

HODGEMOOR RIDING ASSOCIATION MINUTES

Annual General Meeting
8 p.m. Monday 17th October 2005
Reading Room, Chalfont St Giles

Before the meeting officially opening, Danielle Lanstone from Allen and Page gave a good, short talk on nutrition accompanied by slides. She no doubt helped members sort out in their minds the huge choice of feeds, supplements and balancers now on the market. Allen and Page use no animal-based additives, and their feeds are milled on their property.

Apologies for Absence had been received from: Tim Fountain, Sue Aston, Tessa Bayliss, Amanda Tasker, Ellie Beatty, Georgina Wright and Sally Reynders Messenger.

1. Last year's AGM minutes were approved
2. Approval of Accounts. Tim Taylor, Treasurer, presented the accounts. The Association had @ £3000 in its accounts to date
3. **Fund-Raising Activities:** Marcus Bicknell, Chairman, reported on this year's so far, and others planned.

The **2 TREC days** seemed popular. Having max of about 20 people is about right as would need lots more helpers with more. Can scrape by with 4 or 5 helpers with under 20. A 3rd one is taking place on Nov 12th and we will try an orienteering section in Hodgemoor this time as well as the PTV obstacles.

We have held **3 XC Fun Jumps**. It was difficult to know what dates and times to choose to attract more riders. Very few came this Easter Sat and on 1st Oct. Introducing low parallel course seems very popular and course rental to individuals and small groups has increased a bit since it appeared. Susie Bicknell was still planning to organise **XC clinics** taught either by Jonathan Chapman or Sacha Hamilton both for kids and adults. Val Janes and Simon Thornton were keen. MB asked floor if they knew somebody suitable for kids. Georgina Blair thought Sacha would be good with kids but she has stopped doing XC work because of going. A **dressage clinic** was held at the end of August at Austens Farm, thanks to Sacha Hamilton. It was much enjoyed by the 3 people who finally made it (3 others had to drop out at last minute).

Future Plans. An **Xmas ride / drive** with the Black Park Harness Club was planned for Sunday Dec 18th to the Red Lion in Coleshill. Details to be fixed.

There were also plans for a **Treasure Hunt**, probably in early January.

Georgina Blair was going to organise a **Native pony Dressage Day** at Windmill Farm in May 2006.

Sponsored Rides. SB had not organised any recently. Val Janes said she would really like to learn the way to Penn. She said the map that association had sent out was very difficult to understand particularly as the route in situ was not well-indicated. Various members said the Chiltern Society maps were easy follow. MB suggested Association could buy some in bulk to sell onto members. **He also suggested redoing the Association map, with written instructions as well to make it clearer.** SB said she would try to repaint and add markers to the route. A provisional date of 12 Dec was set to ride to Penn where Miranda Souter would again very kindly offer refreshment at her home.

It was pointed out that these events don't make that much money. Well-attended events make £150 to £200. But they keep the profile of the association up and if we keep on doing 6 or so events a year, it all helps.

The XC course was available for rental at any time: just over £50 had been raised on rental. Again having a lower course may make rental more popular.

Miranda Souter from the Penn Area Bridleways Association, suggested that local riding associations should co-operate more by, for example, organising joint events such as sponsored rides. MB said he had talked just the day before to Beryl Jarvis at Grove Farm (South Bucks Riding Club) about co-operating with them. Miranda said another possibility were the Chiltern Endurance Riders.

4. **Use of Hoggin:** "Patch Up and Save Up". MB explained that there were now 300 tons of hoggin in Hodgemoor waiting to be used. He related how the Chalfont St Giles Bowling Club had need to get rid of this hoggin, they had paid £2500 to transport to just near the new MBX track in Hodgemoor. The Association had contributed £200 but now had hoggin worth at its lowest £3000. MB said 300 tons was approx enough to surface 1200 me of 2 m wide trail, about what we've already done in woods. Either we should save up to do another 200 metre trail properly (which would cost @£6000, and we currently have @ £3000). Or we use some of our funds and some of the hoggin to patch up certain small sections not only in Hodgemoor but also in the Wickham Way bridleway. MB showed on a map the bad patches that could be repaired. No geotex layer or rubble layer would be used, just a thick and well-damped layer of hoggin. Rough estimate: £1000 to £1500. Presuming English Nature and Forest Enterprise agreed, these repairs would take place when the woods dry out in the spring. Terry Holbrook and Jo Read said that Bucks CC was responsible for repairing the bridleway bad patches. SB would contact John Clark, Rights of Way Officer, about this. The meeting voted to carry out these repairs rather than wait and do a significant length later.
5. **Maintaining Membership levels and Communication with Liveries.** MB pointed out that a mandate from the last AGM was to do a brochure, which gave an indication of what the wood was like before and what it was like now, to give newcomers to area a feel of what the Association had achieved. This had been done. Several copies had been given to each livery yard, and managers had been encouraged to enclose a brochure with livery invoices to all new liveries and also to liveries who weren't members. Perhaps this was done in early enthusiasm but SB suspected it wasn't done consistently. Current membership was down about 30 overall and figures were as follows:

