

# THE RULES OF THE PONY CLUB

(Text in Bold Type denotes a change from the Rules as printed in the 2017 Yearbook)

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

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### I. Purpose

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.

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).

### II. Health & Safety Policy

The Trustees are committed to ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the Health & 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.

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

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**.

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. The Chief Executive and the Pony Club Office shall on behalf of the Trustees
  - 1.1. Ensure that Rules and procedures are published and updated regularly to cover all Pony Club activities;
  - 1.2. Ensure that adequate Employer's Liability and Public Liability insurance cover, as determined by The Trustees of The Pony Club, is obtained;
  - 1.3. Ensure that adequate training and instruction is provided for Area Representatives, District Commissioners, Volunteers and Employees;
  - 1.4. 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;
  - 1.5. 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;
  - 1.6. Ensure that adequate safeguarding procedures are notified to Area Representatives, District Commissioners and Centre Proprietors for implementation at all Pony Club activities;
  - 1.7. Maintain effective communications on Health and Safety issues with employees, Area Representatives, District Commissioners and Centre Proprietors;
  - 1.8. Require accidents to be investigated to identify the causes so that actions may be taken to reduce the possibility of a recurrence.
2. 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.
3. Area Representatives are responsible for monitoring the Health and Safety performance of the Branches in their area.
4. Pony Club Linked Riding Centres are responsible for their own Health and Safety arrangements. These will be monitored by their Regional Centre Co-ordinator and reported to The Pony Club Office as part of the Centre annual visit.

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

All persons acting on behalf of The Pony Club or carrying out work for The Pony Club must:-

1. Take reasonable care for their own Health and Safety;
2. Consider the safety of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions;
3. Work within the limits of their own training and competence and the information and instructions they have received;
4. Refrain from intentionally misusing or recklessly interfering with any equipment provided for Health and Safety reasons;
5. 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;
6. Report all accidents to a member of the Branch Committee, or their immediate Pony Club contact.

In all Pony Club activities, riders who suffer concussion, with or without loss of consciousness, will not be allowed to ride again that day. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure the Member's fitness to ride following concussion.

Please refer to the Health, Safety & Safeguarding Rule Book for more guidance on concussion.

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

### **III. Other Legislation**

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 legislation organisations, and which regulates the care and supervision of young people.

In relation to equity, equality and diversity, The Pony Club

- a) 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;
- b) 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;
- c) 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
- d) aims to monitor, review and evaluate progress in achieving the stated aims and objectives and to feed back to member bodies on progress made.

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

## **2. DEFINITIONS**

In these Rules:

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

“The 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.

**“Company Member” means a person who is entitled to vote at general meetings of The Pony Club**

“Management Committee” means the executive body responsible for the day-to-day operation of The Pony Club, **whose membership is defined in Rule 4 IV**

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

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

“Branch District” or “District” means a geographic sub-division of an Area, forming the territory within which a Branch operates.

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

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

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

“The Branch Membership Year” means the period from 1 February to the following 31 January.

“Centre Member and Centre Plus Member” means a member of a Centre.

“The Centre Membership and Centre Plus Membership Subscription Year” means the period of twelve months commencing from the first day of the month in which the Centre Member’s subscription was paid.

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

**“Centre Membership Scheme” means the scheme administered by The Pony Club for the membership of Centre Members**

“Regional Centre Co-ordinator” means the person responsible for inspecting Centres within a geographical region and for advising on Centre Membership issues within that region.

“Branch Member” means a member of a Branch.

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

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

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

“Parents” shall include individuals with parental responsibility.

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

“Web Site” means the web site of The Pony Club, available at [www.pcuk.org](http://www.pcuk.org)

“Rules” and “Rules of The Pony Club” mean the Rules of The Pony Club, as published in the **Handbook**, and displayed on the Web Site. 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 in the next issue of The Bulletin. Any query about the operation of the Rules or request for clarification should be referred to the Trustees.

"The Bulletin" means the periodic E-newsletter sent to all **Area Representatives**, District Commissioners and Centre Proprietors by The Pony Club Office.

