its very nature, Camp, and particularly residential Camp, must be very carefully organised. Rigorous Risk Assessments must be carried out at all venues to be used, and the person in charge of the Camp (the Camp Organiser) must be fully conversant with The Pony Club's Health and Safety Rule Book and Safeguarding Policy. Camp Organisers should be given guidance on supervision levels and safeguarding, particularly at night.
- 10.13 A responsible adult should be available to the Members at all times of the day and night. There should also be a trained First Aider equipped with a mobile telephone and an appropriately stocked First-Aid Kit. Arrangements for catering must ensure that all food hygiene regulations are fully met.

## Competitions

- 10.14 A Branch may organise competitions in any of The Pony Club's sports. These competitions can either be restricted to the Branch's own Members, restricted to Pony Club Members from any Branch or open to the general public. All competitions organised by Pony Club Branches shall be conducted under the Rules as printed in the applicable Sport Rule Book, unless otherwise stated in the schedule of classes and regulations published for the competition.
- 10.15 If a Branch organises a competitive event that is open to Members of other Branches, but not to the general public, then the entry form must require a visiting competitor's Branch to be identified. Either the District Commissioner or the Secretary of the visiting competitor's Branch must countersign the entry form.

- 10.16 Cash or other valuable prizes must not be given at Pony Club competitions. Prizes should normally take the form of rosettes and/or trophies.

## Other Activities

- 10.17 A Branch can arrange other activities for its Members and their families such as a Quiz, outings, social events and fund-raising events. These other activities do not need to be equestrian in nature.

## 11. CENTRE AND CENTRE PLUS MEMBERSHIP Purpose and Scope of Activities

- 11.1 Centre Membership is intended to enable anyone who rides at a Centre to become a Member of The Pony Club. Centre Members are able to take Pony Club Tests up to and including A Standard as well as the Progressive Tests. They can also take part in the Achievement Badges scheme.
- 11.2 Centre Plus Membership is for Members that have their own pony and transport arrangements. A Centre Plus Member can remain within the Centre to take part in all activities and compete for the Centre. This type of membership is a progressive step from Centre membership or as an interim before Branch membership. As with all Pony Club membership, third party liability insurance applies. The Centre Plus Membership fee will be equal to the Branch Membership fee.
- 11.3 Centre Members and Centre Plus Members are eligible to participate in all sports and competitions open to Members, although the Centre Equitation competition is for Centre Members only.
- 11.4 Centre and Centre Plus Members have third party legal liability insurance cover.

## Membership – Centre and Centre Plus

- 11.5 The Trustees will set the rate for the Annual Subscription and will publish this in the Handbook.
- 11.6 The first Annual Subscription is due when first applying for membership. The initial membership application must be endorsed by the Centre Proprietor.
- 11.7 Membership runs for twelve months from the date the subscription is received. A renewal reminder will be sent to the Member one month before the end of his Membership Subscription Year. Email Renewal reminders will

be sent to the Member in the month leading up to the end of the Membership Subscription Year.

11.8 The Centre Membership Committee may expel any Member whose conduct is such, in their opinion, as to be injurious to the character or reputation of The Pony Club, to any of its Centres or to the interests of The Pony Club or Members or whose conduct shall in the opinion of the Centre Membership Committee, make a Member unfit or unsuitable to continue as a Member.

11.9 Before the Centre Membership Committee expels a Member, they will be given reasonable notice of relevant meetings, full opportunity to defend themselves and to justify or explain their conduct. This will include making representations by way of defence, justification and explanation on behalf of the Member by the parents. If the majority of the Centre Membership Committee present at the inquiry are of the opinion that the Member has been guilty of the alleged conduct and that the Member or parents of such Member has or have failed to justify or explain it satisfactorily, the Centre Membership Committee shall ask the Member to resign. If they do not resign the Centre Membership Committee will expel the Member from The Pony Club.

11.10 The Pony Club Office may refuse to renew the membership of a **Centre Member or Centre Plus Member**. Reasons for such action would normally be given.

11.11 On the ending of membership, either because of age, non-payment of subscription, resignation, expulsion or any other reason whatsoever, the Member will forfeit all the privileges of membership and all rights against The Pony Club.

