Rules and Constitution
Revised March 2009

1. All full members should have some proof of ability to swim, e.g. a recognised swimming test certificate. Members not fulfilling that requirement may be asked to show their ability to swim 50 metres wearing light clothing.
2. Members are expected to follow the guidelines and rules laid down by the British Canoe Union.
3. Members must obtain the permission of the Committee if they wish to represent a canoeing organisation other than Tonbridge Canoe Club.
4. Do not light any fires or matches (e.g. no smoking) in the Clubhouse.
5. Always lock up the Clubhouse when not in use, even for a very short time. Club keys are not normally issued to Junior members.
6. No parking in front of the Clubhouse. We suggest you park in the Lower Castle Field car park and walk across the bridge.
7. Do not obstruct the garage doors or road with canoes or other equipment.
8. Keep noise to a minimum so as not to disturb our neighbours.
9. Members may, at the committee's discretion, be allocated racks for the storage of their canoes which will be their responsibility to maintain. Members requiring a rack space should make a request to the membership secretary. All private boats stored in the clubhouse buildings must be licensed for use on the River Medway by means of BCU membership boat licence or an Environment Agency river licence. Racks will be allocated based on frequency of use of the boat concerned. Members who have allocated rack spaces will be asked to vacate them to make room for other boats if the boat being stored is not used at least on average once per month. Any such decisions will be taken by the full committee, where after the member will be given one month to remove their boat from the clubhouse, and a proportional refund of their rack fee will be made. Members must not use other people's racks without permission.
10. Keep the Clubhouse tidy and leave it as you would like to find it.
11. Equipment must be booked in advance for use at races and other Club events.
12. Club boats may only be used on flat water. The only exception is on an organised event when the specific permission of the Head of the relevant section of the Club and an Executive Member of the Committee has been previously obtained.
13. Canoes must be emptied of water and equipment after use, i.e. sponged dry.
14. Canoes and equipment must be put away and racked in the allotted places after use.
15. Life jackets/buoyancy aids and spray decks must be hung up to dry after use.
16. Any damage to canoes and equipment must be reported to the Hon. Secretary as soon as possible.
17. Club members must not borrow equipment belonging to others without first obtaining the permission of the owner of such equipment.
18. Juniors who have access to a key are expected to do as instructed by the person in charge on regular Club sessions.
19. The wearing of buoyancy aids is compulsory for all paddlers under the age of 16 except when taking part in racing or race training, when it is at the discretion of the person in charge.
20. Bicycles and motorcycles are not allowed in the Clubhouse.
21. All members (except Associate, Cadet and Child members) must be able to prove that they are at least of BCU One Star Standard of proficiency or that they will attend Club training sessions to achieve that standard. Members and guest paddlers who are unable to prove their proficiency to this standard must be accompanied on the water by a current BCU qualified instructor at all times.
22. Junior members (those under the age of 18) will only be permitted to paddle when supervised by a suitably qualified/experienced adult.

I. Name
The Club shall be known as the Tonbridge Canoe Club, hereinafter referred to as the Club.

II. Objects
The object of the Club is to provide facilities for and promote participation of the whole community in the sport of canoeing.

III. Membership
1. Qualifications of Membership:
Membership of the Club shall be open to all persons irrespective of ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, religion or beliefs; or of age, sex or disability except as a necessary consequence of the requirements of canoeing as a particular sport.

(a) *Full Membership:*
Adult Membership - any active canoeist over 18 years of age who undertakes to behave in the best interests of the sport shall be eligible for full membership.
Family Membership - the second or subsequent members of the same household as an existing adult member who undertake to behave in the best interests of the sport.
Junior Membership - any active canoeist between the age of 12 and 18 years who undertakes to behave in the best interests of the sport.
Student Membership - any active student canoeist living away from home who undertakes to behave in the best interests of the sport shall be eligible for concessionary rates.
It is recommended that all full members should have some proof of ability to swim, e.g. a recognized swimming test certificate. Members not fulfilling this requirement may be asked to swim 50 metres wearing light clothing.
(b) *Associate Membership - a*nyone wishing to support the Club, but not a canoeist or a canoeing member, moving away from the area.
(c) *Affiliated Membership - a*ny group of canoeists of which one must be a full adult member who is responsible for all of his/her group.
(d) *Child Membership - a*ny child (under 12 years old) of an existing full adult member of the Club. The parent must accompany the child member in the same boat at all times.
(e) *Cadet Membership* - Any child (between 8 and 12 years old) of an existing full adult member of the Club, who is competent to paddle in a boat on their own, but who must have supervision from their parent or a qualified BCU instructor at all times.