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

"Championships" means The Pony Club Championships.

"BETA" means the British Equestrian Trade Association.

**"BEF" means the British Equestrian Federation.**

"he" means either he or she and "his" means either his or her.

### 3. PERIOD OF OFFICE

**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 3 year terms. They may then stand again after a period of 3 years has elapsed, up to a maximum of a further three consecutive 3 year terms.

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.

This Rule shall prevail if it is in conflict with any other Rule.

### 4. STRUCTURE

#### 1. The Trustees

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.

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

**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.**

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.

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

## **II. Honorary Appointments**

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.

## **III. Finance Committee**

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.

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 Director of Finance (or other member of staff nominated by the Chief Executive) shall attend each meeting.

## **IV. Management Committee**

The Management Committee is the executive body charged with the administration of The Pony Club in accordance with the policies and guidelines established by the Trustees

The Vice-chairman of The Pony Club will chair the Management Committee and its membership will be:

**The Vice-chairman (Chairman)**

**The Chief Executive**

**The Director of Finance**

**The Sports and Competitions Manager (NV)**

**The Marketing and Communications Manager (NV)**

**The Training Officer (NV)**

**The Pony Club Centres Manager (NV)**

**The Chairman of the Training Committee**

**The Chairman of the Health, Safety & Safeguarding Advisory Group**

**The Chairman of the Centre Membership Committee**

**The Chairman of the Area Representatives Committee**

**Two members elected by the Area Representatives**

**One member elected by the Chairmen of the Competitive Sport Committees**

**The Chairman of the Rules and Compliance Committee**

**The Chairman of the Finance Committee**

**The Chairman of the Volunteers and Officials Committee**

**Other members of the staff of The Pony Club may attend the meetings at the invitation of the Chairman of the Management Committee**

The elected Area Representatives will serve for a three year period. 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.**

**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 3 year terms of office but he may stand again after a period of one year has elapsed to a maximum of a further three consecutive 3 year terms.**

The same Area Representative may not serve at the same time as a Trustee and on the Management Committee.

The member elected by the Chairmen of the Competitive Sport Committees will serve for a three year period, and may not immediately stand for re-election to the Management Committee.

The Management Committee will meet at regular intervals.

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. **Save that those members of the Management Committee marked “NV” above shall not be entitled to vote**, 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.

#### **V. Rules applicable to all committees**

The following Rules shall apply to all committees, with the exception of the Appeals Committee: -

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.

Further nominations can be made by the relevant Sport Committee members and by Company Members. If more than one nomination is received, the relevant Sport Committee will vote on the appointment.

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.

Each committee shall include at least 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 3 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 ordinary members of the committee.

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.

Other than the Area Representatives, persons will be invited to become members of committees because of their expertise in a particular sport. They will serve for a period of three years, but may offer themselves for re-election. Nominations may also be received for other persons, and the vacancy should be advertised on The Pony Club web site. 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.

After consultation with his committee, each committee chairman shall submit a list of the proposed composition of his committee for the coming year **to the Annual General Meeting for ratification**.

Proposals to fill casual vacancies shall be submitted to the next **Management Committee** meeting after the vacancy arises.

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.

#### **VI. Area Representative's Committee**

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.**

#### **VII. Appeals Committee**

In the event that any matter cannot be resolved by the Area Representatives, **the Regional Centre Co-ordinators**, 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 3 or more **Company Members**, 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.

The Chairman will have the casting vote in the event of equality of votes.

The decisions of the Appeals Committee shall be final.

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

#### **VIII. Competitive Sport Committees**

**There shall be formed a committee for each Competitive 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 Rulebook which is published annually and they adjudicate on any matters requiring resolution within their sport. These sport Rulebooks 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.

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.

#### **IX. Training Committee**

The Training Committee has responsibility for all training activities within The Pony Club, and for all elements of horsemanship and horsemastership within competitions, and also for the commissioning of coaching and training publications. They are also responsible for the administration of tests and for the appointment and removal of assessors to and from the Panel of Assessors for 'A' Tests.

