

Minutes of the AGM held on 8 April 2014 at The Brooke commencing at 11.00am

In Attendance:

Caroline Doulton (Elise Pilkington Trust)
Carol Boulton (Association of British Riding Schools)
Dr Andrew Waller (AHT)
Alana Woodward (AHT)
Gemma Taylor (Blue Cross)
Kerry Taylor (Blue Cross)
Brig. Paul Jepson (BEVA)
Ryan Rouse (Bransby Horses)
Mary Low (British Connemara Pony Society)
Petra Ingram (The Brooke)
Martin Taggart (The Donkey Sanctuary and NEWC Management Board)
Sandra Mansell (Exmoor Pony Society)
Gary Evans (Greatwood)
Amanda Berry (HAPPA)
Nicholas Higham (HAPPA)
Lindsay Plant (Horse Rescue Fund)
Jackie Crook (Horse Rescue Fund)
Mary Henley-Smith (Moorcroft Racehorse Welfare Centre)
Dr Carol Hall (Nottingham Trent University)
Jayney Caspar (Nottingham Trent University)
Sarah Holton (Racehorse Owners Association)
Nicolas De Brauwere (Redwings and NEWC Chairman)
Diana Arbuthnot (Retraining of Racehorses)
Steve Carter (RSPCA)
Sally Phillips (RSPCA)
David Buckton (SEIB)
Donna Wilson (SEIB)
Andy Stringer (SPANNA)
Joanna Price (Sussex Horse Rescue Trust)
Jean Adams (Sussex Horse Rescue Trust)
Charlotte Launder (The Horse Trust)
Roly Owers (World Horse Welfare)
David Boyd (World Horse Welfare and NEWC Management Board)
Carl Bettison (Worshipful Company of Farriers)
Wendy Minor (NEWC Administrator)

GENERAL MEETING

Welcome and Apologies

The meeting commenced at 11.00am and NDB welcomed everyone thanking all those present for attending. Thanks were also extended to Petra Ingram CEO at The Brooke for kindly hosting this meeting.

Petra Ingram welcomed all present to The Brooke and spoke about The Brooke's support for NEWC over the years. PI talked about the work of The Brooke worldwide.

1. Apologies for Absence

Dr Harry Greenway (NEWC President)
Lee Hackett (BHS)
Georgina Dale (Dartmoor Livestock)
Alison Phillips (DHAPS)
Carol Morse (Donkey Breed Society)
Gwen Smyth (Equestrian Needs)
Kate Thompson (Equine Grass Sickness)
Pamela Bluck (HACK)
Grace Muir (HEROS)
Rebecca Evans (Horses4homes)
Jerry Watkins (Horseworld)
Emma Kurrells (Lluest Horse and Pony Trust)
Sian Morris (Mare and Foal Sanctuary)
Patricia Hartley (Mill House Animal Sanctuary)
Natalie Waran (Royal Dick School of Vet Studies)
Jenny MacGregor (SWHP)
Faye Allan-Banting (SHHPS)
Anna Prytherch (Welsh Pony and Cob Society)

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

NDB asked all present to go through the previous meetings minutes page by page and requested all present to make any comments. All members in attendance felt they were an accurate record of the meeting. (Proposed JC/ seconded MT)
Annexes available on request to the NEWC office.

3. Matters Arising

DB announced the date for the forthcoming Equine Link project day being organised by WHW in Hull on 22 April and requested volunteers to offer to help if they can. The plan is for NEWC to oversee these projects.

NdB asked for any comments regarding the use of the NEWC restricted ragwort fund. PJ said BEVA's position hasn't changed and that it is up to the individual owner and landowner to clear ragwort from the land. CB added that as the local authorities do not accept responsibility Community Service people have been used in her area to clear the ragwort.

The Control of Horses (Wales) Act 2014 – Since this has come into effect this year the RSPCA has had one case go through the courts. DEFRA are not keen to update The Animals Act however as only 'straying' animals are referred to and this needs to include 'flygrazers' too.

4. Chairman's Report & Accounts to 31.12.13

Prior to all reading the report NDB wished to thank a number of organisations. Firstly thanks were extended to Bipin Thaker, SEIB, for providing the accounts and for acting as NEWC Treasurer. NdB also thanked the BHS for providing the NEWC Office and The Donkey Sanctuary for Martin Taggart's work towards achieving a formal legal status for NEWC in becoming a CIC (Community Interest Company) and as secretariat for the ESC. NDB suggested that NEWC could be used as an information hub for the ESC by providing updates etc.

NDB also thanked MT for his work on the NEWC Code of Practice and also the Elise Pilkington Trust for their generous provision of funding for the Code, which will be circulated to all members on its completion this year.

NDB reported that the Equine Crisis continues to dominate the work of NEWC and the whole of the equine welfare sector. NEWC has been working together with the main charity members raising awareness of the gravity of the challenges we face.

5. Equine Sector Council- an update on progress in England with DEFRA- Roly Owers- World Horse Welfare

Roly spoke about the background to the ESC and the Steering Group and explained the risk approach that is now used.

The next meeting is on 19 June at the BHS.

Roly reported that a radical overhaul is required of the whole ID system. The passport system is generally not seen as fit for purpose leading to a lack of enforcement. Sweden and the UK are the only countries with no central database.

6. NEHS (National Equine Health Survey)- Gemma Taylor and Kerry Taylor- Blue Cross

Five NEHS surveys have now been completed showing consistent trends. The main aim for 2014 has been to increase participation and advertising. If anyone requires additional media they should contact the Blue Cross. The launch dates are 18-24 May and a highlight of the results will be on the Blue Cross website 22 July.

7. Member Statistics 2013

NDB reported a good response for 2013. The results show an increase in the numbers of admissions including more colts leading to more castrations. Some of the larger members are not able to provide a breakdown of their admissions.

8. 'Breaking the Strangles Hold' : the vital role being played by equine welfare charities- Dr Andrew Waller- Animal Health Trust

AW thanked NDB who had teamed with Richard Newton to identify carrier animals. AW also thanked all those organisations who have supported this research.

Statistics show that this is the most frequently diagnosed disease worldwide and that morbidity rates are up to 100%, case fatality rates are up 10% and there are more than 1000 outbreaks a year in the UK.

AW spoke about the need for ID and said that eradication from carrier animals was essential and covered:-

- Guidelines to understanding the disease and what steps to take
- The Need for an Outbreak Plan

- The Need for an Effective Vaccine

Reference was made to the STEPS leaflet available from the BHS.

9. The Equine Crisis and Contingency Planning- Member Reports

- DB reported that in the past WHW have had lulls during the year but that now the welfare concerns are constant.
- Redwings reported that they had wasted a lot of time over the Dorset flood.
- The media concern over the Fosse Park horses caused hysteria due to a dead horse being shown on the media.
- Large scale abandonments such as the Wick horses have led to large scale rescues.
- BHS operate a Friend at the End Scheme to help owners through the process of euthanasia.
- Racing members reported that a greater number of owners seems to be taking more responsibility and are asking for advice for the horses in their care.
- The Farriers Registration Council held a Hoof Care clinic last year and reported that generally hoof care is good and blamed rogue owners for most hoof problems. More farriers are needed and if necessary a vet should attend with the farrier together. NDB suggested that micro chipping and passport days should include foot care in the future.
- PJ reported that dental care is much better these days.

10. AOB

Regional meetings are to be advertised to encourage local members to attend and participate.

11. Date of Next Meeting

Venue and date to be advised