

BRC Area 1 - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
held at the Radstone Hotel, Ayr Road, Larkhall, ML9 2TZ
at 2.30 pm on Sunday 18th February 2024

DRAFT MINUTES

Present:

Julia Robinson-Dow (Chairman), Lothians
Linda Allen (Treasurer), Ayr
Jane McDowall (Secretary), Stranraer & District
Joyce Grigor, Ettrick Forest
Darren Miller, Scottish Dressage Group
Maggie Bunnett (Area Rep), Girvan & District

Linda Chambers, Ayr
Rebecca McNab, Ayr
Lisa Grant, Polnoon Castle
Helen McFarlane, Polnoon Castle
Sheona McNeill, Polnoon Castle
Susan Stuart, Ayr
Helen Green, Ayr
Nikki McKie, Galloway and SW Scotland

Alison Huntley, Peebles & District
Carolyn MacDonald, Peebles & District
Susan Crookston, Glenbrae
Liz Linn, Edinburgh & District
Emma Fletcher, Edinburgh & District
Joyce Kent, Edinburgh & District
Evelyn Anderson, EFRA
Sandra Smith-Maxwell, EFRA
Kaighley Stakim, North Ayrshire
Sonya-Anne Perry, North Ayrshire

Lucy Barclay-Carr, Peebles & District,
Edinburgh & District and HorseScotland
Julie Hanna - BHS Scotland and Ayr RC

Julia thanked everyone for making the effort to attend and welcomed Lucy Barclay-Carr, Chief Executive of HorseScotland.

1. Apologies

Kat Lewis (Edinburgh), Jennifer Rentoul (KKRC), Jenni Surgeon (Almond), Jackie Aglen (EFRA), Annie Millar (EFRA), Pat Bell (Polnoon), Nadine Scott and Kirsteen Watson (SPRA).

2. Minutes of the previous AGM (12th February 2023)

All agreed that the minutes were an accurate record of the business conducted. The minutes were proposed for adoption by Susan Stuart and seconded by Darren Miller.

3. Matters Arising not covered on Agenda

None.

4. Chairman's Report

Welcome everyone today and thank you for coming along. It's great to see everyone.

My name is Julia Robinson-Dow and I am your current Chair of Area 1. This time last year I was sitting just where you are and somehow after hearing that the lovely Ann Affleck from South Lammermuir was standing down after 3 years and I was being recruited as the chair and now I'm the other side of the desk and sitting in front of you all.

I hope I can do the chair position justice and after this year I feel I am just beginning to understand what goes on within the Area and BRC as a whole.

I have been involved with Riding Clubs since 2003 and have been an active member of Lothians RC and on the committee for many years. I have been the chair of LRC for the past 3 years and I was on the Area 1 committee for a couple of years mostly during Covid when we were relatively inactive then as I say taking on the role of Chair last year.

I still ride and compete my horses and have taken part at many of the qualifiers over the years and been lucky enough to compete at both the winter and national championships.

I could not have taken this role on without the support and guidance of your very experienced Area 1 committee members and I would like to thank them all for helping me find my stride so to speak.

I'd like to introduce to you our current committee

4. Chairman's Report (continued)

Jane is our Area secretary and a member of Sranraer & District. Jane has a wealth of knowledge and understanding of RC and the role. She is an excellent organiser and keeps us all to task and current with relevant information. Jane manages the website, FB page and does all the committee meeting minutes. Jane makes sure that all our qualifier schedules are available and sorts out the payment systems amongst all the other admin involved. She has attended a lot of qualifiers and is fluent in the RC Rule book, which is very handy!! One of the consequences of Covid was that Jane took on a lot of the responsibility, along with Maggie, of keeping everything ticking over and I think at times this was quite overwhelming. It has been an important priority of mine and the committee to share the workload amongst us and best utilising our skills between us to even the responsibilities.

