

Suffolk Horse Society AGM Meeting

Trinity Park, Felixstowe Road, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP3 8UH

on Saturday April 26th 2025 at 2.00pm

MINUTES

Present

Cherry Grover	Gail Sprake	C Thompson	Sam Maloy
Jayne Groom	George Pratt	Alan Hawes	Ben Ryder Davies
Paul Smith	Peter Bundock	Christine Oakley	Mary Ryder Davies
Sophie Keene	Mary Keeble	Nigel Oakley	Karen White
Susan Wager	Chris Spalding	Louise Vaughan	Tracey Petitt
Tegan Mould	Rose Spalding	Gill Evans	Bruce Smith
Bruce Langley McKim	David Chaplain	Keith Twyman	Jeff Hallett
Brad Auker	Matthew Bundock	Andy White	M Hallett
Andrea Hoskins	Pauline Hayter	John Fleming	Margaret Paul
Neil Syrett	Dennis Hayter	Fiona Fleming	Amanda Hillier
Mark Donsworth	AL Thompson	M Chapman	John Latham
Hazel Chapman	Frank Kinge	George Pratt	Ann Reddick
Liz Pardey	Belinda Rudderham		

	MINUTES	Actioned By	Due Date
	<p>The meeting was opened at 2pm by Neil Syrett, (NS) Retiring President. He welcomed those present and declared the meeting quorate and correctly constituted.</p> <p>Mrs Gail Sprake (GS), Company Secretary, explained and clarified the voting procedure for the AGM.</p>		
1	<p>Apologies for Absence</p> <p>These were received from:</p> <p>Neil Adams Adrian Hoskins Andrew Wager Karen Wager Jonathan Purse Susan Pennell Daniel Oakley Heather and Leona Fleming Miriam Newell Christine Kinge Tom and Sandy Walne.</p> <p>Sue Wager (SW) Chairman read out a list of members and friends who have died since the last AGM.</p>		

	<p>Ms Caroline Bullock Mr Robert Densem Mrs Molly Drabble Mr AD Forster Mr Ray Hubbard Mr William Ireland Mr Philip Ryder-Davies MRCVS Mr Clive Sims</p> <p>A minute's silence was held as a mark of respect to those we have lost.</p>		
2	<p>To receive and adopt the Minutes of the 2024 Annual General Meeting held on 20th April 2024</p> <p>The minutes had been previously posted on the Suffolk Horse Society website and sent to any member who has requested a copy.</p> <p>NS proposed that the minutes were taken as read and they are received and approved as a true and accurate record. Frank Kinge (FK) seconded.</p> <p>Voting in the room and Proxy votes totalled: For = 106 Against = 1 Abstained = 6</p> <p>The minutes were approved</p>		
3	<p>To receive the Chairman's Report for 2024</p> <p>SW read the Chairman's report for 2024</p> <p><i>"Ladies and gentlemen, fellow trustees, members and friends. It is my privilege to present to you the Chairman's Report at the 2025 Annual General Meeting. I would like to add my own warm welcome to you all, in particular to our members who have made the journey to be with us today. I would also like to note that we have lost some valued members in the last 12 months who have contributed much and will be sadly missed. The annual report is, necessarily, only ever a snapshot of what has been achieved in the course of the year, and so I intend to focus on some of the highlights of the year in my second term as Chairman. Whilst being an interesting position to hold, the year has been another challenging one. In May 2024 the Society's 12 affiliated shows commenced. The Woodbridge Show, was the first and it had a good entry forward. The Society was fortunate to be awarded a Horse of the Year Show Ridden Qualifier. This proved a great encouragement to our ridden participants and many entered the class which ensured a Suffolk was in the final at HOYS in October.</i></p>		

Sadly bad weather brought the cancellation of the Derbyshire show, but we were pleased to add the Bury Show as a new show onto the calendar.

