



Constitution of 'Nordic Walking in the Chalfonts'

An unincorporated association (membership group)

Revised & agreed at AGM on 24th October 2024



Name

The name of this group will be Nordic Walking in the Chalfonts

Aims



The aims of Nordic Walking in the Chalfonts will be:

1. To provide a regular pattern of local, led Nordic walks aiming at an average speed of 3 mph
2. To sometimes offer extra Nordic walks at other times or on other days that may be longer or further afield
3. To offer input and training from a British Nordic Walking/INWA trained instructor, or signposting to instructors elsewhere
4. To respect and promote Nordic walking as an outdoor sporting activity which is sociable and improves mental and physical health
5. To maintain and improve the physical fitness of actively participating members

Powers

In order to achieve its aims the group may:

- Set subscription levels to cover costs
- Open and keep a bank account to manage subscriptions and pay costs, including membership of British Nordic Walking for the instructor (so the group gets the benefit of their site listing, discounted insurance, publicity, advice, news, updates, event details, use of logos etc). Also, any other relevant and reasonable costs that might be agreed at an AGM or GM
- Take out insurance to cover the instructor and the club, including other volunteer walk leaders
- Encourage prompt payment of subscriptions by offering a 'rapid payment discount' of £5 if the payment reaches the group bank account within three weeks of it being requested by email. This time limit is non-negotiable
- Organise training sessions and social events
- Organise some group participation in other events eg Park Runs or charity walks.
- Arrange the creation of a Facebook page, website or webpage, or any other means of publicising the group
- Work with other groups and exchange information
- Do anything that is lawful which will help to fulfil the group's aims

Membership

Membership will be open to anyone who:

- Is aged between 18 and 80 (our club insurance stipulates this, but the upper limit could be discussed with them, if need be)
- Is someone either trained in Nordic walking or happy to undertake training before joining a walk, prepared to abide by the rules of the group, support the aims of the group and willing to pay the subscriptions agreed by the group's AGM
- Complies with the mandatory completion of the groups Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire (PARQ) before walking, joining or training

Membership will begin when the applicant has paid the Nordic Walking in the Chalfonts' subscription (which is due after 2 trial walks as a guest).

All members attending the AGM will be entitled to one vote on each proposal.

A list of all members and their contact details will be kept by the member of the Leadership Team who is acting as membership secretary.

The Leadership Team may refuse membership, or remove it, only with good cause such as conduct likely to bring the group or sport of Nordic walking into disrepute, or non-compliance with the Constitution or Rules and Guidance. The member or applicant has a right to appeal and be heard by the Leadership Team, in the company of a friend if they wish, before a final decision is made.

Ceasing to be a Member

Someone will no longer be a member of Nordic Walking in the Chalfonts six weeks after subscriptions are due and they have been reminded in writing but still not paid.

Members or applicants who have been unsuccessful in an appeal to the Leadership Team to refuse or terminate their membership will cease to be members. If this is less than 6 months after their subscription has been paid they will be refunded 50% of their subscription to Nordic Walking in the Chalfonts.

Equal Opportunities

Membership shall be available to any adult regardless of their race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexuality, disability, age, religion or belief.

Any offensive behaviour, including discriminatory or inflammatory remarks in any form, will not be tolerated. The group will also be mindful of other more subtle kinds of discrimination including about things like relationship status, social status, education, appearance and dress. Anyone noted or reported to be behaving in a discriminatory way will be asked to explain and, if deemed appropriate by the Leadership Team, given a written warning and requested to apologise to the individual(s) concerned or leave the group. They will be expelled if they do not apologise, or if they do but then a further incident occurs.

Any requests for a 'reasonable adjustment' by a disabled person or an advocate will be considered (see Rules & Guidance, top of p1).

A level of physical coordination and fitness is obviously required for Nordic walking at a reasonable pace, so signposting advice will be given concerning other groups who may be able to cater for people whose illness or disability prevents them Nordic walking safely at an average pace of 2.5 to 3 mph on varied terrain for 3 to 4 miles.

Health & Safety Policy

The group instructor has written a generic risk assessment form to cover most walks and eventualities. However, in addition all formal led walks will have been previously walked by the instructor and a specific supplementary written risk assessment completed, when necessary, and shared with the relevant walk leaders.

