

HODGEMOOR RIDING ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 8 December 2014

Reading Room Chalfont St Giles

Susie Bicknell gave a presentation on the Brooke Hospital for Animals which helps working equines in 11 countries worldwide. £240 was raised that evening which would fund 2 mobile veterinary teams for a week.

1. **Welcome by Chairman.** The Chairman welcomed the good turn of 35 on a miserable cold evening. The 2013 AGM minutes were approved

2. **Election of Officers and Committee**

Diana Bunyan and Anne Pearson had resigned. Shona Fraser and Miranda Thomas had been co-opted by the committee in the last months. The entire committee was re-elected unanimously:

Marcus Bicknell (Chairman)	James Burfitt	Kevin Malyon
Susie Bicknell (Secretary)	Francesca Burfitt	Angela Stallard
Richard Hill (Treasurer)	Shona Fraser	Mandy Thomas
Jane Braithwaite	Geoff Gudgion	

3. **Approval of Accounts.** Richard Hill presented the accounts (report attached). Funds currently stood at about £11,500. Richard said that although it was a pity that the trail works had not been carried out this summer as planned, it would mean there would be more to spend at a cheaper cost early in 2015.

4. **Membership subscription.** Susie said the response to the call for sub increases (£5 for adults, families and yards, £2.50 for juniors) had been better than expected. About 180 had upgraded or joined at the new rates. 10 or so had stayed at £10 or £15, simply to continuing supporting which was very generous of them. There were about 25 members to chase up who still hadn't upgraded.

5. **Report on Events and funds raised.**

	2013		2014
Grove Dressage	£460	Eventers Challenge	£100
TREC	£360	TREC 7 Sept	£735
Curry Night	£1193	Rob Waine Dressage	£150
Widmer Dressage	£50		
Waylands Dressage	£200		
TOTAL	£2263	TOTAL	£985

Susie said this year the Association had done as agreed at the last AGM: to hold less events. Members agreed to hold 2 TREC events in 2015 as this year's had raised so much. Susie said she hoped to be able to count on a lot of help in the running of these!

Quiz/auction/pub event at the Three Horse Shoes in Seer Green. Francesca Burfitt was very kindly sorting this out for a weekday date in February.

Shona Fraser suggested a car boot sale. Susie said this had been suggested a few times over the years but it had never happened. Jane Braithwaite pointed out that the charity MARES ones and another that a member had organised this year had not been a great success.

Geoff Gudgion suggested having a stall during the TREC events: even quite big items like rugs could be displayed. **It was decided to try this.**

Pip Edmunds said the Thames Valley Riding Club always had a second hand stall at their AGM: why doesn't Hodgemoor? **It was decided to try this next year.**

6. Increasing Membership: New livery yard client package.

Susie showed the meeting the package to be distributed to all yards for managers/owners to give to new clients which would include:

- Introduction page (same as poster)
- membership form and standing order form
- map of wood

A **Poster** would also be distributed for each yard to display. It was agreed that a rep for each yard – as well as the manager/owner – would be responsible for getting these packages to new liveries.

Reps agreed so far:

Shona Fraser	Oldfields	Angela Stallard	Waylands
Jane Braithwaite)		The Burfitts	Widmer
Mandy Thomas)	Highclere		

Jane Braithwaite said could it be made clear that for **a horse share, both riders must pay a sub.**

7. Work in woods: proposed work delayed.

Marcus showed slides with where proposed work would take place.

The financial breakdown of proposed work was :

80m x150 mm culverts in The Glade, Susie's Loop and Spring Link: Cost: £1,040

169m new surface in The Glade, Susie's Loop and Spring Link: Cost: £6074

TOTAL £7124

But works were delayed till next year, we should, in addition, be able to resurface around 130 m of the Old Bridleway, with current funds of £11,500.

Shona Fraser asked if, as there would be additional funds, the short stretch leading to Bottrells Lane from the west end of Ambers Trail could be surfaced.

