

Welcome to the
South East Wales
BHS Newsletter
Autumn 2011

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Registered Charity Nos. 210504 and SC038516

AGM
Monday 17th
October, 7.30pm
St Mellons Hotel,
Castleton, Cardiff,
CF3 2XR
All welcome!

Mary King
Lecture/Demo
Sunnybank EC
Details below

Welsh Festival of
Dressage
2011

Your South East Wales Regional Committee

Regional Chairman/Access: Mrs Jeanne Hyett 02920 885697

Vice Chair: Mike Williams

Development Officer: Mrs Jan Roche 01656 724700

Road Safety: Andrea Parsons 01873 811798/ 07968 357617

Welfare: Elaine Burt/Ellie Griffiths (via Jan above)

Bridleways Officer (Newport and Monmouth) Anne Underwood

Riding Clubs: Mrs P Davidson: 01954 529355

Treasurer: Mrs M Aikman 01495 785747

Secretary: Mrs Liz Williams 01443 402289

Newsletter: Amanda Harris 01443 222952

Members: Ros Dudley Val Allen Harry Harris

Chairman's Report. September 2011

This is my last report as Chair of the S E WALES Regional Committee. Following the enforcement of the 6 year policy at local level, I now have to stand down, because I have, in fact, served 12 + years. I shall still continue as Regional Access and Bridleways Officer for Wales. There will be an election for a new Chair at the S E Wales Annual Meeting in October. My good wishes go to whoever takes over the Chair.

One Trailer Training session took place at Usk earlier but there were not enough requests to fill the second session so it unfortunately had to be cancelled. Apologies to those people who were unsuccessful in getting a place then but we shall try to put on another in the Spring. If you are still interested, - or if you would like to apply for a place next time - can you let me or Jan Roche know.

On Saturday October 29th we are lucky that Mary King is coming to give an afternoon lecture demo at Sunnybank EC in Rudry. This is a joint venture by the BHS and Sunnybank. Tickets are £26 and can be applied for from www.sunnybankec.com. Mary is one of eventing's best known and most successful riders, (more details below)

The ragwort issue seems to have been worse than ever this year, particularly along the M4 Corridor where, even if the verges had been cut, the central reservation was generally bright yellow. Other main roads, particularly at junctions and roundabouts are also covered, many of which are adjacent to grazing land and fields which are producing hay or silage. The Highways Agency and local authorities are making little or no effort to clear it even when it is reported to them. There are also some fields that can be seen from the road where ragwort is prolific so some landowners are equally responsible. If you know of any badly infested areas please contact the relevant local authority and/or tell one of our Welfare Officers so that we can be prepared early next year.

Finally, I hope you have all had a good summer and that feed won't go on getting too expensive through this winter.

Jeanne Hyett.

The British Horse Society and Sunnybank Equestrian Centre present

An Afternoon with Mary King

**Lecture/Demo
Saturday 29 October 2011**

Sunnybank Equestrian Centre Rudry Caerphilly CF83 3DT

Start 2pm Refreshments available

Mary will sign copies of her Autobiography/DVDs for purchase during the interval
BHS Christmas Cards will also be on sale

Ticket: £26 (includes P&P) available online from Sunnybank EC website – www.sunnybankec.com

For further information please contact Jan Roche BHS Development Officer on 07767 411919
or Terinna at Sunnybank on 07767 374079

Exciting news for this autumn in that **Mary King** will be coming to Sunnybank Equestrian Centre to do an afternoon lecture/demo. It will be a rare opportunity to see Mary locally and she will be **bringing some of her well known event horses** along with up and coming ones to show us all how it's done!

In a career spanning over 30 years Mary King has become one of British Eventing's icons and a regular member of the British team. By her own admission Mary, now 50, finds it extraordinary that she became interested in horses as her parents were anything but keen. Her father, a retired naval officer, became a verger and at the age of six Mary began to ride the vicar's pony. Inspired by a visit to Badminton Horse Trials, Mary worked tirelessly on a butcher's delivery round and as a gardener, cook and chalet girl – anything to fund her eventing career. She became head girl to Sheila Wilcox, a former European Champion and Badminton winner, and in 1985 she made her Badminton debut, finishing in seventh position. In 1992 she added her name to the famous trophy with her great horse **King William**, the only horse to accumulate more than 2000 points in competition, and she achieved her second Badminton victory in 2000 with **Star Appeal**. Her glittering career has brought four team gold medals at World and European Championships and the title of British Champion a record four times. She has also represented Britain at the last four Olympic Games.

