

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF SPORT HORSE BREEDING OF GREAT BRITAIN, HELD AT PRIMROSE HILL FARM, ARLESCOTE, OXFORDSHIRE, OX17 1DQ AT 11AM ON 27TH SEPTEMBER 2026.

The General Secretary explained to all present that whilst the items on the agenda remain unchanged, the order had been revised and for clarity she would announce each item in turn.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for non-attendance were received from 35 Members.

WELCOME FROM THE INTERIM CHAIRMAN

The Interim Chairman Mr Hewlett opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the last Meeting held on 23rd April were confirmed and signed as a correct record by the Interim Chairman - proposed by Mrs J Hall and seconded by Mr J Conifey.

PRESENTATION OF ANNUAL BREEDING AWARDS.

THE ROBERT WARDEN MEMORIAL TROPHY

The Robert Warden Memorial Trophy is awarded annually to the owner of the mare that receives the highest marks for the grading season.

Mares that have been successful either in equestrian sport or the show ring usually gain the top placings in our mare gradings and 2025 was no exception. Showing mares The Sligo Queen and Langaller Cover Girl who scored 8.78 and 8.42 respectively, were the top two.

The Sligo Queen belonging to Ashley Anderson is by Sligo Candy Boy out of Leanbh Ceadaoin. The Sligo Queen had a super 2025 season winning at Midland Counties, Royal Norfolk, Great Yorkshire and The National Hunter Supreme Championship Show and taking her HOYS ticket for The Price Family Supreme Championship.

Langaller Cover Girl belonging to Charles Upham is by Sandy's Light out of Chantry Clover Girl.

Third placed mare with a high score of 8.21 was Fourfields Classeka owned by Sharon Dudden is by Classe VDL out of Agent M.

The Robert Warden Memorial Trophy was presented to Ashley Anderson by the President of SHB(GB) Jane Hastie nee Nixon MRCVS.

(Ashley Anderson is unable to attend to receive the award, we will arrange to get it to her after the AGM)

THE PARTY TRICK LEGACY FOAL TROPHY

In 2021 SHB(GB) introduced Foal Grading alongside the established Mare Grading series. Nick & Amanda Gauntlett very generously donated a trophy to be awarded to the foal that received the highest mark, in memory of their talented young stallion Party Trick.

Quality was in abundance in the foals forward for judging. In our fifth year of foal grading 12 of the 24 foals assessed received a premium score of 8.0 or more meaning they will receive a "premium" stamp in their passport. The top marked foal of the year was the filly Wellpark Vesper owned by Sharon Dudden.

Wellpark Vesper is by The After Party out of Fourfields Classeka.

The Party Trick Trophy was presented to Sharon Duddon by the President of SHB(GB) Jane Hastie nee Nixon MRCVS.

THE BREEDERS CUP

Sport Horse Breeding GB present the trophy to the individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the breeding of Sport Horses. This year's recipient was a very easy choice. Ann studied agriculture at Seale Hayne college in Devon before marrying and working on the family dairy farm. Hunting was a huge passion, and she took on the mastership of the Pentyrch {pronounced Pen Turk} which she held for 10 seasons. During those early years she combined the farm with standing stallions at public stud, initially on the family farm in Wales. She is a qualified Equine AI technician and sits on the BYEH judge's panel. Always a passionate stalwart of the then Hunter Improvement Society and later with Sport Horse Breeding GB, her first stallions included Turn Back Time, Senang Hati, Cornishman, Another Hoarworthy, Queens Soldier, Southern Music and Roviris. She then made the move to Dorset and joined forces with Tony Warehem and together they set up Etheridge Farm Stud. A wider mix of stallions were resident there including the Irish Draughts Sandy's Light, Silvamon and Knockaleery Dancer, and sports horses Earl Cottage, Sempers Spirit and Trenawin Lydian, as well as the Thoroughbreds Deltic, Leander and latterly Virtual. Alongside their working stallions they ran a superior herd of broodmares winning County and National Championships all over the UK and producing some of the finest show horses in the country. These have been consistently sourced by the leading producers for their clients know that the quality and temperament would be exceptional. Producing in hand horses for others was another string to their considerable successful enterprise.

We are delighted to present this award to Ann Bassett in recognition of her 43 years of breeding, so far, and to acknowledge her remarkable influence going forward.

RECOGNITION & THANKS TO RETIRING COUNCIL MEMBERS.

Mr Hewlett said that he would also like to formally thank Mr Upham, Mr Chalmers & Mr Hunnable for their service on Council.