The Training Committee shall meet each year to consider whether any changes are required to the syllabus of each Test, or to the fees charged for 'B' test and above.

#### **X. Centre Membership Committee**

The Centre Membership Committee has responsibility for the administration of the Centre Membership Scheme. It represents the interests of Centre Members. It is responsible for establishing the standards required of Pony Club Linked Riding Centres and for giving approval for individual Riding Centres to join the Centre Membership Scheme. To assist in carrying out this responsibility, it will appoint Regional Centre Co-ordinators to visit Riding Centres to assess their suitability. It may also remove Riding Centres that do not maintain the required standards. It will administer all national competitions organised for Centre Members, and will establish and publish the Rules for such competitions.

The Centre Membership Committee shall meet each year to consider whether any changes are required to their competition rules, or to the standards required from Riding Centres..

#### **XI. Health, Safety & Safeguarding Advisory Group**

The Health, Safety & Safeguarding Advisory Group has responsibility for implementing and reviewing the Health and Safety Policy of The Pony Club. It is also responsible for implementing and reviewing safeguarding issues, and for ensuring compliance with the requirements of **the DBS, Access NI or PVG (as appropriate)**. The Group shall meet as required.

#### **XII. Rules and Compliance Committee**

**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.**

**The BODs will be members of the Committee and the chairman will be a BOD. 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.**

#### **XIII. Volunteers and Officials Committee**

**The Committee will be responsible for the recruitment of volunteers to The Pony Club and for maintaining the processes by which they are elected. The Committee will also approve and/or ratify new District Commissioners.**

**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.**

The chairman of the Committee will be the Vice-chairman of The Pony Club and the membership of the Committee will comprise two further Trustees and two Area Representatives. The Chairman of The Pony Club will be given notice of all meetings of the Committee and may attend at his discretion. The Committee will have power to co-opt additional members from time to time.

#### **XIV. Treasurer of The Pony Club**

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 Finance Director, will be responsible for all financial matters affecting The Pony Club.

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.

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

#### **XV. Chief Executive**

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.

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

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.

#### **XVI. The Handbook**

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, Regional Centre Coordinators and Centre Proprietors; statistical information; details of Insurance cover and information on Pony Club merchandise. **The Handbook may be released in electronic form.**

**XVII. Bankruptcy**

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**

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: -

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

Normally, no Equestrian Professional will be eligible for appointment as an Area Representative, a District Commissioner, 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.

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**

All meetings of the Trustees, the Finance Committee, the Management Committee, and the committees established under these Rules must be minuted, and 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 and the Management Committee - to the Trustees
- the committees established under these Rules - to the Management Committee.

**7. MEMBERSHIP****1. Eligibility**

Membership is available to Branch Members until the 31st of January following the end of the Calendar year in which they become 25 years old.

Membership is available to Centre and Centre Plus Members until the end of the Centre Membership subscription year in which they become 25 years old.

It is open for anyone to apply for Branch Membership. It is desirable that they should have the use of a pony. Membership is of a Branch and 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 should be agreed with the Area Representative.

Centre Membership is intended for anyone who does not have their own pony, (either owned, hired or on loan), who ride 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 for Centre Membership.

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.

## **II. Termination of Membership**

If the Renewal Subscription of any Branch Member has not been paid by the end of February Membership is terminated from that date. Membership will also be terminated for any Centre Member who has not paid his renewal subscription by the end of his Centre Membership subscription year. As insurance cover will also cease at the same time, it is essential that a lapsed Member should 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 rejoins The Pony Club.

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.

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.

The **Rules & Compliance Committee** may expel or exclude any Member whose physical, verbal or online conduct is such, in its opinion, to be injurious 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. 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 & Compliance Committee**. Alternatively, the **Rules & Compliance Committee** may decide to suspend the Member for a fixed period. In the case of a Centre Member, or **Centre Plus member** a Regional Centre Co-ordinator will recommend the expulsion to the Chairman of the Centre Membership Committee, who will present the case to **the Rules & Compliance Committee**.

