

MINUTES OF THE NEWC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



Date: 11 May 2021
Start time: 10.00am
End time: 13.05 pm
Location: Zoom

Present

Dr David Marlin	NEWC President	Paul McGlone	GAWF
Nic deBrauwere	NEWC/Redwings	Jon Bennett	GAWF
Carolyn Madgwick	NEWC/The Horse Trust	Amanda Berry	HAPPA
Claire Gordon	NEWC/World Horse Welfare	Nicola Endersby	Here 4 Horses
Hannah Bryer	NEWC/The Donkey Sanctuary	Leonie Martin	Hope Pastures
Ruth Court	NEWC/Blue Cross	Suzi Tait	Hope Pastures
Dr Carol Hall	NEWC/Nottingham Trent Uni	Sophie Kendrick	Hope Pastures
Gemma Stanford	NEWC/British Horse Society	Kate Nottage	Horse Rescue Fund
Dr Mark Kennedy	NEWC/RSPCA	Petra Ingram	HorseWorld Trust
Kirsty Withnall	NEWC/RSPCA	Sarah Hollister	HorseWorld Trust
Dr Rachel Kay	NEWC	Dionne Schuurman	Llest Horse & Pony Trust
Chris Sherwood	RSPCA	Syra Bowden	Mare and Foal Sanctuary
Mike Flynn	Scottish SPCA	Gillian Gratton	Mare and Foal Sanctuary
Alex Le Grand	Le Grand Solutions	Sally Burton	Mare and Foal Sanctuary
Jim Green	BARTA	Bex Sherrell	Mare and Foal Sanctuary
Neil Rae	BARTA	Sarah Jane Williamson	Mare and Foal Sanctuary
Maria Kavanagh	Blue Cross	Helen Lacey	North Wales Horsecwatch
Vicky Alford	Blue Cross	Anna Gregory	Nottingham Trent Univ
Kerry Taylor	Blue Cross	Caroline Johnson	Oak Tree Animals Charity
Emma Carter	Bransby Horses	Caroline Yon	Oak Tree Animals Charity
Rosie Mogford	Bransby Horses	Lynn Cutress	Redwings Horse Sanctuary
Rosanna Hart	Bransby Horses	Jo Franklin	Redwings Horse Sanctuary
Rachel Jenkinson	Bransby Horses	Phillipa Gilmore	Retraining of Racehorses
Laura Canfield	Bransby Horses	Jenny Hall	Retraining of Racehorses
Sue Gillingham	British Connemara Pony Society	Bryony Lancaster	R(D)SVS
Vickie John	British Horse Society	Patricia Spargo	RSPCA
Cathy Hyde	British Horse Society	Jon Knight	RSPCA
Lydia French	British Horse Society	Gillian Carlisle	The BTRC
Sophie Cookson	British Horse Society	Jan Rogers	The Horse Trust
Dawn Avery	British Horse Society	Janet Douglas	World Horse Welfare
Georgina Dale	Dartmoor Livestock Protection	Sam Chubbock	World Horse Welfare
Carol Morse	Donkey Breed Society	Steven Gale	World Horse Welfare
Catherine Bell	EBTA	Jon Phipps	World Horse Welfare
Suzanne Rogers	EBTA	Rachel Andrews	World Horse Welfare
Jane Myers	Equiculture	Tony Tyler	World Horse Welfare
Sue McGeever	Exmoor Pony Society	Guy Reynolds	Worshipful Company of Farriers

Council Meeting

1. Welcome and apologies

Nic deBrauwere (NdB) welcomed attendees and thanked all members and speakers for joining the meeting.

Apologies were received from:

Nicolina Mackenzie	SEIB
Kate Thomson	Equine Grass Sickness Fund
Laura Dennis	The HUGS Foundation

2. Speaker - NEWC President, Dr David Marlin

David commended the welfare industry for their continued efforts in maintaining and supporting vital rescue and rehoming activities throughout the pandemic. Findings from a survey of horse owners by David and colleagues identified a sizeable proportion of individuals who self-reported a decline in their mental health initiated by the pandemic which could potentially impact the welfare of equines (and other animals) in their care. David stressed the importance of the welfare sector providing horse owners with consistent, unified messaging on welfare matters as a means of countering the myriad misinformation that circulates around the sector, particularly on social media platforms.