The parents of Child and Cadet members must be suitably experienced and qualified themselves, and be able to satisfy the committee that they are capable of taking responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of their child on and off the water whilst engaged in Club activities. These classes of membership are only available on written application to the Membership Secretary, with the full Committee taking the final decision on whether it is appropriate for the members concerned. The Club does not undertake to provide special equipment for these categories of membership, and the full adult member must provide a suitable buoyancy aid or lifejacket for their child.

Candidates for election as members shall make written application to the Secretary of the Club on the form provided. The Club may refuse membership or expel from membership only for good and sufficient cause, such as conduct or character likely to bring the Club or sport in to disrepute. Appeal against such a decision may be made to the Club's members and decided by a majority vote.

The General Committee may restrict the total numbers in each class of membership if in the opinion of the General Committee this would be in the best interests of the Club.

IV. Subscriptions
The rates of subscriptions shall be determined by the members in general meeting and shall be due on election and thereafter on or before 1st May in each year. Any member renewing subscriptions after 1st June will incur an overdue penalty charge.
The club recommends all members join the British Canoe Union (BCU) to take advantage of the river licence and third party liability insurance included in BCU membership.
Club members who are not current BCU members, and who have not purchased an EA river licence, must pay the full subscription amount from which the club will pay for Environment Agency boat licences for club boats and pay the membership levy to the BCU.
Club members who are also current BCU members must state their BCU membership number on their membership application / renewal form, or purchase an EA boat licence, in order to qualify for the licensed member discount.

V. Cessation of Membership
1. Any member may resign by giving notice in writing to the Secretary.
2. Any member violating rules or regulations of the Club or being adjudged guilty of unsatisfactory conduct may by resolution of the General Committee be suspended or expelled. Any member so suspended or expelled may appeal to an Extraordinary General Meeting if such an appeal is sponsored by not less than ten other members.
3. Any member so suspended or expelled may also appeal to the British Canoe Union to state his/her case.
4. A member shall be deemed to have resigned from the Club, if, after due notice in writing, he/she has not paid by 30th June the annual subscription which became due on 1st May.

VI. Sections
1. The Club shall organize various sections to cover the various activities of canoeing where this is deemed necessary by the General Committee.
2. The affairs of each section shall be conducted by a sub-committee of three members of whom the leader or his deputy shall serve on the General Committee.

VII. Disqualification from Holding Office
Any member who is carrying on business in the sale or manufacture of canoes and/or their accessories, or disqualified as an amateur under the rules of the British Canoe Union, shall not be eligible for election to the General Committee of the Club.

VIII. General Committee
1. The General Committee shall conduct the affairs of the Club as a whole and shall consist of a Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and other Officers as necessary, up to a maximum* of ten. Additionally, the General Committee may co-opt members of the Club to its number. (*recommended)
2. Nominations for the position of Chairman, Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer and other Officers shall be put forward in the form of a motion under the terms of Section XII, 4.
3 The General Committee shall elect a Vice-Chairman from among its members.
4. The terms of office shall be for one year, and members shall be eligible for re-election.
5. Junior members may only hold office on a Committee if a letter of consent is received from their parents and their nomination is received in accordance with the terms of Section XII, 4.

IX. Duties of General Committee Officers
1. Chairman
The Chairman will preside at all General Meetings of the Club and at all meetings of the General Committee. He/she shall be responsible for guiding the activities of the Club in accordance with its rules and general policy as expressed by the majority of its members. He/she shall represent the Club at meetings of other organisations. He/she shall ex officio be a member of any other committee of the Club.
2. Hon Secretary
The Hon. Secretary will be responsible for the organisation of meetings of the General Committee and of the Club, the recording of minutes relating to such meetings and all correspondence relating to the general business of the Club. He/she shall also be responsible for transmitting to the section secretaries all correspondence relating to particular activities of the section concerned at the earliest opportunity. He/she will receive copies of any records relating to section committee.
3. Hon Treasurer
The Hon. Treasurer will be responsible for the collection of all monies and shall keep such books of accounts as required by the General Meeting. He/she shall have the power to examine, after giving one week's notice, the books of any section, and shall report any discrepancies to the General Committee. He/she shall audit the books of each section annually and shall produce at the AGM balance sheets showing the financial state of each section and of the general funds, accompanied by the Hon. Auditor's report.

