

Mid Cotswold Tracks and Trails Group

Policy and Working Practices Handbook - Dec 1st 2011

The information contained in this manual is expressed in a formal way to ensure clarity and to address various important, serious or legal points. It is not a reflection of our general day-to-day relationship, which we hope will always be a friendly and, where possible, informal one.

Anyone using this handbook who has knowledge of errors or omissions is asked to inform the Secretary, so that such errors may be corrected. If you have any questions, please ask the Secretary.

Distribution:

A copy of this handbook should be made available to all committee members.

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Section 1: INTRODUCTION

NB This page to be re-issued when listed personnel or posts change

Jan 12th 2012

Introduction

Name: Mid Cotswold Tracks and Trails Group

Committee:

Chairman: Pat Harris

Secretary: Sue Ellis

Treasurer: Katrina Thacker

Information Officer (including Safety Issues, New Links and Modification Order Liaison):

Pat Harris

Website Manager: Steve Radcliffe

Other Committee Members:

Joanna Chapman

Emma Chandler

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Section 2: CONSTITUTION

1. Group Name

The name of our Group is MID COTSWOLD TRACKS & TRAILS GROUP, hereinafter referred to as 'the Group'.

The Group will be affiliated to the British Horse Society (BHS).

Administration

The Group and its property will be administered and managed in accordance with this constitution by the Committee. (see section detailed below).

2. Aims of the Group

The Group's aims are:

- 2.1 To improve and expand the tracks and trails network (bridleways, byways, unsurfaced roads and other off-road routes open to horse riders) to enable horses to be ridden off road in safety.
- 2.2 To develop new links and create additional multi-use routes to benefit horse riding.
- 2.3 To promote safer conditions for horse riders on roads.
- 2.4 To promote use of local riding routes and facilities to promote sustainable tourism, which may include publication of maps and guides.
- 2.5 To establish good relations with local authorities, landowners and other user groups, such as walkers, cyclists, disabled, trail riders and carriage drivers, in order to achieve the above.
- 2.6 To provide assistance in maintaining existing tracks and trails.

3. Area

The approximate area the Group covers is defined (though not exclusively) as:

- Northern boundary - the A40
- Western boundary - the River Severn
- Southern boundary - the Gloucestershire County Boundary
- Eastern boundary - the Gloucestershire County Boundary

Any areas adjacent to or outside the above boundaries will be included where necessary in order to benefit from any of the overall aims of the group.

4. Powers of the Group

In aiming to achieve the Group's aims the Committee will have the following powers (while conforming to the relevant requirements of the law):

- 4.1 to raise funds.
- 4.2 to pursue and receive contributions, grants or donations.
- 4.3 to buy, lease or negotiate property or items required.
- 4.4 to dispose of any properties or items owned, leased or acquired.
- 4.5 to liaise and co-operate and enter into agreements with other groups, organisations, authorities etc.

- 4.6 to do all other lawful things as are necessary for the achievement of the Group's aims.
- 4.7 to employ such persons as the Committee deems necessary.
- 4.8 to enter into any contracts the Committee deems necessary.

5. Membership

Membership of the Group is open to any individuals who are interested in furthering the aims of the Group, subject to the agreement of the Committee and payment of the appropriate membership fee.

6. The Committee

- 6.1 The Committee shall consist of a minimum of five members who are elected at the Annual General Meeting to hold office until the next AGM. All the members of the Committee shall stand down from office at the first AGM after the date on which they came into office but may be re-elected or re-appointed.
- 6.2 Committee members are free to resign at any point. The Committee shall have the power to co-opt additional members who must be submitted for election at the next AGM.
- 6.3 It is at the discretion of the Committee that any Committee member who fails to attend at least three consecutive Committee meetings without good cause, may have their membership of the Committee withdrawn.
- 6.4 All persons elected to serve on the Committee shall make a declaration of acceptance and willingness to act in the interest of the Group and to support its aims.
- 6.5 All persons elected to serve on the Committee shall make a declaration of possible conflict of interest.
- 6.6 A quorum will be four Committee members.
- 6.7 The Committee will produce a Working Practices Handbook which may be updated as necessary provided that it is consistent with the Group's aims and that it is consistent with current legislation.

7. General Meetings of the Group

- 7.1 The Group Secretary or other such appointed person shall endeavour to make an accurate record of the proceedings at each meeting.
- 7.2 Matters will be determined by the majority decision of members in attendance at meetings.

