

PROPOSED MERGER BETWEEN THE HYDNEYE COMMUNITY ANGLING CLUB AND THE SOUTHDOWN ANGLING ASSOCIATION

MERGER DETAILS DOCUMENT

Introduction

Further to the Extraordinary General Meeting held on 28th July 2022 (EGM1) where both Resolutions A and B were adopted, this document sets out the principal details for the merged club (Resolution B).

The two founding clubs being merged are the Hydneye Community Angling Club (HCAC) and the Southdown Angling Association (SAA).

The proposals are set-out below. They result from detailed workings of the Merger Working Party (MWP) that was established following the first EGM. It is anticipated that the proposals will be adopted "on block". Further information can be provided at the second EGM if required.

This is a positive step for both "legacy" clubs that will create a strong management team and a more extensive membership offering than the individual clubs currently have. Best practice from both clubs will be adopted going forwards. Undoubtedly there will be some changes, but these will help build a more robust merged club going forwards.

The MWP strongly recommends that the merger proposal is adopted unamended.

Name

The merged club will be called the Southdown and Hydneye Community Angling Club (SHCAC). This preserves the origins of the founding clubs and should be uncontentious to members. It will also help preserve existing relationships with landowners which is an important consideration.

Date

If adopted, the merger of the two clubs will come into effect from 1st April 2023.

Constitution and Rules

A new Constitution and Rules has been prepared and this is largely based on the HCAC versions that are simpler than those of the SAA.

We would like to highlight these aspects:

1. The SAA land asset will be protected by a separate legal document such that it may only be sold, if desired, to help finance a new water of considerable benefit to SHCAC. New Trustees will be appointed to manage this asset in accordance with the agreement;
2. Every SHCAC member will be registered on the Clubmate management system and thus must provide: 1) a digital photograph, 2) a valid e-mail address and 3) a telephone contact number. Membership will no longer be permitted without this information; and
3. The Rules will require every SHCAC member to produce their Environment Agency rod licence on request

Angling Regulations

All existing SAA Angling Regulations and those of HCAC will be consolidated and reviewed. Only minor changes are anticipated. These will be periodically reviewed in the coming years.

Assets of HCAC and SAA

Upon agreement to the merger, all assets of HCAC and SAA will become owned by SHCAC. The SAA land asset is subject to a legal agreement on its future use and sale. The land deeds will be updated with details of the new Trustees.

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Merger Details Continued

Officers and Committee

Officers and Committee have been drawn from the merger clubs to maintain continuity where possible. All appointees will have responsibilities whether they are a named Officer or not, as it is important to share the workload as equitably as possible.

The Trustees are responsible for the SHCAC assets and are also signatories on the club's bank account(s).

Water Keepers will be responsible for monitoring angling activity on club waters and identifying any maintenance needs.

The proposed Organisational Chart will be posted on the existing HCAC and SAA websites in advance of EGM2.

Membership Categories

The HCAC and SAA membership structures are similar. SHCAC will adopt these membership categories:

Honorary

Active Officers and Committee

Former Presidents and Vice Presidents of HCAC and SAA if retired/not elected to SHCAC

Nominated Life Members from HCAC and SAA

Association Members

Full

Senior Citizen

Disabled

Young

Junior

There will be no Non-Fishing or Spouse membership categories.

All memberships will be rolling annual, starting from the date of joining.

A new member fee will be levied.

Any member that does not pay their membership fee within 1 month of their renewal date will be considered a new member.

The Officers will be able to award discretionary memberships in exceptional cases.

Membership Transitional Arrangements

Existing arrangements of the merger clubs are not aligned; HCAC have rolling annual membership, SAA have a fixed membership year ending on 30th April.

Existing HCAC members

- Will renew as normal to HCAC up until 30th March 2023 at the new HCAC fee rates below;
- Will receive a new HCAC membership card upon renewal;
- Will receive a replacement SHCAC membership card valid from 1st April 2023; and
- Will have to renew their membership on the year anniversary of the HCAC membership renewal.