11.12 Subscriptions and/or fees will not in such circumstances be returnable and the Member will still be liable for all annual subscriptions and/or fees that had become due and remained unpaid at the date of ending of the membership.

### Area Centre Coordinators

11.13 The duties and responsibilities of an Area Centre Coordinator are:

- To assess all riding schools who apply to become a Pony Club Linked Riding Centre and report their findings to the Pony Club Office.

- To contact each of the existing Pony Club Linked Riding Centres in their Area annually and report their findings to the Pony Club Office.
- To be a point of contact for the Centres in their Area for advice and assistance with Pony Club Tests and other aspects of Pony Club within the Centre.
- To liaise with the Area Representative
- To assist the Pony Club Office and Area Representative in communicating national or regional events, qualifying competitions and training opportunities to the Pony Club Linked Riding Centres.

### Pony Club Linked Centres

11.14 When a Riding Centre Proprietor applies to join the scheme, the Area Representative will be informed and the Riding Centre will be visited by an Area Centre Coordinator.

11.15 Provided that the Pony Club Office is satisfied that the Centre meets the required standards, the Centre Proprietor will be invited to enter into a legal agreement regulating the relationship between himself and The Pony Club. The Riding Centre will become known as The xxxxxx Pony Club Centre and its participation in the scheme will be renewable annually through an affiliation fee.

11.16 The Centre Membership Advisory Committee may recommend the withholding or termination a Centre's participation in the Centre Membership Scheme at any time if the Centre is unable to provide, or ceases to provide, the benefits of Centre Membership as determined in Rule Section 11.1 above, or ceases to meet the standards required by The Pony Club. Adequate notice will be given, along with reasons for withdrawal, in reasonable time.

11.17 Pony Club Linked Riding Centres will display a Pony Club Centre plaque.

11.18 All Pony Club Linked Riding Centres **must** hold a current licence under the Riding Establishments Acts 1964 and 1970 or The Riding Establishments Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1980 **or The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018 (as appropriate)**.

11.19 All Pony Club Linked Riding Centres must have current Public Liability Insurance Cover, which must include cover for all their Pony Club activities. Members riding Centre owned ponies will be covered by The Pony Club Third

Party Legal Liability Insurance Policy when taking part in any Pony Club activity. However, the pony itself will not be covered by this Insurance.

- 11.20 Pony Club Linked Riding Centres are required to provide the benefits of membership, including mounted and dismounted instruction to Members.

### **Pony Club Tests at Pony Club Linked Centres**

- 11.21 The Centre Proprietor must contact his Area Centre Coordinator, Area Representative and/ or the local District Commissioner if necessary, in order to find suitable Assessors for the Test to be taken at E, D, D+, C or C+ Standard. Thereafter, the Proprietor must consult the Area Representative as to how and where further Tests are to be taken.
- 11.22 The riding component of the C Test must be taken outside and not in an indoor school.
- 11.23 It will be the responsibility of the Centre Proprietor to order any badges, felts, and certificates for presentation to successful candidates.
- 11.24 The Centre Proprietor or Test Organiser should update the Membership Database with badge and test results.
- 11.25 Candidates may be charged a fee by the Centre to cover the cost of Assessors' expenses, normal hire charges, and other costs.

## **12. REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES**

### **Remuneration**

- 12.1 No Trustee shall receive remuneration from The Pony Club in any circumstances. No Area Representative nor any District Commissioner shall receive any salary or emolument from The Pony Club or any of its Branches for performing his normal function within The Pony Club. However, the Management Committee shall have authority to waive this Rule for Area Representatives and District Commissioners in exceptional circumstances, in order to employ the particular skills of an individual for a specific purpose and provided that such payment is legally permissible.
- 12.2 Applications for such a waiver should be sent to the Chief Executive, in writing, giving precise details of the work to be done and the remuneration to be paid.

### **Payment of Coaches and others**

- 12.3 Coaches and others such as Camp helpers may be paid a fee on production of an invoice. It is strongly recommended that fees should be negotiated in advance, and that they should not be paid in cash. Those paid fees may be members of Branch Committees but cannot be the District Commissioner unless he has received a dispensation from the Volunteers and Officials Committee under Rule 9.24..