Before **the Rules & Compliance Committee** expels or suspends a Member, he will be given reasonable notice of relevant meetings, and 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 the parents. If a majority of the **Rules & Compliance Committee** present at the inquiry 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 & Compliance Committee** shall decide either to expel or suspend the Member from The Pony Club.

The **Rules & 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.

Before the **Rules & 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 the parents and/or by appropriate medical professionals.

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.

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 & Compliance Committee** inquiry.

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.

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.

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.III - Transfers will apply, save for the following: -

- The Transfer Form does not need the approval of the refusing District Commissioner.
- The 14 month 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 month rule.

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.

### **III. Parents and Supporters**

**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.**

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** within three weeks of receipt of the letter and that if this appeal is not successful they may appeal to the Appeals Committee. 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 they have been banned from attending Pony Club activities.

## 8. BRANCH MEMBERSHIP

### 1. Subscription

The Trustees will set the rate for the annual subscription, and will publish this in the **Handbook**. They will also determine the capitation fee, which is that part of the annual subscription that is 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, and also in the following Pony Club Year.

The annual subscription is due on 1st February for the following Branch Membership Year. The first annual subscription is due when first applying for membership. All applications for membership must be made 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, they should collect it by means of a locally produced supplementary form, but this must be in addition to the official forms, not replacing them.

For the purposes of this Rule, a renewing Member is one who renews his membership for the following Branch Membership Year **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.**

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).

A renewing Member will pay the Standard Subscription, which will cover his membership for the Branch Membership Year. A new Member joining between February and June will also pay the Standard Subscription, for membership for the rest of the Branch Membership Year. A new Member joining in July or August will pay a Reduced Subscription, which again gives membership for the remainder of the Branch Membership Year. A new Member joining between September and January will pay the Standard Subscription set for the following Branch Membership Year, and will enjoy membership until the end of the following Branch Membership Year.

Family membership is available to three or more children of the family **as defined in paragraph 2. Children** to be covered by family membership must all live at the same permanent address, and must be Members of the same Branch.

Where there are already one or two children in a family who are Members, and additional children of the family join for the first time in July or August, thereby qualifying for Family membership, the parent may opt either to pay the balance of the Standard Family Subscription, or to pay the individual Reduced Subscription(s).

The capitation reporting will follow the decision of the parent. In such cases, the renewal for following years must be at the Standard Family Subscription, provided that there are sufficient children of the family in Membership to qualify.

For the purposes of the Capitation Return, new **or Renewing** Members joining between September and December shall be treated as new Members joining in the following Branch Membership Year.

Annual subscriptions are paid to the Branch to which application for Membership has been made. Renewal Subscriptions are also paid to the Branch.

## **II. Visiting Members**

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.

## **III. Transfers**

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.

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 month 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 month rule.

On permanent change of residence, however, 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 month 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 month restriction.

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 rule will not apply to that sport, but it will apply to those other sports in which he could have taken part.

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 2018 Transfer 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 in cases where Membership has lapsed for two years or more.



Every request for a transfer must be made to the Area Representative and a 2018 Transfer Form will be issued. The Transfer 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, it shall be referred to the **Rules & Compliance Committee**.

A final appeal may be made to the **Appeals 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 be determined 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 Appeals Committee shall be final.

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

#### **IV. Branches outside the UK**

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

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.

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.

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

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).

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

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**

#### **I. Areas and Branches**

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.



Branches must follow the purposes of The Pony Club, as stated in Rule 1.I, and are governed by the Rules of The Pony Club. **The Rules & 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.

Before the Rules & 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.

This will include making representations by way of defence, justification and explanation on its behalf. If the majority of the **Rules & 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 & Compliance Committee** shall decide either to suspend or to expel the Branch. 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.

## **II. Area Representatives**

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.

Area Representatives will be confirmed 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

The duties and responsibilities of Area Representatives include:-

To ensure that their Branches are aware of and adhere to the Health & Safety and Safeguarding Policies, and other statutory obligations.

To hold at least two Area Meetings per year. (See below).