Maggie is your Area 1 Rep and Official Steward and, like Jane, Maggie is a fount of all knowledge. Maggie knows her stuff. She has her own horse and has competed at county and RC level. Maggie is a huge asset to have on board and is very hands on when we are hosting Qualifiers. She has her finger mostly on the pulse and along with Jane she has kept the area running during these past few years.

Linda is our finance/treasurer and is an excellent one at that. She is very au fait with H&S issues, finances, and generally well versed in the BRC way of operations. Linda has also trialled the live results for our qualifiers and we will be utilising this going forward in 2024. Linda is always willing to take on new tasks and willing to learn. She has organised today's AGM and speaker, Lucy Barclay-Carr.

Pat, a member of Polnoon RC, is another well versed member of our committee and is brilliant at sourcing our dressage judges and scoring at all the dressage qualifiers. She and her team are the backbone of the scoring and getting the results sorted as everyone waits in anticipation. A lot of pressure but Pat, and her team who consist of a couple of her personal family members and a couple of RC volunteers always do the job brilliantly! It's actually a huge part of the qualifiers and without the help and support of this committee either hosting the qualifiers or mentoring the clubs that do run a qualifier then running them would be almost impossible. So much work goes on behind the scenes to make the qualifiers happen.

Darren, like me, moved over to this side of the table last year at the AGM. He is chair of Scottish Dressage Group and brings a lot to our meetings, reflects a younger generation's view point and he provides humour to most meetings as well. His club undertook the hosting, alongside EDRC of the winter novice & intermediate dressage qualifiers at SNEC last November. Darren willingly takes on tasks and responsibilities and has also now just signed up to become an official steward and undertaken his first training session with BRC. We cannot host any qualifiers without an OS and for a while we struggled in the area to have enough OS. We are now actively working towards increasing our pool of OS and now have three - Kat Lewis, Darren, and Maggie.

Joyce Grigor has been an active committee member since she joined in 2018. She is a member of Ettrick Forrest RC. Joyce has been instrumental in sourcing sponsorship for the summer festivals.

She has not been able to attend many of our meetings in the last year due to family commitments and for this reason she has very sadly decided to stand down from her position on the committee as from today. We really do appreciate all that she has done for us and the area over that past 6 years and wish her well in the future, safe in the knowledge we will miss her! Thank you Joyce.

Sonya, from North Ayrshire RC joined us at last year's AGM. Sonya has a lot of ideas and has been keen to help RCs become more integrated to the wider Scottish organisations within the sport. Sonya is a busy gal and has found work commitments in particular, getting in the way of being able to attend the meetings either in person or via zoom. Sadly, she has, because of these reasons and her commitment to other equestrian disciplines, is also standing down from the committee. We thank her for her input over the last year and also wish her well in her continuing dedication to the equestrian sport.

I would like to on behalf of myself and all of Area 1 members say a big thank you to all of our committee members and show our appreciation of their commitment and hard work.

A few things throughout the year that are worth a mention.

4. Chairman's Report (continued)

To all the clubs who participated, helped host, volunteer & spectators and to all the individuals and teams who qualified for the National Championships at Lincoln in September and the winter championships in April this year at Arena UK. Both these and in fact all the championships are a fantastic experience to compete at and definitely gives one a sense of the enormity of British Riding Clubs as a whole and an experience and scale which is unknown to most of our Scottish members. It is such a great thing to be part of and I want to take this opportunity to mention all the clubs who had teams or individuals attending the champs in 2023.

EDRC had a rider who qualified in another Area because our area struggle to host HT due to many factors but mostly venue and staffing issues. But none the less qualified and competed at the BRC NAF National Horse Trials Championships at Swalcliffe, Banbury in August.

Our summer qualifiers in July for dressage & SJ were Ayr, Galloway and SW Scotland, Girvan & District, Kilmacolm and Kilallan, Lothians and Polnoon Riders Association all went to the BRC National Championships at Lincoln Showground in September.