3. Speakers – RSPCA CEO, Chris Sherwood and SSPCA Chief Superintendent, Mike Flynn

Chris presented the new RSPCA Strategy 'Together for Animal Welfare' focusing on the proposed transfer of prosecution activity over to the Crown Prosecution Service. Mike then shared his experience of the SSPCA becoming appointed Inspectors under the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006 and how this positively impacted prosecution work in Scotland for the Inspectorate. The expectation is that this will help cases progress more speedily through the courts, as was experienced in Scotland. Ultimately, this should reduce the length of time animals are held before release and rehoming which will provide both cost and welfare benefits. Chris acknowledged the benefit of partnership working with the SSPCA, requested the support of NEWC members during the transition period and stressed that feedback on the changes is very welcome.

4. NEWC Website Re-Launch – NEWC Director, Dr Carol Hall, and Le Grand Solutions Web Developer, Alex Le Grand

Carol presented the rationale behind the NEWC website redevelopment which will allow us to increase public awareness of NEWC and deliver on our current strategy. Alex Le Grand demonstrated some of the key features of the new website which will better support the current membership – including a new, secure members' area - which will allow us to add value to NEWC membership which we hope will in turn help us grow the membership reach.

Annual General Meeting

1. Minutes of the previous meeting

Attendees received and reviewed minutes of the 2020 Annual General Meeting held on Zoom on 11th August 2020. The draft minutes were accepted by attendees as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting, proposed by Claire Gordon and seconded by Carolyn Madgwick.

