



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government



Department
for Transport

SPARTA

Recreational Association of the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, the Department for Transport and related Executive Agencies

CONSTITUTION

1 OBJECTIVES

- 1.1 The overarching objective of the Sports and Recreation Association (SPARTA) is to promote and encourage social and recreational activities in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and the Department for Transport (DfT) and their related Executive Agencies and Non-Departmental Government Bodies
- 1.2 SPARTA will promote the setting up and growth of affiliated clubs and societies for such activities and to support employee health and wellbeing through the delivery of wellbeing initiatives.

2 MEMBERSHIP

- 2.1 Membership of SPARTA shall be applied as follows;
 - 2.1.1 Full Membership of SPARTA is open to all employees of MHCLG and the DfT including their related Executive Agencies and Non-Departmental Government Bodies. Full Membership can be continued should any part of MHCLG/DfT or their Agencies be privatised.
 - 2.1.2 Associate Membership Level 1 is open to anyone who has been previously employed by the Departments or their forerunners but have relocated due to transfer or machinery of government changes.
 - 2.1.3 Associate Membership Level 2 is open to immediate family of Members in the above categories (parents, partner or children etc.), or any individual not otherwise eligible, subject to the appropriate agreement of the General Secretary or club representative.
 - 2.1.4 Honorary Life Membership may be granted to retired former members who are deemed to have performed a special service to SPARTA. Recommendations may be made by the members of the General Management Committee and put before the Annual General meeting for approval.
- 2.2 Membership of the above categories is subject to the payment of subscriptions as laid down in paragraph 7.2 and 7.3 with the exception of Honorary Life Members who do not pay a subscription.

- 2.3 Retired members keep the membership status held on their retirement with the exception of those subsequently granted Honorary Life Membership.
- 2.4 Associate Members Level 2 shall be entitled to the privileges of Full Membership, Associate Membership Level 1 and Honorary Life Membership with the following exceptions:
 - 2.4.1 they may not vote at General Meetings;
 - 2.4.2 they may not serve as Officers of the Association;
 - 2.4.3 they may serve on the Committee of an Affiliated Club or Society only with the consent of the Officers of the Association or the respective club representative.
- 2.5 Persons seconded to the Departments are entitled to the Full Membership/Associate Membership Level 1/2 status and the rights that come with such membership.

A more detailed chart showing the membership rights is at Annex A

3 MANAGEMENT

- 3.1 The Management of SPARTA shall be entrusted to the General Management Committee which will consist of:
 - 3.1.a. The Officers of the Association as follows:
 - Chair
 - Deputy Chair
 - General Secretary
 - Hon Treasurer
 - Assistant Hon Treasurer
 - 3.1.b. One representative to be nominated by each Affiliated Club or Society each year;
 - 3.1.c. Up to 5 independent representatives of the membership.
- 3.2 One third of the members of the General Management Committee (GMC) shall form a quorum. Any decision voted on by the quorum will be by a majority.
- 3.3 The Officers of the Association, as listed in 3.1.a, shall have power to appoint Sub-Committees as necessary, with duties and powers required to carry out the functions delegated. Should the Officers of the Association consider it necessary to use these powers they should inform the GMC at the earliest opportunity.
- 3.4 The Officers of the Association, as listed in 3.1.a, will have the power to co-opt additional members for any particular purpose and may fill any vacancy among its members between General Meetings. Should the Officers of the Association consider it necessary to use these powers they should advise the GMC at the earliest opportunity.

4 ELECTION AND APPOINTMENT OF OFFICERS

- 4.1 As vacancies arise in the posts of Chair, Deputy Chair and Treasurer, nominations will be invited from the membership and, if necessary, advertised in open competition. Appointments will be made subject to the agreement of the General Management Committee. SPARTA may terminate all such appointments at any time.
- 4.2 All other Officers, except the General Secretary, (see paragraph 3.1.a above) shall be elected annually at the SPARTA Annual General Meeting.

5 MEETINGS

- 5.1.a. The SPARTA Annual General Meeting will be held during the last quarter of each calendar year, or at the earliest opportunity thereafter.
- 5.1.b. At least 21 days before the date of the meeting a notice will be issued.
- 5.1.c. At least 14 days before the meeting, all motions for presentation to the Annual General Meeting will be submitted in writing to the General Secretary.
- 5.1.d. At least 7 days before the meeting all nominations for all elective offices, and the name of the proposer and seconder for each nomination, must be received in writing by the General Secretary. The consent of the nominee shall have first been obtained.
- 5.2 Decisions made at the AGM shall be by a majority, with the exception of amendments to the Rules of SPARTA. Voting for amendments to the Rules of SPARTA are covered in paragraph 10.1.
- 5.3 The Annual General Meeting shall:
 - 5.3.a. Appoint the President (Perm Sec of Department) and Vice President (Perm Sec of Department).
 - 5.3.b. Elect the Officers of the Association (see paragraphs 3.1.a., 4.1 and 4.2).
 - 5.3.c. Elect the independent representatives of the membership of the General Management Committee (see paragraph 3.1.c.).
 - 5.3.d. Elect an Honorary Auditor who shall not be a member of the General Management Committee.