Any HCAC member renewing from 1st April 2023, will become a member of SHCAC directly and receive a membership card in the normal way.

Existing SAA members

Any existing SAA member renewing will join SHCAC directly and will receive a membership card through the post.

Note: membership cards will be credit card sized photo ID cards.

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Membership Fees

The MWP have carefully considered membership fees mindful that HCAC fees would have increased in 2023 anyway, and that SAA have been generating a small surplus in recent years. The merger is likely to incur some exceptional costs, but the MWP feel confident that the suggested fee structure is affordable in the first year. Thereafter, membership fee levels will need to be reviewed to ensure we have a viable/sustainable club.

In summary, existing HCAC members will pay more than last year; this change was needed even without the merger. SAA members will pay less than last year.

Proposed Annual Membership Fees

	Auto Renewal	New Annual
Full	£60	£70
Senior Citizen	£50	£60
Disabled	£25	£25
Young	£25	£25
Junior	£10	£10

The “New Annual” fee includes a joining fee

The “Autorenewal” fee will apply to all existing members; that is all HCAC members that renew within 1 month of their renewal date and SAA members that renew on or before 1st June 2023.

These membership fees will be subject to annual review.

Waters

All existing HCAC and SAA waters will be retained, subject to final agreement of renewal with the landowners. In most cases agreement has already been reached in principle.

Curl’s Farm at Ripe is subject to a development plan that is pending agreement with the landowner. It will be retained as part of SHCAC’s portfolio but may not be available in 2023.

All Water Share arrangements will be formalised and maintained at least for the first year of SHCAC existence. Thereafter, all water sharing arrangements will be reviewed annually.

We will not affiliate to the Rother Fisheries Association (RFA). This may be reconsidered in future years.

Membership Management and Communications

We will continue to use Clubmate as our membership management tool.

We will adopt credit card style photo ID membership cards as currently used by HCAC.

SHCAC Constitution, Rules, Angling Regulations, maps etc. will all be available to access on a Website.

Communications will be via e-mail, Facebook and our Website. Texts may be used but letters will only be sent in exceptional cases.

Arrangements for Membership and Renewal

The primary system for membership will be the on-line Clubmate system where payments are made electronically directly to our bank account via Stripe. Cheques will no longer be accepted.

All existing HCAC and SAA members details will be collated on Clubmate. Anyone not previously registered on Clubmate will have to do so.

Assistance with initial on-line enrolment and payment will be available at Polegate Angling Centre. There is a Clubmate App that is easy to use.

Alternative arrangements will be put in place at Polegate Angling Centre and Anglers Den for those that can only pay cash. Cash will only be accepted from those that have already registered on Clubmate and have provided a digital photograph, valid e-mail address and contact telephone number.

We will no longer accept membership from people without providing the identification requirements.

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Merger Details Continued

Club Competitions

There will be a limited schedule of club competitions in 2023 running from April until December. For the first year at least, there will be no competitions at Marle Green.

Other

We will join/subscribe to the Angling Trust and Fish Legal.

We will participate in an Exchange Permit arrangement with selected clubs.

We will make Guest Permits available via Clubmate only.

No Day Tickets will be made available.

EGM2

The second EGM will be held on 31st January 2023, at the Fisherman's Club, Royal Parade, Eastbourne, BN22 7AA, commencing at 7pm. It will again be a joint EGM with members of both HCAC and SAA welcome to attend.

Separate votes will be held by HCAC and SAA on the proposition.

Summary and Recommendation

The proposed merger offers the opportunity to create a strong local fishing club, taking advantage of best practice from both legacy clubs.

Members from both legacy clubs will gain from having access to more waters.

Membership fees for the merged club will be no higher (in the first year) than had the legacy clubs continued.

The Merger Working Party strongly recommend that the merger be approved.