### **Expenses**

- 12.4 **Travelling and out of pocket expenses of Trustees and, members of committees will be refunded by The Pony Club Office in accordance with the Pony Club Expenses Policy. Expense claims must be submitted to The Pony Club Office within 30 days from the end of the month of which the expense was incurred.**
- 12.5 Branches may also reimburse such expenses incurred by District Commissioners, Branch Officers, Committee members and others acting on behalf of the Branch. Branches may, if they wish, pay a flat sum or a rate per capita to their District Commissioner, but they should be aware that the Inland Revenue may require the District Commissioner to justify the amount paid. Travelling expenses will be paid at either the Standard Class train fare or at the currently approved mileage rate if travelling by car. This rate should be used as the normal allowance for all Pony Club meetings and events. However, when using qualified officials (i.e. British Dressage judges or BS judges) their official rate should be paid.

## **13. THE PONY CLUB TESTS**

- 13.1 Details regarding conditions of tests and badges can be found in the Administrative Notes section of the Handbook and online at [pcuk.org](http://pcuk.org).

## **14. COACH AND INSTRUCTOR ACCREDITATION**

- 14.1 The Pony Club accredits its coaches and instructors in line with the detailed notes laid out in the "Coaches and Training" section of the Administrative Notes in the Handbook and on the website. The Pony Club grants this accreditation to coaches and instructors, and reserves the right to remove or suspend the accreditation of any coach or instructor if it considers it necessary. If a coach or instructor has their accreditation removed or suspended, they may not instruct for any Pony Club Branch or Centre until their accreditation is reinstated.

## 15. THE PONY CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS

15.1 Each year, the Management Committee will appoint a Championships Committee to arrange a championship for each of the sports. Wherever possible, all of the sports will hold their championships at the same venue during one week in the second half of August, but it is recognised that some sports may have to hold their own separate championships.

Qualification for the championships will be through competitions held by each Area. In some sports, these Area competitions may be replaced or augmented by Zone competitions, in which two or more Areas combine.






15.2 The rules for each competition will be approved by the relevant committee for each sport.

## 16. DRESS AND SADDLERY FOR PONY CLUB MEMBERS

### Hats

16.1 It is mandatory for all Members to wear a protective helmet at all times when mounted with a chinstrap fastened and adjusted so as to prevent movement of the hat in the event of a fall. This rule defines the quality of manufacture that is required. The individual sports also have additional requirements with regard to colour and type. It is strongly recommended that second hand hats are not purchased.

16.2 **The current hat standards accepted by the Pony Club are detailed in the table below:**

Hat Standard	Safety Mark	Allowed at the following activities:
PAS 015:1998 or 2011* with BSI Kitemark		All activities
VG1 with BSI Kitemark		All activities
Snell E2001* onwards with the official Snell label and number		All activities
ASTM-F1163 2004a onwards with the SEI mark		All activities
AS/NZS 3838 2006 onwards		All activities

- For cross-country riding (over 80cm) including Eventing, Tetrathlon, Horse Trials, Pony Racing (whether it be tests, rallies, competition or training) and

Mounted Games competitions, a jockey skull cap must be worn with no fixed peak, peak type extensions or noticeable protuberances above the eyes or to the front, and should have an even round or elliptical shape with a smooth or slightly abrasive surface, having no peak or peak type extensions. Noticeable protuberances above the eyes or to the front not greater than 5mm, smooth and rounded in nature are permitted. A removable hat cover with a light flexible peak may be used if required.