COUNCIL ELECTION RESULTS

Mr Hewlett read out the Report of the Scrutineer of the Voting Papers, for the election of 3 members of the Council.

The results confirmed the election to Council of Mrs Katie Jerram-Hunnable, Mrs Denise Richardson-Rowell & Mr C Hewlett.

TO RECEIVE VERIFICATION OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2025.

The Society's financial statements were verified and accepted. Proposed by Mr K Lee and seconded by Mr J Conifey.

ELECTION OF SOCIETY'S ACCOUNTANT

On the proposal of Mr S Somers, seconded by Mrs S Rawding, 'Myfiscal' were elected as the Society's accountants.

TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE INTERIM CHAIRMAN MR HEWLETT ON BEHALF OF THE BREEDING COMMITTEE.

Mr Hewlett gave his report as follows:

"We have had another successful year with 5 venues kindly hosting mare and foal gradings across the country. We had 15 mares and 24 foals forward for grading.

7 mares graded into the Head Stud Book, 7 attained Main Stud Book status and 1 into the Foundation Stud Book. All of the mares forward gained good scores and had favorable comments. As a society, we are delighted to welcome these mares onto the grading system and share their owner's enthusiasm to improve and increase their mares value for future generations.

Of the 24 foals presented 12 graded and 12 achieved the higher Premium status. The standard of foals was extremely high, and the highest placed foals were exceptional.

The top 3 mares and the top two foals will receive monetary prizes. Every other Head Stud Book mare belonging to a current member will receive a voucher for a free foal registration. The 2025 Mare and Foal gradings have been very generously sponsored by Baileys Horse Feeds.

Top Graded mare went to The Sligo Queen belonging to Ashley Anderson. The Sligo Queen is by Sligo Candy Boy out of Leanbh Ceadaoin. The Sligo Queen, has been shown in 2025 as a brood mare winning at Midland Counties, Royal Norfolk, Great Yorkshire & the National Hunter Supreme Championship show, where she also won the Price Family Supreme, qualifying her for HOYS. Congratulations to Ashley Anderson who wins the top prize of £400.

Second highest mare went to Langaller Cover Girl belonging to Mr C Upham. Langaller Cover Girl is by Sandy's Light out of Chantry Clover Girl. Langaller Cover Girl has also been showing this year, winning the L/W Hunter Brood mare at the National Hunter Supreme Championship Show. Congratulations to Mr Upham who wins the second prize of £300.

Third place went to Fourfields Classeka belonging Mrs S Dudden. Fourfields Classeka is by Classe VDL out of Agent M. Congratulations to Mrs Dudden who wins the third prize of £300.

Each of the other mares achieving Head Stud Book status belonging to a current member in 2025 will be awarded a voucher for a free foal registration (including DNA). Vouchers are valid for two years, and foals must be by an SHB(GB) Graded Stallion.

The highest placed foal of the series goes to Wellpark Vesper owned and bred by Mrs S Dudden. Wellpark Vesper is by The After Party out of Fourfields Classeka. Congratulations again to Mrs Dudden who will receive £500.

The second highest place foal was Ashleys Queen of Candy owned and bred by Ashley Anderson. Ashleys Queen of Candy is by Ashleys Black Magic out of The Sligo Queen. Congratulations to Ashley Anderson who wins £300.

We are very grateful to all our generous hosts who allowed us the use of their facilities and we are also very appreciative of the time given by the panel of graders who ensure that consistent standards are maintained”.

TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE JUDGES, RULES & SHOWS COMMITTEE MRS R FLACK.

Mrs Flack gave her report on the year as follows:

"Before I begin, I would like to take a moment for us to remember our judges, whom we have sadly lost during the past year.

Anne Burrington

Julian White

This has been an exceptional and, at times, extremely difficult year for Sport Horse Breeding of Great Britain.

As members will know, we did not hold our Spring Show this year.

Given the financial position of the Society, we felt that this was the responsible decision — and that it also gave us an opportunity to take stock and reconsider what we wanted that show to be.

I am pleased to say that we are now in a position to organise what I hope will be a fantastic Spring Show, the date of which will be announced shortly.

Our Championship Show went ahead, with disappointingly low entries, but it has to be said, the quality of horse's forward was excellent.

We also had to contend with the practical challenges presented by vaccination requirements and the exceptionally hot weather that we experienced over the period.

Our sincere thanks must go to the people who continue to support this society and its shows, whether that's by sponsoring, stewarding, judging, volunteering competing or spectating, every one of you is valued.

Complaints and standards

This year has seen two serious, high-profile complaints upheld by this Council.

