



# NEWSLETTER

## MARCH 2017

### From the Chair...

Chairs Report. Feb 2017

Hi Everyone,

To start I would like to thank Ros & her little people for doing a fantastic job over the last few years, I didn't want to do this job but hey ho will try to do it justice. Ros will be a hard act to follow.

So, another year begins, it started so well, dry & mild but now the weather is biting back. Hopefully it won't be for too long & we will soon be enjoying dry warm conditions.

I was hoping to be able to write something about what I was doing with Coco, she has been away since October & returned 2 weeks ago, I managed to ride 3 times including a fab rally with Anthony Perkins. She got a stone jammed in to her heel & is now lame. Fingers crossed the bruise will soon clear.

We are enjoying another very successful dressage series, this seems to go from strength to strength. Big thanks to Laura for her organisation, she is stepping back as her baby is due in May. Congratulations to Lizzie Seddon who did her first 'in charge' day & did a fabulous job. We had plenty of helpers on the day, this makes the day so much easier. Long may it continue.

The teams are doing a great job representing the club, we don't have a huge membership compared to some clubs, but we are making a few others sit up & take notice. Again, big thanks to Laura for organising, anyone interested in team competition please contact Laura.

I can't believe how quickly the year is passing, eventing season starts next week, soon the show season will be in full swing. Please can everyone think about how they can help with our Championship Show this year, I know it's not until September but your committee is already well into the organising of this event. We need sponsors, helpers, judges, we need other shows to hold qualifiers. If anyone has any ideas, please speak to a committee member.

Finally, I would like to say enjoy your horses, ride safely, don't forget your hi-vis & be polite to other road users, even the cyclists.

Jane & Coco

VHPRC

Open show & VETERAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2017

@ Leyland Court

If you can help, or know someone who can, please get in touch

Contact: anyone on the Committee!!! ☺

We hold our monthly meetings on the first Wednesday of the month

FABULOUS FOOD!

**ROSE & CROWN**

68 Parkfield Road, Pucklechurch, Bristol, BS16 9PS

## First Aid Training

Last month on the 8<sup>th</sup> Feb 2017, most of our committee members carried out a first aid training course. I am pleased to say that everyone taking part passed and they now hold a three-year certificate.

First aid today is very important, with waiting times for emergency help increasing with the sheer volume of calls our services are getting. We never know when we are likely to need this help, or even when we are needed to administer the help ourselves, but I can assure you it could save lives so it's fantastic that our members now hold this certificate... well done all!!!

We thoroughly enjoyed the evening, and today they have simplified the technics, so it now helps build greater confidence for those learning, or perhaps putting their learning to the test.

If any club members would be interested in obtaining their qualification, please speak to a committee member and we can arrange small groups to be trained.

## CAMP 2017

Just ONE space left for camp 2017!! This year we have added an extra day as this is our special **10 year anniversary!!** So we'll be going Thursday and back Sunday for those that can make it. Thursday and Friday will be hacking days, or practising, for the tuition which is two sessions Saturday and one session Sunday. Please let Linda know if you would like to book a place at camp or download the application form on the website and return it with your deposit for £50.

Camp is such fun and anyone can attend with or without a horse. Hacking only options are available and it can be as simple as you want it to be, or for the more adventurous riders you can put your skills to the test and make use of the fabulous facilities at Stockland Lovell.

If you have missed the opportunity this year, please get your name down early Jan 2018 for next year.

## NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

We would like to inform you of two new members on the committee! Rachael Frost and Sue Hocking. Rachael will be taking over the club merchandise, and Sue will be helping Linda and Kathy with the championships. Sadly, Ros has stepped down and will be sorely missed by all of us. Obviously for myself I have a hard act to follow with this news- letter role, if I can do half as good as Ros I will be happy!!