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 **Rules & Compliance 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 Committee problems,

Branch programmes,

Health, Safety and Safeguarding matters,

Transfers between Branches.

To accredit Coaches and Nominees for the Recommended 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, as per the minimum Area Training Requirements set out by the Training Committee.

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 all levels of 'B' Tests.

To advise Regional Centre Co-ordinators 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. All final decisions on these suggestions rest with the Training Committee.

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 & Compliance Committee** in writing and signed by a majority of the District Commissioners in the Area.

The **Rules & Compliance Committee** will appoint a person to investigate fully and, if necessary, to report. The **Rules & Compliance Committee** in its absolute discretion may end the appointment of an Area Representative at any time upon giving written notice to the individual.

The **Rules & 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.

Area Representatives are given an annual grant to meet Area expenses (in addition to their travelling expenses), and an Area training grant. A supplementary training grant is available if required.

### **III. Area Meetings**

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**.

The Pony Club Office will refund the travelling expenses of one Branch delegate to go to no more than three Area Meetings each year. The District Commissioner of the Branch should make requests for this refund direct to the Pony Club Office.

### **IV. District Commissioners**

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 **Rules & Compliance Committee** on the recommendation of the Area Representative.

When the term of office of a District Commissioner has expired, 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 votes take place. The Assistant District Commissioner (where appointed) will chair the meeting in the absence of the District Commissioner or the other members of the Branch Committee at that meeting will appoint a person present to act as Chairman for the election. In the event of an equality of votes, the acting Chairman will have a casting vote.

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.

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.

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.

**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.**

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.

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.

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 below.

No Equestrian Professional will be eligible for appointment as a District Commissioner except in special circumstances which the **Volunteers & Officials Committee** in their absolute discretion will decide. (See Rule 5.) Conditions may be applied to the appointment.

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 & 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 & Officials Committee** and the training process as detailed above.

The **Volunteers & 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.

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.

The duties and responsibilities of District Commissioners are to ensure that: His Branch complies fully with the Health & Safety and Safeguarding Policies, and other statutory obligations.

He is familiar with The Pony Club's Health, Safety & Safeguarding Rulebook, and must ensure 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.

#### **V. Branch Committee and Committee Members**

The Branch Committee will consist of no less than five people including the District Commissioner.

The Committee will choose the following Officers of the Branch: - Secretary, Treasurer, Health and Safety Officer, and Safeguarding Officer. It is also recommended that a Chief Instructor be appointed. 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.

All Officers and Committee members 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.

Inherited Committees – In exceptional circumstances, **after consultation with and with the approval of the Area Representative**, a newly appointed DC who has attended a branch officials training day, may ask up to 50% of the Branch Committee to resign.

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 DC (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.

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

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.

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 Treasurers.

Should it appear that a Treasurer or any other person carrying out the functions of a 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 & 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 & Compliance Committee** meetings, the Treasurer of The Pony Club may initiate the suspension.

The **Rules & 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.

If a Branch Committee loses confidence in the District Commissioner, or a member of the Committee, and he is unwilling to resign, then this will be reported to the Area Representative. The Area Representative will investigate and report the facts to the **Rules & Compliance Committee**.

The Area Representative or the **Rules & Compliance Committee** may also initiate such an investigation. The Committee may deem it appropriate that a person other than the Branch's Area Representative should carry out any investigation. The **Rules & 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 Secretary of the Branch. 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.

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. This rule also applies to Parents' Associations/Support Groups, etc.

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.

#### **VI. Parents' Meeting**

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.

#### **VII. Returns to The Pony Club Office**

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 may result in fines being imposed on The Pony Club, which will be charged to the Branch(es) concerned.

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

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 (see below).

For the purposes of the capitation returns and the capitation fees, a Member who transfers from one Branch to another during the course of 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.

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.

A Branch which has failed to submit any of the following:-

- The Annual Financial Return
- The First Capitation Return (unless permission has been given to dispense with it)
- The Second Capitation Return
- The Annual Report and the Capitation Fees that are due within six weeks after the specified due date shall incur a late submission fee. If the item is still outstanding three months after the specified due date, a further late submission fee will be incurred. The fee(s) will be published in the **Handbook**, or in the Bulletin. The invoice for the fee will be addressed to the District Commissioner of the Branch.