- It is strongly recommended that a jockey skull cap is worn for cross-country riding over lower fences (less than 80cm) as there is research evidence that a fall onto the fixed peak can result in an over extension of the neck backwards with the potential for serious injury.
- No recording device is permitted (e.g. hat cameras) as they may have a negative effect on the performance of the hat in the event of a fall.
- The fit of the hat and the adjustment of the harness are as crucial as the quality. Members are advised to try several makes to find the best fit. The hat should not move on the head when the head is tipped forward. Most helmet manufacturers recommend you visit a qualified BETA (British Equestrian Trade Association) fitter.
- Hats must be replaced after a severe impact as subsequent protection will be significantly reduced. Hats deteriorate with age and should be replaced after three to five years depending upon the amount of use.
- Hats must be worn at all times (including at prize-giving) when mounted with a chinstrap fastened and adjusted so as to prevent movement of the hat in the event of a fall.
- For Show Jumping and Mounted Games the cover, if applicable, shall be dark blue, black or brown only.
- For Dressage, hats and hat covers must be predominately black, navy blue or a conservative dark colour that matches the rider's jacket for Area competitions or above. The Pony Club Hat silk is also acceptable.
- The Official Steward / Organiser may, at his discretion, eliminate a competitor riding in the area of the competition without a hat or with the chinstrap unfastened or with a hat that does not comply with these standards.

## Hat Checks and Tagging

- 16.3 The Pony Club and its Branches and Linked Centres will appoint Officials, who are familiar with The Pony Club hat rule, to carry out hat checks and tag each hat that complies with the requirements set out in the hat rule with an aquamarine Pony Club hat tag.
- 16.4 Hats fitted with an aquamarine Pony Club, British Eventing (BE) or British Riding Club (BRC) hat tag will not need to be checked on subsequent occasions. However, the Pony Club reserves the right to randomly spot check any hat regardless of whether it is already tagged.
- 16.5 Pony Club hat tags are only available to purchase from the 'Officials Area' from The Pony Club online shop.
- 16.6 Tagging indicates that a hat meets the accepted standards, NO check of the fit and condition of the hat is implied. It is considered the responsibility of the Member's parent(s) / guardian(s) to ensure that their hat complies with the required standards and is tagged before they go to any Pony Club event. Also, they are responsible for ensuring that the manufacturer's guidelines with regard to fit and replacement are followed.

## Ties and Stocks


- 16.7 The Pony Club's colours are pale blue, gold and purple, and Members should wear the approved tie in these colours whenever attending a Pony Club activity, unless the wearing of a tie is inappropriate to that activity.
- 16.8 Recognising the wide age range of Members, there is also a dark blue tie, which may be worn by Members who have attained their 18th birthday. Alternatively, a plain white or cream stock may be worn with a black or navy jacket, or a coloured stock may be worn with a tweed hacking jacket. It is permitted to wear a Pony Club stock with any coloured jacket.

## Badges

- 16.9 The official membership badge should be worn at all Pony Club activities when a jacket is worn.
- 16.10 Branches and Centres give Members a coloured felt showing the highest Test standard achieved by the Member. It should be worn behind the membership badge.

- 16.11 Cloth Achievement Badges should be sown on to the Branch or Centre sweatshirt.

## Body Protectors

- 16.12 The Pony Club does not make the use of body protectors compulsory, except for all Cross Country riding and Pony Racing whether it be training or competition. If worn for any Pony Club activity a Body Protector must meet BETA 2009 Level 3 standard (purple label) or BETA 2018 Level 3 standard (blue and black label).
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- 16.13 For general use, the responsibility for choosing body protectors and the decision as to their use must rest with Members and their parents. It is recommended that a rider's body protector should not be more than 2% of their body weight. When worn, body protectors must fit correctly, be comfortable and must not restrict movement. BETA recommends body protectors are replaced at least every three to five years, after which the impact absorption properties of the foam may have started to decline.
- 16.14 BETA 2009 Level3 (purple label) body protectors will continue to be accepted at Pony Club competitions until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024.
- 16.15 Riders who choose to use the Woof Wear Body Cage EXO must lodge a key with the Event Organiser when they collect their number.

## Air Jackets

- 16.16 When an air jacket inflates the sudden noise startles horses in the immediate vicinity thereby causing difficulties for the other members of a ride if used in a group ride in a confined area, e.g. an indoor school or outdoor manège. Air jackets are therefore not encouraged for group rides.
- 16.17 If a rider chooses to wear an air jacket in Cross Country or Pony Racing, it must only be used in addition to a normal body protector which meets the BETA 2009 Level 3 standard (purple label) or BETA 2018 Level 3 standard (blue and black label). Parents and Members must be aware that riders may be permitted to continue after a fall in both competition and training rides for Cross Country and/or Pony Racing, provided the rider has been passed as fit to continue by First Aid Providers. In the event of a fall, it must be fully deflated or removed before continuing, after which, the

conventional body protector will continue to give protection. Air jackets must not be worn under a jacket and number bibs should be fitted loosely or with elasticised fastenings over the air jacket.

