

# Equestrian Association Of Shetland



## Shetland Equestrian Facilities Working Group

Minutes of the meeting of Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> September held in the Radio Room,  
Islesburgh House at 7.00 p.m.

### Present

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

Karlin Moar - Clickimin Open Riding Club  
Susie Nicolson - Equestrian Association of Shetland  
Dorothy Sales - Filsket Riding Club  
Helen Thomson - Pony Breeders of Shetland Association  
Susan Goodlad - Shetland Pony Riding & Driving Group  
Marianne Hughson - Shetland Riding Club  
Marion Slater - South Whiteness Riding Club

Bob Kerr - Shetland Islands Council  
Abigail Robertson - Chairman, Equestrian Association of Shetland  
Eve Eunson - in attendance at invite of EAS

### Apologies

Sonja Flaws - Pony Breeders of Shetland Association  
Vikki Robertson - SPRDG  
Rosalyn Fraser - Whalsay Riding Club

### Adoption of Minutes

The Minutes of 23<sup>rd</sup> June were proposed by Dorothy and seconded by Susan.

### Changes to Representation from Filsket Riding Club

Tracey Leith was proposed in a letter from Filsket Riding Club as their representative. Votes were cast anonymously, resulting in 8 votes for and 0 against. Tracey was therefore accepted.

### Changes to Representation from DRC

Margaret Leslie and Kirsty Budge were proposed in a letter from the Dunrossness Riding Club as their representatives. Votes were cast anonymously for each, resulting in 8 votes for and 0 against in both cases. Margaret and Kirsty were therefore accepted.

### Changes to Representation from EAS

We are waiting on a letter of nomination which should be with us for next meeting. Eve Eunson had been invited along to the meeting by the EAS to get 'a flavour' of the group to assist her deciding whether to stand for election to be their representative.

### Partnership with 'The Brakes' Livery Yard

The EAS had been contacted by Elissa Bishop (by means of an e mail) explaining that she was planning to erect an indoor school and enquiring about the possibility of a partnership with the EAS. She was unaware, but has now been informed, of the presence of our group. The current proposal for an inside area at Brakes is 20m X 40m but Elissa had stated she would look at making it bigger in the event of a potential partnership. She had received a quote of £50,000 for materials only.

Marion shared the fact that she had a quote from Shaun Casey of £16,500, including erection, for a shed of 60 X 30 ft.

Dorothy pointed out that when Filsket RC had enquired about funding for an outdoor riding surface, they had been informed that there would be no grant aid unless there was at least a 25 year lease on the land. It could be seen that grant aid in terms of this proposal might not be straight-forward.

Bob shared the example of the Black Gaet shooting facility, where the club had obtained a long-term lease on the land, therefore enabling them to obtain public funds. As far as Bob was aware, no constituted club was able to buy land due to the fact that they are not a legal entity.

Graham related this to the indoor facility in Orkney where, as far as he was aware, they were a registered company and were pursuing charitable status.

The general feeling was that as Elissa Bishop was working commercially, a partnership could be difficult. The point was made that at present the livery clients have priority in using the school; hence issues regarding hire would need to be addressed. There was also a query about access and Planning Permission, given the location of Brakes, with narrow slip-road off the main road ie. there was a possibility that this might be problematic for anything other than domestic use.

Bob had also received an e mail from Elissa. He pointed out that if her project was commercial there would be opportunity for grants through the business gateway. If we were to rent her facility, it would be no different from renting, for example, badminton courts from the Recreational Trust. Each of the equestrian groups could apply for grant assistance (of up to £5000 per year) to use the facility.

One proposal made was that we should consult out groups as to whether a partnership might be a suitable way ahead. This was debated, along with our other options of the Cunningsburgh Show Ground and Robert Hunter's ground towards the top of Wormadale (west of the cattery). There was a strong feeling that now the Girlsta hatchery was sold and out of the equation, we needed to push ahead with our remaining options. Bob made the point that the data from the Girlsta Hatchery would be advantageous for inclusion in our business plan.

We do not yet have a price from Robert for the 10 acres we had proposed. Robert would first like at least a rough sketch. Graham is to send a layout drawing to Marion to show to Robert. The group felt that even 3 acres would provide an adequate area for a site, but 10 acres would allow for a Cross Country Course etc.