A large number of the club's guidance points and rules (which are in a separate document) are about members health and safety and should be adhered to at all times. Any concerns or breaches should be shared with a member of the leadership team as soon as possible.

A club accident book will be kept up to date by the instructor. The instructor will carry a first aid kit in line with British Nordic Walking policy for instructors. We note that The Ramblers recommend, but do not insist, that all walk leaders carry one (The Ramblers 'Walk Leader Checklist', PDF, August 2021 and updated more recently).

Data Protection

The instructor will keep only paper originals or versions of the PARQ forms and these will be kept confidential in a locked filing cabinet. However, the names of members and their next of kin's name and contact details will be shared with walk leaders together with any important medical information or alerts on a 'need to know' basis. This information will be held in strict confidence and nothing will be disclosed to anyone else by walk leaders, with the exception of emergency services personnel. The forms will be stored for as long as is required under data protection law and regulation. Attendance lists will also be kept for insurance purposes. The Leadership Team will have access to the Membership Secretary's list of members and contact details, but any group emails will be blind copied to everyone. Members wishing to contact each other can message via the SBS site without gaining access to email addresses (and anyone doing so inappropriately can be blocked). Any informal contact arrangements via Facebook or Whatsapp will require the individual's request or permission to join.

Management

The business of the group will be carried out by the leadership team and subsequent roles and participation will be agreed at AGMs. There will be three or four members in the team when possible. The instructor will coordinate the division of labour or take on the duties herself, when necessary. The roles that are required are Membership Secretary, Secretary, Treasurer and Chair. The team will manage the affairs of the club in its best interests and may make such rules & guidance as they think necessary but changes will be subject to a vote at the next group meeting. This Constitution will be available via our website and new members and trainees will be given links to it and the Rules & Guidance (members signatures on the club's PARQ form acknowledge this). Paper copies can be requested.

The Leadership Team will meet or liaise by telephone / email / video meeting, as deemed necessary, or if requested by any member to address any issue relevant to the group. Decisions may be taken by just two, including the Chair/instructor, but whenever possible after discussion with the other leaders and generally some of the wider membership too, when practicable. Any major decisions will be voted on at the subsequent GM or AGM.

In the event of someone in the team standing down or becoming incapacitated, a replacement will be agreed informally between the remaining leadership team members and be put to the members at the AGM. The team may co-opt other members on to the Leadership Team when help is required for this or other reasons.

Duties of the Leadership Team and other volunteers

Membership Secretary to maintain a membership list including only name, email and telephone number, and confirm subs have been requested and paid.

Secretary to circulate information, notify members of the dates & times of meetings, prepare an agenda, take and distribute minutes and other information as required. They will also retain master copies of all minutes, either hard copies or backed up.

Treasurer who will be responsible for checking payments in and out of the group's bank account and producing simple accounts or a financial statement for the AGM.

Chair to chair the AGM and other club meetings. The Chair may use an additional vote as a casting vote in the event of a 50/50 voting split. They, currently the instructor, will take responsibility for keeping the club's Facebook & WhatsApp pages running, and for ensuring that all new members are given links to the Constitution and the Rules & Guidance. The Chair/instructor will also ensure walk leaders have the necessary information from the PARQ forms as specified elsewhere, as well as any training or refresher training that may be required.

Walk Leaders. Members well known within the group would be welcome to ask to become a walk leader so they can volunteer to administer and lead specific walks that have been risk assessed, and agreed with the leadership team. A brief training session with Karen is required to comply with insurers. They would be given admin rights on the relevant WhatsApp pages.

Meetings & Procedures for Meetings

Ideally all discussions will reach a general consensus as to the way forward, but if compromise and broad agreement is not possible in a reasonable time frame then a vote will be taken by a show of hands.

Annual General Meetings

An AGM will be held to confirm and adopt this constitution. After that AGM's must be held annually, with no more than a 15 month gap between them. All members will be notified by email of the date, time and venue at least 3 weeks beforehand. Anyone wishing to be considered for the Leadership Team or to put forward a change to the constitution must notify the secretary at least a week before the AGM. The quorum (minimum number) for the AGM and any voting will be 5 members, including the Chair/instructor.