### Medical Armbands

16.18 Medical armbands are advised if Members are not accompanied by a responsible adult, including hacking on roads and are compulsory for Pony Racing and for Endurance rides.

### Clothing, Footwear and Stirrups

16.19 When mounted at Pony Club activities, Members should wear a riding jacket or Branch sweatshirt, jodhpurs with leather shoes or jodhpur boots or breeches and either leather or rubber riding boots, a suitable plain-coloured shirt with a collar and The Pony Club tie or a stock.

16.20 Only standard riding or jodhpur boots with a well-defined square cut heel may be worn. No other footwear will be permitted including wellington boots, yard boots, country boots, "muckers" or trainers. Boots with interlocking treads are not permitted, nor are the boots or treads individually. Laces on boots must be taped for Mounted Games only.

16.21 Plain black or brown half chaps may be worn with jodhpur boots of the same colour. Tassels and fringes are not allowed.

16.22 Stirrups should be of the correct size to suit the rider's boots. They must have 7mm ( $\frac{1}{4}$ ") clearance on either side of the boot. To find this measurement, tack checkers should move the foot across to one side of the stirrup, with the widest part of the foot on the tread. From the side of the foot to the edge of the stirrup should be 14mm.

Note: There are now many types of stirrups marketed as "safety stirrups". All riders must ensure that their stirrups are suitable for their type of footwear and the activities in which they take part and that the stirrup leathers are in good condition.

16.23 There are no prescribed weight limits on metal stirrups. However, with the advent of stirrups of other materials, weight limits are seen to be given by manufacturers. Anyone who buys these stirrups should take particular note if weight limits are on the box or on the attached information leaflets.

16.24 Neither the feet, nor the stirrup leathers nor irons, may be attached to the girth, nor may the feet be attached to the stirrup irons.

16.25 New clothing is not expected, but what is worn must be clean, neat and tidy. Jeans should not be worn when mounted except when specifically allowed by certain sports. Polo shirts in Branch colours are allowed at rallies and at camp.

### Spurs

16.26 Spurs may be worn at Rallies and other events. Any misuse of spurs will be reported to the District Commissioner/Centre Proprietor, Area Representative and Training Chairman and riders who are reported will be recorded and monitored. Sharp spurs are not permitted. Only blunt spurs, without rowels or sharp edges, and spurs that have a smooth rotating ball on the shank may be worn. If the spurs are curved, the curve must be downwards and the shank must point straight to the back and not exceed **4 cm** in length. The measurement is taken from the heel of the boot to the end of the shank.

### Jewellery

16.27 For safety reasons jewellery, other than medical jewellery, a wristwatch, a wedding ring, a stock pin worn horizontally or a tie clip, is not allowed. It is recommended that stock pins are removed for cross country. Members who are contemplating piercing their ears or any other part of their body should be aware that they will not be allowed to participate in any Pony Club mounted equestrian activities until such time as the "sleepers" can safely be removed. The reason for this is that sleepers have in the past caused injuries following falls. This rule will be strictly enforced.

**EXCEPTION: In the event of a person being unable to remove permanent jewellery, it must be adequately protected by being covered by a sticking plaster or another appropriate material prior to presenting at tack check.**

### Competitions

16.28 Additional or different dress requirements for competitions may be specified in the Sport Rule Books, but otherwise, these Rules shall apply.

### Saddlery

16.29 Side reins, grass reins and balance support reins are permitted to be used at rallies and general Pony Club activities. Side reins must be loosely fitted and clipped on from the bit

to the 'd' ring. The height limit for jumping is 50cms. Other than this only saddlery permitted in the Sport Rule Books may be used at Rallies and general Pony Club activities relating to that sport.