X. General Committee
1. The General Committee is responsible for the general conduct of the Club's business and activities.
2. The General Committee shall meet not less than six times, at regular intervals, during the year.
3. Meetings of the General Committee shall be called by the Hon. Secretary on instructions from the Chairman or not less than three Committee Members.
4. A quorum shall consist of not less than half the members in the case of the General Committee.
5. In the case of a vacancy occurring on the General Committee, the said Committee shall appoint another eligible person to act until the next Annual General Meeting. Members thus co-opted will not be eligible to vote.
6. The General Committee may make, vary, and revoke rules (not inconsistent with the Constitution) for the regulation of the Club and the conduct of its members.

XI. Section Committee
1. The Section Committee shall each consist of the Section Captain or Secretary and two members selected by the General Committee.
2. Section Committees may nominate other members of the Section to serve on the Section Committee.
3. Meetings of the Section Committees shall be called by the Secretaries of the Sections concerned, or on the instructions of any member of the Section Committee.
4. The secretary of each Section may, if the General Committee so wishes, be required to keep a record of all Section Meetings and be prepared to produce these if required at General Meetings. He/she shall also be responsible for the collection of all monies relating to the Section and shall submit a balance sheet showing the financial state of the Section at the Annual General Meeting. He/she shall also be prepared at all General Committee Meetings to give a statement of the Section's finances.
5. Section Committees may draw up rules and regulations necessary for the efficient management of the Section, but such rules and regulations shall not become operative until approved by the General Committee.
6. Section Committees shall meet at specified intervals.
7. A quorum shall consist of not less than two members in the case of Section Committees.

XII. General Meetings
1. The Annual General Meeting shall be held in the month of March each year. There shall be laid before the meeting a statement of account made up to the last day of the month of January immediately preceding.
2. An Extraordinary General Meeting shall be called on the instructions of the majority of the General Committee, or on a requisition signed by not less than ten full members of the Club, within eight weeks of the Chairman receiving the requisition.
3. Not less than 30 days clear notice shall be given, specifying time and business of General Meeting.
4. Motions for discussion at Annual General Meetings, not originating within the General Committee, shall be lodged with the Hon. Secretary on or before the 15th day of the month of February preceding, and shall be signed by three full members.
5. At any General Meeting, a resolution put to the vote of the Meeting shall be decided by a show of hands of full members except when more than one nomination has been received for a position on the General Committee, in which case voting will be by secret ballot of full members.
6. At all General Meetings, the Chairman will preside or, in his/her absence, a Vice-Chairman will be elected by the Committee.
7. The quorum for any general meeting will be considered to be the total number of members assembled, at the published time, date and place.

XIII. Notices
Notices of general meetings shall be sent to each member at the address he/she has given for communications. Accidental omissions to give notice of a meeting or the non receipt of notice of a meeting by any member shall not invalidate the proceedings of the meeting.

XIV. Liability
1. The General Committee shall manage the affairs of the Club. Financial or legal liability incurred in the rightful exercise of their office shall not, however, be the personal liability of the Committee, but shall be the responsibility of the Club as a whole.
2. All members or other persons who attend Club tours or meets do so at their own risk, and neither the Club or its Officers can accept any liability for any loss or injury of any kind sustained at headquarters or whilst on a Club tour or meet.
3. The Club strongly recommends that all members join the British Canoe Union to benefit from the Third Party Liability Insurance that this provides. BCU membership application forms are available from the Membership Secretary.

XV. Alteration of Constitution
1. This Constitution shall not be altered, amended, or rescinded except by a General Meeting of the Club.
2. A resolution to give effect to a change must be passed by at least 50% of the full members present at the General Meeting and voting on this behalf.

XVI. Auditor
Every Annual General Meeting shall appoint an Hon. Auditor who shall at least once in every year examine the accounts of the Club and ascertain the correctness of the income and expenditure accounts and of the balance sheet.

XVII. Distribution of Profits
In no circumstances can any profit be distributed to members or third parties, but any profits earned shall be contributed to a General Fund for furthering the objects of the Club.

XVIII. Termination
In the event of dissolution of the Club, any assets remaining after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities shall not be paid to or distributed among the members of the Club, but shall be given or transferred to one or more of the following approved sporting or charitable bodies:

1. A registered charitable organization(s)
2. Another club which is a registered CASC
3. The sports national governing body for use by them for related community sports.

XIX. Power of Decision
Any matter not provided for in this Constitution, or any question over the interpretation of it, shall be dealt with by the General Committee, whose decision is final.