*Deb Vickery*

*Xxxx*

# VHPRC SHOW CHAMPIONSHIP QUALIFIERS

14 <sup>TH</sup>	APRIL 2017	SWPA
16 <sup>TH</sup>	APRIL 2017	ROMAN LODGE
22 <sup>ND</sup>	APRIL 2017	SHETLAND SHOW (In aid of Wellow RDA)
23 <sup>RD</sup>	APRIL 2017	TUMPY GREEN
7 <sup>TH</sup>	MAY 2017	SWPA
14 <sup>TH</sup>	MAY 2017	DJL KEYNSHAM
14 <sup>TH</sup>	MAY 2017	LLANGIBBY HUNT PC
21 <sup>ST</sup>	MAY 2017	SPRINGWATER
28 <sup>TH</sup>	MAY 2017	STRETCHOLT
28 <sup>TH</sup>	MAY 2017	MENDIP PLAINS
4 <sup>TH</sup>	JUNE 2017	SWPA
4 <sup>TH</sup>	JUNE 2017	SYSTON PC
17 <sup>TH</sup>	JUNE 2107	BERKELEY HUNT SOUTH PC
24 <sup>TH</sup>	JUNE 2017	STRETCHOLT
2 <sup>ND</sup>	JULY 2017	CONGRESBURY
8 <sup>TH</sup>	JULY 2017	MENDIP PLAINS
9 <sup>TH</sup>	JULY 2017	SWPA
22 <sup>ND</sup>	JULY 2017	STRETCHOLT
20 <sup>TH</sup>	AUG 2017	STRETCHOLT
20 <sup>TH</sup>	AUG 2017	MENDIP PLAINS
3 <sup>RD</sup>	SEPT 2017	TUMPY GREEN
16 <sup>TH</sup>	SEPT 2017	STRETCHOLT

More dates will be added once confirmed with Show Secretaries so keep checking the website for updates.

*Wishing you all the very  
Best of luck!!*

# HAPPY HACKING

(Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> JAN 2017)

It was the most beautiful crisp start to the day as I set off to work. The sun had come out and the temperature was rising. I was working up until 12.30 but so looking forward to a nice afternoon hack. I planned on riding down through Oldland as on the previous Sunday morning, my horse Josie had been very surprised by the statues at the Trading Post garden centre.

So around 1 o'clock I set off out of Woodfield stables and made my way down through the high street to Oldland. We passed the scary tortoise, the rearing horses, as well as a screaming little boy in his pushchair, Leaving the garden centre with his Gran not a problem!! 😊

We continued on and made our way over the brow of the hill at Cherry Gardens, and there we were greeted with a hive of activity!! The Fire services, ambulances, and Police, there had been a road traffic accident, a car had ploughed into the back of a bus! My first thoughts were "oh I think I will turn around" but that would have made my mare think it was too frightening to pass so with my leg on and a silent prayer we went right through the middle supervised by the police. I was so proud of my horse and although some of you may think I should have turned around I think it's up to the individual to know your horse and your own confidence level.

Happy hacking guys!! 😊  
Deb Vickery x

## Guest speaker Feb 2017

A massive thank you to Carrie for standing in at the last minute and coming to talk most passionately about her horse & pony agility. It was so enjoyable and I think many of us are interested in Carrie spending a day with the club and trying some agility with our own horses. Carrie is available to come to you and also holds play days at Haywood Equestrian Centre.

Carrie first got involved in 2014 and is now well on her way to becoming a HAAT with the International horse & pony agility club. There are 5 stages of training beginning with Starter Level and moving up to Advanced 2\*. Listening to Carrie was fascinating and it makes sense that veteran horses and ponies that can no longer be ridden do agility. The benefits are fantastic not from just an exercise point of view but also for keeping their minds active. Furthermore young stock can benefit from this a great deal too. We never know what we will face out hacking or at new venues, but by working on the simplest of techniques we can make our mounts much braver.

Carrie showed us that even a small corner of a field can be enough room to have your own training sessions and most of the equipment that Carrie uses can be obtained from many of the cheap stores, even the £1 shop. For example bunting, hoola hoops, children's brollies etc, and the use of a tarpaulin at home is a very good idea in order to simulate conditions you might find whilst out hacking e.g. caravan awnings, construction sites and so on!! Take a look at Carries facebook page for more information! there is so much more to this, even ridden agility, taking us back to handy pony.

Thank you again Carrie and best wishes for the future.