*In **both** cases, it was the decision of **the entire Council** to proceed to independent disciplinary action, the detail and results of which have already been published.*

Moving on...

We continue to receive the occasional anonymous email from fake accounts which we are simply unable to verify or act upon. It seems that every Society deals with these. I suppose that is one of the negatives of the world we now live in.

We also receive many telephone calls throughout the year with complaints or opinions about which judges are doing what.

And I say the same thing to every one of those people:

*If you believe something is wrong, **write it down and send it to us. Our complaints process is designed to protect the complainant in its confidentiality.***

But allegations whispered down a telephone line cannot be investigated fairly.

Written complaints can.

For instance, It was horrible to hear allegations from a very senior judge about the way another senior judge had behaved during an assessment for another society.

And I remember thinking:

If this is serious enough to tell me...

why isn't it serious enough to put in writing?

That is important.

Because standards are not maintained by gossip.

They are maintained by people being prepared to stand behind what they say —

and by the Society then dealing with those concerns properly, fairly and consistently.

And there is another side to this.

Those of us involved in running the Society are human beings.

We read what is written about us. We hear what is said about us.

And sometimes the personal nature of it can be extremely unpleasant.

Think about that for a moment.

Words matter.

And when they become personal, aggressive or deliberately hurtful...

it stays with you.

That does not mean that Council should be protected from criticism. Far from it.

We should be challenged.

We should be questioned.

And where we get things wrong, we should be held to account.

But there is a difference between legitimate criticism and personal attack.

*Apparently, even being **hissed at** by banned members now comes with the territory.*

Judges, rules and the future

One of the areas I am particularly proud of this year has been the work surrounding our judges and our rules.

Our judges are fundamental to this Society.

They represent SHB(GB) at shows across the country, and the decisions they make directly affect the confidence that exhibitors and members have in us.

That means we have a responsibility not simply to appoint judges — but to train them, support them and continue to develop them through their careers, young and old.

We have therefore been looking closely at how we train the next generation of judges and how we provide continuing development for those already on our panels.

That work will continue.

We have also been prepared to ask questions about long-established practices.

*The consultation surrounding **shod and barefoot horses** is a good example.*

Rather than simply assuming that something must continue because it has always been done that way, we asked people what they thought.

That is how a Society should evolve.

Not by throwing away its traditions - but by being prepared to examine them.

Our staff

There is something else I particularly want to say today.

Over the last few years, I have come to gain enormous respect for the Catherine and the Team who work in the offices of SHB(GB).

They are the people who answer the telephone, - sometimes when somebody is angry.

They deal with the entries.

They deal with the memberships.

They deal with the judges, the shows, the paperwork, the complaints — and the endless questions.

And very often they are dealing with the consequences of decisions that they themselves did not make.

I believe that, until Chris came on board, our staff have been consistently let down by successive Councils, they have been left to operate in a vacuum through a lack of consistent leadership, communication and care.

That has to change.

Council has a responsibility not only to govern this Society, but to support the people who actually keep it running.

And I would personally like to thank Catherine, Tracey, Laura and Clare For their long-standing commitment and contribution to this society.

I also want to say something about Chris Hewlett.

Chris stepped into the Chair at an extraordinarily difficult time for this Society.

There have been financial pressures, serious governance issues, difficult complaints and some extremely challenging Council meetings.

Yet throughout all of that, he has remained focused on trying to move SHB(GB) forward.

Chris and I have not always agreed on absolutely everything.

And I suspect he would be slightly worried if we did.

But I have developed enormous respect for him.

He has been prepared to make difficult decisions.

He has been prepared to listen.

And, perhaps most importantly, he genuinely cares about the future of this Society.

Leadership is easy when everything is going well.

It is considerably harder when it is not.

And I would like to thank Chris for the leadership he has shown during this period. Sport horse breeding is certainly in a better place than it was 9 months ago.

And finally, something more personal

I have always given myself 100% to everything that I do

I do not agree with the direction that the majority of this Council is taking Sport Horse Breeding.

I am exasperated by the lack of ability to grasp the situation that the society faces or the responsibility that they themselves have as Trustees of a Charity.

To be absolutely clear on this, the experiences I have witnessed in the past 3 years would never be tolerated in the professional workplace.

I am sorry,

sometimes speaking out about the truth sounds really harsh, but maybe that's because you have benefitted from the silence?

But I believe in accountability, not comfort at the expense of integrity

It is therefore, with sadness, that I tell you that I am stepping down with immediate effect from the Council of SHB(GB).

