

Equestrian Association Of Shetland



Shetland Equestrian Facilities Working Group

Minutes of the meeting of Tuesday 9th December held in the Radio Room, Islesburgh at 7.00 p.m.

Present

Graham Wishart - Shetland Riding Club (Chairman SEFWG)
Elaine Laurenson - Clickimin Open Riding Club (Secretary SEFWG)
Vaila Stevenson - South Whiteness Riding Club (Minute Secretary SEFWG)

Donna Cameron - Equestrian Association of Shetland
Susie Nicolson - Equestrian Association of Shetland
Stephen Morgan - Clickimin Open Riding Club
Helen Thomson - Pony Breeders of Shetland Association
Marion Slater - South Whiteness Riding Club
Marianne Hughson - Shetland Riding Club
Abigail Robertson - Dunrossness Riding club

Apologies

Bob Kerr – Shetland Islands Council
Susan Goodlad - Shetland Pony Riding & Driving Group
Karlín Moar - Clickimin Open Riding Club
Vikki Polson - SPRDG
Sonja Flaws - Pony Breeders of Shetland Association

Adoption of Minutes

One correction to pg 4 of the previous minute was required. This was to reflect the fact that Bob Kerr hadn't actually spoken to Pete Glanville, of the Tingwall and Girsta Development Association (T&GDA). Instead he had referred to an e-mail in which Pete had stated that the T&GDA would be interested in any ideas that would renew interest and give the Association a new lease of life. The previous minute will be amended and signed by Graham, as chairman of the meeting. This given, the minute was adopted by Marianne and seconded by Susie.

Graham suggested that he intends that the Minutes of our meetings be made available in PDF format, thus being accessible to the Equestrian Association of Shetland.

Matters arising from minutes

Graham confirmed Helen's correct e-mail address.

Terms of Reference sign-off for Whalsay R C

The Whalsay Riding club have not yet signed the Terms of Reference but it is possible to move ahead and have them sign at a later date.

Result from visit to Broonies Taing

Susan was unable to attend the meeting but had circulated an e-mail, which Graham shared. David, Susan's husband, had visited the shed and, in the e-mail, noted that the shed is divided in two by pillars which are 6 metres apart. Each half measures approx 35 x 38 metre's which is still short of the length we need. He did not know if it would be possible to work around or remove any of the pillars.

Helen felt that the road down to Broonies Taing, though useable, was not good. She also noted, with regard to the last minute, that the figure of £400 per week to cover a lease of £20,000 was not realistic in that there would be many additional costs. This is a valid point, as expenditure would not only include the lease, but it was pointed out that Susan was merely making a rough estimate to clarify the picture for the group.

Susan noted in her e-mail that if we still wished a visit she could arrange it. The group felt that, while Broonies Taing did not sound completely suitable, we should not immediately rule it out, and decided that we should ask Susan to set up a viewing for early in the New Year. Elaine is to e-mail Susan with this request. It was suggested that taking photos, which could then be shared with the group would be a good idea.

Update on position relating to salmon farm interest in Girlsta Hatchery

Graham has been in contact with the Managing Director of Hjatland Sea Farms, Michael Stark, who confirmed that the firm has started proceedings to purchase the shed at Girlsta. This should be completed this month (December 2008). Michael Stark felt that, should purchase go ahead, we could still have use of the building for about a year. Graham enquired about the possibility of a share i.e. perhaps leasing part of the building, but bio-security means that this would not be possible. Graham requested that Hjatland give us due notice if we are required to vacate the building.

Later in the meeting Graham read Johanna David's response to our letter, declaring an interest in the Girlsta shed. She explained that at present she cannot disclose information relating to negotiations with Hjatland but adds that she may know more in the New Year when it comes to 'some sort of conclusion'.

Marianne had spoken to Frank Johnson (as he had recently removed 50% of the edging boards (insulated sheets placed by the Shetland Riding Club, but

belonging to Frank) from the shed. Frank had explained he had taken the sheets for 'a job' but was happy for us to carry on using the shed.

Graham reported from Bob Kerr that there were new guidelines on 'Change of Use'. Potential for flooding etc. comes into consideration and it is likely that our proposed equestrian use would be looked on more favourably than that of a company possessing equipment that might be damaged by flooding.

Report on discussion with Tingwall & Girlsta Development Association

Graham reported, from discussion with Pete Glanville, that the T&GDA have a 25 year lease on the Girlsta pier and are currently in year 23. The association would prefer to be released from their commitment and the company Demlane Ltd., wish to take over the lease and hence the associated liabilities.

The T&GDA are happy to have an equestrian association within their area. They have Charitable Status, which might be useful to our group. The EAS members' reported that they had been advised that acquiring Charitable Status would be beneficial if a project was to go ahead.

Pete Glanville had suggested that the group speak to Drew Anderson regarding a possible feasibility study to be done for an Agricultural Museum, as it might be useful to us. There was some doubt from the group however as to whether sharing a facility with a museum would be suitable in that they would be likely to have permanent artefacts on display.

Melanie, the previous EAS Chairman, had apparently approached Davy Robertson sometime ago regarding a site behind the Tingwall Hall as a possibility for inclusion in a feasibility study.