Winter qualifiers in November for SJ & Dressage are taking place at Arena UK in Grantham in April this year and we have teams and individuals going from Lothians, Ayr, Kilmacolm & Kilallan, Polnoon, Stranraer & District, Strathendrick, Ettrick, South Lammerrmuir and Almond RC. We wish them all a great time and safe travels and good luck.

Also worth a mention, although not BRC - but to all those members who had success at Blair Castle Horse Trials in August.

As I've said it is a fantastic opportunity and experience to travel south and represent your club and be part of the bigger picture. Albeit very nerve-wracking!!! But a fabulous opportunity all the same.

As a committee we made the decision at the beginning of the year to meet in person for the first time since Covid. This was an opportunity for us all to really get to know each other and explore our skill set and ideas particularly in the light of not having met in person for the 2/3 previous years. Zoom meetings have their place but as a new committee and chair we felt it vital for us to represent the area to the best of our ability it was important to hold more regular meetings throughout the year to get us up and running and back on track.

Certainly, alongside getting to know everyone and encourage a team spirit it has definitely helped us all share the workload, develop and implement new ideas in the area. It is an ongoing process and this year coming we intend to meet in person as well as having zoom meetings. We currently have been using the room at BHS in the Stirling Hub to all meet up. We met in March as the new committee after the February AGM, then May, October and December. Given we all travel from all corners of our area it is, surprisingly enough, the most accessible to us all.

A couple of examples being that we have been able to be more organised for holding qualifiers, producing schedules and save the dates much further in advance than previously, securing judges, venues, photographers, first aid etc. It also allows us to mentor and help support hosting clubs to successfully run an event. Thanks to the Area, Lothians, SDG and EDRC for running all the qualifiers last year. We did also make the difficult decision to drop the junior classes from our qualifiers. This was done after considerable research into numbers and clubs with Juniors and cost implications along with guidance from BRC regarding numbers in qualifying classes.

We have introduced the new Volunteers award with trophy for the winner and nominee rosettes to all those nominated. It has also helped us attempt to get our head round the hastily implemented Sport 80 platform. This has been a nightmare if we are honest and completely outwith our control. It has proved extremely testing and challenging for many of us. It's still early days and BRC have a standard answer like Tesco have "do you need bags?" to "yes it will be fine, just teething problems so bear with it". Sadly, I think a few clubs have fallen foul of the system or don't wish to participate in the system as it has felt like we were losing control of our own membership. Be warned there is no going back to the old system. It's here to stay.

4. Chairman's Report (continued)

I also want to note on a positive side that we are building bridges with the historically broken bridges that were between our area and Area 22. Both areas have moved towards building the bridges and it's fantastic to be able to communicate and work towards much more collaborative approach with all disciplines to provide a more co-ordinated approach for Scotland. You will have seen the current invites on our fb feeds to join some online training and seminars, hosted by area 22 but open to us all.

Thank you all for listening to me so far... I would just like to say that we are all volunteers working on this committee to represent all of our membership across the Area. We are all here to try and work together and do the best we can for our Area. There will be an opportunity at the end to give us any feedback or suggestions/items that you would like us to look at and see how we could improve, we are always open to suggestions. We also don't have all the answers but we are willing to try find them.

The recent sad loss of Pat Baird, past chair of Galloway Horse Club and South West Scotland Riding Club (now merged to Galloway and South West Scotland RC), who was very involved with riding clubs and equestrian events in Dumfries & Galloway, was noted.

Thank you again for listening and I will now pass you onto Linda for our treasurer's report.

5. Treasurer's Report and Adoption of Accounts

Linda went through the items of income and expenditure. There was a loss of £659.57 for the year.

The accounts were proposed for adoption by Sheona McNeil and seconded by Joyce Kent.

6. Election of Office Bearers and Committee

Joyce Grigor was standing down after six years and was presented with a small token of appreciation by Julia.

Sonya Perry had resigned due to work commitments.