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.

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

It is a requirement of The Pony Club's 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 on-line Members Database.

### **VIII. Branch Presidents**

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.

### **IX. Closing of Branches**

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 (such as jumps) held and owned by the Branch and any sub- branch(es).

**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

### I. Scope

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.

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.

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.

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.

All ponies are expected to be properly groomed and well turned out, with correctly fitting tack.

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.

### II. Working Rallies

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.

A working Rally is one at which **coaching** is given and which is open to all Members of the Branch within the age range for which it is intended. It may be either a mounted or dismounted Rally. Team practices/coaching do not qualify as Working Rallies.

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 & 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.

### III. Practices

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.

#### **IV. Pony Club Camps**

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.

In view of the additional responsibilities for the Health, Safety & Safeguarding of the Members that arise from the very nature of Camp, 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, Safety & Safeguarding Rulebook on safeguarding. Camp Organisers should be given guidance on supervision levels and safeguarding, particularly at night.

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.

#### **V. Competitions**

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 Rulebook, unless otherwise stated in the schedule of classes and regulations published for the competition.

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.

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

#### **VI. Other Activities**

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**

#### **I. Purpose and Scope of Activities**

Centre Membership is intended to enable anyone who rides at Centres, but who does not own a pony, 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.

Centre Plus Membership is an option 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 when the Member owns a pony 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.

**Competitions may be held at Centres, and Centre and Centre Plus Members are eligible to participate in all sports and competitions, although the Centre Equitation competition is for Centre members only, and not for Centre Plus Members.**

Centre and Centre Plus Members have third party legal liability insurance cover.

Centre and Centre Plus Members may be invited to take part as individuals, or as teams, in Branch competitions restricted to Members of The Pony Club.

## **II. Membership – Centre and Centre Plus**

The Trustees will set the rate for the Annual Subscription and will publish this in the **Handbook**.

The first Annual Subscription is due when first applying for Membership. The initial Membership application must be endorsed by the Centre Proprietor.

The Annual Subscription runs for twelve months from the first day of the month in which the Subscription is received. A renewal reminder will be sent to the Member one month before the end of the Centre Membership Subscription Year.

**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.

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.

The Pony Club Office may refuse to renew the Membership of a Member. Reasons for such action would normally be given.

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.

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.

**Transfer Rule for Centre Plus**

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 Centre Membership Committee.

**Centre to Branch**

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 Centre Membership Executive Officer for a refund on any Centre fee outstanding. No 14 month restriction on competing for the Branch applies, but the Member **MUST** meet all other eligibility rules.

**Centre Plus to Branch**

If a Centre Plus Member wishes to transfer to a Branch, they must contact their chosen Branch and join as a new Member. They may contact the Centre Membership Executive Officer for a refund on any Centre Plus fee outstanding. No 14 month restriction on competing for the Branch applies, but the Member **MUST** meet all other eligibility rules.

**Centre to Centre Plus**

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 Proprietor must also be informed.

If the transfer from Centre to Centre Plus Membership takes place mid subscription, the Centre Membership Executive Officer should be contacted who will manage the transfer.

**Branch to Centre Plus**

The transfer from Branch to Centre Plus Membership will follow the same procedure as transferring from Branch to Branch. (See Transfer rule 8. III)

**III. Regional Centre Co-ordinators**

The duties and responsibilities of a Regional Centre Co-ordinator are:

To visit all riding schools who apply to become a Pony Club Linked Centre and report their findings to the Centre Membership Executive Officer.

To revisit each of the existing Pony Club Linked Centres in their Area annually and report their findings to the Centre Membership Executive Officer.

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 Centre Membership Office and Area Representative in communicating national or regional events, qualifying competitions & training opportunities to the Pony Club Linked Centres.

#### **IV. Pony Club Linked Riding Centres**

When a Riding Centre Proprietor applies to join the scheme, the Area Representative will be informed and the Riding Centre will be visited by a Regional Centre Co-ordinator.

