

Meeting Minutes
Cleveland Bay Horse Society
Council Meeting
Thursday 17th July 2025
1930 BST

Present: Matthew Stonehouse (MS), Catherine Lea (CL), Claire O'Connell (CO), Norma Wilson (NW), Daniel Cracknell (DC), Sarah Kirk (SK), Elaine Keith (EK), Maggie Brown (MB), Karen Wylie (KW), and Mary Ann Raey (MAR)

Absent: N/A

Apologies: Tierney Hill (TH)

General Business:

MS opened the meeting and declared it quorate. Apologies were received from TH. No conflicts of interest were declared.

Treasurer's Report:

CL reported that the transition to a new accountant is in progress for AGM account preparation. The Grassroots bill has increased due to SPARKS integration; raising the monthly costs. HBLB payments can be distributed once authorisation. Bank balances: £82,919 (Savers, including £27,000 HBLB funds), £3,547 (current). Great Yorkshire Show takings of £514 have been received.

Breed Committee Report:

General Matters:

DC reported one USA stallion application had been completed in June. A further UK application has a veterinary inspection scheduled for August 1st. A second USA application has been stalled due to communication issues; SK to follow up. DC to provide updates.

Grants:

DC announced the HBLB application deadline was August 22nd and requested NW schedule a membership meeting to discuss spending and changes. The meeting will include all members, UK and overseas to gather diverse perspectives on breed-related spending that could benefit the organisation. Applications are now processed through an online portal system requiring familiarisation with the new format; hence DC was keen to start the process.

CL raised the question of continuing the overseas breeding grant program, noting few applications are typically received. MS argued the grant provides overseas members something equivalent to the 20% HBLB contribution that UK members receive. The Committee agreed the £100 maximum grant for two horses annually represents minimal cost given low application numbers. The motion was proposed by MS, seconded by DC, and passed by general vote to continue the overseas grant program for another year.

Promotions & Publicity (P&P):

General Matters:

CO reported the magazine is nearly complete with a few additions still needed, also several for-sale advertisements required updating on the website. The Great Yorkshire Show was reported as successful, with thanks extended to EK and volunteers. Facebook engagement has increased with posts now receiving 500-600 likes and shares, and other sites are sharing their content.

Passport and Registration Issues raised on Facebook:

CO referenced Facebook concerns about passport regulations and DEFRA compliance. CL reported DEFRA has requested a meeting meeting on August the 4th to discuss studbook operations, as part of broader breed society outreach. Council agreed to delay public statements to avoid confusion; a report would be made to members in due course.

Shows Committee:

General Matters:

EK reported some controversies at various shows and identified need for clearer showing procedures and rules definition in regard to HBLB qualification. Sarah Ramson has joined has agreed to act as judges' coordinator.

Judge Shortage and Recruitment:

EK highlighted a critical shortage of judges with show secretaries actively requesting fresh judges and expressing concerns about the limited panel size. The current panel has 16 judges, but only 6 responded to questionnaires sent out in November and January. Currently, there are two probationary judges (Matthew Stonehouse and Bronte Thompson) but more judges are needed urgently. EK suggested approaching established Irish Draft, hunter breeding, and sport horse judges panels to expand the body; with additional Cleveland Bay breed standard training. MAR emphasised a preference for recruiting judges from within the Cleveland Bay membership and breeding community rather than external judges. Further expressing concern that once external judges join the panel, they cannot be easily removed, and Cleveland Bays differ significantly from other breeds. EK responded that she had already approached a number of active Cleveland Bay members last year with limited response. Discussion followed regarding the need for proper mentoring and professional development of new judges. Council agreed to advertise the judge recruitment needs to the membership, with a warning that external judges may be approached if insufficient internal candidates emerge.

Any Other Business:

Matters Arising:

N/A

Memberships for Approval:

N/A

Member Renewals:

Helen & Julie Lane

Jason Daisy – all agreed unanimously

AGM Planning:

Discussion covered AGM preparation timeline with nomination deadline proposed for September the 5th. CO's contact has agreed to serve as scrutineer, bringing a banking and finance background with equine experience. Materials will be produced, and notice given for the AGM.

Council discussed streamlining AGM material distribution and reducing costs by delivering the AGM materials by email; it was unanimously agreed, provided that arrangements were made for members who don't have an active email address.

Membership Processing at Shows:

EK sought clarification on handling mid-year membership applications at shows, noting confusion about pro-rata arrangements as membership runs December 1st to November 30th. It was confirmed that the Society does not allow pro-rata membership.

Insurance and Society Representation:

A members request for insurance coverage at a show was discussed. MAR clarified coverage applies to official society business. Council deemed the activity acceptable but noted insurance requires further review.

Historical Records Management:

CL reported collecting 15 years of archived society materials from a member's attic, including covering certificates from 1983 onwards, member correspondence, and passport applications from 1984. A discussion followed, covering retention requirements and whether materials should be archived with North Yorkshire Records office, or disposed of.

Meeting Adjourned: 21:10 PM

Next Meeting Scheduled: 17.09.25