

The Taunton Garrison - Objectives, Rules and Regulations

Very important please read

OUR OBJECTIVES

The Taunton Garrison brings history to life with music, drama and re-enactments.

What we do:

- We provide a wide range of entertainment both military and civilian from the late sixteenth to late seventeenth century.
- We perform various Living History skills, also small skirmishes and weapons demonstrations.

We cover three main historical periods

1. The Elizabethan period during the Spanish Armada of 1588
2. The English Civil War of the 1640s
3. The Monmouth Rebellion of 1685

Our objectives are to entertain and inform the general public about these three periods in history. Our group is a small, friendly society, and everyone is encouraged to take part to their full capacity. We have limited membership under our Public Liability Insurance which means we can build a close working group with like-minded interests. Should we have a full membership list we can add your name to a waiting list should a vacancy occur.

We run the group with a small Committee. An Annual General Meeting takes place usually at the beginning of each season in around March/April. Anyone wishing to be considered for a role in the Committee may put themselves forward at that time. A Committee member may leave the committee at any time.

RULES OF MEMBERSHIP

It is important that each member or prospective member is aware of the Taunton Garrison rules and regulations, as they are the basis for agreement to become or remain a member of the group.

1. Membership is open to adults over the age of 18, children aged 12 –16 (if accompanied by a parent or guardian who is also a member) and 16+ unaccompanied. All children wishing to take part must be prepared to be involved in scripts and cameos as required at specific events. They also need to be kept occupied at all times throughout an event. This responsibility will lie entirely with the parent or designated event guardian. Membership may be open to children under the age of 12, providing that the parents are joining at the same time and are already

experienced re-enactors who understands the implications of bringing a young child onto a living history campsite. All children must be supervised at all times.

Membership is provisional for one season or at the discretion of the Taunton Garrison Manager. During a season, new inexperienced members may be allocated an experienced member of the Garrison (a mentor) at events, to guide and advise throughout the day. At the end of a season the Committee will review a potential new member's application and will consult with the appropriate mentor (if applicable) as to suitability.

Provisional/Guest Members will not be eligible to vote on Taunton Garrison policies until completion of their first year and they become fully paid up members of Taunton Garrison.

Membership will be renewed on an annual basis.

The Taunton Garrison will try to accommodate any particular interest a member has with respect to Garrison life. Guidance will be offered as necessary. The Taunton Garrison Manager/Events Officer may request that a specific role is adopted at an event.

Prospective members may attend as many Taunton Garrison events, as members of the public, and talk to the other Taunton Garrison members until they feel ready to commit to joining as a provisional member.

Training days are open to prospective members without the need for authenticity or commitment. Anyone wishing to take part in the military aspect of the Garrison will be required to attend training days, when annual musket testing takes place. No untrained/untested member will be allowed to take part in any display.

2. Each member agrees that they will undertake to treat other group members, venue employees or volunteers and members of the public with courtesy and respect, and will place safety first in every situation. The committee reserves the right, that - in the event of a group member not adhering to this, or of any concerns in this regard being raised to a Committee member – to investigate and take any necessary measures, including but not limited to additional training, suspension or expulsion from the group, and possibly a report to any relevant authorities.

3. All members should undertake to take care to protect the safety of others.

4. As situations allow, everyone will have the opportunity to portray a specific military/civilian role if wished with relevant training. However, it will be down to the discretion of the Manager in filling available positions when necessary.

5. A common criticism of re-enactment groups concerns historical accuracy. As a small group, one way Taunton Garrison can make its mark is by being as historically accurate in our drill and equipment as possible. Experienced members should be approached before making or buying any kit. See also the table listing kit

parameters. Full members are expected to either purchase or make their own kit. Initially items can be borrowed from the Garrison for a small fee.

In order of importance, it is considered that a pair of shoes and a pair of spectacles (if required) are given priority.

6. Modern/period kit mix: One of the worst sins for a re-enactment group is to mix modern items with period. Certain deviations are accepted e.g. women dressed as men.

Glasses: No modern glasses. Period or period style frames are preferred. (Small round lenses, dark metal or dull copper coloured wire frames, not plastic coated – BEFORE buying ask advice). Contact lenses are acceptable.

For new members without suitable glasses, initially safe roles will be given so that they can experience the TG before committing to membership and financial outlay. There are also “behind the scenes” roles should anyone wish to be involved with TG without dressing in period costume.

7. Jewellery: No jewellery of any sort to be worn unless cleared by the Manager.

This includes earrings and hand rings. If a ring (other than a wedding ring) cannot be removed gloves must be worn at all times. There could be health and safety liabilities if rings are worn during combat. However – wear gloves if possible.

8. Watches: None to be worn, even under a cuff, unless you are the Official Timekeeper.

9. Make-up: No make-up to be worn (by women or men!).

10. Beards: The fashion of the 1680s (only) was for no facial hair. If anyone can temporarily part with any beards when doing 1680s it would be appreciated. Anyone wishing to play an officer/gentleman role must shave.

11. Non participants: No public or garrison members in modern dress are allowed access to cameo areas during public performances. This is for safety reasons as well as visual impact.

12. Temptations: Tea, coffee, sandwiches, crisps, ice creams etc are not to be consumed during any official duties within or without of the camp. The Manager will advise at stand-down.

13 Alcohol: No alcohol or other drug related substance is to be consumed immediately prior to or during official working times by any person who handles a weapon during working times. Anyone who does so will not be allowed to handle a weapon for the rest of the day and their membership will be instantly reviewed and may be terminated.

No person will be allowed to take part whilst still under the influence of alcohol or drug related substance from the previous night.

Safety is our primary concern at all times.

14. Firearms: Acquisition of the appropriate shotgun and blackpowder licenses is encouraged. Training in musketry will be given together with annual testing by our Musket Officer. Seek advice from experienced members before purchasing a musket.

15. Other weapons: Training will be given in the use of all weapons to new members coupled with continued training and annual testing for the more experienced members.

HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIRES TRAINING RECORDS TO BE KEPT FOR ALL WEAPONS.

No person will be allowed to use any weapon without prior training and testing or proof of testing. This must include any guests from other bonefide re-enactment groups.

Very important – under no circumstances are any members of the public to handle loaded weapons of any type (including bows). Swords and empty muskets may be held with care!

Please note: These regulations should be read in conjunction with Taunton Garrison's Health & Safety policy. Any regulations may also change at short notice in line with any Government Covid-19 advice given.

July 2026