## 17. SAFEGUARDING

17.1 The Pony Club believes that it is essential that children and young people are encouraged to take part in outdoor activities and sports as part of their development to adulthood. Their participation in sport must be in a secure, safe and fun environment and be protected from harm. The positive effects of involvement with horses can help develop self-esteem, teamwork and leadership. This can only take place if equestrian sport is effectively regulated and managed by well trained staff and volunteers.

17.2 The full Safeguarding Policy contains the necessary policies and procedures which should be implemented and adhered to, including but not limited to:

- The appointment of a Branch / Centre Safeguarding Officer
- Dealing with safeguarding concerns / allegations
- Requirements for those who carry out roles in regulated activity / work
- Safer recruitment procedures

## 18. DISPLAYS

18.1 Branches will not give displays, or stage competitions, at shows or other public gatherings without first obtaining the permission of their Area Representative.

## 19. PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

19.1 Because of the risks involved, team-chasing events or practices must not be organised by The Pony Club, nor should Branch teams be entered in such events. The same restriction applies to Racing, other than racing sanctioned by The Pony Club Racing Committee. Team-chasing and other unauthorized racing is not covered by Pony Club insurance.

## 20. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

### Competition Complaints and Objections

20.1 Complaints and objections arising from within competitions should be dealt with in accordance with the procedure detailed in the relevant sport rule book. Decisions made in this way are final, and no appeal will be entertained.

Should a breach of eligibility subsequently be discovered, then the Sport Committee may

disqualify the offending team or individual. If the said individual was a member of a qualifying team, and their score contributes to the qualification, the team will be disqualified unless the qualification holds up using the discard score. In the event of disqualification, the next best placed team or individual will be promoted. Decisions made by the Sport Committee shall be final. No issue of eligibility can be considered after the Championship competition has been held.

### Other Complaints and Problems

20.2 If a problem arises within a Branch or a Centre, it is for the District Commissioner or Area Centre Coordinator to try initially to resolve the problem. If they are unable to do so, then they should enlist the help of the Area Representative, who will consult with the relevant Committee Chairmen if necessary. If the problem still cannot be resolved, then the Area Representative (with the assistance of a Branch Operations Director if required) will refer the matter to the Rules and Compliance Committee, **whose decision will, subject to Rule 20.3 be final. The decision will be advised to the complainant in writing.**

20.3 **The Rules and Compliance Committee may in exceptional circumstances and in cases where the Committee is unable to determine the matter properly due to a conflict of interest arising must, ask the Vice Chairman to establish an Appeals Committee under Rule 4.30 to review the matter and make a decision on it.**

20.4 **Any appeal to the Appeals Committee will be considered only after the above procedure has been carried out. If the complainant wishes to lodge an appeal, they must do so within 28 days of the date of the decision letter. They must also pay a deposit to The Pony Club Office. This deposit will be refunded if the appeal is upheld. The amount of the deposit will be shown in the Handbook.**

## 21. FINANCE

21.1 Branches shall be largely autonomous in their control of Branch funds. However, it should be understood that, under charity law, the funds of The Pony Club, whether they are held by the Branches or by The Pony Club Office, are all part of The Charity. This means that, if any part of The Pony Club cannot pay its debts, payment must be made from elsewhere in The Pony Club.

21.2 For this reason, no Branch may enter into a financial commitment that risks a loss that is larger than 50% of its free reserves at the time of the commitment, or £5,000, whichever is the greater, without the approval of the Finance Committee. A Branch that wishes to assign Designated Funds must obtain the consent of the Finance Committee.

21.3 Any purchase or rental of land (irrespective of value), and any capital expenditure in excess of £20,000, requires the prior approval of the Trustees. However, this requirement does not apply to casual hiring of facilities, provided that the hire period does not exceed one month. A Branch does not have the legal capacity to buy or rent land or buildings in its own name. All such transactions must be in the name of "The Pony Club", with the interest of the Branch being noted. All costs incurred, such as legal fees, are to be paid by the Branch.

