
The document is an electronic version of the Royal Charter of English Sports Council (Sport England)

This electronic version is consolidated to 15 October 2025
It incorporates the only amendments that have been made since it was first issued on 23 July 1996. Those amendments were:

17 May 2000 - Gave Sport England the power (on approval of SOS) power to form companies and act as director or member of companies

17 July 2003 – Reducing number of Vice Chairs on Council (i.e. the Board) from two to one

12 February 2008 – Giving Mayor of London power to appoint Chair of the London Regional Committee/Panel and three other members

15 October 2025 – Removing the requirement for the application of the English Sports Council's Common Seal when executing deeds

ELIZABETH THE SECOND By the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and of Our other Realms and Territories Queen, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith:

TO ALL TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME, GREETING!

WHEREAS We, by Royal Charter dated the fourth day of February in the twentieth year of Our Reign, constituted a Body Corporate by the name of "The Sports Council" with perpetual succession and with power to sue and be sued by the said name and the use of a Common Seal:

AND WHEREAS it has been represented to Us that it is expedient to distinguish more clearly between those activities undertaken by The Sports Council for the benefit of Our United Kingdom as a whole and those undertaken for the benefit of England, and to do this by the replacement of The Sports Council with two new bodies one of which should be an independent English Sports Council with the objects of fostering, supporting and encouraging the development of sport and physical recreation and the achievement of excellence therein among the public at large in England and the provision of facilities therefor:

AND WHEREAS it is intended that in the furtherance of its objects the said Council will take a lead in all aspects of sport and physical recreation which require administration, co-ordination or representation in England:

AND WHEREAS it has been represented to Us that for the purpose of carrying out the said objects and with a view to facilitating the holding of and dealing with property and the making of gifts and bequests in aid of the said objects it is expedient that the said Council should be incorporated:

AND WHEREAS We having taken the said representations into Our Royal Consideration are minded to grant a Charter containing such provisions as seem to Us right and suitable:

NOW THEREFORE KNOW YE that We by virtue of Our Prerogative Royal and of Our especial grace, certain knowledge and mere motion have willed and ordained and by these Presents do for Us, Our Heirs and Successors will and ordain as follows:-

1. (1) The persons who shall in accordance with the provisions of this Our Charter be the Chair and other members for the time being of the English Sports Council are hereby constituted and from henceforth for ever shall be one Body Corporate under the name of "The English Sports Council" (hereinafter referred to as "the Council").

(2) The Council shall have perpetual succession and a Common Seal, with power to break, alter and make anew the said Seal from time to time at its will and pleasure and by its name shall and may sue and be sued in all courts and in all manner of action and suits.

2. In furtherance of its objects the Council shall have the following powers:-
 - (a) to develop and improve the knowledge and practice of, and education and training in, sport and physical recreation in the interests of social welfare and the enjoyment of leisure among the public at large in England;
 - (b) to encourage and develop higher standards of performance and the achievement of excellence among persons or teams from England participating in sport and physical recreation;
 - (c) to foster, support and undertake provision of facilities for the benefit of sport and physical recreation in England;
 - (d) to advise, encourage and assist individuals or teams from England participating in events or seeking to gain relevant experience at home or abroad;
 - (e) to collaborate with the United Kingdom Sports Council in dealings with national, foreign or international bodies;
 - (f)
 - (i) to carry out itself, or to encourage and support other persons or bodies in carrying out, research or studies into matters concerning sport and physical recreation in England; and to disseminate knowledge and advice on these matters;
 - (ii) to encourage, facilitate or undertake the implementation of proposals or findings arising out of such research or studies;
 - (g) to encourage and support the adoption of the highest ethical standards among persons or teams from England participating in sport and physical recreation;
 - (h) to make grants or loans upon and subject to such conditions and otherwise as the Council shall deem fit provided always that the Council shall attach to any loan made by it such conditions as may be prescribed from time to time by Our Secretary of State;
 - (i) to advise and assist, and to co-operate with, Departments of Our Government, local authorities, the United Kingdom Sports Council, the other Home Country Sports Councils and other bodies, on any matters concerned whether directly or indirectly with its objects;
 - (j) subject to the prior approval of Our Secretary of State, to establish, or act as trustee or member of, any charity the objects of which include any of the objects of the Council;
 - (k) to enter into contracts, to acquire, hold and dispose of property of any kind and generally do all matters and things incidental or appertaining to a corporate body;
 - (l) subject to the prior approval of Our Secretary of State, to form or take part in the forming of or to establish, and act as director or member of any company (whether formed by the Council or not) the objects of which will include any of the objects of the Council;
 - (m) to carry on any other activity for the benefit of sport and physical recreation in England.
3. (1) The Council, in furthering its objects and exercising its powers, shall

(a) have regard to any general statements on the policy of Our Government that may from time to time be issued by Our Secretary of State;

(b) take into account the objects and powers of the United Kingdom Sports Council and the other Home Country Sports Councils and consult those bodies and act in accordance with any directions given to the Council by Our Secretary of State in relation to the division of responsibilities for matters relating to sport and physical recreation between the Council, the United Kingdom Sports Council and the other Home Country Sports Councils; and

(c) consult such of the governing or representative bodies of sport and physical recreation in England as appears to the Council to be appropriate.