8. Access Plan to upgrade footpaths to bridleways south of Hodgemoor.

Marcus used slides to outline the proposed upgrades. The most likely was the one that would link the existing Wilton Lane bridlepath running along north edge of Jordans Village up to Seer Green past the entrance to Manor Farm. Lucinda Young said avoiding Twitchells Lane was crucial. Marcus said the new route would be a long way round for those coming to Hodgemoor from the south, but it would avoid the worst part of Twitchells Lane. **Members agreed that if rapid progress was made on this route and expenditure was needed (on fencing for example), some funds could be diverted from the woods to this new route.**

Lucinda asked if more calming measures could be taken for Twitchells Lane. Susie felt this would be unlikely as it was only 2 or 3 years ago that a lower speed limit had been made through Jordans after great difficulty.

Jill Brown thought more progress could be made on upgrading footpaths if the Association worked with cyclist organisations. Susie and Marcus said they had tried with Sustrans in the past but without much success. They would try again and other cycling bodies too. Jordans Village were now keen on the proposed upgrade because they wanted a safer route from Jordans to Seer Green for cyclists.

Diana Bunyan wondered if there was anyway of influencing GPS routing which brought much heavier traffic onto our local roads. Marcus said this would be very unlikely.

Lucinda warned that the new housing development on Wilton Park was likely to increase local traffic.

9. **Website & Facebook page.**

Marcus had made changes to the Facebook page and would gradually wean followers of the private page that had been made by mistake. He thanked Jenien Cunningham who had set it all up in the first place.

10. **Narcot Lane Cycle Path**

Jill Brown said two riders were very indignant when she had asked them what they were doing on the cycle path. It didn't help the reputation of local horseriders if people persisted in riding on it. Marcus said it had been mentioned several times in emails newsletters and he was still waiting for signs from Bucks CC saying "No horse riding". The verge beside much of the length of this cycle path was wide enough to use by horseriders. Susie said that Bucks CC had to be encouraged to cut it as it was too overgrown to ride by mid summer.

11. **Dealing with aggressive behaviour from anti-horse walkers**

Marcus reported what the police had advised should be done if horseriders come across hostile walkers or cyclists: retain when and where incident took place and description of offenders, take photo if possible, call the police if behaviour is at all threatening.

12. **Improving PR image of horse riders**

Linked to point 11, there was discussion of how to improve the PR image of horseriders. Mandy Thomas said they were perceived as elitist, and that maybe the Association should organize events involving other users of the woods. Susie suggested holding a **dog agility contest** in the XC field. Jane Braithwaite suggested using the **Chalfont St Giles email newsletter**, especially if such events took place. Geoff Gudgion said the Association should get **local press coverage**. Susie pointed out there had been more in the past: we had to find the reasons to get them along. Diana Bunyan said Moorlands Centre got a lot of coverage, but they did a lot of therapy work which was newsworthy.

Jill Brown said obvious things like thanking and being aware of drivers on the roads always helped: no wearing headphones or using phones would be a plus too.

Francesca Burfitt asked if info signs could be put in the woods. Marcus said the Forestry Commission were not very keen on that as we'd tried in the past.

13 Any Other Business.

Shona Fraser suggested selling Hi Viz vests. Marcus said we had had them in the past: he would research prices. Sue Brown said these vests could be offered more cheaply to new members joining as an incentive.

Lucinda Young said the Barn Dances had been such fun, couldn't another be done? Marcus said they had been such hard work. Francesca said she would research doing one with the school this year.

Team Quest. Susie forgot to mention this at the AGM. The few who had taken part in this dressage event as a Hodgemoor team had really enjoyed it. British Dressage had said that this new event had really taken off. Susie hoped there would be more volunteers so Hodgemoor could have more than one team next year.

Susie Bicknell, Secretary

info@hodgemoor.org.uk

www.hodgemoor.org.uk