Provided that the Centre Membership Committee 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 a contract agreement and an affiliation fee.

The **Centre Membership Committee** may, at its absolute discretion, withhold or terminate a Centre's participation in the scheme at any time if the Centre is unable to provide, or ceases to provide, the benefits of Centre Membership as determined in 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.

Linked Centres will display a Pony Club Centre plaque.

All Centres will hold a current licence under the **Riding Establishments Acts 1964 and 1970**.

All 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.

Centres are required to provide the benefits of Membership, including mounted and dismounted instruction to Members.

All Health, Safety & Safeguarding requirements are the responsibility of the Centre.

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

Centre and Centre Plus Members may take The Pony Club Tests up to and including A Standard.

The Centre Proprietor must contact his Regional Co-ordinator, Area Representative and/or the local District Commissioner in order to find suitable Assessors for the Test to be taken at 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.

The riding component of the C Test must be taken outside and not in an indoor school.

The E Standard Test is optional and may be assessed internally, but all other Tests (except for B+) must be taken in sequence.

It will be the responsibility of the Proprietor to order any badges, felts, and certificates for presentation to successful candidates.

The Proprietor or Test Organiser should update the Membership Database with badge and test results.

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

### I. Remuneration

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.

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.

### II. Payment of Coaches and others

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.

### III. Expenses

Travelling and out of pocket expenses of Trustees, members of committees, and approved Recommended Coach visits going to Branches/Centres will be refunded by The Pony Club Office in accordance with the Pony Club expenses policies.

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

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

## 14. COACH AND INSTRUCTOR ACCREDITATION

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

Each year, **the Management Committee will appoint a Championships Committee** to arrange a championship for each of the competitive 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 recognized 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.






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

**16. DRESS AND SADDLERY FOR PONY CLUB MEMBERS**

**1. Hats**

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.

The hat standards accepted as of 1st January 2018 are detailed in the table below:

Hat Standard	Safety Mark	Permitted 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-FI163 2004a onwards with the SEI mark		All activities
AS/NZS 3838 2003 or 2006		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**

The District Commissioner will appoint two Branch Officials (one of whom may be the District Commissioner), who are familiar with The Pony Club hat rule, to carry out hat checks and tag each hat that complies with the requirements (as explained in Section 16.1 Hats) with an **aquamarine** Pony Club, British Eventing (BE) or **British Riding Club (BRC)** hat tag. Linked Centre Members' hats may also be tagged by Centre Proprietors and Regional Centre Co-ordinators. 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.

Pony Club (**Aquamarine**) hat tags are available to purchase from The Pony Club Online Shop.

Tags may only be fitted by one of the two appointed Branch Officials, Area Representatives, the Health, Safety & Safeguarding Advisory Group Chairman, Centre Proprietors or Centre Regional Co-ordinators after they have personally checked the hat.

Tagging indicates that a hat meets the accepted standards, NO check of the fit and condition of the hat is implied. It is considered to be 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.

### **II. Ties and Stocks**

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.

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.

### **III. Badges**

The official Membership badge should be worn at all Pony Club activities when a jacket is worn.

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.

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



#### IV. Body Protectors

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 competing.

Body Protectors used for Cross Country and Pony Racing must meet BETA 2009 Level 3 standard (purple label).



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.

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

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.

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). 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.

#### V. Medical Armbands

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.

#### VI. Clothing, Footwear and Stirrups

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.

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.**

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

Stirrups should be of the correct size to suit the rider's boots. They must have 7mm (¼") 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.**

**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.**

**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.**

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.

### **VII. Spurs**

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 3.5cm in length. The measurement is taken from the heel of the boot to the end of the shank.

### **VIII. Jewellery**

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.

### **IX. Competitions**

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

### **X. Saddlery**

Only saddlery permitted in the Sport Rulebooks may be used at Rallies and general Pony Club activities relating to that sport.