8. Annual General Meeting

- 8.1 An Annual General Meeting will be held each year at an interval not greater than fifteen months.
- 8.2 Changes to the Constitution can be made by majority vote at the AGM provided that the proposed changes have been circulated to the members not less than four weeks before the meeting.

9. Extraordinary General Meeting

The Committee will call an Extraordinary General Meeting, with at least two weeks notice, on written request of not less than 25% of the membership stating the reasons and the motions to be put to the meeting.

10. The Group’s Accounts

- 10.1 All types of funds raised or acquired by the Group will be paid into a bank account under the name of MID COTSWOLD TRACKS & TRAILS GROUP.
- 10.2 All funds are to be used only in furthering the aims of the Group.
- 10.3 All withdrawals from the Group account are to be signed by not less than two agreed signatories.
- 10.4 The Committee will be responsible for financial management and the appointment of an auditor for the yearly financial accounts.

11. Dissolution of the Group

In the event that the Committee decides that the Group should cease to continue, for whatever reason, then any assets remaining after the payment of any debts or liabilities shall be given or transferred to any other such organisation, group or charitable institution that has the same or similar aims and objectives of the Group as the members of the Group’s Committee may determine.

This constitution was adopted on:

Signed by: (Chair)

Countersigned by: (Secretary)

MID COTSWOLD TRACKS & TRAILS GROUP
Declaration of Committee Members

We the undersigned agree as members of the MID COTSWOLD TRACKS & TRAILS GROUP Committee to work together to further the aims and objectives of the Group as defined in the Group's Constitution.

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(MCTTG 7 July 2008)

Section 3: General Policies:

The general policies of the Group are as follows:

1. The aims of the Group are to be paramount in all considerations.
2. The Group will ensure a non discriminatory environment for all members of whatever race, national origin, religion, ability, gender, age or sexual orientation.
3. All people representing the Group will act in a courteous, respectful and appropriate manner and will do nothing that could harm the Group's good name and public confidence in the Group.
4. The Group will positively enforce all appropriate Health and Safety measures including those of Child Protection in its activities.
5. All prospective committee members must familiarise themselves with the committee member responsibilities as set out in Section 3.
6. The Group will be affiliated to the BHS.
7. Work may be delegated to volunteers not on the committee, but should remain the responsibility of a nominated committee member.
8. Induction and training will be provided where necessary.
9. There will be an annual membership scheme which may allow certain benefits as defined by the Committee and for which membership a charge may be levied if a majority of members voting at the AGM so decide.
10. All children must be accompanied and in the charge of a designated adult at any events organised by the Group.
11. An annual general meeting will be held for the Group's members.
12. Documented expenses necessarily incurred in agreed activities of the Group will be refunded where approved by the Committee.
13. When considering improvements to existing tracks and advising on problems and new links, the Group will seek to achieve the best solution that seems reasonable and practicable in each circumstance. BHS recommendations will be considered for each issue, but the Group will be mindful that local tracks have evolved in ways which may require an individual approach to a problem. The Group will consider also the integrity of the area and the needs of other user groups.

Section 4: WORKING PRACTICES

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Chairman

The Chairman is responsible for the overall running of the Group. Specifically s/he will ensure that the committee:

- Administers the Group in a competent and appropriate manner;
- Monitors all aspects of the Group with regard to compliance with the Group's aims, policies and objectives and BHS requirements.

The Chairman will:

- Monitor all tasks carried out by officers of the Group and volunteers undertaking work on behalf of the Group;
- Draw up appropriate agendas for committee meetings and the AGM in consultation with committee members;
- Liaise with the BHS on issues of common concern. This will usually be with the Gloucestershire District or County Access and Bridleways Officer (DABO or CABO).

Committee members

Committee members are responsible to the Chairman for the administration of the Group in accordance with its constitution. They should ensure that insurance is sufficient to cover the Group's activities and that accurate records are kept of all meetings. They are responsible for raising and allocating funding.

Before accepting the responsibilities of becoming a committee member, candidates should:

- Familiarise themselves with the Group's constitution and handbook;
- Understand the roles and responsibilities of committee members;
- Study the Group's recent accounts and minutes of meetings;
- Know where the Group's records are kept and how to access them. These will include the register of conflict of interest, minutes of committee meetings and AGMs, copies of accounts, grant enquiries and funding, newsletters and reports.