## TEAM DRESSAGE @ LEYLAND COURT Sunday 19th Area 9

Congratulations to the two teams that did us proud at Leyland court what a fab day you had. A big well done to Kim Saunders, Kathleen Griffiths, Julian Minchin, Sue Hocking, Rachael Hawkins, Kelly Clare, Christine Guy and Chloe Little. You came 9<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> fabulous results and a huge pat on the back for Team Manager Laura Hayden. Any- one wishing to compete for the club should contact Laura on 07989085769.

## DRESSAGE SUNDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2017



Whilst helping out at the dressage, and watching all the competitors, this lovely combination caught my eye!!

Watching Brom Thomas was a pleasure, the smile on her face said it all, she came 3<sup>rd</sup> in her first class, and then went on to win the next. There was tears of joy from Brom and her mum, and they then told me the story of how her horse had a bad reputation, and had even bolted from an arena before. To see this partnership doing so well is what makes all the hard work worthwhile!!

So, come on ladies, gents, girls and boys take inspiration from this and keep working away!! It can be so frustrating when you practise all week, think you have nailed it only for your test not to go quite as planned!!!...But hey that's horses for you!!

Well done Brom!!!

## DOES IT MATTER IF MY STABLES SMELL OF URINE????

Changing from deep litter bedding to rubber mats with minimal bedding has brought a new problem – the ammonia level in stable air. Many people accept that the smell of urine (actually its ammonia gas) in horse stables is an unavoidable part of keeping horses. But the gas is quite harmful to a horse's respiratory system. Here we tell you how to keep the level as low as possible.

Bacteria present in faeces, soiled bedding and on the stable floor convert the compound urea in urine into ammonia gas, which then circulates in stable air. The HSE has set the maximum permitted 8-hour workplace exposure ammonia level for people at 25ppm, yet the level in stables can be as high as 250ppm or more. If you can clearly smell ammonia in a horse's stable (and your clothes smell after mucking out) the level is likely to be at least 50ppm or more, well above the safe level. And remember that although you may be in the stable for less than an hour, some stabled horses are forced to breathe this for up to 23 hours per day. High ammonia levels irritate the horse's respiratory system causing excess mucus production and interfering with oxygen uptake when the horse is working.

A horse urinates 5-8 times a day, producing around 15 litres (a large bucketful) of urine. When kept on mats the urine leaks between them if it is not rapidly absorbed by the bedding, and accumulates underneath. Poorly absorbent bedding materials such as straw and miscanthus when used as a thin

layer allow the urine to flood along the bed creating larger urine 'footprint', and the release of more ammonia.



What can be done? The problem has to be approached in two ways a) decrease ammonia production b) ensure the ventilation is adequate to dilute the level in stable air

**USE MORE BEDDING.** Use a thicker layer and spread it over a wider area to absorb as much urine run-off as possible and allow more complete removal. Stables with soft rubber mats, used to minimise or even eliminate the need for bedding tend to have unacceptably high ammonia levels. Although in principle a sloping floor with a channel should allow urine to run away, the volume passed is so low it seems not to help very much.

**USE A MORE ABSORBENT BEDDING** The finer bedding materials such as sawdust (from pellets) and shavings seem to be the most efficient and result in the smallest urine footprint. If you are wedded to straw, consider using a more absorbent alternative underneath. Removal of as much soiled bedding as possible at least twice a day is critically important too.

**MUCK OUT THE STABLE WHEN EMPTY.** Mucking out exposes the wet bedding and floor, raising the ammonia level. It is best if the stable is left empty afterwards, preferably with the door completely open. Mucking out also raises the dust level in stable air for several hours, which is another compelling reason for not having the horse in there at the time.

**USE A STABLE DISINFECTANT** If the bedding is pushed back every day, powdered (not granular) garden lime from garden centres, or a powdered stable disinfectant (lots are available) can be sprinkled on the urine footprint. These inhibit the action of the bacteria that convert urea to ammonia. It is important to choose a powder that is a true disinfectant rather than just a deodoriser, which merely masks the smell. Fresh bedding is then placed on top.