## **17. SAFEGUARDING**

The Pony Club is a Member Body of the BEF, and as such adheres to the overall policy of the Federation on safeguarding, which can be found at [www.bef.co.uk/safeguarding](http://www.bef.co.uk/safeguarding).

Each Pony Club Branch/ Centre is required to have an appointed Child Protection Officer (sometimes referred to as a Child Welfare Officer) whose role is to ensure protection and safeguarding of Members. Full details of this role can be found in the Health, Safety & Safeguarding Rulebook.

All individuals who carry out a role involving Regulated Activity on a regular or overnight basis (see the Health, Safety and Safeguarding Rulebook) must attend an approved safeguarding workshop. The only exception to this rule is at residential camps, where each night a minimum of two overnight supervisors must have attended an approved safeguarding workshop. It is recommended that any other person carrying out Regulated Activity on an overnight basis at residential camps should also attend an approved safeguarding workshop.

The Pony Club has a network of Safeguarding Trainers who offer the BEF Safeguarding Course, which is also offered by other BEF member bodies. The course is tailored to equestrian activities and recognised by Sport England. It meets the requirements for the UK Coaching Certificate. The Pony Club also recognises Sports Coach UK's Safeguarding and Protecting Children course as an approved workshop.

The first approved safeguarding workshop attended should be face to face. This may be followed three years later by an online course. However, as a minimum, individuals should attend a face to face course every six years. Details of the available training courses can be found in the Safeguarding section of The Pony Club website, [www.pcuk.org](http://www.pcuk.org).

Arrangements for instructors under the age of 18 years old to attend an approved workshop can be made in consultation with the Lead Safeguarding Officer and the Area Safeguarding Trainer concerned.

Any individual who has attended a Safeguarding course other than the BEF or the Sports Coach UK's approved workshops can apply for their prior learning to be taken into consideration by completing an Accredited Prior Learning (APL) form and submitting it to the Lead Safeguarding Officer for consideration. S/he will be informed of the decision and the reasons for making it as soon as is possible and practicable.

The Pony Club reserves the right to restrict and/or prohibit attendance at any of its events to anyone who The Pony Club considers to be an unsuitable person.

If it is discovered that a parent or other adult accompanying a Member has been found guilty of an offence against a child and/ or has been on the sex offender register, The Pony Club's policy is that the individual should not be permitted to attend any Pony Club activity.

The Pony Club's full rules and policies on safeguarding and related issues are set out in the Health, Safety and Safeguarding Rulebook.

### **18. DISPLAYS**

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**

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

### I. Competition Complaints and Objections

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.

### II. Other Complaints and Problems

If a problem arises within a Branch or a Centre, it is for the District Commissioner or Centre Membership Executive Officer/Regional 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 & Compliance Committee**, who will make a decision. The decision will be advised to the complainant in writing.

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.

Complaints received by The Pony Club Office will be referred to the appropriate official/officials.

## 21. FINANCE

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.

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 £2,500, whichever is the greater, without the approval of **the Finance Committee**. Free reserves are the assets of the Branch (excluding fixed assets) less its liabilities and also less any Restricted or Designated Funds. Restricted Funds are monies that have been given by a donor with conditions on how they are to be spent. Designated Funds are funds that have been earmarked by the Trustees for specific projects. A Branch that wishes to assign Designated Funds must obtain the consent of **the Finance Committee**.

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.

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.

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.

These rules relate to all sub-groups, such as Parents' Associations, that belong to the Branch.

### PayPal

The use of PayPal 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.

## 22. INSURANCE

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.

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 & unpaid officials, instructors, volunteers, parents, Members of The Pony Club and visitors must: -

Take all reasonable care for the Health, Safety & 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, Safety & Safeguarding issues.

Not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of Health & 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, Safety & Welfare.

Report accidents either by making an entry in The Pony Club Accident Book or by informing the District Commissioner or activity organiser.

### **23. LEGAL LIABILITY**

Neither The Pony Club, nor the Trustees, nor any person acting on behalf of The Pony Club will be held responsible for any accident, damage, injury or loss at rallies or any other meetings to Members or their ponies.

**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.**