On appointment as a committee member, a member should:

- Complete the Constitution Commitment Form;
- Complete a conflict of interest form. This needs to be reviewed annually at the first committee meeting following the AGM to reflect any change in circumstance.
- Keep a monthly record of time, travel and other expenses incurred as a member of the MCTTG to inform any funding bids.

Minutes Secretary

The Minutes Secretary is responsible to the Chairman for:

- Keeping accurate records of all committee meetings and AGMs;
- Circulating these to Committee members.

Treasurer

The Treasurer is responsible to the Chairman for:

- Banking any monies received ;
- Paying approved invoices and expenses;
- Maintaining accounts on a day-to-day basis;

- Preparing the accounts for audit within the prescribed timescale;
- Presenting a report to the committee at each meeting.

Membership Secretary

The Membership Secretary is responsible to the Chairman for:

- Maintaining the members' database;
- Answering membership enquiries;
- Providing reports to the committee as required.

Information Officer

The Information Officer is responsible to the Chairman for:

- Keeping the Committee up to date regarding local tracks issues;
- Liaising with other bodies regarding these;
- Dealing with notifications of safety issues;
- Monitoring developments with regard to new links and modification orders;
- Providing information to interested parties about the work of the Group.

Website Manager

The Website Manager is responsible to the Chairman for:

- Keeping the Committee up to date regarding website developments
- Receiving and posting items on the website, including advertisements
- Ensuring that the site is regularly updated

Task Managers

The Task Managers are responsible to the Committee for:

- Liaising with all other parties involved in a Task.
- Keeping the Committee up to date regarding Task developments

The above roles are those currently performed by committee members and are subject to change as circumstances alter. They do not reflect the full range of tasks that may be carried out by members for the Group at any one time. Because the Group is small, one person may do several jobs or one job may be shared by several people. The important thing is that any task undertaken is done so with reference to the working practices of the Group regardless of the personnel.

PROCEDURES

How to co-opt a new MCTTG committee member

1. Give the prospective member the opportunity to read the constitution and agree to it;
2. Ask them to attend a meeting to introduce themselves to the committee;
3. Committee members discuss any recommendations, queries or concerns before the meeting the prospective member will attend or earlier in that meeting before the candidate arrives;
4. Circulate the proposal to co-opt the member in advance of the next meeting to all committee members;
5. Committee members unable to attend that meeting make their opinion known to the Minutes Secretary in the interim;
6. The committee votes on acceptance of the candidate at the meeting.

7. The new committee member signs and dates Commitment to the Constitution and Conflict of Interest forms.

Junior Membership

Members aged 18 or over are entitled to vote at the AGM. Junior members are welcome, but may not vote at the AGM.

Website Advertisements

Advertisements for general items are free of charge to members to encourage use of the web. (Committee decision 12/03/2009) Advertisements for livestock or procedures will not be published.

Working Parties

The Committee may set up working parties to carry out specific projects or investigate particular topics in order to progress individual issues efficiently outside the usual formal programme of committee meetings. They must include at least one MCTTG member, but may draw upon the expertise of other interested parties as appropriate. Such groups will report back to the main committee at least quarterly.

What to do when a safety issue about an existing track is raised

1. The Information Officer checks the Tasks Index to see if the problem has already been raised, checking against parish information.
2. If the problem is not on record, the Information Officer allocates a reference number coded SI (Safety Issue) using the Tasks Index.
3. All available information is recorded on a Task Sheet.
4. The Task is raised at the next committee meeting to enable the issue to be discussed and the best approach to be determined. This may include contacting the Public Rights of Way team (PROW) and/or Gloucestershire County Council Highways officer and/or other local riders for comments and approaching the landowner.
5. The Committee decides who is the best person to proceed with the task on behalf of the Group as the Task Manager. This will be a MCTTG member, but need not be a committee member.
6. The Task Manager tells the Information Officer and BHS Glos DABO or CABO as appropriate about all activities relating to the task;
7. Progress is logged on the task sheet either by the Information Officer or the Task Manager who returns the sheet to the Information Officer on completion for archiving.
8. Progress on the task is discussed at succeeding committee meetings and included in committee minutes.
9. The Task Manager reports the progress to the person who first raised the issue.
10. When the task has been completed, the Task Manager or Information Officer sends thank you letters and/or a full report to all parties involved as appropriate.

