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|  | | **WEALD HARNESS CLUB**  President: Mr Barrie Luck  Club founded in 1977.  **November 2022 Newsletter** | | |

I am writing to all Club members to advise you of changes afoot with Weald Harness Club’s affiliation with British Carriagedriving (BC), our governing body. Currently the Club pays an annual affiliation fee to BC which provides the Club with back-office support for running events, guidelines on Safeguarding, GDPR and other issues, plus Club officer insurance for holding and running events, and Club members with a level of insurance to take part at events.

At Council level, BC has been studying its own finances and have had shortfalls of around £10,000 p.a over the last 2 years and the books need to be balanced. To do this BC has looked into its own membership structure, the affiliation fees paid by clubs and how new income streams can be generated. BC would like to include all carriage drivers nationally within their remit directly and has requested that all clubs provide their members’ details. At BC’s AGM and Conference on 5th November 2022 concerns were raised regarding the legality of the clubs disclosing this information to BC in the light of GDPR regulations. I do not want to release your data to BC but am happy for WHC to send on any information from BC to our members either by email or post. You are welcome to become a member of BC in your own right as well as being one more different clubs’ member.

On the positive side, WHC affiliation fee for 2023 will reduce from £534. The first £160 of the fee is for the insurance cover allowing the Club to hold events and protect the committee, stewards and all that allow an event to run. The balance is made up from £25 per non-BC member. Currently, WHC has 12 BC members, 7 driving but non-BC members and 8 non-driving members. I am seeking clarification as to whether our affiliation fee will be the minimum charge or £415.00. However, see below regarding new start fee charges.

The next change to be seen next year will the need for the Club to pay to BC a start fee for each competitor at our events up to British Carriagedriving. This will be calculated at £1 for each arena/indoor event, £3 for a Gateway or One Day Event and £6 for each 2-day event. No fees for non-competitive events. Returns to BC will need to be done during the year to settle what is owed. I have been in discussion with other Clubs as to how we feel about this imposition. Most clubs are very anti the speed at which BC is trying to implement the changes in structure both of the classes, membership and fees. Had this fee structure been implemented this year, the Club would have had to pay a further £170.00 in start fees to BC which comes directly off any event profits for WHC. BC will have the right to amend these fees annually and the Club will have no ability to refuse the pay the increases.

Another impact on WHC of the changes demanded by BC regards the Club’s financial end of year, including the membership period for which subscriptions are paid. Currently the audit is done to end of February for presentation at the AGM end of March, and Membership Subscriptions run 1st April to 31st March. It would make sense to align BC & WHC ends of year to 31st December and subscription year from 1st January to 31st December. I will need the agreement of members to make these changes.

The new membership structure for BC in 2023 will be:

* Full Membership £150
* International Membership £250
* Associate Membership £80
* Officials Membership £45
* Supporting Membership £10
* Young Members and British Young Drivers:
  + Young Member (6-16 years) – 75% discount to Full & Int Membership
  + Young Member (17-21 years) – 50% discount to Full & Int Membership
  + Young Member (22-25 years) – 25% discount to Full & Int Membership
  + BYD – Newcomers to the sport receive their first year of BC membership included for free when attending their first BYD camp.

I believe the upshot of these changes will mean that for 2023 the membership fee structure for WHC members will also need to be reviewed. Subscriptions will remain unchanged for the coming year, but it will be difficult to classify a Family Membership within the BC structure, and this will cease. However, if there is more than 1 non-driving member in the same household and at the same address, only one fee of £10.00 will be payable. Membership application/renewal forms will need to be clearly designed so that existing Club & BC members annotate their BC membership number. If you do not, the Club will have to pay a £25 premium to cover your insurance cost to the Club. Details can be found in detail on [www.britishcarriagedriving.co.uk](http://www.britishcarriagedriving.co.uk) on the Home Page/Members Services/Insurance. My suggestion regarding subscriptions for 2023 would be:

Single £20.00 with BC Membership £30.00 for non-BC Members

Non-Driving £10.00 (Only 1 fee due for more than one non-driving person residing at the same address, but all names to be disclosed on the Membership form)

Young Members £15.00 with BC Membership £25.00 for non-BC Members

In conclusion, WHC requires that each member is made aware of the upcoming changes and has the opportunity of making their views known. I would ask that you please confirm in writing or by email your responses to the following:

1. Do you permit the sharing of your name, email, and address details to British Carriagedriving? BC advises this is so they can include you in newsletters etc but the Club should forward relevant information to you, in any case.

Yes / No / Don’t know

1. Do you agree to the changing of WHC’s year end to 31st December with effect from 2023? The AGM will be brought forward accordingly and might be combined in 2023 with the Xmas meal.

Yes / No / Don’t Know

1. Do you agree to the restructuring of Club Membership:

Yes / No / Don’t Know

1. In reviewing the WHC Constitution form 2013, I note that the Club has not maintained an audit panel of 3 committee members. There is an independent auditor, currently Kim O’Nion at the year end and the accounts are regularly reviewed at Club Committee meetings. I would like to propose that in future the Constitution wording is amended (See Point 7 ii of the Constitution) that this reads in future:

“The accounts for the previous financial year shall be audited and presented to the members of the Club at the AGM. The accounts shall be audited by an independent person or persons agreed at the AGM for the purpose”.

Do you agree?

Yes / No / Don’t Know

Jane Lamb

Chairman

05 November 2022