We ended the show season with the Spectacular at Jimmy's Farm, Wherstead – a new venue for us. The Foal and Youngstock show was held on the Saturday and the Suffolk Spectacular on the Sunday. The Society had a great entry over the two days and we are pleased to have been invited back to Jimmy's Farm for the 2025 Suffolk Spectacular. Which will again run over two days to include the Foal and Youngstock Show. A big thank you must go to Jimmy Doherty and his team for their generosity.

Looking ahead the Society is pleased to announce that two more shows have been added to the affiliated list. These extend into the north of the country, and are the Halifax show and Great Yorkshire show.

In October The Suffolk Horse Society joined with the Eastern Counties Heavy Horse Association, to hold a ploughing and working day at Bucklesham, by kind permission of the Ramsey family. This was kindly judged jointly by father and son, Peter and Matthew Bundock This event will be held again this October.

The Cambridge Assisted Learning Centre kindly hosted the Young Handlers Championship, judged by Elspeth Ross. This was strongly contested and won by Niamh White.

An enjoyable evening was had at the Annual Awards Dinner, held again at Hintlesham Golf Club last November. It was hosted by our President, Mr Neil Syrett. I would just like to add the Society's grateful thanks to all those who gave raffle and auction prizes.

So much of what the Society can achieve would not be possible without funding and stable financial backing. We were fortunate to once again receive a large grant from the Horse Race Betting Levy Board. As well as funding grants to help breeders, the show grants help promote the breed.

In 2024 the Society registered 42 Suffolk foals. 20 Colts and 22 Fillies.

The Society has three breed projects currently running :-

Project 1. A Colt Inspection Scheme, to identify colts that will be beneficial to the gene pool going forward. Assessors were sent out to view several colts, and two have been selected. Our thanks must go to our assessors Dennis Hayter, Nigel Oakley and Jonathan Purse for undertaking this task for the society.

Project 2. A Mare breeding Scheme, which will identify the top 50 lowest coefficient mares. Whose genes will be of interest to keep the diversity in the breed going forward. I can confirm 31 mare owners have been written to requesting their participation.

Project 3. Is to carry out semen collections from under used stallions, this will safeguard their genes for the future. Two of the three stallions identified have undergone collections already this year; the third stallion will be collected from in the autumn.

All these valuable projects reinforce the core of the Society's purpose which is to protect our beloved breed for future generations. This is sometimes lost in the day to day business.

	<p><i>In addition, at the end of 2024 Council gave the ‘green light’ to the Genomic Project. The aim of this project is to obtain a detailed genomic profile of the breed as a resource to evaluate the genetic diversity of present-day Suffolk Horse population, as a tool to guide breeding advice now and in the future, and as a databank for future research.</i></p> <p><i>The Suffolk Horse Society Stud Book has had to undergo changes to comply with the new DEFRA Zootech rulings, it will contain two sections: a supplementary section and a main section.</i></p> <p><i>Within the main section there will be five further sections. There will be three grade sections, with each grade being issued with a different coloured passport cover for easy identification. This will only allow females to upgrade within the stud book grade section, a full pedigree section with the normal green passports and a mis-mating section for horses from the full pedigree section that wouldn’t be eligible for a full pedigree passport.</i></p> <p><i>This new layout will enable the SHS to facilitate all Suffolk horses and comply with DEFRA legislation. All horses currently in the X register, International register, and the upgrade register will be re allocated within the Stud Book. This will take effect in the 2025 Stud Book.</i></p> <p><i>I would like on behalf of the society to thank Jayne Groom, Jayne never says no to the Society when catering is needed at an event, she provides refreshments for society meetings and at today’s AGM.</i></p> <p><i>Finally, I wish to conclude by extending sincere thanks to Belinda and Liz in the office, and to you, our members and supporters, who are passionate about our amazing Suffolk horses.</i></p> <p><i>Also to my fellow Council members, who give of their time and expertise unstintingly and share with me the responsibility, of leading a Society that is so dear to us all.</i></p> <p><i>A sincere thank you to you all.”</i></p>		
<p>4</p>	<p>To receive and adopt the Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2024.</p> <p>NS said these have been reviewed by the Independent Accountants. These were correctly posted on the Society website and sent to any member who had requested a paper copy.</p> <p>Alan Hawes (Treasurer) (AJH) presented the Annual Report. He warned that the accounts next year, given the current economic climate and the downturn in investments worldwide, may not look so healthy.</p> <p>AJH proposed that the Annual Report & Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2024 be taken as read and that they be received.</p> <p>Seconded: Chris Spalding (CS)</p> <p>Voting in the room and Proxy votes totalled: For = 112 Against = 3</p>		