Please note: *When considering improvements to existing tracks and advising on problems and new links, the Group will seek to achieve the*

best solution that seems reasonable and practicable in each circumstance. BHS recommendations will be considered for each issue, but the Group will be mindful that local tracks have evolved in ways which may require an individual approach to a problem. The Group will consider also the integrity of the area and the needs of other user groups.

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Procedure for Guided Rides:

1. Any points deemed a possible worry to any particular rider should be notified for their consideration (crossing or utilising a fast road; steep, stoney track; possible mud; narrow gate; kites on common etc.)
2. A leader should use a route they ride regularly or should investigate the proposed route on horse or foot prior to ride.
3. Date, time, leader, estimated distance, starting point information and deemed hazards details are sent to Rides Secretary along with style of the ride (e.g walk only; walk and trot; walk, trot and canter; fast ride). Riders will be expected to choose the type of ride they are comfortable and competent on.
4. The Rides Secretary books the above information onto the web site.
5. The Rides Secretary ensures the BHS Access Department (currently Pat Reagan) has a list of all events listed for the Group to ensure insurance is activated for these activities.
6. The Ride Leader takes bookings for the ride at their discretion, to a maximum of five escorted riders.
7. Riders must be members, and if not members when they book, they must join at least one week before the ride.
8. The Ride Leader should carry a mobile phone or ensure that there is at least one in the group.
9. The Ride Leader carries the entry forms with them to ensure they have all the emergency phone contacts and medical/allergies information to hand.
10. The Ride Leader should carry a map of the ride route and draw the participants' attention to it before setting out. If the Ride Leader has a fall, and is injured/unconscious and unable to continue, this will enable the other riders to find their way.
11. Every horse must carry identity information (e.g. on a luggage label tied to saddle) giving the owner's/rider's name and phone number.
12. All riders will sign MCTTG Guided Rides – Rider's Form (MCTTG 6) at the start of a ride to confirm they agree to the following:
 - i. All riders should be comfortable and competent riding in a group at the designated paces of the ride as shown above, and should be comfortable with, and on a horse that will cope with, the type of terrain and situations listed.
 - ii. All riders should be able to be able to mount and dismount, and cope with unexpected situations.
 - iii. All riders to remain behind the leader, and not to split away into separate groups. (If anyone insists on doing so, they must inform the leader, and do it at their own risk).
 - iv. All riders to wear suitable footwear, safety hats and something fluorescent – e.g. waistcoats, hat bands, hat covers, horse leg bands etc.
 - v. All riders should carry mobile phones and must carry emergency contact details and medical/allergy information.
 - vi. All horses should have identity tags giving owner/rider's name and contact details.
 - vii. All riders should be aware of the Highway Code in relation to the riding of horses (see pages 13-17)

(Procedure for Guided Rides continued)

Insurance

All riders must confirm that they understand that being a BHS-affiliated member only allows them third party insurance, and that the riders and horses should have their own insurance cover.

* **BHS and Insurance Company SEIB**, who insure Group Rides, also point out that the Highway Code (*see below*: page 19 rule 52 Sep 2007) stipulates a horse rider, whilst using the highway, must make sure they can control their horse on a road and must never ride a horse without both a saddle and bridle.

As the insurance company will always be mindful of the law, a claim could be rejected if appropriate restraints (bridles) are not used. Our recommendation, therefore, is not to use alternative bridles, bit-less bridles etc. on the highway but only on private land. MCTTG highlights these points to its members to ensure that they clearly understand the insurance position. It remains, of course, the rider's personal choice to use whichever tack they wish.

Action in event of a road accident

In accidents involving cars and horses, it is the horse and rider that invariably come off worse. Riders should know what action to take in the event of an accident and should report accidents and also any near misses to the local police.

If an accident occurs:

- prevent further accidents and risk of injury by warning approaching traffic;
- summon professional help and emergency services;
- apply basic first-aid if you are trained (to humans and horses) until help arrives;
- inform the police if there are horses loose on the road.

The Official Highway Code and Horses:

The latest Official Highway Code is that of September 2007.

Where the Code says "must" or "must not", the rule is a legal requirement and if you disobey, you are committing a criminal offence. Other rules introduced, for example, by "should/should not" or "do/do not", are not legal requirements in themselves, but may, if broken, show liability in court proceedings.

Listed below are the sections which refer to horses on the road or have particular significance for horse riders/drivers.