The Leadership Team will present a summary of how the group has been over the year, eg attendance, membership, any events etc. together with a review of club finances. In the light of this the meeting will vote on any changes to the annual subscription and a figure will be agreed. The Leadership Team will be elected to the team and their roles in the light of any vacancies, co-opted members or new roles proposed. Any proposals given in advance to the secretary will be discussed and if necessary voted on. There will be an opportunity to raise 'Any Other Business'.

Special General Meetings

A special general meeting may be called in exceptional or urgent circumstances, with the agreement of at least half of the leadership team and after a written request from a member. The meeting will take place within 21 days and 2 weeks notice will be given in any format ie text, email or telephone call. A quorum will be 4 including the Chair/instructor (but in exceptional circumstances video calls, or telephone calls on loudspeaker, during the meeting to make up the quorum can be considered).

General Meetings

General meetings may be required throughout the year and members would be welcome to attend. The members will be given 2 weeks notice in any format ie text, email or telephone call. A quorum will be 4, including the Chair/instructor.

Leadership Meetings

These meetings will be arranged within and by the Leadership Team if found necessary and with at least 7 days notice. A quorum will be 2 members including the Chair/instructor, but this is intended to be a democratic group so opinions would be sought from the rest of the Leadership Team and some of the other 'actively participating'* group members beforehand.

**Meaning attending frequently or regularly and giving apologies for absences at meetings and walks.*

Finance

All monies obtained by the group shall be used only for the running of group, including instructing. The bank account will be in the name of the group and three members of the leadership team will have access to it for monitoring and security purposes. All members will be encouraged to pay their subscriptions promptly by bank transfer into the group account. The Chair/Instructor will discuss and agree any expenditure over £50 with the Treasurer and two other 'actively participating' members. A financial statement or copy bank statement will be raised as an item at each GM and SGM meeting.

This a non-profit group and any accumulation of funds will result in discussions and plans about either reducing subscriptions or spending the money appropriately eg perhaps on the provision of some adjustable poles and straps of different sizes that could be used for taster sessions, training novices and hiring out (for a fee, per walk) to new members.

Insurance

The insurance for the club instructor and the volunteer walk leaders does not provide general cover for members, who all walk at their own risk and may wish to look at policies that insure them for their involvement in Nordic walking and other sports. An example, but

not necessarily a recommendation, is Insure4Sport who cover 'Players and Participants' expenses regarding some treatments and loss of earnings.

Amendments to the Constitution or Rules

Any proposal to amend the constitution must be made to the secretary in writing, at least a week before the AGM. Any amendments to the Constitution or Rules and Guidelines must be agreed by at least two thirds of the members present and voting at a AGM or Special General Meeting.

Group Not to be Used for Business

No unauthorised member or guest/trial member shall give or use the details of this group or any photographs of members in any advertisement or other form of publicity, including social media. No member or guest/trial member may use the club meetings or conversations during walks or social events for any business purposes. The Leadership Team may promote the group as they see fit and this may include a private/members only Facebook page.

Dissolution

If any meeting by simple majority thinks it is necessary to close down the group it may call a Special General Meeting, with the sole purpose of voting on this proposal and making arrangements to dissolve the group. Because of the finality of this, and to avoid any malicious behaviour, actively participating members will be entitled to a postal or a proxy vote at the SGM, and the Chair/instructor must be present (unless permanently & cognitively severely incapacitated or deceased). The list of those eligible will be agreed by the Leadership Team based on the criteria for 'actively participating' stated on page 5.

If it is agreed to close the group, once any outstanding invoices or debts have been paid, all remaining monies will be donated to a local charitable organisation. In the event of the club having any other assets, such as Nordic walking poles for hire, they will be sold or donated to a relevant charity. The charities in question will be decided at the meeting which agrees the dissolution.

This revision of the constitution was agreed at the Annual General Meeting of Nordic Walking in the Chalfonts on 24th October 2024.

Name of Leadership Team member signing:

Signed:

Date:

Name of Leadership Team member signing:

Signed:

Date: