

Equestrian Association Of Shetland



Shetland Equestrian Facilities Working Group

Minutes of the meeting of Tuesday 23rd February held in the Meeting Room, Hayfield House 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)

Steven Morgan - Clickimin Open Riding Club
Abigail Robertson - Dunrossness Riding Club
Susie Nicolson - Equestrian Association of Shetland
Helen Thomson - Pony Breeders of Shetland Association
Susan Goodlad - Shetland Pony Riding & Driving Group
Marion Slater - South Whiteness Riding Club

Bob Kerr – Shetland Islands Council

Apologies

Marianne Hughson - Shetland Riding Club
Vikki Robertson - SPRDG
Whalsay Riding Club

Adoption of Minutes

The Minutes of 20 January were proposed by Susie and seconded by Abigail.

Matters arising from minutes

Helen queried p4 referring to the possible long-term storage by the Cunningsburgh Show Committee, if we were to build a shed on their ground. Graham explained that this would be in addition to our Indoor School Space.

Our previous minute mentioned inviting Willie Ross of the Cunningsburgh Show Committee to a meeting of our group some time after their AGM in February. This AGM has taken place and Abigail is now on the committee, their next meeting being the 4th March. There was discussion around this but we decided to delay inviting Willie for the mean time.

Contact list

This has been drawn up by Graham and copies were given to group members.

Results from visit to Broonies Taing

A group of SEFWG members had visited Broonies Taing, as agreed previously, and Graham shared photos taken. Scaled drawings of the Broonies Taing shed and the Girlsta shed were circulated, giving a clear comparison of relative dimensions.

The Broonies Taing shed offers us the space we require but there are a number of central pillars, at least some of which would need to be removed or angled. There is a plinth made of cast concrete inside the door which would not be easily removed and it was felt that a better option would be to level the area with hard-core before adding a surface.

The state of the road down to the building was thought to be adequate.

Discussion with Alistair Goodlad, the owner, revealed that he is asking a rental of £20,000 per annum, payable quarterly in advance. This charge would be reviewed annually. If we were to lay a surface he would take an initial deposit to cover its removal. There is also an office block, which would be available for an additional £8,000 rental. Alistair Goodlad and his brother own land adjacent to the building.

Bob pointed out that such a lease is considered by his department as a running cost and not a capital cost, although setting up costs could be built into a bid for grant aid, with us paying a percentage. We would need to have a minimum lease of 25 years before the council would consider a grant for capital works and, as mentioned previously, the capital programme is over-subscribed. Obviously we could seek other funding sources.

The general feeling was that these costs were high and that we were talking about a lot of money for little security.

Photos of the Girlsta Hatchery were also shared.

Graham had talked to Neil Watt and Michael Duncan of the Sports and Leisure Service who informed him that funding for an indoor school had been on the capital programme for 5 or 6 years. There is potentially a maximum of £100,000 available through the Capital Grants Programme if design/ structure etc. is in place. Other sources of funding would also be likely to be required.

Transfer of funds to SEFWG from EAS

Graham reported that the EAS time-limited feasibility study money has been extended to the end of September 2009.

Ownership, valuation and survey of Girlsta Hatchery

a. Update on Completion Certification

Stephen now has building warrant details. He reported that the building has full planning permission, building warrants and completion certificate. Graham later shared more detail relating to the building warrant. It appears there was a single original building warrant, which was changed to become a staged warrant. The first stage was for the erection of the foundations, building steelwork and cladding (revised later); there was a second stage for a septic tank and sea outfall but there was no final stage to complete the remaining works. Planning permission was granted and a building warrant issued for the first two stages but, as far as we are aware, the final stage was never applied for. Therefore it would appear that the hatchery building has no completion certificate. It was suggested that we write to the 'Council Building Standards Department to confirm whether there is a completion certificate.

b. Update on Change of Use Certification

The planning consent for the hatchery was discussed. Concern was raised that insurance cover may not be appropriate due to the original planning permission and building warrant defining the use of the building as a hatchery. Graham reported that Shetland Riding Club had stated at a recent meeting that there had been two British Horse Society registered instructors happy to teach in the hatchery both of whom would be willing to endorse the building. Graham reported that he had asked the Shetland Riding Club to pursue getting these endorsements in writing urgently as they would obviously be beneficial. SRC had stated that there was adequate insurance cover and this had been Minuted by SRC. At the conclusion of discussions there was no definite answer in relation to suitability of insurance cover but it was felt that SRC had negotiated the use of the building and therefore we had to trust their judgement on the level of insurance cover provided.

c. Progress on proposed sale of building

Graham shared an e-mail dated 17th February, from Johanna David. She is still not clear on the situation with the building; she describes the situation as a 'resounding silence'. The group felt that we should inform Johanna that we remain seriously interested in purchase. It was agreed that we should contact her as soon as possible to express an interest. Graham said he could do this by e-mail.

Graham has been in discussion various banks involved with the hatchery. It was agreed that we should send them a letter expressing an interest.

d. Advice from Scottish Agricultural College and Crofters Commission

The SAC had advised Marion that to move forward, title deeds were essential. She had viewed a plan from the Crofters Commission but there were no names on it. We require a map indicating land ownership and boundaries. She had been advised that the only way to obtain names of those holding title was through the land registry in Edinburgh. There is apparently an online research facility available. Elaine volunteered to research this.

Bob referred to a document, shared during the meeting of Tues 4th November, with names of neighbours and approximate arrows but it was agreed that we need more detail. It was also suggested that ask the Amenity Trust for detail of their ownership. It was suggested that this could also be gained from the Land Registry.

User Requirement Specification

Abigail has details of what was drawn up by the EAS in the form of a draft letter. It was suggested that we all considered our requirements, with the EAS specification being the starting point. Susie had sketches of an excellent indoor facility in Ireland, which could prove useful in deciding on our specification.

Future fundraising for an Equestrian Centre

Graham was keen to see group members come up with ideas for funding sources. Susie suggested June Porter, Community Learning and Development Officer and Maureen Stewart, Community Worker as useful contacts regarding funding. Bob felt both would be helpful but explained that they referred to Michael Duncan as grants co-ordinator and added that Michael also had a very good knowledge of other funding sources. Marion felt that Bob McEldowney would be a useful contact as she was aware that he had helped groups with Scottish Rural Development Fund grants.

Bob pointed out that the above two items are linked, in that any funding application will require a building specification. He feels that the EAS specification is key in that it was based on a 3-stage process, stages being: - 1. feasibility; 2. design of a building; and 3. Capital Grant. As minuted at the meeting of Tues 20th January the EAS had reached a point where they were ready to request initial costings for a building from local surveyors. It was agreed that the EAS document would be circulated and added to if necessary. Once we have agreed specification we will be in a better position to pursue funding.

Bob shared the fact that Sport Scotland had a funding stream entitled Building for Sport. This grant application involves a 2-stage process and Bob felt that a stage 1 application could be put together within a fairly short timescale, and would inform us if there was any potential in proceeding to stage 2. Bob volunteered to research this but suggested that he would require details of any business plan.

AOCB

The question of minutes being available to the groups represented on this steering group was raised. It was agreed that this should be the case. The power of the SEFWG lies in it's representation of all equestrian groups across Shetland, this representation being an enabling factor when it comes to grant aid, business negotiations etc. Thus it was felt that keeping all groups informed and 'on board' was essential if we are to secure an Equestrian Facility that will benefit all concerned. It was noted however that until the Minutes are proposed, seconded and then signed by the Chairman, they are not official Minutes and therefore not for general circulation.

Date of next meeting

Set for 19:00 hrs, Thursday 26th March, venue to be agreed.