Page 4 Introduction:

The most vulnerable road users are pedestrians, particularly children, older or disabled people, cyclists, motorcyclists and horse riders.

Page 12 Rule 27 Equestrian crossings

Equestrian crossings are for horse riders. They have pavement barriers, wider crossing spaces, horse and rider figures in the light panels and either two sets of controls (one higher), or just one higher control panel.

(Procedure for Guided Rides continued)

Page 18 Rule 47 Horse-drawn vehicles

Horse-drawn vehicles used on the highway should be operated and maintained in accordance with standards set out in the Department for Transport's Code of Practice for Horse-Drawn Vehicles. This Code lays down the requirements for a road driving assessment and includes a comprehensive list of safety checks to ensure that a carriage and its fittings are safe and in good working order. The standards set out in the Road Driving assessment may be required to be met by a Local Authority if an operator wishes to obtain a local authority licence to operate a passenger-carrying service.

Page 18 Rule 48 Safety equipment and clothing

All horse drawn vehicles should have two red rear reflectors. It is safer not to drive at night but if you do, a light showing white to the front and red to the rear **MUST** be fitted.
Law: Road Vehicle Lighting Regulations 1989 reg 4

Page 18 Rule 49 Horse Riders: Safety equipment

Children under the age of 14 **MUST** wear a helmet which complies with the Regulations. It **MUST** be fastened securely. Other riders should also follow these requirements. These requirements do not apply to a child who is a follower of the Sikh religion while wearing a turban.

Laws: Horses (Protective Headgear for Young Riders) Act 1990 sect 1 & Horses (Protective Headgear for Young Riders) Regulations 1992 reg 3

Page 18 Rule 50 Other clothing

You should wear:

- Boots or shoes with hard soles and heels
- Light-coloured or fluorescent clothing in daylight
- Reflective clothing if you have to ride at night or in poor visibility

Page 19 Rule 51 At night

It is safer not to ride on the road at night or in poor visibility, but if you do, make sure you wear reflective clothing and your horse has reflective bands above the fetlock joints. A light which shows white to the front and red to the rear should be fitted, with a band, to the rider's right arm and/or leg/riding boot. If you are leading a horse at night, carry a light in your right hand, showing white to the front and red to the rear, and wear reflective clothing on both you and your horse. It is strongly recommended that a fluorescent/reflective tail guard is also worn by your horse.

Page 19 Rule 52 Riding

Before you take a horse on the road, you should:

- Ensure all tack fits well and is in good condition
- Make sure you can control the horse

Always ride with other, less nervous horses if you think that your horse will be nervous of traffic.

Never ride a horse without both a saddle and bridle.

(Procedure for Guided Rides continued)

Page 19 Rule 53 Before riding off or turning, look behind you to make sure it is safe, then give a clear arm signal.

When riding on the road you should:

- Keep to the left
- Keep both hands on the reins unless you are signalling
- Keep both feet in the stirrups
- Not carry another person
- Not carry anything which might affect your balance or get tangled up with the reins
- Keep a horse you are leading to your left
- Move in the direction of the traffic flow in a one-way street
- Never ride more than two abreast, and ride in single file on narrow or busy roads and when riding round bends.

Page 20 Rule 54 You MUST NOT take a horse onto a footpath or pavement and you should not take a horse onto a cycle track. Use a bridleway where possible. Equestrian crossings may be provided for horse riders to cross the road and you should use these where available. You should dismount at level crossings where a “Horse Riders Dismount” sign is displayed.

Laws: Highways Act 1835 Sect 72 and Road(Safety)Act 1984 sect 129(5)

NB Footpath in this context refers to the pedestrian way beside a carriageway to allow separate movement of pedestrians and road traffic, not a footpath across countryside.

Page 20 Rule 55 Avoid roundabouts where possible. If you use them you should

- Keep to the left and watch out for vehicles crossing your path to leave or join the roundabout.
- Signal right when crossing exits to show you are not leaving
- Signal left just before you leave the roundabout

Page 26 Rule 79 (Advice for cyclists)

Do not ride across equestrian crossings, as they are for horse riders only.

Page 37 Rule 114 (Advice for drivers)

You MUST NOT

Use any lights in a way which would dazzle or cause discomfort to other road users, including pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.

Page 41 Rule 125 (Advice for drivers)

You should always reduce your speed when sharing the road with pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders, particularly children, and motorcyclists.