I am truly sorry to the people that support my place on the Council of SHBGB, that I leave at a time where so much more needs to be done and hope that you understand why.

I am exhausted and frankly have run out of patience, this has made me miserable, I have nothing left to give.

I will be making my resignation letter public as I feel that I owe that to those that support me.

Thank you for listening and goodbye".

TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE INTERIM CHAIRMAN MR HEWLETT.

Mr Hewlett gave his Chairman's report as follows:

"Good morning everyone, and a very warm welcome to you all.

Thank you for coming this today and for taking the time to attend your Society's Annual General Meeting.

I hope that everyone here feels welcome and included. An AGM should be an opportunity for all members to feel that they are part of their Society, to hear what has been happening, to understand where the Society is today, and to have a voice in its future.

This is, ultimately, your Society, and I believe it is important that we remember that.

For those who may not know me, my name is Chris Hewlett. I have been a member of the Society for 51 years and I am also a Life Member. I have been Interim Chairman since March this year, having been co-opted onto Council earlier in the year.

I suspect, however, that despite having been Interim Chairman for the last six months, many members still know very little about me. And, if I am honest, I suspect many members know relatively

little about the individual Council members they vote for either.

So, before I talk about the Society, what has happened over the last six months, and why I have made

some of the decisions I have made, I think it is only fair that I briefly tell you a little about who I am and

where I have come from.

MY BACKGROUND

I wasn't particularly good at school and I didn't follow a conventional academic route.

At 22, I became a BHSI, and horses and the equestrian industry have been at the centre of my working life ever since.

I spent approximately 25 years building and running Haddon Stud, and I had an absolute blast doing it. I bred, produced and trained some lovely horses, including Haddon Challenger, Haddon Conquest, Derwen Red Marvel, Sylvan Express TB and Haddon Hurricane, a HOYS winner.

I was also responsible for bringing Miners Lamp over from Ireland. He went on to sire Miners Frolic, a very successful event horse and world circuit medal winner, as well as numerous other successful show and event horses.

I then created Haddon Training, which became the largest provider of equine apprenticeships in the country, later expanding into animal care and business programmes through to Level 5. Haddon Training was subsequently rated Outstanding by Ofsted for 11 consecutive years. At one point, we were managing approximately 650 apprentices and students cross England and Wales, with Government contracts worth up to around £3 million. That brought significant responsibilities for accountability, transparency, financial management and ensuring public money was properly controlled and spent. It also meant building and leading a skilled team of people who could deliver all of this effectively.

In my mid-forties, I went back to education, gained a Certificate in Education and became a qualified teacher — quite a journey for someone who hadn't exactly excelled at school and had not followed a conventional academic route.

I tell you that not to give you my CV, but because it provides some context for how I approach governance, finance, accountability and organisational management and to give you confidence in what I am doing.

WHY I BECAME INTERIM CHAIRMAN

When I was co-opted onto Council earlier this year, I was initially asked to look at the Society's financial position.

What started as a financial concern very quickly became something much broader. I undertook what became an overall audit of the Society.

That meant looking not just at finance, but at governance, operations, IT, data, risk, policies, processes, project management and the way Council itself was functioning.

And, quite honestly, I was shocked by what I found.

There were weaknesses in a number of areas which, taken individually, might appear manageable. But collectively, they painted a much more serious picture of an organisation that needed significant change.

THE FINANCIAL POSITION

I want to talk about the financial position because I believe members have a right to understand it. Over the last ten years, the Society has withdrawn more than £300,000 from its investments to support its ongoing operations.

I want to ask you directly: Were you aware of that?

Were you aware of the overall trend, and what that trend tells us about the underlying financial sustainability of the Society?

I suspect many members were not.

What concerns me is not simply the individual withdrawals, but the trend over time. I do not believe that this overall picture has previously been brought together and presented to Council as a single,

clear financial trend and considered for what it tells us about the underlying sustainability of the Society.

There have been repeated indications over a number of years that the Society was having to rely on its investments to support its operations, but, in my view, sufficient attention was not given to the significance of that continuing trend or to what needed to change to address it.

This was one of the reasons why I believed an overall audit was necessary. I wanted to understand not simply where the money was going, but why the Society had repeatedly needed to draw on its investments and what needed to change to put it on a sustainable footing.

This is not about attributing blame for individual decisions. It is about recognising the pattern, understanding its significance and making sure that we do not continue to repeat it.

"if you always do what you always did, you will always get what you have always had"

WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED

Despite the seriousness of what I found, a great deal has been achieved since in a relatively short period.