(Should, following the conclusion of the AGM, any of the above posts remain vacant, the Officers of SPARTA shall endeavour to recruit officers to these posts and inform the membership of any new appointee at the earliest opportunity.)
 - 5.3.e. Consider the Annual Report and the audited Statement of Accounts for the preceding year.
 - 5.3.f. Consider any other business.
- 5.4 A Special General Meeting may be called by the General Management Committee; or

- 5.4.a. at the request of not less than 5 Association members SPARTA whose request will be sent in writing to the General Secretary. The meeting shall take place within one month of the receipt of such a request and 8 members shall form a quorum.
- 5.4.b. At least 14 days clear notice of such a meeting will be given and displayed on official digital platforms and sent to Secretaries of Affiliated Clubs or Societies and Branches. Only those matters for which the meeting has been called will be discussed unless the Chair exceptionally decides otherwise.

6 AFFILIATED CLUBS OR SOCIETIES

- 6.1 Clubs or Societies formed to cover any social or recreational activity for which there is sufficient demand may affiliate to the Association, subject to the approval of the Officers of the Association.
- 6.2 Each Regional Association, Affiliated Club or Society should, within a reasonable timeframe, create their own rules to be shared with the Officers of the Association. Any subsequent amendments to such rules shall be shared with the Officers of the Association.
- 6.3 The Management of each Regional Association, Affiliated Club or Society shall be vested in its own officers and committee. A record of accounts should be kept which should be shared with the Officers of the Association when required.
- 6.4 Members of SPARTA shall be eligible for membership of all Affiliated Clubs and Societies.

7 FINANCE

- 7.1 The General Management Committee will oversee the finances of SPARTA.
- 7.2 The subscription rate for a full member of the Recreational Association shall be an amount determined at the SPARTA Annual General Meeting. Payment of the relevant amount will be made by authorisation to make deductions from pay or by other arrangement as may be approved by the Officers of the Association. The subscription rate for an Associate Member shall be the same as for a Full Member and shall be collected by the Treasurer of the Club or Society. The appropriate SPARTA Associate Membership fee shall be payable by any non-employee of MHCLG and DfT.
- 7.3 The subscription rate for a Full or Associate Member of a branch affiliated to the Recreational Association shall be the same as the subscription rate for a Full Member. The appropriate SPARTA Associate Membership fee shall be payable by any non-employee of MHCLG and DfT.
- 7.4 The monies of SPARTA shall be held:
 - 7.4.a. In a current Bank account opened in its name. Transactions may be carried out using any available banking methods. All outgoing transactions shall be authorised by a minimum of 2 people from a panel of up to 5 bank signatories, which shall be appointed from time to time by the Officers of the Association and shall include the Hon. Treasurer.
 - 7.4.b. In a cash imprest, not normally exceeding £1000, by an appointed officer of SPARTA.
- 7.5 The financial year of SPARTA shall end on 30 September.

- 7.6 The Hon Treasurer shall present audited accounts of the Income and Expenditure during the year to 30 September and of Liabilities and Assets at that date for the inspection and approval of the Annual General Meeting.
- 7.7 All Affiliated clubs, Regional Associations or Societies may apply to the General Management Committee for an allocation of funds. In considering such applications the General Management Committee will take into account financial and other information, as necessary. The General Management Committee can refuse an application where it is known those members of Affiliated Clubs, Regional Associations or Societies do not subscribe to SPARTA. It shall not refuse an application solely on the grounds that a Club, Regional Association or Society does not charge its own subscriptions or engage in other money raising activities.
- 7.8 SPARTA may raise funds in response to appeals from other bodies and organisations, subject to the approval of the General Management Committee.
- 7.9 The auditors will have access at all times to the books and accounts of SPARTA.
- 7.10 All assets held by Affiliated Clubs, Regional Associations and Societies shall, at all times, be vested in the Association. In the event of an Affiliated Club, Regional Association or Society ceasing to exist, all residual assets shall be disposed of, as directed by the Officers of the Association. In the event of the dissolution of the Association, the General Management Committee shall dispose of the assets of the Association subject to the approval of a Special General Meeting and in accordance with any existing relevant memoranda of agreement.

8 AFFILIATION

- 8.1 SPARTA shall be affiliated to the Civil Service Sports Council and to such bodies as the Officers of the Association may determine.

9 COLOURS

- 9.1 SPARTA colours shall be blue and gold.

10 AMENDMENT OF RULES

- 10.1 Amendment to these rules shall be made only at the SPARTA Annual General Meeting, or at a Special General Meeting called for the purpose and shall require the assent of 2/3rds of those present and voting at the meeting.