	<p>Abstained = 7</p> <p>Annual Report and Accounts were adopted.</p>		
5	<p>To appoint Accountants for 2025</p> <p>NS: The Council recommend that Ensors are appointed as the accountants for Suffolk Horse Society, to act as such until the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting. NS asked for a proposer and seconder.</p> <p>Proposed: John Fleming (JF) Seconded: Mark Donsworth (MD)</p> <p>Voting in the room and proxy votes = 112 Votes against = 4 Abstentions = 7</p> <p>Ensors were appointed as accountants for 2025.</p>		
6	<p>To elect the President for 2025/2026 (Mrs Jayne Groom)</p> <p>NS confirmed that Mrs Jayne Groom has accepted the invitation to serve as Suffolk Horse Society President for 2025/2026.</p> <p>This was proposed by Cherry Grover (CG) Seconded by Mary Ryder Davies (MRD)</p> <p>Voting in the room and proxy votes = 116 Votes against = 5 Abstentions = 2</p> <p>Jayne Groom (JG) was duly elected as President of the Suffolk Horse Society for 2025/26.</p> <p>Before handing over the chain of office, NS said a few words as the retiring President.</p> <p><i>“Ladies and Gentlemen it now comes to my final act as President. The Speech.</i></p> <p><i>What does a President do apart from running the AGM? This was a question I asked this time last year. The reply was; whatever you wish, you are the President. It’s not quite worked out like that. ‘Phone calls, emails and meetings are all accompanied with; “it’s really the president’s job”, or, it might be something that the President should do. It’s a lot like being at home! Anybody who thinks I am being very brave saying that, should note that Wendy is not here but is at this very moment watching Torvill and Dean in Birmingham. When, I asked her what she thought of my Annual Dinner speech, published in the last newsletter; her reply was she had not read it as she had heard it all before. With a bit of luck she will not read this either!</i></p> <p><i>I believe a President’s task is to try and help the Officers and Trustees of the society to move forward and maintain some</i></p>		

	<p><i>cohesion. On that note, the crib sheet we have been given for today, states the new President should give us a speech on her plans for the society; my experience, whilst everybody in this room, be they Members, Trustees or Officers of the Society, are here to help the Society, and through it the Horse, we all have slightly differing views and ideas of how this should be done. To believe than you can plan a course of action, even without unexpected things coming up, is fraught with difficulty. "It takes a damn good dog to herd cats"; and we all must accept this when things do not go to plan, or the way we think they should. Getting upset and reacting, especially on social media without the brake of being face to face, with its instant response does not help. It is better to remain calm and realise, that although someone may not get our view or idea, we are all here for the Horse."</i></p> <p>Item 9 taken out of order: Presentation of the President's Award NS explained that the President's Award is given to a non-horse owning member who in the opinion of the President has contributed to the furtherance of the Society and/or the Suffolk horse.</p> <p><i>"This year it is given to a man who has never owned a Suffolk, but has spent most of his working life, until his retirement in October, ploughing, drilling and pulling carts with them. Showing thousands of school children how Suffolk horses work, indeed it is a picture of "his" horses working on the side of the Society van. This year's award is given to Richard Dalton."</i> Richard Dalton was not present to receive the award.</p> <p>NS stepped down from chairing the meeting and handed over the chain of office to Jayne Groom (JG) the incoming President.</p> <p>JG made a short speech. <i>"Good afternoon everyone. For those of you who don't know me, here is a little about me. It was my late husband's dream to have Suffolk horses when we retired from our catering and carriage business. So ten years ago we bought our first Suffolks and we were hooked. After John died suddenly in 2019 I was undecided whether to carry on with the horses, but with the help from my wonderful horsey friends and Karen, my groom, we continued showing, driving and breeding. And look where I am now! I hope the SHS have a good year and I hope to see you all at some of the shows This year I would like to see trustees working together in harmony and integrity, for the good of the breed. Let's all be kind to each other."</i></p>		
7	<p>Election of President Elect 2025/26 and President 2026/2027 Two nominations were received: Mr Dennis Hayter and Mrs Christine Oakley. Those present were asked to use their voting cards to cast their votes and these were counted and added to the proxy votes received.</p>		