Transfer of funds to SEFWG from EAS

Donna reported that the EAS have funds of £1,400 that they would be willing to transfer to a new SEFWG account. The EAS has a confirmation from Michael Duncan, giving permission to utilise the £3000 feasibility money initially granted to the EAS for the purpose of undertaking a survey and associated legal costs to move the Girlsta proposal ahead. The conditions of the grant mean that the money must be spent by March 2009.

The group discussed obtaining a valuation for the shed. Marianne felt that it was unlikely that there was a completion certificate and consequently there may be legal costs in getting it up to standard. Steven volunteered to check with Building Control regarding planning status, completion certificate etc. He felt that Building Control would have a list of what was required for completion. He also explained that if those previously involved hadn't applied, the shed would now need to fulfil current regulations.

Michael Thomson and Steven Leask were both suggested in terms of providing a valuation. Stephen suggested Richard Gibson Architects in that

they would also be able to explore the legal work involved. Discussion revealed that we are fairly sure Michael Thomson has surveyed the building previously, so his continued involvement would make sense. We agreed that we would request a full survey on the building, including a list of defects, as Building Control would require. Elaine offered to talk to Michael, as she knows him quite well. Stephen is to 'feed' the results of his enquires to Elaine in order to guide her in what to instruct Michael. Depending on the cost of the above we may be able to appoint a lawyer to further our case.

It was noted that spending on the above would be governed by EAS `rules. They would authorise Michael Thomson and billing could be carried out through them. Graham was reassured by this as he had some concerns about authorisation of funding and the lack of any Rules for the 'Group.

Proposed allotments at Seafield by SIC

Abigail shared with the 'Group the ongoing developments regarding this issue. She had initially been contacted, as an EAS member, 2 weeks ago, by Steven Cooper who informed her that Seafield, our main show venue for EAS and Shetland Pony events, was being considered as a possible site for allotments. There had been various subsequent correspondence, including that between Abigail and her local councillor and with Mary Lisk of the council, who is involved in the allotments project. All of the above had resulted in the equestrian community becoming decidedly concerned that, once again, their interests were to become secondary to that of others, which in the past had included a supermarket and other sporting interests, and now appeared to be a small minority requesting allotments. Abigail had set up a petition, on behalf of the EAS, available both online and in her local shop which already had a large number of signatures.

The EAS had been invited to attend a meeting on Thurs 11th Dec (i.e. 2 days time) and Abigail had confirmed that members of the SEFWG would be welcome. Abigail shared copies of a pre-drafted letter setting out our major objections. It was agreed that due to the short timescale, the letter would be signed by a representative of each equestrian group, stating how many members their group had. We also felt that the SEFWG should be represented at the meeting, given our strong concerns. The fact that it was mid-day Thursday, meant attendance was not easy for everyone. It was decided that Abigail would attend on behalf of the EAS, Elaine on behalf of Clickimin Open Riding Club and Helen and Donna on behalf of SEFWG.

AOCB

Marketing the SEFWG

Marketing for the SEFWG group was discussed. One suggestion was that we place a page on the EAS website. We also need to inform councillors, and others, of our existence.

AOCB (cont.)

User Requirement Specification

Graham felt that we should develop a 'User Requirement Specification', perhaps proceeding with this in the New Year. This available, we could use it to weigh up/ share various options in terms of our considered requirements. Susie offered to use her contacts to help provide information.

Development Options at Cunningsburgh Show-ground

Marianne outlined her conversation with Willie Ross of the Cunningsburgh Show Committee. He is proposing to spend £200,000+ on the Cunningsburgh Show ground in relation to horses and ponies. The committee intends to move the horse area of the show-ground and create a separate car park. They have requested that horse-group members view the area and offer suggestions. The point was made that for SEFWG members to consult would make sense as we represent all groups. It was suggested that we also seek information on dimensions allowed for Orkney Shows/ Jumping etc. to pass on to the Cunningsburgh Show committee. Graham was tasked with providing this information, given his Orkney contacts.

Willie Ross had also outlined the Cunningsburgh Show Committees' desire to build 2 large sheds to benefit the show. The committee felt that one of these sheds could provide an indoor school for our group and, due to the fact that the committee is not directly interested in running an indoor school, we would have control. Willie also stressed that, in the event of this going ahead, rental would be reasonable. The group felt that such ideas had to be positive and that a representative group should meet with the Show Committee. We will contact Willie regarding who and when.

It was stated that Cunningsburgh was on the edge of what could be called central, but again the group strongly felt that we should not rule it out. The possibility of inviting Willie Ross to the next meeting, in order for him to share his proposals, was discussed. It was suggested that this could be discussed with Willie when meeting at Cunningsburgh. The options for Cunningsburgh will be included in our next agenda.

Todds warehouse option

Frank Johnson had phoned Graham in response to our letter. He confirmed that the hatchery was owned by the bank and was up for sale and also Hjatland's interest. He also suggested that we contact George Hepburn regarding Todds warehouse which is due to be dismantled, the frame of which might be of use to us.

Possible establishment of 'The Pony Club' in Shetland

On Wed 18th February there will be an EAS public meeting to discuss whether there is sufficient interest to form a branch of 'The Pony Club' in Shetland.

Date of next meeting

Tues 20th January

