826

EQUINE STUDBOOKS ASSOCIATION

Representing Horse and Pony Studbooks of the UK

Chair: Celia Clarke (WBSUK), Vice-Chair: Natalie Meredith (AHS), Secretary and Treasurer: Jane Murray (New Forest),

MINUTES
826 EQUINE STUDBOOKS ASSOCIATION MEETING NO 17 INCLUDING 2026 AGM
11.00 AM TO 1.00 PM WEDNESDAY 25 MARCH 2026 VIA ZOOM

PRESENT

Committee:
Celia Clarke (Chair, WBSUK); Jane Murray (and Minutes); Sacha Shaw (NPS); Catherine Burdock (SHBGB); Natalie Meredith (AHS); Eva-Maria Livesey (AES)

Observers:
Gina Dent (CPR); Sam Hyman (Weatherbys); Gemma Stanford, John Shenfield (Hanoverian); Jane Nixon MRCVS

Breed Societies:
Andrew Morrey (Connemara); Christine Lovatt (Dartmoor); Ruth O'Reilly (AQHA-UK); Mary McBryde, Julie Nicholas (BAPSH); Karin Swanson (AHS); Jill Robinson (Miniature Horse); Kate Eaton, Katy Holder-Vale (British Hanoverian); Gwenan Thomas (STAGBI); Judith Harris, Steve McMinn (Eriskay); Auriol Thorne (APHCUK); Deb Drew Hobby, Karen Wood (British Palomino); Victoria Borland (HPA); Rowena McDermott (British Percheron); Heather Chaplin (Irish Draught); Pam Moon (Donkey Breed); Amy (Pedigree Livestock Services)

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Defra: Helen Johnston and Equine ID team; Heather Escala; Liam Taylor (Zootechnics)

Breed Societies
April Lawn (Dales); Andrea Betteridge (TGCA); Kim Sands (ApHCUK); Jane Mullan (Palomino); Rosie (British Spotted Pony); Mike Butts (Weatherbys); Paula Moore (British Appaloosa); Emma Hore (CHAPS); Lady Anne Vestey

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- **Minutes of the 2025 AGM.** These had been cleared at the November 2025 Meeting,
- **Matters Arising.** The part-bred issue had rather overshadowed that of Amber Status, which was still a problem. As nothing had been done it might be appropriate to send a reminder to again raise awareness.

- **Minutes of General Members Meeting no 16 plus Appendix 1 for these Minutes.** Approved.
- **Matters arising from the Minutes of the above not covered by Agenda items.** The Appendix had proved to be an extremely useful document, but there were no further updates, indicating that some societies had still not been fully approved. The proposed new Statutory Instrument had been dropped by the Labour government, which was now prioritising the SPS agreement.

CHAIR'S REPORT MARCH 2026

Celia Clarke read out her report which had been circulated. Points highlighted were:

- **Transfers of Ownership**: While there is no legal requirement for a transfer to be handled only by the issuing PIO, there had been a concern that a Defra-approved body had appeared to promote one particular studbook as better for recording changes in ownership because it is 'more digitalised'. Fortunately it appeared to be an isolated incident.
- **Working together:** CC encouraged all studbooks to work together on the various issues faced by breeding organisations of all sizes, as this helps to strengthen our position in the industry as a whole.
- **Small website:** This is being developed to increase our public facing identity although it will be small and clearly defined – constitution, downloadable membership forms, minutes of past meetings.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

This is not an election AGM so all current officers and committee members remain in place.

COMMITTEE AND MEMBER MOTIONS

No Committee or member motions have been put forward for this AGM

TREASURER'S REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

The Accounts for 2025 and Treasurer's Report had been circulated and were duly proposed and approved. The Treasurer will explore opening an instant access savings account.

DEFRA REPORTS

Defra Equine ID and Traceability Update

A written report had been presented and circulated. This set out the background to the UK-EU Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Agreement and noting that negotiations have begun to make trade with our biggest market cheaper and easier, cutting costs and removing barriers to trade to British producers and retailers. Information will be shared with industry as soon as Defra is able to, but with negotiations ongoing, the exact impact of the SPS Agreement on equine policy areas including ID and traceability remains unknown.

Zootechnics Update

Liam Taylor had submitted a written report which had been circulated. The Zootechnical Regulation 2016/1012 is in the list of regulations which are expected to be in the scope of the SPS Agreement. Work has restarted on the compliance project, picking up the applications processes with a few societies and revisiting several more in the coming weeks. The intention is to clear some of the ongoing applications before approaching other societies that have yet to start the process, thus reducing the number of applications being reviewed at the same time. This should limit the time between studbook structures being considered, restructured and approved, keeping disruption to a bare minimum.

REPORTS FROM JANE NIXON

- **World Horse Welfare Breed Data Project -** Studbooks are encouraged to engage with this project, either through a 30-minute discussion with the WHW team on foal

numbers and breeding trends, or by completing a survey. BHS will support WHW where they can, although they have limited data to provide. Noted that UKGLE could provide its annual data to WHW. It was thought that returns to WBFSH could be forwarded to WHW. There has been a 9% drop in TB registrations leading to a reduced gene pool.

- **BEF Equine Health Week** – is looking at equine health essentials.
- **Equine Infectious Diseases Surveillance (EIDS) -** A case of neurological EHV in Oxon in March. No change to African Horse Sickness or Foot and Mouth. Climate change is triggering West Nile Virus to move northwards.

WHIRDEC

Noted that it had changed location and registration process, but it was a useful way to learn about regulations and data changes.

WBFSH

Its welfare project is being extended, to include a focus on assisted reproductive techniques. It was noted that WBFSH cannot stop cloning and can only advise and give an opinion. It is now possible to complete clones, and three Chilli Morning clones have appeared in Young Horse classes, with all three in the top ten.

REPORT BY EVA MARIA LIVESEY (EML) ON THE BRITISH BREEDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND BRITISH BREEDING FUTURITY

- **The Futurity** calendar is nearly ready and all are welcome, including native ponies.
- **Linear Scoring** for natives has been introduced at the Futurity, with some differences in the interpretation and evaluation, with different priorities for each breed. A comment on Connemaras was that there was a risk of turning natives into something which they was never meant to be. There are also differences between Irish Draughts and Irish Sport Horses which are not yet resolved. EML commented that they are still learning but that linear profile data should be useful in the future.

DNA – PROGRESS MOVING TO SNPS

There was a brief discussion on progress moving to SNPs. An issue is compatibility, when the stallion is SNP but the mare is still on the old MS system.