(2) The Council shall accept responsibility for such property, rights, liabilities and obligations of The Sports Council as Our Secretary of State may direct.

(3) In the event of any dispute between the Council and the United Kingdom Sports Council or any of the other Home Country Sports Councils as to which of them shall deal with any matter in pursuance of powers and functions and duties conferred on each respectively by Our Charters (or in the case of the Sports Council for Northern Ireland by The Recreation and Youth Service (Northern Ireland) Order 1986) or any directions given thereunder, the question shall be determined by such of Our Secretaries of State as is appropriate, and the Council shall comply with such determination.

4. All moneys and property howsoever received by the Council including any moneys voted by Parliament shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the objects of the Council and no portion thereof shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly by way of dividend, bonus or otherwise howsoever by way of profit, to the members of the Council: provided that nothing herein shall prevent the reimbursement of expenses incurred by such members in the performance of their duties as provided in Article 6(2) of this Our Charter, or the payment of such remuneration in return for service rendered as may be approved under Article 6(3) hereof.
5.
 - (1) The Council shall consist of a Chair, a Vice Chair and not more than twelve other members or such other maximum number as Our Secretary of State shall determine.
 - (2) The Chair, Vice Chair and other members shall be appointed by Our Secretary of State, and the terms of their appointment shall be determined by Our Secretary of State.

6. (1) Every member of the Council shall hold and vacate office in accordance with the terms of their appointment, but
- a) the Chair shall be appointed for such term, not exceeding five years, as may be agreed by Our Secretary of State and shall be eligible for re-appointment thereafter and may at any time by notice in writing to Our Secretary of State resign from office;
 - b) Vice Chair shall be appointed for a term of not more than three years, and shall be eligible for re-appointment thereafter and may at any time by notice in writing to Our Secretary of State resign from office;
 - c) apart from the Chair no member shall be appointed for a term of more than three years but shall be eligible for re-appointment on ceasing to be a member;
 - d) a member may at any time by notice in writing to Our Secretary of State resign from office;
 - e) notwithstanding the provisions of sub-clauses (a) to (d) above inclusive and the terms of their appointment, any member may at any time by notice in writing given under the hand of Our Secretary of State be deprived of membership of the Council if he or she:
 - (i) has become bankrupt or made an arrangement with creditors;
 - (ii) has, without the permission of the Council, been absent from meetings of the Council for a period longer than three consecutive months or for more than half the Council's meetings in the twelve month period immediately preceding Our Secretary of State's notice;
 - (iii) is found guilty of a criminal offence involving dishonesty; or
 - (iv) in the opinion of Our Secretary of State is otherwise unable or unfit to discharge the functions of a member, or is unsuitable to continue as a member.
- (2) Save as is provided in Article 6(3) hereof, the Council shall not make to any of its members any payment by way of remuneration for their services as a member, but may reimburse to any such members expenses reasonably incurred by them in the performance of such services.
- (3) The Council shall, if Our Secretary of State so directs, make to its Chair, and Vice Chair and members such remuneration in return for service rendered to the Council as Our Secretary of State may determine.
7. (1) The Council may act notwithstanding a vacancy among its members and the validity of any proceedings of the Council shall not be affected by any defect in the appointment of a member.
- (2) The quorum of the Council shall be five members present or such greater number as the Council may from time to time determine.