21.4 Legally, The Pony Club is a charitable company, governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. In order to comply with the Memorandum and Articles, Pony Club funds may only be deposited with or lent to an institution, such as a bank or building society, which is regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

21.5 Duplicate paper bank statements must be obtained at not greater than monthly intervals, with one copy being sent to the Treasurer, and the other copy to the District Commissioner. If the Branch has a building society account, the Treasurer must bring the pass book to every committee meeting and make it available for inspection. The following rules should be followed regarding access to Branch funds:

- i. Cheques  
Single signatures may be allowed on cheques up to £200. Payments above this amount must bear dual signatures.
- ii. Telephone Banking  
Disbursements may not be made by telephone banking.
- iii. On-line Banking  
On-line banking is permitted, provided that the Bank has a feature that requires two separate people to authorise the transaction.
- iv. Credit Cards  
Credit cards are not allowed.
- v. Debit Cards  
Debit cards may be used, but the Treasurer may not be the holder of a Debit Card. The

person who is the holder must give the transaction dockets to the Treasurer at not greater than monthly intervals, together with an explanation of the reason for each purchase.

21.6 These rules relate to all sub-groups, such as Parents' Associations and Sports Sub-committees that belong to the Branch.

### Online Payment Systems

21.7 The use of online payment systems such as PayPal, Worldpay, Sagepay by Branches is permitted. However, it should be used in accordance with the relevant rules laid out in The Pony Club's Treasurer Guidelines, which are available on the Treasurers and Finance section of the website.

### Returns to The Pony Club Office

21.8 To comply with charity law, all Branches are required to submit an Annual Financial Return to the Pony Club Office by 28th February following the end of The Pony Club Year. Failure to do this will result in fines being imposed on The Pony Club, which will be re-charged to the Branch(es) concerned.

21.9 The funds of all sub-branches, Parents' Associations and other sub-groups must be reported, either separately, or consolidated with the Branch.

21.10 Capitation returns must be sent to the Pony Club Office twice yearly, together with the appropriate capitation fee. The first return is due by 31st March, and should include all renewals and new Members up to and including the end of February. In exceptional circumstances, which would generally be of hardship, the Treasurer of The Pony Club may grant a Branch permission to dispense with the first return and to report all membership information with the second return. In such a case, the capitation fees will not become due until the second return. The second return, which includes all subsequent renewals and new Members up to and including 31st August, forms part of the Annual Report

21.11 For the purposes of the capitation returns and the capitation fees, a Member who transfers from one Branch to another during The Pony Club Year shall be reported by the Branch to which he has paid his subscription. He should be excluded completely from the Return of the other Branch.

21.12 The Annual Report, which includes the second Capitation Return, together with statistical information about the Branch and details of Branch Officers, must be sent to The Pony Club Office, to arrive by 30th September.

**21.13 The annual financial return, and capitation fees are due by the specified due date. Late entries shall incur a late submission fee, if the item is still outstanding one month after the specified due date, a further late submission fee will be incurred.**

- The Annual Financial Return
- The First Capitation Return (unless permission has been given to dispense with it)
- The Second Capitation Return

The fee(s) will be published in the Handbook or on the website. The invoice for the fee will be addressed to the District Commissioner of the Branch.

A completed submission will encompass:

- Capitation: submission of a completed capitation form and payment being made by the specified date
- Annual Financial Return: Fully completed, balanced and signed return along with all documentary evidence requested by the specified due date

21.14 If it is not paid within 28 days from the date of the invoice, the Branch and/or one or more of its Officers or Committee members may be suspended from membership of The Pony Club until such time as it is paid, and the Return is received. If a Return or Report has to be returned to a Branch because it contains errors, the Branch will remain in default until the satisfactorily corrected Return or Report (together with any payment that may be due) is received at The Pony Club Office.

The Chairman of The Pony Club has discretion to waive this Rule if he is satisfied that there are sufficient extenuating circumstances.

21.15 Following consultation with the Area Representative, the Management Committee may impose different reporting requirements upon Branches that are persistently late in filing their Returns.

21.16 It is a requirement of The Pony Club insurers that a list of the Members covered by public liability insurance can be made available to

them if required. To satisfy this requirement, all Branches must submit details of their current membership by means of the online Database.