	<p>Dennis Hayter: Voting in the room and proxy votes = 56 Christine Oakley: Voting in the room and proxy votes = 72</p> <p>JG declared that Christine Oakley is Suffolk Horse Society President Elect for 2025/2026.</p>		
8	<p>To receive the names of newly elected Councilmen Twelve nominations were received for the six vacancies on the Council. This was put to fully paid-up members to vote.</p> <p>The twelve nominees were: Bradley Paul Auker Matthew Bundock Emily Fitzroy Fiona Fleming Pauline Hayter Alan Hawes Adrian Hoskins Sam Maloy Bruce Smith Neil Syrett Julie M Turner Louise Vaughan</p> <p>The result was received in a sealed envelope from Ensors. The newly elected Councilmen who will serve for four years, are:</p> <p>Matthew Bundock Bruce Smith Fiona Fleming Alan Hawes Pauline Hayter Julie Turner</p> <p>JG welcomed the successful nominees and thanked all members who had stood for election to Council. JG reminded all Council members that there would be a short meeting following the AGM.</p>		
9	President's award – taken at Item 6		
10	<p>To consider Any Other Business – taken after item 11.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was highlighted that the Chairman's report did not mention the Extravaganza held at the Cotswold Farm Park, which was a significant event for the Society. • It was noted that Trustees work hard for the betterment of the breed, but stallion and mare information needs to be made available earlier in the season for breeders so that choices can be made. 		

	<p>Flowers were presented to NS in appreciation of his work as President.</p> <p>Flowers were also presented to Belinda Rudderham and to Liz Pardey from the office.</p>		
11	<p>Members' Questions submitted in advance – was taken before item 10.</p> <p>Two questions were received by the closing date 12th April.</p> <p><i>1. Why is the AGM held in April? It would greatly help breeders who would like to attend for it to be in either late February or March. Many will have mares due to foal and be unable to attend at this time of year and it would be much appreciated if it could be moved to earlier in the breeding season.</i></p> <p>SW answered: We appreciate these concerns. An AGM has to be held within 15 months of the previous AGM. The AGM has traditionally been at this time of year. To move it earlier would mean the accounts would not be ready to be signed off and presented. The financial year end is 31st December and it takes at least three months for the accounts to be produced.</p> <p><i>2. Limited tenure of office for Trustees. While this was voted on as part of the changes to Articles of Association last year, it should be pointed out that this matter involves Trustee's self-interest and, as such, should not have been voted on by those it would affect. This should be a question put to the full members to vote on.</i></p> <p>GS answered: There is currently no time limit on trustee tenure, the governing document (Articles of Association) does not state how long trustee appointments should last so there are currently no set limits. This was not included in the revision of the articles put to all members as a Special Resolution in 2024.</p> <p>This was opened to the floor for any opinion. There was no further comment.</p>		
	<p>JG thanked GS for acting as Official Scrutineer at the meeting. Belinda, Liz, NS and SW were thanked for their work. AJH was thanked for his hard work in producing the accounts.</p> <p>JG thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting at 2.55pm</p>		