11 INTERPRETATION OF RULES

- 11.1 The General Management Committee shall interpret these rules and shall have power to decide in any case of doubt as to the meaning of a rule or its applicability to a particular matter. They shall also have the power to decide on any matter on which the rules are silent.
- 11.2 The Rules of SPARTA shall be published and be available to all members.

12 AFFILIATED BRANCHES

- 12.1 SPARTA will welcome applications from clubs or groups of staff outside London to form regional clubs or to become Affiliated Branches of SPARTA.
- 12.2 Each Affiliated Branch should, within a reasonable timeframe of their formation, create their own rules to be shared with SPARTA. Any subsequent amendments to such rules shall be shared with SPARTA.
- 12.3 The SPARTA General Secretary should be given fair warning of any Affiliated Branches Annual General or Special General Meetings and be provided with a copy of any papers to be considered. The SPARTA General Secretary will seek to attend those meetings unless diary constraints do not allow. A copy of the minutes of these meetings should be provided to the SPARTA General Secretary as soon as possible following the meeting.
- 12.4 In the event of an Affiliated Branch closing, any residual assets shall be transferred to SPARTA for safekeeping. The Officers of the Association shall be consulted and decide on the re-allocation of these assets, either to a new Club formed in the same area, or to other Affiliated Branches absorbing the original members, according to the circumstances of dissolution and with the best interests of the original members in mind.
- 12.5 Subject to paragraphs 12.1 to 12.4, Affiliated Branches shall:
 - 12.5.a. Create their own rules, especially to conform to current Licensing Acts, and orders of responsible Authorities;
 - 12.5.b. Have financial autonomy;
 - 12.5.c. Conduct their own activities.
- 12.6 A copy of the papers of all General Management Committee meetings shall be sent to Secretaries of Affiliated Branches. No decision will be made on any matter affecting an Affiliated branch unless at least 14 days' notice has been given to the Branch concerned of the date of a meeting at which the matter will be discussed. A representative from the branch will be invited to attend the meeting at least 14 days in advance.

Annex A

TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SPARTA CONSTITUTION

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL	ELIGIBILITY FOR MAIN ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES			ELIGIBILITY FOR AFFILIATED CLUB/SOCIETY ACTIVITIES			
	Association membership	Vote at meetings	Serve as officer of Association	Club/society membership	Vote at meetings	Serve on Committee without consent of GMC	Serve as Officer on committee with consent of GMC
Honorary Life Membership May be granted to retired former members deemed to have performed a special service to SPARTA	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
Full membership Open to all persons employed by MHCLG/DfT & related Executive Agencies, and Non Departmental Government bodies	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
Associate Membership level 1 Open to anyone previously employed by MHCLG & DfT or its forerunners but relocated due to Machinery of Government changes or Privatisation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A
Associate Membership level 2 Open to immediate family of Full members or Level 1 (parents, partners or children) or any individual not otherwise eligible e.g. Other Civil Servants or Public Bodies, subject to written agreement of the General Secretary.	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes

A.	<p>Full Membership of SPARTA allows the holder to participate in all SPARTA activities and those of its Affiliated London Clubs/Societies and its Regional Affiliated Branch Clubs.</p> <p>This includes representing the MHCLG/DfT in all Civil Service inter-departmental national competitions, providing they are full members of the Civil Service Sports Council.</p>
B.	<p>Associate Membership Level 1 of SPARTA allows the holder to participate in all SPARTA Affiliated Clubs/Societies Activities and are subject to local Club Committee Rules.</p> <p>Level 1 does not give the holder the automatic right to represent MHCLG/DfT in Civil Service inter-departmental competitions. Their allegiance is firstly to their parent department, unless circumstances dictate otherwise</p> <p>i.e. Where they are denied the opportunity to participate in the CSSC competition due to the absence of their particular activity in their parent department.</p>
C.	<p>Associate Membership Level 2 of SPARTA is as with Level 1, but the membership is determined by to local Club/Society Committee Rules and circumstances. They do not take precedence over Full or Level 1 Members.</p>

Annex B

Table of Known Revisions

Date	Revision Details	Further Notes
1978	Membership status clarified at AGM	
1980	Membership status clarified at AGM	
1983	Membership status clarified at AGM	
1985	Membership status clarified at AGM	
27 November 1986	Ratified by the General Management Committee	
1988	Membership status clarified at AGM	
1989	Membership status clarified at AGM	
1997	Updated to reflect the change in the name of the Department following merger	
6 July 1999	Updated to reflect Department name change and Secretariat address	
8 June 2001	Updated to reflect the machinery of government changes following the general election on 8 June 2001	
5 December 2002	Revised following adoption of the motion at the AGM held on 5 December 2002, to change the name of the Association from the DTLR-RA to SPARTA	
31 January 2019	Revised to ensure consistency with current working practices on 31 January 2019	
13 December 2023	Revised following review in 2023 and agreed at AGM	
21 April 2026	Revised following DLUHC name change to MHCLG	