

HODGEMOOR RIDING ASSOCIATION

Annual General Meeting
8 p.m. Monday 22th October 2007
Reading Room, Chalfont St Giles

Minutes

- Welcome by Chairman:** Marcus introduced Ben Mullen who was the recently appointed Forestry Commission ranger now responsible for Hodgemoor.
- Approval of Accounts.** The Treasurer Richard Hill presented the accounts to April 2007 (attached). Funds currently stood at £4950.
- Maintaining Membership levels and Communication with Liveries.** Susie Bicknell, the Secretary, outlined the current membership status as shown below. Having 39 standing orders was very encouraging. John Clark and Angela Stallard said having a £5 difference between the standing order and cash/cheque payment was just too much. The meeting agreed the following recommendations re subscription payment:
 - less difference between standing order and cash/cheque payment, eg, £10 and £12
 - make payment date 1 Jan
 - half payment if joined after July.

39 standing orders out of total of 98 memberships - @43 have not renewed (going back to 2004) 25 new members

	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003
Adults	71	70	52	85	77
Juniors	12	6	9	6	16
Family	13	11	11	5	9
Walkers	2	2	2	5	1

- Report on Events and funds raised:** Georgina Blair reported on the very successful Dressage events she had organised. The dressage events were certainly popular and raised a lot of funds. Lana Craker had volunteered to hold a dressage event on December 9th and the new owners of Oldefields had said they would be happy to host another which was good news. Total raised so far from events this year was £1362.
 - New Years Day Ride £40 Susie
 - XC clinic £20 Susie
 - Easter Treasure Hunt £105 Georgina
 - TREC/XC £102.50 Susie
 - Aescwood Treasure Hunt £95 Georgina and Audrey
 - BBQ £78 Susie
 - Dressage Challenge £519.45 Georgina
 - Dressage to Music £120 plus DVDs @ £45

5. Introduction of Permit System for Hodgemoor Wood Permissive Riding Trails. Marcus outlined the proposals as per the consultation paper attached.

Terry Holbrook proposed that livery stables should pay the Association a lump sum, for example, £500, and then recoup the money from their liveryies. He personally would be happy to do that, and he felt that it was about time the yards took on the responsibility for making their clients members: after all, having the hacking facility that Hodgemoor offered was a selling point for the yards. He said it was regrettable that not more yard owner/managers were at the meeting. (For the record, yards represented at the meeting were Oldefields (Charlotte Perry), Highclere (Kevin Malyon), Hillview (Gina Peters) and Oak Tree (Vicky Gregory); that is to say 4 out of 11). Angela Stallard, Judith Broadley, Deborah Davies and Jane Braithwaite supported Terry's proposal.

Kevin Malyon said one uniform lump sum could be tricky: why should small yards pay the same as large yards, and why should yards further away from Hodgemoor pay the same as ones right on the door step. And what about the several fairly large private yards in the area? What would they pay?

Lesley Cornthwaite suggested that one solution could be that the yards pay pro rata depending on the number of liveryies they had using the wood. Others felt it would be difficult to persuade yards to do this. They would say that they didn't know who used the wood or not, etc. Charlotte Perry (Oldefields) said yards might be favourable as long as it was clear that it was in their interest to do so, ie, that the Association was really making improvements. Zoe Garner Glowski said private yards would probably cooperate in a permit scheme.

Richard Hill said it should really be seen in perspective: asking the yards to add what would amount to less than £1 a month to the livery bill did not seem excessive! Jane Braithwaite agreed: it should just be added to the bill.

John Clark felt that whatever the decision, the difference between a standing order at £10 and a cash/cheque sub payment was excessive. He also felt cyclists should have permits too.

Angela Stallard and Carol Fletcher and others at the meeting didn't like the idea of permits and having to wear ID tags. Angela remembered the era when the Forestry Commission had tried out permits and she had been stopped by hostile walkers and asked for her permit. The meeting agreed to change the emphasis from "permit" only to "membership" only. Regular checks could be carried out in the wood with a current membership list. ID could be voluntary rather than obligatory for members.

Ben Mullen said the permit for Wendover Woods cost £55 a year with a £10 deposit being paid on an ID headband. Susie Bicknell said Penn permit was £35. Hodgemoor was really reasonable in comparison.

The Meeting voted:

- . that the Association would formulate approach to yards whereby they pay the Association directly and recoup subs from their liveries.
 - . that the Association would work out a formula for private yards
 - . that emphasis would not be "Permit only", but "Members Only"
 - . ID head bands or bridle tags would be worn on voluntary basis rather than obligatory.
 - . that the year would run January to January rather than April to April
6. **Use of current @ £5000 balance . Susie Bicknell said that by the middle of next year, the association would probably have @ £6000, so enough to do @ 200 metres of repair work. The Yellow Brick road would need work soon, and old bridleway too. Charlotte Perry said it was better to spend it rather than save up because then incoming riders to the area would see work being done and feel membership was worth while.**
7. **Signs for Events: it was decided to invest in road signs to warn drivers of Hodgemoor events, but not to use AA or RAC signs as too expensive.**
8. **Speed calming measures. Diana Bunyan said the Hodgemoor locality came within Area 8 whose consideration for speed reduction would not come up till 2009, at which point the Association should submit a consultation paper with desired measures.**
9. **Motorcycle Riders in Wood. Susie Bicknell reminded members of what to do if confronted with motorcyclists: call Police No 0845 8 505 505, press option 1 and then quote URN 495 of 19 September 2007. Jane Braithwaite urged members to ring because the police were beginning to take more notice. Sharon Brown had been visited by the police after reporting seeing motorcyclists. Ben Mullen said Hodgemoor came within the Seer Green police area and there was now more presence. One motorbike had been seized.**
10. **Election of Officers and Committee: the following were re-elected:
Marcus Bicknell (Chairman), Susie Bicknell (Secretary), Georgina Blair, Jane Braithwaite, Judith Broadley, Diana Bunyan, Deborah Davies, Richard Hill (Treasurer), Audrey Holbrook, Terry Holbrook**

Any Other Business. **Jill Brown asked if the scouts and guides could be more useful to the Association. Maybe they could do clearing twice a year, as the previous two annual clearing expeditions had been such a success. The meeting thought this was a great idea.**

NOTES FOR COMMITTEE ONLY

CONSEQUENCE OF INCREASING MEMBERSHIP.

Currently have around 100 members pa. i.e giving income of @ £1000 a year, events for 2007 have so far made £1362 so total income pa @ £2300.

Main costs are printed newsletter twice a year @ £400 so can assume profit pa at around just under £2000.

This covers cost of maintaining @ 66 metres of trail at a 2 m width at current cost of £30 a metre. If we could increase membership to 200, then projected increased income pa of £3000 would give us 100 rather than 66 metres a year. (We have so far created and repaired 2010 metres of trail since 2001).

COST OF HAVING BRIDLE TAGS

Cost to association of bridle tags with annual update sticker: if we ordered 250 (to cover, say, 5 years), it would cost £225 (90p per tag) plus £39 for set up plus 100 year stickers @ 18 p £18 , ie a total of £282. Would this investment get in the extra 30 members that this cost represents ?! Could argue that not bother with identifications tags which quite a lot of people regard as a bore, and just rely on policing at regular intervals? (100 tags would cost £110 NB). Also there would be extra cost of mailing out tags (@ £23) and year stickers annually. SB was planning just to acknowledge renewals with email to save postage.