We now have a clear Vision, Mission and Values. Our Vision is:

"A respected and inclusive equine society where breeding for today's and tomorrow's changing needs is championed, equine welfare is upheld, excellence in all activities thrives, and members are proud to belong."

Our Mission is: "Educated breeding for all future equine activities."

And our Values are: Excellence. Welfare First. Education. Integrity. Public Benefit. Stewardship.

We have also developed a strategic plan, strengthened financial reporting, and introduced a formal budget giving Council a clearer picture of anticipated income and expenditure and a basis for monitoring performance.

Identified savings of approximately £30,000 a year through changes to telephone costs, insurance and accountancy arrangements.

We have addressed significant weaknesses around data protection and now have GDPR-compliant backed-up data. Our IT and communications systems are now working effectively and reliably.

The database project has been significantly progressed and hastened. It has been cleansed and validated and is now at the final stages of verification before transfer to Grassroots. Once transferred,

Grassroots will build the new database and host the data.

There has also been progress in education, membership and digital development.

WHAT THE SOCIETY HAS GOING FOR IT

And I want to stress something very strongly.

Despite the difficulties, I have never lost sight of what an extraordinary organisation this is.

This Society has a history going back to 1885. It is one of the oldest horse breed societies in the country and has one of the largest breeding registers and stud books for non-Thoroughbred horses in the UK. It has Royal Patronage.

It has an enormous amount of knowledge, experience, data, relationships and goodwill built up over many years.

It has affiliations across shows, horses and riders, and its role in registration and passports, judges, mare and stallion gradings, education, breeding and membership.

The Society has Royal Patronage from His Majesty the King

There is an enormous amount here to build on. And I genuinely believe the Society has huge potential.

THE ANNOUNCEMENT

There is something that I have not shared with members before today.

It is a decision I have not reached lightly, and one that I have spent a considerable amount of time thinking about.

Today, I have decided to stand down as Interim Chairman and by that I mean full resignation.

I want to explain to you why I have reached that decision.

It is important that I make clear from the outset that this is not because I have lost faith in the Society.

In fact, it is almost the opposite.

I believe too strongly in what this Society could become to pretend that the current structure is capable of delivering it.

I am standing down because I have reached the professional conclusion that I cannot deliver the changes I believe the Society needs within the current structure and mix of Council. This is not about one individual, one disagreement or one particular issue. The difficulty, as I see it, is the structure and culture of Council.

STRUCTURE, SKILLS AND GOVERNANCE

When I talk about the structure of Council, I am not simply talking about the number of Trustees. I mean how Trustees are selected, the skills and experience represented around the table, and how responsibility for different areas of the Society is organised.

When I became Interim Chairman in March, there was initially following my recommendation a collective recognition within Council that the existing structure needed to change. There was an acknowledgement that we needed to look at how Council was constituted, the skills and experience required around the table, and how we could create a structure better suited to the Society's future. I believed that was an important and positive step. However, as the months have progressed, that position has changed. The appetite for genuine structural change has reduced, and the approach has increasingly become one of believing that the existing Council can resolve these issues itself within the current structure.

That is where I fundamentally disagree.

In my professional judgement, the current structure and, importantly, the current mix of Trustees are holding the Society back.

The Society already has an abundance of equine knowledge and experience, and that is a huge strength. But a modern charity also needs strong skills in finance, governance, legal and regulatory matters, risk, strategy, business management, communications, marketing, digital, data and membership development.

Those skills do not all need to sit within the Trustee body. We should also make better use of specialist equine expertise through properly structured advisory groups covering areas such as Breeding, Shows and Events, Judges and Rules, and Education.

In simple terms, Trustees should govern and provide strategic oversight, while appropriately structured specialist groups can provide the expertise needed to support the Society's activities.

The member's vote should remain important. But the process leading to that vote needs to ensure members have a genuine opportunity to choose from candidates who collectively provide the skills, knowledge and experience the Society requires.

HOW COUNCIL SHOULD WORK

There is also the question of how Trustees work together.

Trustees should guide, help, direct and constructively challenge. Challenge is essential to good governance, but it needs to be informed, objective and constructive.

During my time as Interim Chairman, there have been occasions where discussion has become accusatory rather than constructive, where objectivity has been lacking, where suggestions have been

challenged without an alternative solution being offered, and where decisions or actions have been delayed.

There have also been occasions where people have been working at very different speeds without sufficient consideration of the impact on others.

That does not create an effective governing body.

Good governance requires collaboration. It requires people to share knowledge and experience, listen to different perspectives and collectively find solutions.