	2005	2004	2003
adults	52	85	77
Juniors 9	6	16	
Family	11	5	9
Walkers	2	5	1

SB had sent personalised chase up emails which from the responses did at least clarify that some people had moved, horse out of action, given up, etc but still a lot who hadn't renewed. **Val Janes** said it was just so easy to forget even with reminders. **Charlotte Lucas** said direct debit was best solution. The meeting agreed, and Tim Taylor would set this up in time for renewals in April 2006. **Simon Thornton** said he thought prospective members would wonder what the perceived benefit to themselves was. It was difficult to get across image of association as basically a fund-raising organisation rather than a riding club. **Mike Pearsall** said association should appeal to the moral calibre of local riders. **Terry Holbrook** said he was perfectly willing to put up signs on his gate and elsewhere giving the message "**Hodgemoor Needs You!**" It was also suggested that a large poster should be put up in each livery yard to remind everyone of the Association's existence. SB said she was willing to do this, but doubted if it was worth it: having seen the state of most livery yards' notice boards, with masses of old, curling faded bits of paper everywhere all pinned on top of each other, she felt the poster would soon lose its impact. SB felt the best way was to motivate yard owners/managers to be more active on the Association's behalf. But this was something the Association had failed to do, as evidenced by the fact that only Vicky Gregory and Gina Peters had made the effort to come to the AGM, despite a personal letter sent out to most yard owner/managers. **Georgina Blair** said that the ideal was to have permit access only to the Wood. But this solution always came back to the basic problem of how to police this. **Val Janes** suggested using the argument that riding in the great facilities of Hodgemoor for £10 was a bargain in comparison to other areas where permits were needed (£165 Windsor Great Park, £85 Farm near High Wycombe, £35 Common Wood, Penn). **Miranda Souter** said the Penn Area Bridleways Association could not police Common Wood either, but they tended to accept the fact that some

riders were not ever going to pay, unjust as this was. **Donna Taylor** said the Association should encourage more walkers to join. **Tim Taylor** proposed that the association take up the idea suggested at the last AGM of having a Sunday morning, for example, in the wood where several members would place themselves at key points and ask all riders if they were members and if not, why not. The meeting agreed.

6. **Clearing.** Several members had noted a fallen tree in the Rawlings Lane to A355 bridleway. SB urged members to put the number to call on their mobiles and if convenient to call right away. **Jane Braithwaite** luckily had Bucks CC number she had called for a fallen tree 01296 486630 which she gave the meeting. (The other number to call is 0845 230 2882). **Tim Taylor** noted one particularly low growing holly at the end of Bracken Ride. SB said she had ridden round the wood with Jo Mason from Forest Enterprise and they had noted various spots to cut back. Forest Enterprise would do the cutting back and Hodgemoor would provide volunteers to do the clearing.
7. **Saving costs by using email.** SB said the last newsletter had been sent by email, saving @£200. She had estimated that only 20 of 130 mailing list were not on email, and therefore had only sent 20 hardcopies. SB, and MB agreed, was not convinced that the newsletter had so much impact by email: some people might have an email but not use it much, others might not bother to read it as an attachment. However, the meeting agreed to continue sending the newsletter by email to save money.
8. **Rogue Car.** **Janet Blair** warned the meeting of a white van that was terrorising horseriders by swerving past and then stopping sharply just in front. It's number was V251 PUC. The police had been told and the van was untaxed and uninsured. Therefore, if members could in any way help find the culprit, it would be great.
9. **Seer Green Verges.** A message was given from Rachel Lulham that she had received a letter from Bucks CC that horseriders could use the verges but not go on the footpath leading from Rawlings Lane into Seer Green.
10. **Election of Officers and Committee.** The current committee were proposed and re-elected as follows:

Chairman:	Marcus Bicknell
Treasurer:	Tim Taylor
Secretary	Susie Bicknell
Members:	Heather Black, Georgina Blair, Judith Broadley, Audrey Holbrook, Terry Holbrook

RAFFLE

After the meeting concluded a very successful raffle was held. The Committee would like to thank the attending members for their generosity not only in donating prizes and in buying so many tickets! Over £80 were raised. The top prize of 25 bales of hay kindly donated by the Swerlings was won by Janet and Georgina Blair.

ACTION POINTS FROM AGM:

1. **Introduce Direct Debit for renewals and new members in April 2006**
2. **Use some of funds to patch up small sections of wood trails in spring 2006, Forest Enterprise and English Nature permitting.**
3. **Ask Bucks CC for financial help on patching up official bridleways.**
4. **Organise Membership push one Sunday morning and/or afternoon next Spring with volunteers placed at certain points in wood to intercept all riders**
5. **To help Forest Enterprise clear when they undertake to cutback trees and undergrowth as soon as their timetable allows this.**
6. **Make new map + notes for Route to Penn**