2. Matters arising

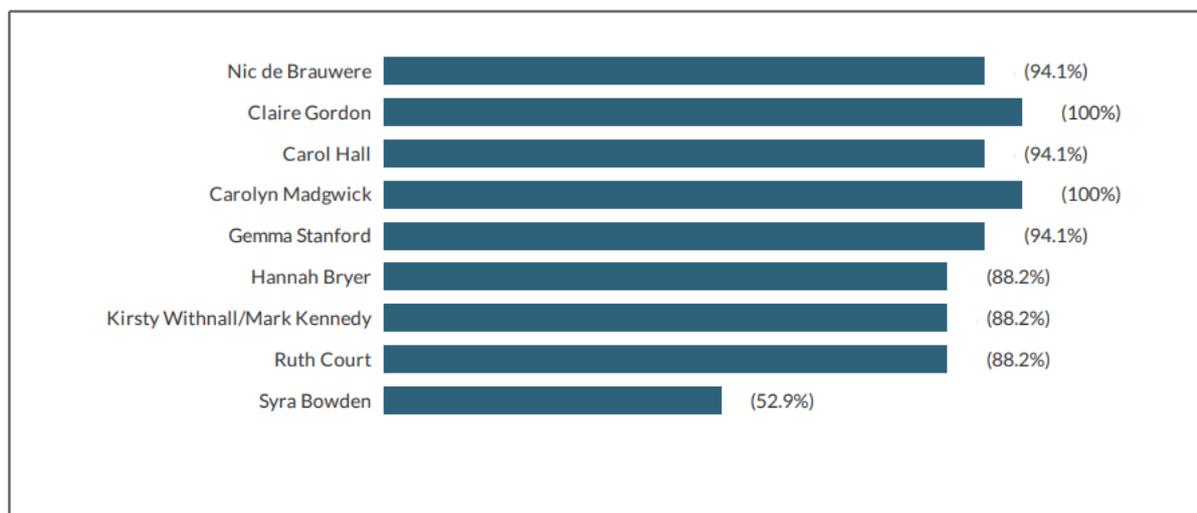
None raised

3. Chairman's Report and 2020 Annual Accounts

Attendees received and reviewed the 2020 Chairman's Report and Annual Accounts. NdB acknowledged the hard work, dedication and resilience of member organisations in responding rapidly to the restrictions of the pandemic while sustaining their own operations and maintaining support for the sector. NEWC was pleased to work in partnership with other member organisations and the PetPlan Charitable Trust to establish the Equine Rescues Emergency Fund which distributed financial assistance to support smaller charities affected by the Covid-19 crisis. NEWC will focus on the impending Licencing of Rescue Centres in the coming year. NdB welcomed feedback from members on how the sector can best communicate a unified message on welfare matters. NdB acknowledged the invaluable help and insight provided by Bransby Horses Finance Team in dealing with NEWC finances and accounts. Both the report and accounts were accepted by attendees as a true and accurate reflection of the Council, proposed by Claire Gordon and seconded by Carolyn Madgwick.

4. Board member election

NdB explained that Director re-elections had lapsed due to a gap in administrative support and a shift in focus in response to the pandemic. To bring matters back up to date the membership were asked to put forward nominations to the board and an election was held using an online voting system in advance of the AGM. The results on the vote were:



This means all current board members were formally re-elected for a further period of 3 years. NdB thanked Syra Bowden for supporting NEWC by submitting a nomination and confirmed that NEWC will actively engage with the Mare and Foal Sanctuary to involve them in NEWC initiatives going forward. Information on the activity of the NEWC sub-groups will be posted in the new members' area on the NEWC website and the involvement of members is welcomed.

5. Member highlights

Members paid tribute to the resilience and hard work of their staff in maintaining essential operational activities during the pandemic. For many organisations, the enforced closure enabled them to review certain aspects of how they operate, e.g. developing brand new 'virtual' initiatives and moving existing activities/resources online where possible to ensure they could continue with internal and external comms, fundraising and education activities effectively. Difficulties were experienced both in the UK and overseas by restricted operations in the field when movement and travel constraints were in force. It was generally felt that organisations had been supported by their respective industries and by the generosity of the general public. Many rehoming centres had experienced an increased and faster turnover of animals despite premises being closed to visitors for most of the year.

6. Any other business

-Equine Assisted Activities survey/guidelines – NEWC Director, Carol Hall, will shortly circulate a survey of members' participation in EAA with the aim of creating a new sub-group to look at the activities from an equine welfare perspective.

-RSPCA Equine Rehoming Support – RSPCA Senior Equine Manager, Patricia Spargo, informed members that the Society is currently reviewing the journey of equines through their network and appealed for any members that are interested in rehoming, fostering and boarding equines from the Society to please get in touch.

-Bransby Horses External Welfare Manager, Rachel Jenkinson is new in post and introduced herself to attendees. Rachel is looking forward to working with NEWC members in her new role.

-NEWC statistics Welfare/Community figures – Hope Pastures Sanctuary Manager, Leonnie Martin, asked if NEWC could consider reflecting members' efforts in working in the community to improve welfare in the annual statistics as this is a key organisational activity that is currently not visible. NdB advised that NEWC will consider how this might be incorporated in future.

-Update from the Equine Grass Sickness Fund (EGSF) – University of Edinburgh MSc Equine Science Programme Director, Bryony Lancaster, updated attendees on the activities of the EGSF in appointing a new Research Fellow and creating a biobank to collect samples from vets/owners. One area of concern is the lack of support for owners nursing chronic EGS horses and the Fund wish to link up with rehoming organisations that maintain contact with loanees/borrowers to offer support. Owners are encouraged to notify cases to the Fund by submitting a case report survey via the EGSF website. Bryony will forward details of an online CPD course, due to launch in Summer 2021, to NEWC members.

-NdB appealed to equine-keeping members for help in rehoming horses from the recent Welsh court case.

Meeting closed at 1.05 pm.

Date of next meeting

General Meeting, Autumn 2021 – date and location TBC.