21.17 In the event that a Branch is unable to complete its Annual Financial return it may request the Pony Club Office to undertake the task for it. If a Branch makes such a request it must supply to the Pony Club Office: -

- A completed and balanced cashbook in either electronic or hard copy
- Copies of all bank statements for the year

21.18 If a request is made to the Pony Club Office to complete an Annual Financial return the Branch will pay to the Pony Club Office a fee calculated in accordance with the following: -

- If the request is made prior to 16th February a fee of £5.00 per Member
- If the request is made on or after 16th February a fee of £7.50 per Member

### Record Keeping

21.19 It is the responsibility of the Branch Treasurer to keep appropriate financial records. This must include:

- All financial transactions must be recorded in the cashbook (electronic / hardcopy), this includes recording the VAT that has been paid on each payment as per the receipt
- All payments made must have a receipt (can be scanned)
- All expenses claimed must have appropriate receipts attached

All records must be kept for a period of 6 years

### Branch Audits

21.20 The Pony Club Office may at any time request to audit the last two years of the Annual Financial Return of a Branch. Within 30 days of receiving an audit request the Branch Treasurer must send to the Pony Club Office the following documents: -

- Monthly Bank statements for all bank accounts held by the Branch for the period requested
- Download of all online payment platforms Transactions during the period requested
- A copy of the cashbook
- All receipts to evidence expenditure

21.21 Results of the audit will be communicated back to the Branch District Commissioner and Area Representative.

**Branch Correspondence**

21.22 All correspondence with a Branch will be undertaken through the (branchname)@pcuk.org email address and the District Commissioner must ensure that this email is monitored at regular intervals sufficient to ensure that all relevant correspondence is dealt with expeditiously. To this end, the District Commissioner may share the password with anyone s/he deems relevant to have access to the email address.

**Refunds**

21.23 No refunds after close of entries.

21.24 Withdrawal before close of entries on production of vet / medical certificate will get a full refund less a £10 admin fee (to be retained by The Organiser).

21.25 In the event of a competition being abandoned, for whatever reason, a refund of 50% of the entry fee will be given (0% for Polo).

**22. INSURANCE**

22.1 The Pony Club has Insurance under a number of headings and policies, a summary of which is provided in the Handbook. In particular, all Branch and Centre Members are covered for their legal liability for accidental injury or damage to third parties or their property, arising out of the use or ownership of ponies at any time, not just on Pony Club activities. A full policy summary is shown on The Pony Club website under Parents Info.

22.2 Members and their parents must read the summary of cover carefully, to ensure that it satisfies their own requirements. It must be understood that this is liability Insurance and does not cover property belonging to, or in the care of, the Member or his family. Nor does it cover injury to the Member or his family. To comply with insurance requirements, all employees of The Pony Club (including contractors), paid and unpaid officials, instructors, volunteers, parents, Members of The Pony Club and visitors must: -

- Take all reasonable care for the Health and Safety and Welfare of themselves and others that may be affected by their actions or omissions.
- Co-operate fully with The Pony Club and its Officials on all Health and Safety and Safeguarding issues.

- Not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of Health and Safety.
- Use correctly and as intended all work items, procedures and personal protective equipment provided by The Pony Club (or other employers), in accordance with the training and instructions given and report any loss or defect immediately.
- Inform the District Commissioner or activity organiser of any situation they consider represents danger or could result in harm to themselves or others.
- Inform the District Commissioner or activity organiser of any failings or shortcomings as regards Health and Safety and Welfare.
- Report accidents either by making an entry in The Pony Club Accident Book or by informing the District Commissioner or activity organiser.

22.3 Insurance claims made by Branches are subject to an insurance excess, this excess may be recharged back to the Branch. This is £1,000.

**23. LEGAL LIABILITY**

23.1 **Save for the death or personal injury caused by the negligence of anyone for whom they are in law responsible, neither the Pony Club nor any agent, employee or representative of these bodies, accepts any liability for any accident, loss, damage, injury or illness to horses, owners, riders, spectators, land, cars, their contents and accessories, or any other person or property whatsoever, whether caused by their negligence breach of contract or in any other way whatsoever.**

**24. GENERAL**

24.1 Every eventuality cannot be provided for in these Rules. In any unforeseen or exceptional circumstances it is the duty of the relevant officials to make a decision in the spirit and ethos of The Pony Club and to adhere as nearly as possible to the intention of these Rules.