We also returned to the Cunningsburgh Show Ground option, where the show committee were proposing to seek Scottish Rural Development Partnership grant funding for an upgraded show ground, including groundworks for an area which could allow a large shed/ indoor school to be built. Abigail, who is on the Cunningsburgh Show Committee, could tell us that the application to SRDP had not yet been made but the committee was moving forward. Bob suggested that a letter of support from our group would benefit their case.

The option of ground from Davy Robertson, a previous proposal, was queried. Graham had spoken to Davy some time ago. There were 2 potential areas of land, one near the main road in Tingwall and the other behind the Tingwall Hall. Davy told Graham that he'd think about it over the summer. It was thought by the group that the latter site had had past problems with planning and access but this would obviously need investigating. Helen informed the group that Davy was quite ill at present, meaning it would be inappropriate to contact him in the meantime.

Dorothy questioned what would happen in the event of a group, such as ours, leasing land and erecting a building, and subsequently folding. We did feel that this was a relevant question and one we needed to consider.

There followed a lengthy discussion around the idea of consulting our groups (and possibly individual horse owners) by means of a questionnaire regarding preferred site choice. We discussed the fact that if we were to query preferred site choice we would need to provide a summary of key points. It was also felt that land owners of prospective sites would need to be consulted before we put forward their sites as an option. We spent time listing pros and cons before deciding that we, as a representative group, should be able to rank the options in terms of suitability while not ruling out any viable option.

Cunningsburgh Show Ground emerged as the preferred option due to the fact that the groundworks would be prepared and that services were in place nearby. The less-than-central location was brought up but the general feeling was that, in comparison to mainland distances, all of the proposed sites were within a viable distance.

Robert Hunter's site was more central but the digging work, lack of services and potential planning issues (if it was outside the councils preferred building zones) made it appear less attractive. There remains the fact that this site could be owned outright or leased and has the possibility of grazing and cross-country course. It may be worth exploring these issues and the costs involved.

We agreed we needed to contact the Cunningsburgh Show Committee to express our interest. Abigail is to speak to Willie Ross and e mail Elaine who will advance a letter expressing our interest.

**Feedback from Clubs on User Requirement Specification**

Due to the time spent on the above items, we agreed to defer the above item to the next meeting. A few points put forward by the Shetland Riding Club were shared however. These were as follows: - The arena should be 60m x 30m not including the kick boards, as these reduce riding area; tie up area should be along the long side in a "lean-to" construction; toilets should be in another "lean-to" hence reducing cost and height in the arena should be 14ft (minimum).

**AOCB**

**Creation of Plans for new Equestrian Centre**

Eve stated that as her profession is architecture, she would be happy to assist with any required drawings. Marion shared the fact that Paddy Casey's wife Anjo is willing to draw plans and provide prices for us. Marianne had obtained a sample price from Robertson and Read. They had provided groundworks and erected a 48m X 30m shed for £170,000.

**Scottish Equestrian Association**

Bob informed the meeting that the governing body linked to Sport Scotland (a potential funding source) was the Scottish Equestrian Association (SEA). If Sport Scotland was going to invest money they would be looking for a link with the governing body, hence it might be worth paying for membership/ association with SEA, if it means we could enlist their support.

Bob also made the point that the extremely successful Shetland Pony Breed Show might work in our favour in terms of promoting our cause. Helen had already collated articles and letters of support. Graham said he was happy to collate all relevant correspondence if associated individuals would provide it.

**Whalsay Riding Club**

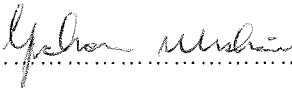
Rosalyn Fraser had requested minutes to be sent to her and also for the club's apologies to be included each month. The club is happy to be involved, but logistics makes presence at meetings difficult. It was suggested that we could locate one of our meetings in Whalsay to accommodate the Whalsay Club.

**Quality of Life funding to EAS**

The Quality of Life grant was discussed as surveys and legal costs for the Girlsta Hatchery are obviously no longer appropriate. Bob felt that the group would need to speak to Michael Duncan again with this regard. Abigail was willing to do so.

**Date of next meeting**

Set for 19:00 hrs, Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November, venue to be agreed.

.....  ..... Chairman