8. Subject to the provisions of this Our Charter, the Council may regulate its own procedure.
9. (1) Subject to Article 9(3) the Council may appoint committees or panels to exercise, or advise it on the exercise of, any of its functions, and may
 - (a) appoint to any such committee or panel persons who are not members of the Council, and
 - (b) at any time revoke the appointment of any member of any such committee or panel.(2) Subject to Article 9(3) the Council may appoint as Chair of any such committee or panel a member of it who is a member of the Council.
(3) Where the Council have appointed a London regional committee or panel, the Mayor may appoint, as members of that committee or panel, up to four persons, and may
 - (a) appoint to any such committee or panel, persons who are not members of the Council, and;
 - (b) revoke, at any time, the appointment of any person made under this Article.(4) Where the Council have appointed a London regional committee or panel,
 - (a) the Mayor of London shall appoint a member of that committee or panel as its Chair, subject to the approval of Our Secretary of State;
 - (b) the person appointed as Chair of the London regional committee or panel by the Mayor and approved by Our Secretary of State, may also be appointed as a member of the Council by Our Secretary of State; and
 - (c) the Mayor of London may, subject to the approval of Our Secretary of State, revoke the appointment of a person as Chair of the London regional committee or panel.
10. (1) The Council may regulate the procedure of any committee or panel appointed by it in pursuance of Article 9 of this Our Charter.
(2) Article 6(2) and 6(3) of this Our Charter shall apply to members of such committees and panels as it applies to members of the Council.
11. Any officer of the Department of Our Secretary of State who may be appointed by Our Secretary of State to be an assessor to the Council, or to any committee or panel of it, shall be entitled to attend (but not vote at) any meeting of the Council, committee or panel to which he or she is so appointed.
12. (1) If Our Secretary of State appoints persons to promote the development and practice of sport in specified regions of England and designates any persons so appointed for the purposes of this Article, the Council shall consult those persons (hereinafter referred to as "Ministerial Nominees") on the exercise of any of its functions as they relate to the region of England for which they are appointed and exercise those functions with regard to any advice which Ministerial

Nominees may give.

(2) The Council shall, if Our Secretary of State so directs, reimburse to Ministerial Nominees expenses reasonably incurred by them in the performance of their duties.

(3) The designation of Ministerial Nominees for the purposes of this Article may be for such term, not exceeding five years, as may be prescribed by Our Secretary of State, but notwithstanding any such term their designation may at any time be revoked by Our Secretary of State.

13. (1) The Council shall, if Our Secretary of State so approves, appoint a Chief Executive Officer (or person with similar title) who shall be the principal administrative officer of the Council; and may appoint such other officers and take into its employment such other persons as the Council may determine.

(2) The Council may

(a) pay to its officers and other persons employed by it such remuneration as the Council may, with the approval of Our Secretary of State, from time to time determine; and

(b) with the approval of Our Secretary of State to any determination made hereunder, pay to any officers or other persons employed by it such pensions, allowances or gratuities as the Council may from time to time determine, making payments towards the provision of these matters, or provide or maintain such schemes (whether contributory or not) for the payment of the same as may be so determined.

(3) Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 4 of this Our Charter, but subject always to the provisions of Article 13(1) and 13(2) hereof, the Council may employ from time to time for the performance of any of its functions a person who is a member of the Council and, subject as aforesaid, may remunerate such persons for services rendered in pursuance of such employment.

14. The Council shall keep proper accounts and other records, and shall prepare for each financial year statements of account in such form as Our Secretary of State with the approval of the Lords Commissioners of Our Treasury may direct and submit these statements of account to Our Secretary of State at such time as he or she may direct.
15. The Council shall make to Our Secretary of State in such form and at such time as he or she may direct a report on the exercise and performance by the Council of its functions during that year and of plans for its future activities and performance.
16. Deeds shall be executed on behalf of the Council by the Chair or some other member of the Council authorised to act for that purpose, and one of such Officers of the Council as may be so authorised by the Council to Act.

17. The Council may by resolution in that behalf passed at a meeting of the Council by a majority of not less than three-quarters of the members present and voting (such majority of those members present and voting being an absolute majority of the whole number of the members of the Council), and confirmed at a further meeting of the Council held not less than one month nor more than four months afterwards by a like majority, add to, amend or revoke any of the provisions of this Our Charter, and such addition, amendment or revocation, when allowed by Us, Our Heirs or Successors in Council, shall become effectual, so that this Our Charter shall thenceforward continue and operate as though it had been originally granted and made accordingly. This provision shall apply to this Our Charter as added to or amended in the manner aforesaid.
18. In this Our Charter
- (a) references to Our Secretary of State are to Our Secretary of State for National Heritage;
 - (b) references to Our Secretaries of State are to Our Secretaries of State for National Heritage, for Scotland, for Wales and for Northern Ireland;
 - (c) the term "other Home Country Sports Councils" means The Scottish Sports Council, The Sports Council for Wales, or The Sports Council for Northern Ireland, or all of them as appropriate; and
 - (d) the word "person" includes bodies corporate and firms.

IN WITNESS whereof We have caused these Our Letters to be made Patent. WITNESS Ourselves at Westminster the 23 July in the forty-fifth year (i.e. 1996) of Our Reign.

BY WARRANT UNDER THE QUEEN'S SIGN MANUAL