No individual Trustee has all the answers, and no one person can deliver all the changes this Society needs.

What the Society needs is a Council that can provide informed skilled scrutiny, constructive challenge, practical support and genuine collaboration — working together in the interests of the Society.

THE ARTICLES

The Society's Articles of Association are outdated and need to be modernised properly. They need to reflect the Society we are today and, more importantly, the Society we want to become.

I have tried to move this forward. It has proved considerably more difficult and slower than I believe it

should have been.

The Articles should provide the framework for a modern governance structure, including a proper

mechanism for identifying the skills and experience required on Council. This is important work and it needs to be done properly, with appropriate professional advice.

WHY I AM STEPPING DOWN

So, ultimately, this is why I have made my decision.

I have reached the point where I believe that the changes I believe are necessary cannot be delivered

effectively within the current structure and mix of Council.

I could continue trying to push those changes forward. But I do not believe that would be in the best interests of the Society.

I am therefore choosing to step aside.

I want to be absolutely clear:

I am not walking away from the Society.

I have been a member for 51 years. I am a Life Member. This Society has been a part of my life for a very long time. I care deeply about its future.

And I want to see the Society still here in another 51 years.

LOOKING FORWARD

The Society has a huge amount going for it. It has history, knowledge, expertise, data, relationships and members. It has enormous potential.

We need to make better use of what we already have, attract new members while retaining existing ones, engage younger generations and become more outward-looking, collaborative and relevant.

And we need a governance structure capable of delivering that ambition.

I genuinely believe that can be achieved. But it requires the right structure, the right skills, the right culture and, above all, a willingness to put the interests of the Society first.

FINAL MESSAGE

I have spent the last six months trying to understand this Society, to identify what needs to change and to put foundations in place for a more sustainable future.

I am proud of what has been achieved in that time.

There is still a great deal to do.

But I leave you with this.

Our responsibility is not simply to preserve the Society's history. It is to give that history a future and the correct platform to achieve it.

The Society has a future.

It has enormous potential.

And it is worth fighting for.

I would like to say thank you to all the members who took the trouble to vote for me and thank you to

the Team at the office who work extremely hard.

Thank you."

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mr Hewlett read out an email received from Mr J Gilliver who had sent his email to the SHB office and asked for it to be read out. That email is reproduced in full below:

"Firstly, may I send my apologies for being unable to attend the AGM this Sunday, due to a prior commitment.

I have been a member of this society for over 35 years and on the Judging panel well over 25 years. I have been past Chairman of the SHBGB North West. I have shown in hand, winning the Hunter Brood Mare Championship with a homebred at the Great Yorkshire Show when the Lightweight class had just under 30, the Middleweight's had 20 and the Heavyweight's had 10+. The "Hay Day" for Hunter breeding. It is a sad reflection of the times that these classes only have a handful of exhibits. I was proud to be a member of this society.

I have eagerly awaited this meeting that has been delayed (normally a spring meeting) which now favours breeders at this time of year. I have asked Council members on several occasions as to when the AGM was going to take place. Finally, I contacted our Lady President who informed me it was diarised for the 27th September both venue and live streaming. However, now there is no "Live Streaming" to cater for members that cannot attend in person. This sadly reflects the attitude of the society that they are no longer member focused. All other societies manage Zoom/Teams meeting for Judges/Members online. Yet another example of a backward thinking society.

I have an issue with the process, selection and treatment of young probation judges. They are being exploited and becoming disillusioned by the process.

How can someone be accepted to probation for Small and Ladies but not Weight classes?

Why can these people not be allowed to do probationary on any other panels whilst doing Sport Horses. Surely if they meet the requirement of the SHBGB then they should be free to do other panels?

Why have these candidates not received any information about their progress after 2 years or if they have been successful? Some probation judges have not received any feedback after their probationary period. Is that right?

The society send out an email to ask the candidate about their experience and what they felt about the process. Ironic the society is asking for feedback but has not given any.

This process has done nothing but to discourage, frustrate and disillusion the very people that our society should be encouraging.

I feel the above begs the question, should someone with no judging experience be in charge of this process?

Ridden Hunters and In Hand Hunter classes are sadly in the decline. The guidelines description of a Lightweight being 16.1hh perhaps should be revised as rarely as a Judge do you have anything around this height to judge and you inevitably award winners that tower over the "Ideal" 16.1hh.

Sadly I am no longer proud to be a member of this society and feel a change in direction of the society is needed. The society should be more customer focused towards its members, judges and show organisers. The society needs to foster the younger member as they are the future of the societies.