**SEAL BETWEEN THE MATS** Urine flooding between the mats and accumulating underneath seems to be a major problem. Because lifting the mats and disinfecting underneath is such an onerous and unpleasant task it usually isn't done often enough, although it is important. A liquid disinfectant such as Virkon can be brushed into the cracks as a stop-gap measure. When the mats are first laid (and it can only be done then) it is possible to inject a sealant between them, but this does require the floor to be perfectly flat such that the joints are tight and uniform, and the sealant may need to be regularly renewed. The cheaper lightweight cow mats tend to expand over time causing the joints to buckle allowing more urine to flood underneath, although they are much easier to lift for cleaning.

**WATCH THE PROTEIN LEVEL IN THE DIET** Protein fed to excess (for example large amounts of alfalfa) results in more urea being excreted in the urine and consequently more ammonia production from the stable floor and bedding.

**IMPROVE VENTILATION** This is a key part of reducing the ammonia level. Every stable should have two air inlets/outlets, as far apart as possible. If the rear wall is made of wood, drilling a line of 3cm holes high up all along the back wall is a great way to promote air flow, without draughts. Removing window glass, opening all windows and doors, using a chain across stable doors - these will ensure a good flow of air through the stable and dilute the ammonia level. Never restrict ventilation to keep horses warm. If you are worried that your horse is cold, put on another rug.

**CATCH IT if YOU CAN!** A long-handled muck scoop is excellent for catching the urine if a horse urinates in your presence. Don't be shy! Also, it is surprisingly easy to teach a horse to urinate on command. It is done by habituating the horse to a certain sound (for example whistling) every time it urinates. Once it has learnt the command, it can be taken out of the stable to a particular part of an adjacent paddock where horses have urinated or defecated before (or where you have deposited urine you have caught previously) and induced to urinate. They soon learn that is why they are brought there, and will often urinate without being asked. Alternatively, the reluctance of horses to urinate on a bare floor can be used to advantage. Bring the horse in from the field on to a bare stable floor for an hour or more, for example when it is being fed. Then scatter the bedding and wait briefly with a muck scoop to catch the urine if the horse urinates.

**THE BOTTOM LINE?** If your stables smell strongly of urine, something is wrong and you need to take action.

### DIARY DATES

March 19 <sup>th</sup>	Dressage @ Woodfield
April 17 <sup>th</sup>	Combined training @ Rabson Manor
April 30 <sup>th</sup>	Dressage championships @ Woodfield
May 14 <sup>th</sup>	Dressage & riding test @ Rabson Manor.
June 4 <sup>th</sup>	Dressage to music @ Burrows Court
July 2 <sup>nd</sup>	One day event West Wilts (TBC)
July 16 <sup>th</sup>	Show & style jumping at Leyland Court (heights now starting from 70 cm)

**Dressage Riders, Show Jumpers, Eventers**  
If you would be interested in competing for the club at area competitions, please contact Laura Hayden, Team Co-ordinator on 07989085769.

### **Tack Shop Club Member Discounts**

Did you know you are entitled to special discounts at local tack shops? Think of all that money you can save! Here is a summary of just some of the discounts available and the contact details:

Chris Puddy : <http://puddys.co.uk/saddlery/> - Discount 10% - Discount 5%

Patrick Pinkers: <http://www.patrickpinker.com/?id=296> - Discount 10%

It is also worth asking if you visit other tack shops, & remember always take your membership card with you! Please note these discounts do seem to be rather selective and some items are excluded. unfortunately this includes saddles.



## Upcoming Guest speakers

5<sup>TH</sup> April 2017 Rachael Flanagan: Scintigraphy

10<sup>TH</sup> May 2017 Terri Ikonen: Grade 4 listed B.D judge  
Please note the date change for May

7<sup>TH</sup> June 2017 Nicola West: Disabled rider doing horseback Archery

5<sup>TH</sup> July 2017 The police: Yard safety talk

### REMINDER

Subscriptions for 2017 were due to be paid in February.  
Renewal forms can be downloaded from our website.

Please keep checking the website for up-to-date news regarding speakers and rallies – [www.vhprc.co.uk](http://www.vhprc.co.uk)  
Any articles/ photos to Deb at [Debvickery@live.co.uk](mailto:Debvickery@live.co.uk) many thanks.