

Tyneside 114 – Frequently Asked Questions



1. Who are we?

We are a dive club which is part of the British Sub-Aqua Club (BSAC), and we have been in existence for over 50 years. We currently have around 60 members, and train people to dive and organise diving trips in UK and abroad. We welcome divers who have trained/qualified with other clubs and training organisations, and want to join a BSAC club. We have an excellent safety record.

2. Where and when do we meet?

Every Monday evening (not bank holidays) at Dunston Leisure Centre (NE11 9PY) from 6.45 pm onwards. We have exclusive use of the swimming pool (3.8m deep) from 7.00-8.00pm for diver training. We then gather at the Ravensworth Arms (NE11 0ER) from 8.30-10.00pm for dive theory lessons, dive planning and socialising. Diving is usually at weekends, but some midweek dives take place, as well as longer trips.

3. Where do we dive?

Day dives are organised throughout the year at various sites along the North East coast from River Tyne up to Scotland (including the Farne Islands). In the winter months, we dive inland sites such as lakes and quarries. Weekend trips include the West Coast of Scotland and other locations around the UK. Longer expeditions (7-10 days) have taken us to the Outer Hebrides, Malta and the Red Sea.

4. How do I Start?

We offer a "Try Dive" experience (£15 per person) at Dunston Leisure Centre on a Monday evening. We will explain what is involved in our sport and take you in the pool to experience scuba diving. If you enjoy this and want to continue, you will need to become a member and start training. You also need to complete a medical self-declaration. Some medical conditions may prevent you from diving underwater. We can advise you on this, and you may need a doctor's opinion.

5. How much is it to join?

Annual membership of Tyneside Sub-Aqua Club is £72. As a member you will receive your training free of charge (including use of scuba sets), although there is a weekly charge of £4 for using the pool. You will also need to join BSAC which will cost £47.50 in the first year (if you pay by direct debit). BSAC membership brings many benefits, including 3rd party insurance and a monthly magazine. Your initial qualification will be Ocean Diver, for which the BSAC training/qualification pack costs £40 plus a contribution to the training costs.

6. How long does it take to learn?

Initial training is a weekly pool session at Dunston Pool (Monday evenings). Typically, 12 weeks is needed (but can be more or less depending on your ability and enthusiasm!). Theory lessons are often completed as a day course (on a weekend) rather than weekly sessions. At the end of the pool training

you are ready to go into “open water” and complete 5 qualifying dives; at that stage you will need to invest in your own dry/wet suit, as the Club cannot provide one. After that, just go diving!

7. How old do I need to be?

The minimum age is 12. Our members are mainly adults but we welcome family groups where one or more parents joins and trains alongside their child/children. Membership costs are lower for young people in education/training and for those living at the same address as another member. We have a Safeguarding Policy and our instructors are DBS checked. There is no upper age limit.

8. How much is it to dive?

Not as much as you might think. Our members buy their own equipment as they progress through the training. You will need a dry suit (or a thick wetsuit), mask, fins, weight belt, scuba set (air cylinder, demand valve and buoyancy jacket). This equipment will cost well over £1,000 new, but second-hand equipment can be obtained more cheaply. It is also possible to hire from local dive shops.

Once you have your own equipment, diving trips are relatively cheap. We share cars to travel to dive sites. We have our own fast inflatable boat and all divers on the trip share the boats costs (c£20-25 per person per day). Air fills are usually c£4 per cylinder. We also charter large boats for some trips, costing around £40 per day per person.

9. Who runs the Club?

An elected Committee runs the Club. People you may need to contact include:

Mike – Chairman

Nicola – Diving Officer

Richard – Membership Secretary

Simon – Training Officer

All training is carried out by our own members who are qualified instructors. Diving is organised by members who are trained as Dive Managers, and qualified in relevant safety and rescue management.

10. When can I start?

We can offer a “Try Dive” most Monday evenings, but contact us in advance so we can confirm your booking.

Starting training will depend on our current commitments. You may need to wait a few weeks for a new Ocean Diver course to start. Once you start, you will need to attend every Monday evening if possible, to ensure you make good progress and complete your initial qualification.

11. How can I find out more?

Visit our website: www.tynesidebsac.co.uk

Contact us at: contact@tynesidebsac.co.uk

Find us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/tyneside114

You can also contact Simon on 07811 299698 if you want a chat.