Mary is married with two children and lives near Sidmouth in Devon. Recent Achievements in 2011 include 1st & 2nd Rolex Kentucky (**Kings Temptress & Fernhill Urco** respectively) and 3rd Badminton CCI4* (**Imperial Cavalier**)

Please come along and support this event – it is hard work to organise something like this in the region and very disappointing when events have to be cancelled due to lack of support. It would make a great Christmas present as well and don't forget to spread the word to everyone you know!

Access Report – Wales September 2011

With luck, we should be opening the Great Dragon Ride this time next year. The last section of the route, which is Sarn Helen in Neath Port Talbot, should be completed by then thus bringing the Ride from Talacre on the North Wales coast in Flintshire right down through Wales to finish at Margam Park – approximately 250 miles in total length

The Wales Coastal Path is being officially opened in May next year but horse riders seem to have far less new access than was originally promised. Between Cardiff and Chepstow we thought we would have between 12 and 20 miles of new access along the estuary but the Environment Agency refused permission to use their maintenance track as part of the route so the path was diverted to the top of the sea wall (walkers only) and now the RSPB are objecting to this in case it disturbs the wading birds.

Windfarm developments are causing a lot of problems mainly in Mid and West Wales and now, in addition to the turbines themselves, overhead power lines and pylons to carry the electricity to the National Grid are now involved as well. In the Dyfnant Forest, one development will interfere with the Rainbow Trails that have already been developed for riders and carriage drivers there.

Mountain bike trails are being encouraged in many of our forests. Recently, I had a meeting with the representative of a firm hoping to win the contract to develop many of these trails in Wales. At least he was interested to know about the needs of equestrians and the impact of the trails on us. One plan is for a development in Gethin Woods in Merthyr but as this will be aimed at the ‘extreme’ cyclists it will be restricted to a relatively small area (similar to one already in existence in Whistler in Canada.)

Merthyr, in developing its definitive map, is planning that many of its routes will be officially designated as bridleways or multi-user paths. In particular the County is emphasising that the whole of the Taff Trail in their area will be officially bridleway. This now reinforces the fact that we are now only denied any access to the Taff Trail in Rhondda Cynon Taf. Cardiff have said that they would be prepared to give us access on part of it if/when RCT is opened up.

Unfortunately, RCT continue to do very little for horse riders.. All the off-road paths being produced to relieve the problems of the new bypass roads are still only for walkers and cyclists. Riders have to take their chance with the traffic. The Transport Departments of the County use the Regional Transport Plan as an excuse because we get no mention there. It is vital that, at every opportunity, we keep emphasising that we are VULNERABLE ROAD USERS in exactly the same way as walkers and cyclists.

A number of counties are now updating their Local Development Plans and in view of government considerations of building houses on greenfield sites, it is important to keep an eye on developments to protect our rights of way and in some cases permissive routes which will not appear on any definitive map.

SUSTRANS are currently updating their policy on shared access with horses - and they are using BHS guidelines to limit shared use. Anything BHS recommends as the ideal situation for bridleways, SUSTRANS are treating as the benchmark and seem to be using this to avoid sharing. We had a recent example locally (RCT again) where the Countryside Warden brought a tape measure to check the width of a very small section of the Taff Trail (20 metres) which we wanted to ride along to cross from one horse route to another. We still await the council's decision!!

The Vale of Glamorgan have recently produced two new bridle route leaflets in the Ystradowen/Llansannor/Craig Penllyn areas and their new Rights of Way Officer is looking for more possible routes, including some upgrades of footpaths if it helps. If you have any ideas for potential routes either in the Vale or any other of our counties please let me know and we can see what negotiations we can carry out with the counties (bearing in mind that money will be tight in the local authorities at the moment.)

Following one or two near misses on a very narrow lane in Lisvane , Cardiff Council are now developing an adjacent off-road path for riders and others in a field alongside Graig Road. This is costing them a lot of money and they are looking for match funding as well. SAFE, the local bridleways group, and BHS have both pledged some money towards this venture which will be a tremendous improvement in safety. A lot of the work has been done by Chris Powell, Senior Conservation Officer in the Parks Dept in Cardiff, as has much of the other off-road extra paths that Cardiff have. Chris has now just retired and we shall miss him. He has always been a good friend to riders.

Cardiff is also consulting on it new Local Development Plan, which includes possible building on greenfield sites. I am working as part of a sub-group with them to safeguard the interests of riders and making sure we do not lose some of the things we have already gained in addition to new possibilities.

Please keep me up to date on any problems or ideas and I can pass them on to our own hard working bridleways officers.

