



Development Officer's Report For West Midlands Regional Meeting May 2011

Membership

We finished 2010 with a growth in membership of 4% with 5,244, a growth of 204. Nationally we ended the year on 72,794 a growth of 2,034 members (2.9%). Membership to end April 2011 stands at:

	End of Dec 10	End of Apr 11	Growth in 2011
Herefordshire	457	453	-4
Shropshire	977	995	18
Staffordshire	1,220	1,264	44
Warwickshire	1,233	1,240	7
Worcestershire	1,357	1,357	0
Region	5,244	5,245	65

Nationally we have 73,588 members a growth of 794 so far in 2011.

Courses/Training

CPD Training Days (*Continuous Professional Development, used to be Teaching Techniques*)

These are booked for Monday 20 June at Kingswood EC and Wednesday 5 October at Warwickshire College.

Other Training Days

So far I have run a PTT training day at Berriewood Farm on 28 March, a Stage 1 & 2 Training Day on 7 April at Grendon EC and a PTT Portfolio Day at Hallow Mill EC on 13 April. Attendance at all these days have been disappointing. I have had to cancel a Stage 3 Care Training Day on 9 May due to lack of entries. I am now combining the care day with the Stage 3 Riding Day booked for 13 June.

Shows

I have only attended 1 show in the Region so far this year, Weston Park Horse Trials, where attendance was very poor (despite lovely weather and a really nice course). I am booked to attend:

Staffordshire County on 1-2 June
Midland Counties Show on 4-5 June
Burwarton on 4 August
Oswestry on 6 August

Badminton was held over the Easter weekend and was very successful with 120 new members joining.

Regional News

Gillian Higgins Evening Talks

These are proving to be really successful with 28 attending the first talk in March and 43 attending the talk on 3 May. The final two talks are on 14 June (14 bookings at present) and 6 September (7 bookings at present).

Summer Camp

I have two summer camps planned for this year:

24-26 June at Lincomb Equestrian (along the same lines as last year)

22-24 July at Country Treks which will be more of a hacking/trekking camp and attendees can hire a horse from the centre if they don't have their own.

Adult Gymkhana

The competition is booked for Saturday 8 October at Rodbaston. Horse magazine have run a feature about the competition in their recent magazine and I have had a lot of enquiries so far. The entry form, rules and race descriptions are all on the BHS website. Staffordshire have a training event planned for 12 June and Worcestershire have a competition running on 4 September. I'm just about to place the order for the gymkhana equipment which will cost just over £1,000. The equipment will be available for all Counties to use and we are currently arranging a central location to store it.

Regional Newsletter

I would like to suggest producing a regional newsletter once a year instead of each individual county producing 1 or 2 a year as they currently do. Newsletters cost a lot of money to produce and take up a lot of volunteers time to put them together, some are sent to all members by post, some by email (with posted versions to those who have requested it – usually very few!). Producing a regional newsletter would have the benefit of advertising all our events to all members in the Region in one go; members not on email would receive a copy; and it is a way of utilising regional funds rather than county funds. We should be able to send it out with British Horse (I'm not sure what the cost would be for this yet but will be checking with Comms Department).

BUT in order for this to be effective each Committee would need to have their events for next year, including the Annual Meeting, organised by latest end of January 2012 so the newsletter could be produced and sent with the March/April 2012 British Horse.

Thoughts?

Using Regional funds

The recent financial audit once again brought up that funds are stagnating in some areas. At the Volunteers Conference, Gill Evans, Head of Finance stated that there is over £500k being held in regional and county accounts throughout the Country.

It is essential that counties have enough in their accounts to pay for volunteers expenses and no-one should be out of pocket for working for the BHS, so we do really encourage people to claim their expenses. I have just had a note from the Finance Department to say that we will shortly be receiving our capitation allowance for this year and the total to be shared amongst the Counties and Region is £5,188. The capitation allowance is first and foremost there to fund officers expenses, however, how best can we utilise the money that is made from running events for the benefit of our members?

Some suggestions:

- Offering free horse owners courses (candidates would only pay their exam fee) – we would pay the Instructor.
- Offering free riding and road safety training (again candidates would only pay their exam fee) – we would pay the trainers.
- Offering a training bursary for someone who wants to take their exams.
- Funding a participation project where we would arrange for some school pupils to have a term of riding/stable management at a local centre – we would pay the centre.

Any other suggestions?

National News

New exam structure

The new exam structure of unitised modules for Stages 1, 2, 3 and PTT have been well received. Stages 4 and above will follow suit shortly.

Mileage rates

The Finance Committee have met recently and reviewed the current mileage rate. As from 1 June 2011 they have agreed a new mileage rate (in line with the new Inland Revenue recommended rate) of 45 pence per mile. A new expense claims policy will be available shortly.

Byelaws

We have been reminded about the importance of adhering to the Byelaws for Committees and lengths of terms of office for Chairmen and Treasurers.

The Byelaws state that:

A Chairman can be elected from within the Committee and serve 3 years in office. At the time of re-election of a Chairman if there is no other person willing to stand for office, the Chairman may be re-elected for successive one year appointments, subject to the approval of the Board. The byelaws also state that a Chairman must vacate office after a second consecutive three year term so the annual extensions granted by the Board must be limited to three.

A Treasurer may serve for up to six consecutive years after which he/she may not serve in that office for a further period of three years. However, where no other candidate is forthcoming, the Trustees may agree, on the recommendation of the Committee Chairman, that a person shall serve additional terms as Treasurer.

How does this affect the West Midlands Region?

Chairmen

Herefordshire – No Chairman at present

Shropshire – No Chairman at present

Staffordshire – David Wheatley elected in 2010

Warwickshire – Phil Nichols elected in 2010

Worcestershire – *Bev Hudson – need to clarify number of years in office*

Region – Lisa Randle elected in 2010

Treasurers

Herefordshire – Isabel Sinclair elected in 2010

Shropshire – *Anne Roberts – need to clarify when elected, Poss 06 Annual Mtg but could be 07?*

Staffordshire – Dawn Russell elected in 2010

Warwickshire – Anna Weston elected in 2010

Worcestershire – Lu Brightwell elected in 2010

Region – *David Wheatley elected in Sept 2004 so currently in 7th year in office.*

We do need to give some thought to succession planning and I would like to encourage all Committees to have a discussion about this at their next meeting and elect a Vice Chairman on the understanding that that person will take over as Chairman when the current Chairman comes to the end of their term of office (Warwickshire have already done this).

We will also need to think about Treasurer succession planning as changing bank signatories is a particular issue and takes time to sort out.

Finally, we are having a staff training day on Wednesday 18 May so the offices will be closed all day and I'm on holiday next week (but will be picking up messages/emails).

Andrea Jackman

16 May 2011