Finishing on a good note, the team at the office are always caring, approachable, helpful and above all polite.

Yours sincerely"

John C Gilliver

Mr Hewlett asked Mrs Flack if she would respond in relation to a number of the points raised which she did as follows:

*"OK, frankly, I am staggered by this criticism, coming from one of our own panel judges because it is so factually incorrect
Firstly, I feel it is correct to point out that Mr Gilliver called me regarding this in October 2024. To be honest, he ranted at me for quite some period of time and I explained then as I will now,*

*the probationary assessment and decision making regarding their success or failure is undertaken by **our own panel judges. NOT BY ME. I do the admin!***

There are a minimum of three judges at every assessment.

This shows that despite me explaining this to Mr Gilliver, he clearly did not understand.

I will address each part of what you have just heard read out:

JG - I have an issue with the process, selection and treatment of young probation judges. They are being exploited

I would be very interested to understand what part of this process is exploitative – this is the same process that all societies have used for years, so IF they are being exploited now in some way, they have been for years. There are many judges sat in this room, and I sincerely hope that you have not found anything in the past to be exploitative.

How can someone be accepted to probation for Small and Ladies but not Weight classes?"

NB: Mrs Hamilton got up to leave the meeting whilst expressing concern that this correspondence was being discussed without Mr Gilliver present. The General Secretary confirmed that she had personally taken a call from Mr Gilliver the preceding Friday where he had expressly asked for his email to be read out on his behalf as he was unable to be present.

Mrs Flack then continued as follows:

"The particular candidate that he is referring to (whose reference he wrote), was assessed on ride for weights and ladies. The 3 assessors all agreed she rode well enough side-saddle to start her on the panel as ladies and smalls and to see if riding improved over time to reassess at a later date. That was a decision made by the assessors, not me.

After Mr Gillivers rant at me, I then took further advice from another two of our panel judges who also agreed wholeheartedly that just because you rode well side-saddle, it did not necessarily mean that you rode well astride.

Why can these people not be allowed to do probationary on any other panels whilst doing Sport Horses.

AND

Surely if they meet the requirement of the SHBGB then they should be free to do other panels?

Firstly, this is because we have a very small window of classes to use for probation - these are our qualifying classes for the RIHS. It is a hard fact that because the HOYS hunters have been dominated by BSHA in terms of shows affiliating to them - they of course use these shows for probation of their own judges on hunters, this severely curtails the number of shows available to us.

Secondly, If the probationary judge is off probationing for another society this then presents another issue in terms of the number of shows available to us.

Additionally, it is such a rare thing to have a non-competitive judge on probation we do not just have to consider whether the show is affiliated to us, but have to work to then avoid the shows that our probationary judges clients or employers want them to ride at or work at.

We made the decision to ask that they commit only to probation with us during the probationary period. We are making a commitment to them and expect them to make a commitment to us.

Why have these candidates not received any information about their progress

after 2 years or if they have been successful?

Mr Gilliver suggests the candidate's probation is complete - for most of the candidates, their probation is not actually complete, other activities are due to commence in Autumn. These candidates know exactly where they are, if they are unsure then all they have to do is call.

Some probation judges have not received any feedback after their probationary period. Is that right?

For the candidate Mr Gilliver refers to here, she would be receiving her letter over the next few weeks when the judges and rules panel had sat to discuss the reports received from judges (again, 3 judges looking at this, not me).

The society send out an email to ask the candidate about their experience and what they felt about the process. Ironic the society is asking for feedback but has not given any.

We have not been asked by any candidate ever for any feedback and my predecessors (some judges themselves) have not offered this either. That said, I have fed back previously to candidates when it could be seen by their reports that perhaps they were going off course,

This criticism makes it sound like I do not communicate – here are 32 pages of screenshots of messages with just this one particular young lady.

I feel the above begs the question, should someone with no judging experience be in charge of this process?

Why on earth would judging experience assist with continuing professional development?

Why would the process be improved by this?

I ask you - Is the minister for health a doctor, or minister for schools a teacher?

I am administering a programme, collating and chasing reports from judges - not critiquing a horse

There is something else I feel I should add here, the fact that Mr Gilliver gave this young lady a reference, hardly makes his views objective. This is a shining example of exactly why I have landed on the page where I walk away. I have no desire to deal with this sort of nonsense anymore. It beggars' belief."

Questions were raised from the floor in relation to the probationary judges selection and appointment process which Mrs Flack clarified. Mrs Flack explained the process and reiterated the fact that her role was as the administrator/facilitator of the programme – she was not an assessor and had no input into the actual assessment decisions and recommendations.

