

The BHRC Directors are working on behalf of every license holder and harness racing supporter in the country. We are committed to ensuring everyone is kept up to date with the business of the governing body, here we have our latest bulletin. These bulletins will be published on, at least, a monthly basis.

BHRC January Update

Handicap – Last summer license holders were invited to submit their proposals for handicap systems to be considered by the BHRC. In total four different systems were submitted and following a forum which included almost 30 people from all facets of the sport the favoured proposal was the Australasian ratings based system. At the BHRC committee meeting on 25th January a vote was taken to adopt the new ratings based handicap system and a majority of twenty five to one, with one abstention passed the new system. Further investigation is now being made into the implementation of the system and committee members will be meeting again shortly to decide if it can be put in place in time for the 2021 season.

BHRC Awards – Horses will now be shortlisted in each category based on a points system. The top horses in each category will go forward to a license holders vote. As a traditional awards ceremony cannot be held BHRC will be staging a virtual awards night.

BHRC have introduced a new Groom of the year award. This award will be split into three regions (Wales, Scotland and England). Trainers are invited to nominate one licensed groom with reasons as to why that particular groom should be considered for the award.

Whip Rules – Use of the whip has been a particularly controversial subject within horse racing over the last couple of years. Many countries have begun taking a more proactive approach towards the use of the whip deciding to do something about it before it became too late. Recently BHRC held a forum with A Class drivers to discuss this topic and it was decided that rules similar to those adopted by Australia would be voted on for implementation in the 2021 season.

Office support – BHRC are currently exploring options around the appointment of a new office assistant to work alongside Heulwen. Once we have a clearer idea of our finances a decision will be made as to the hours worked. As previously mentioned we have now cancelled our lease of the Goole office. We are updating the Staff Handbook and staff contracts to ensure that we are legally compliant.

BHRC Constitution – The general feeling is that BHRC licence holders wish to have a more direct say in the running of the organisation. It has been said that those taking major decisions on behalf of licence holders should be answerable to licence holders. Therefore giving the licence holders the ability to vote the directors in to post is a priority for us. A committee has been formed to review articles in the Constitution with the primary objective of introducing one person one vote for licence holders. The aim is to formulate a new structure to accommodate the new voting system and make amendments to the constitution that work for the modern era.

Trotting – Trotters have had quite a resurgence in Great Britain since the Le Trot program was introduced. The BHRC and Trot Britain would both like to see this continue, not by any means to the detriment of pacing but working alongside it, growing together. We aim to encourage investment in Trotter Francais, promoting trotting which has probably been somewhat neglected by the BHRC over the years. It is felt that membership of the Union of European Trotting (UET) would advance the progression of the trotter in Great Britain as well as allow our drivers, trainers and horses to compete freely in UET countries.

From the Directors of the BHRC.