Jeanne Hyett, RABO Wales.

Welsh Festival of Dressage 2011

This year the Welsh Festival moved from Broomes to Pencoed College. It ran over three days and received many favourable comments from competitors. All the affiliated classes were held in the indoor arena but unfortunately we had to cancel the unaffiliated and Pony Club days. Both were to be held outdoors but the extremely dry weather earlier in the year meant that the College could not prepare and roll the fields sufficiently well for us in time so, reluctantly, for safety we had to cancel those competitions.

Classes were generally well filled and, as usual, the Potential Young International Dressage horse classes on Monday were very popular. One or two of the Advanced riders were sorry that we had abandoned the Grand Prix for this year, but, running under very different circumstances, I decided to play safe this year. However, I have promised that the Grand Prix will be back next year. Once again, all the Advanced classes and Young Horse classes will be on the Monday.

Jeanne Hyett

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Statistics CAN make a difference.....!

In the Spring Newsletter I pointed out that the BHS had launched a new website www.horseaccidents.org.uk asking for people to fill in reports of horse related accidents or incidents so that we could build up some statistics.

Below, you will see the totals of those reported in the first few months of the website going live. The incidence of road accidents and dog attacks is obviously very large compared to some of the others.

Type of Incident	Total since Launch (13.11.10)
Dog attacks	192
Road accidents	277
Fireworks	20
Low Flying	36
Slippery roads	50
Gates	33
Windfarm	1

It is vital that everyone goes on reporting these incidents to build up a picture. Obviously some are going to be seasonal. Please tell people about the report line and persuade them to use it. They do not have to be BHS members or even riders themselves to use the form but we do need people to fill in the forms. If you are coming to the Annual Meeting we will have cards and leaflets there that you can have.

The BHS is sharing the information that is coming in (although not individual incidents) with the police and other agencies such as the farming unions all of whom are finding the build up of statistics very useful and informative.

SO..... it is important that we keep the information coming.

JH

Have your say on 'green' route.

Following the provision of cycle and walking routes but nothing for riders on the new Church Village Bypass, a new walking/cycling route is now being consulted on for the Treforest area. The route will provide a continuous link from the Bypass community and will also cross the River Taff and link with the Taff Trail and Pontypridd via a disused sliproad of the A470 link.

The scheme is part of a national project from cycling charity Sustrans and is part financed through a £50m Big Lottery Fund grant.

Councillor Andrew Morgan (RCT) said "I would encourage residents to come forward and tell us what they think of the planned route"

To have your say, call 01443 424069.

So.... here's your chance to have a say about the continued lack of provision or consideration for horse riders in the area

Welfare Report Autumn 2011

The British Horse Society has a very important role to play in the welfare of horses, including the investigation of reported welfare concerns, provision of education and advice for the horse owners and helping members with general welfare queries. The following incidents were reported and investigated in the Cardiff and District area this year:

- 6 reports of ponies tethered on the coast road. One gave cause for concern and is being monitored
- One pony in Magor who was reported as showing aggressive behaviour. Investigation found that the pony was being fed by passers by and had become demanding as a consequence.
- There was a report of 100 horses in Laleston with no grazing. The RSPCA and the local authority are currently dealing with these.
- 2 horses reported in north Cardiff without fodder or water. Contact with the owner resolved this problem,
- 15 horses reported as dumped in Pontypridd. The owners could not be located but there were no welfare issues as there was plenty grass and water and all the horses looked well, and their feet were fine.
- 2 mares with their foals in St Mellons were reported as giving cause for concern, but following investigation water and grazing was found to be available
- There were 2 areas of grazing reported as having huge levels of Ragwort present. These fields were identified and reported to the local authorities who referred them on to the Welsh assembly.
- A small pony was reported in the heat of the summer with a thick winter rug still on. The pony was old and removal of the rug exposed the pony to be in a very poor state. The pony was subsequently euthanized.

- A mare and her foal were reported to be running loose in St Melons. Contact with local horse owners resolved the problem and the two were captured and returned to their owners.

These cases have been reported by members of the BHS and the general public. Please keep a watchful eye and report any concerns you may have to your local Welfare Officer as often a quiet word can stop a problem becoming a crisis. Your concerns will be dealt with totally confidentially.

Elaine Griffiths
Welfare Officer

Did you know?....

The Society for the Welfare of Horses and Ponies collect used postage stamps as part of their fund raising efforts.

If anyone has used stamps could they please send them to

SWHP, Coxstone, St Maughans, Monmouth NP25 5QF