Mr Somers thanked the venue providers and also Mr Hewlett. Mr Somers queried the fact that no nomination forms were sent out to the wider membership to nominate people to stand for Council. He said in his experience had this been done people with the required skill sets would have been sourced to stand for election.

Mr Somers also stressed the value and importance of SHB(GB) and BSHA being able to work together on joint initiatives such as judges assessments and seminars. He also stressed the value on online seminars as the 'take up' was significantly greater.

Mr Somers said that whilst he was Chair of BSHA he had had a conversation with Miss Gibson in her capacity of Chairman of SHB(GB) and offered to share the revised BSHA Memorandum & Articles of Association as a guidance document.

Mrs Somers said he would like to finish by thanking Miss Gibson for her time and input whilst Chairman of SHB(GB).

Dr Court thanked Mr Hewlett for his availability and visibility throughout the duration of the Hunter Show.

Dr Court expressed shock and concern that both Mr Hewlett & Mrs Flack had stood down. Dr Court said that she personally had been through the probationary judges process and had no concerns or issues and she thanked Mrs Flack for all her hard work and input in relation to the programme.

Dr Court also reiterated the importance of having the right professional and commercial skill sets at board/Council level in order for progress to be made.

Mrs Hamilton queried that SHB(GB) as a Breed Society was prioritising welfare and whilst this was important this was covered by other organisations and should not be the number one priority for SHB(GB). Mr Hewlett said that as a society we are custodians of the horse and without horses we have no society.

There was then discussion about the importance of welfare officers at shows.

Mr Ingle addressed the floor and said that the current financial situation that the society was in must be addressed immediately. He said that there was very little point in discussing the minutiae when the bigger picture was the imminent financial collapse of the Society. The whole management and business model had to be significantly overhauled and updated. He said in his opinion Mr Hewlett had significantly contributed in making a start towards this and had the necessary expertise to continue but had been hampered every step of the way. Mr Ingle proposed that Mrs Flack and Mr Hewlett both reconsider their resignations and he stressed the wider membership present needed to make a decision immediately before the meeting closed – there was no option to delay. Any delay would just speed the demise of the Society.

Mrs Hastie addressed to floor and supported everything Mr Ingle had said and felt that there needed to be an immediate break in proceedings and asked if Mr Hewlett would take a short break from the meeting to have a private discussion with her.

There followed further discussion and then a break of approximately 15 minutes after which the meeting reconvened.

Mrs Hastie announced that Mr Hewlett had agreed to remain as Interim Chairman for 2 months during which time the Mem & Arts would be revised, a business model proposal put together along with a nominations committee being convened to consider trustee applications to be put to the wider

membership at an EGM to be convened within this two month period. It was also agreed if the Articles and business model (as previously minuted) was approved by the members, the current Council would then step down and be replaced by skilled individuals to replace them in respective detailed posts to manage the future of the society.

Mrs Stockley-Bridges said that revised M & A had been drafted and seen by the current SHB(GB) Council. Mr Hewlett said that whilst these had been drafted they had not been legally approved.

Mrs Knifton-Reed expressed concern at the apparent breakdown in professional working relationships amongst the current SHB(GB) council and also the fact that the number of people at the AGM was a small number to take a vote on behalf of the wider membership.

Mrs Killingbeck queried the financial cost of implementing what was required and also asked if things were beyond repair. Mr Hewlett replied that this wasn't so.

Mr Ingle said that leadership was required to take this forward and that Mr Hewlett had the ability to do this.

Mrs Hastie asked would Mr Hewlett & Mrs Flack stay on for 2 months?

Mrs Stockley-Bridges stressed that the existing Council realised and supported the need for change and had worked towards finding a 'middle ground'. She went on to say that both Mr Hewlett & Mrs Flack had done sterling work and put in considerable time but the issue was lack of consultation with the rest of the Council.

After further discussion it was agreed the motion put forward for Mr Hewlett and Mrs Flack to remain for 2 months and for Mr Hewlett to progress the revised M&A and business should be proposed and seconded and then if applicable out to a vote. Mr D Ingle proposed this and it was seconded by Mr C Hunnable. A vote of all present was taken and the result was:

In Favour = 38

Abstentions = 2

Not in favour = 0

Mrs Hastie said that the proposal was carried and agreed and that work would now commence with an EGM planned for 2 months time.

Mr Ingle stood up and said that he would like it recorded that he had a governance matter that he wished to discuss with Mr Hewlett outside of the AGM.

As there was no further business the General Secretary declared the meeting closed at 13.24.