Julia, Linda, Jane, Pat, Darren and Maggie were willing to stand again and Sheona McNeil proposed re-electing them en bloc and this was seconded by Julie Hanna.

Susan Stuart was proposed by Sheona McNeil and seconded by Sonya Perry.

Joyce Grigor is staying on committee until a replacement from the Borders area is found.

7. Proposals for Area Liaison Fees and Area 1 Training Grant

Area Liaison Fees - proposal to hold at 50p per 2023 member to take into account large increase in fee to BRC and cost of living. 50p up to 31st March, then £1 from 1st April. This was unanimously agreed.

New Membership System - Sport80 - Some Clubs were very unhappy with the new system and some members wished to ask BRC for an online feedback session. Julie Hanna offered to pass on the feedback to Rachael at BRC HQ and would send an update to Julia.

Susan Stuart offered to collate e-mails and responses from Clubs to feedback to BRC.

Area Training Grant - Up to £250 per Club for 2024.

Sonya Perry requested that Area 1 put training higher up on the agenda, with more Clubs involved, collaborate with other disciplines and national bodies on training and development.

8. Area 1 Qualifiers

Horse Trials - Area 2 and Area 22 have invited Area 1 to join them this year. Only one invite can be accepted. After discussion it was agreed to send out the information to clubs and request a response (one vote per club), by the end of February.

Area 2 - Northallerton, North Yorkshire - Sunday 26th May
Area 22 - Auchlishie on Sunday 2nd June

8. Area 1 Qualifiers (continued)

Sonya Perry suggested that Area 1 should contact Rachael Robertson at Oatridge to discuss running a Horse Trials qualifier at Oatridge.

Summer Dressage and Riding Test on Sunday 7th July 2024 at Morris EC.

Summer Show and Style Jumping on Sunday 21st July 2024 at Muirmill.

Winter Show Jumping on Sunday 27th October 2024 at Morris EC.

Winter Dressage in November at SNEC.

9. A.O.C.B.

Funding for travel to Championships - Susan Stuart enquired if this would be offered again this year. It was unknown as this had been funded through BRC.

Blair Qualifiers - Julia Hanna advised that Riding Clubs could apply to host a variety of Blair qualifiers via the BHS Scotland website. Information on the stewarding day was also available.

Junior Members - Sonya Perry stated that Area 1 should be encouraging junior members. Sonya's club was undertaking work on encouraging juniors and this information may be useful to others.

Legal Advice - Sonya Perry was seeking legal advice for their club's venue. Julie Hanna said she would make enquiries and report back.

Hat Tagging - BRC rules state that hats must be tagged at qualifiers and championships but not necessary at club events. Official stewards will tag hats.

Julia thanked everyone for attending and handed over to guest speaker - Lucy Barclay-Carr, Chief Executive Officer, HorseScotland.

The meeting closed at 3.40 pm.

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Chairman

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Date

PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

Area Horse Trials Qualifier

HT80 Individual Quaich - Rebecca McNab - Dusty Newtown Lad (Ayr RC)

HT 90 Individual Quaich - Emma Fletcher - Strike it Lucky (Edinburgh & District)

Summer Dressage Qualifier

Prelim Team - BHS Riding Clubs Team Dressage Rose Bowl

Lothians Let's Begin - Duncan Owen and Tr n gouan Mossie, Alex Cocking and Bandirran Gibbs, Sheila Rogers and Hotshot III and Julia Robinson-Dow and Dunraven Kashmir.

Open Team - Robert Young (Newton Mearns) Perpetual Trophy

Polnoon Peacocks - Emma Preston and Without a License, Jordan Hendry and Daisy Duke, Andrea Hibbert and Diamond Cruz and Gillian Morris and Pentrefelin Serena.

CHAIRMAN'S AWARD - Jennifer Rentoul - Kilmacolm & Kilallan Riding Club.

The inaugural winner of the new BRC AREA 1 Club Volunteer of the Year trophy is Nadine Scott of SPRA.