

HODGEMOOR RIDING ASSOCIATION

**Annual General Meeting
8 p.m. Monday 20th October 2008
Reading Room, Chalfont St Giles**

MINUTES

**Apologies received from Sue and Sid Ballaam, Mr and Mrs Sutton, Deborah Davies,
Angela Stallard and Tim Taylor**

1. Welcome by Chairman.

Marcus said how good the woods were looking with the recent trail repairs and pointed out how valuable the contribution from volunteers and members has been over the 8 to 10 years of the present development of the woods. We have a tremendous amenity here and can be proud of it. 280 metres in total had been re-done in September 2008 for which the Association had paid £7500 and Bucks CC £2350. The Forestry Commission had spent £4000 on drainage near the charcoal burner. He pointed out that the first 6 months of obligatory membership had had a positive effect: there were now 143 memberships as against 90 in 2007, and 90 Standing Orders as against 36 in 2007. He described the Agreement that had been concluded with Forestry Commission to safeguard the use of the woods by horseriders. An important condition was that "those who are not members of the HRA do not have the right to use the permissive trails". Marcus also welcomed the enthusiasm of livery yards in offering to raise funds. The Association hadn't been able to accept all offers this year because the weather had been so unpredictable and so many events had been organised locally. He said this livery yard cooperation had been perhaps inspired by the success of party in March to which most local yard owner/managers came.

2. Submission of annual accounts for approval.

Richard Hill, the Treasurer, said that at the end of the last financial year there had been a surplus of £6990. Since 6 April 2008, there had been £1,1740 in subs (about the same as last year) and £500 from events (down from £2700 last year). This had allowed the Association to spend £7500 on trail repairs in September to meet contractual obligations with the Forestry Commission. Current surplus was @ £1700 after current liabilities. Richard thanked the 90 members with standing orders worth @ £1200 making it much easier to budget without having to chase up so many members for sub renewals. Richard pointed out that he had moved yards to Penn and had joined the Penn Area Bridleways Association where the sub to ride in Common Wood was £38 pa: it made Hodgemoor seem like really good value.

3. Maintaining Membership levels and Communication with Liveries

Susie Bicknell pointed out that standing orders had nearly trebled this year.

She felt there was a potential for getting more cyclists as members, and asked if anyone had family or friends who were keen cyclists who could contact local cycling organisations. Cycling events being held in Hodgemoor should certainly contribute a donation to the association.

90 standing orders (36 in 07) out of total of 143 memberships (90 in 07) - 36 have not renewed

| | <u>2008</u> | <u>2007</u> | <u>2006</u> | <u>2005</u> | <u>2004</u> | <u>2003</u> |
|----------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Adults | 109 | 64 | 70 | 52 | 85 | 77 |
| Juniors | 6 | 12 | 6 | 9 | 6 | 16 |
| Family | 20 | 12 | 11 | 11 | 5 | 9 |
| Walkers | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 1 |
| Cyclists | 5 | | | | | |

4. Report on Events and funds raised since last AGM:

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|--|---------------------------------|------------|
| XC 2 March in aid of Horse Trust: | (£350 donated) | |
| KC La Pierre talk 26 March: raised nearly | £350. (in 4/07 – 4/08 accounts) | |
| XC 1 June (only 6 people!) | £55 | |
| BBQ 5 July (Food cost £105, takings £195) | £90 | |
| Windmill Farm Dressage | £170 | |
| Highclere Dressage and SJ | £150 | |
| Oldefields Dressage | £315 | Total £780 |
| Last year, events raised over £2000, so we're behind this year | | |

Future Events for 2008.

Halloween Fun at Widmer 25 Oct

Sue Edwards demo at Widmer

TREC 14 Sept Cancelled: too labour intensive

QUIZ night November To be advised, Jane Braithwaite to organise on a Thursday night in pub.

5. Report on riding by members only on Hodgemoor Wood Permissive Riding Trails

Marcus said there had only been one wood check so far, but there would be more on a regular basis. The Forest Commission ranger Ben Mullen now had an up to date membership list and forms, and would do checks whenever he was in Hodgemoor. He had already started. Hopefully the word would get around that there were more checks. Susie said there were a few people who would probably never become members, but after all, it was an issue of horse trails and not worth being overly aggressive about. The pressure was now on though. Sue Hill-Venning suggested using the dispensers again in the woods for putting membership forms in. She also thought putting signs up "Checks in Progress" would make everyone pay more attention. Maxine Butter suggested using the new flat signs up in the woods for giving more info, including excerpts from Forestry Commission contract on obligatory membership. The meeting also voted, on Joanna Philpott's suggestion, to put whole contract up on website in PDF form (now available in Current Links on www.hodgemoor.org.uk).

6. Maintaining the Trails in the Woods:

Everyone seemed pleased with the recent repairs. Sue Hill-Venning felt that the step between old trail and new trail is a bit acute and could be profiled a bit. Marcus and Susie said they had encouraged the contractor to put in drains at these start/end points to avoid this.

7. Suggestions for Future Events

Jane Braithwaite wondered if Georgina Blair might organise a Christmas Treasure Hunt: Georgina would consider it!

Sue Hill-Venning suggested a "Livery Crawl/Ride" between Christmas and New Year. She was willing to organise this and for her yard to be start and end point. Rebecca Stephenson was happy for her yard to be a stopping point too, as were other yards present at meeting (Widmer, Highclere and Oldefields).

9. Election of Officers and Committee

The meeting was asked to volunteer for the various roles that Susie had taken on in the past. We confirmed that volunteers to a particular role do not have to be committee members! The following officers and volunteers were elected:

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|------------------------------------|---|
| Marcus Bicknell: | Chairman, |
| Richard Hill: | Treasurer, |
| Susie Bicknell: | membership (with Richard Hill helping with chasing up on subs), email round robins and electronic newsletter. |
| Jane Braithwaite: | Yards coordinator and Recruitment |
| Diana Bunyan: | Bucks CC, Forestry Commission, Chiltern DC, and other public bodies co-ordinator |
| Susie Bicknell and Charlotte Read: | Fund-Raising Events Organisers |
| Sue Hill-Venning: | Riding Trails Maintenance Co-ordinator |
| Linda Tuttle: | website |

There were no volunteers for the Development role and we would be delighted if someone were to step forward.

The Current Committee was re-elected:

Marcus Bicknell (Chairman), Susie Bicknell (Secretary), Jane Braithwaite, Diana Bunyan, Deborah Davies, Richard Hill (Treasurer), Angela Stallard. Audrey and Terry Holbrook were given Honorary Committee memberships as their role has been important over the years but they have little time to contribute or attend committee meetings. Volunteers for the committee are welcomed.

10. Any Other Business. Jane Braithwaite asked riders to do their best to prevent their horses pooping on the pavement leading from the Rawlings Lane corner into Seer Green as several complaints had been made. The verge there was wide enough for this to be easy to do.