Page 43 Rule 129 (Advice for drivers) Double white lines where the line nearest you is solid. This means you MUST NOT cross or straddle it unless it is safe and you need to enter adjoining premises or a side road. You may cross the line if necessary,

(Procedure for Guided Rides continued)

provided the road is clear, to pass a stationary vehicle, or overtake a pedal cycle, horse or road maintenance vehicle, if they are travelling at 10mph (16 km/h) or less.

Laws: Road Traffic Act 1988 sect 36 & Traffic Signs Regulations & General Directions 2002 regs 10 & 26

Page 51 Rule 154 (Advice for drivers) Country roads

Be prepared for pedestrians, horse riders, cyclists, slow-moving farm vehicles or mud on the road surface.

Page 52 Rule 155 (Advice for drivers) Single-track roads

Slow down when passing pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders

Page 55 Rule 163 (Advice for drivers) Overtaking

Give motorcyclists, cyclists and horse riders at least as much room as you would when overtaking a car (See Rules 211-215)

Page 59 Rule 170 (Advice for drivers) Road junctions

Watch out for horse riders who may take a different line on the road from that which you would expect.

Page 65 Rule 187 (Advice for drivers) Roundabouts

In all cases watch out for and give plenty of room to cyclists and horse riders who may stay in the left-hand lane and signal right if they intend to continue round the roundabout. Allow them to do so.

Page 68 Rule 199 Toucan, Puffin and Equestrian Crossings

These are similar to pelican crossings, but there is no flashing amber phase; the light sequence for traffic at these three crossings is the same as at traffic lights. If the signal-controlled crossing is not working, proceed with extreme caution.

Page 70 Rule 204 (Advice for drivers) Road users requiring extra care

The most vulnerable road users are pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and horse riders. It is particularly important to be aware of children, older and disabled people, and learner and inexperienced drivers and riders.

Page 73 Rule 214 (Advice for drivers) Other road users

Animals. When passing animals, drive slowly. Give them plenty of room and be ready to stop. Do not scare animals by sounding your horn, revving your engine or accelerating rapidly once you have passed them. Look out for animals being led, driven or ridden on the road and take extra care. Keep your speed down at bends and on narrow country roads.

Page 73 Rule 215 (Advice for drivers) Horse riders and horse-drawn vehicles.

Be particularly careful of horse riders and horse-drawn vehicles especially when overtaking. Always pass wide and slowly. Horse riders are often children, so take extra care and remember riders may ride in double file when escorting a young or inexperienced horse or rider. Look out for horse riders' and horse drivers' signals and heed a request to slow down or stop. Take great care and treat all horses as a potential hazard; they can be unpredictable, despite the efforts of their rider/driver.

(Procedure for Guided Rides continued)

Page 78 Rule 232(Advice for drivers) Windy Weather

High-sided vehicles are most affected by windy weather, but strong gusts can also blow a car, cyclist, motorcyclist or horse rider off course. This can happen on open stretches of road exposed to strong crosswinds, or when passing bridges or gaps in hedges.

Page 85 Rule 253 Motorways

Motorways MUST NOT be used by pedestrians, holders of provisional motorcycle licences, riders of motorcycles under 50cc, cyclists, horse riders, certain slow-moving vehicles and those carrying oversized loads(except by special permission), agricultural vehicles, and powered wheelchairs/powered mobility scooters.

Page 95 Rule 286 (Advice for drivers) Documentation

If you are involved in a collision which causes damage or injury to any other person, vehicle, animal or property you MUST

- Stop
- Give your own and the vehicle owner's name and address and the registration number of the vehicle, to anyone having reasonable grounds for requiring them
- If you do not give your name and address at the time of the collision, report it to the police as soon as reasonably practicable, and in any case within 24 hours.

Law: Road Traffic Act 1988 sect 170

Page 103 Signals to other road users illustrates arm signals and points out that they are "Also for use by pedal cyclists and those in charge of horses."

Page 109 Warning signs include those for wild horses and ponies and accompanied horses or ponies.

Page 123 4. The road user and the law: Road traffic law.

It is important to note that references to 'road' therefore generally include footpaths, bridleways and cycle tracks, and many roadways and driveways on private land (including many car parks). In most cases, the law will apply to them and there may be additional rules for particular paths or ways.

Page 124 The road user and the law: Horses

Horses (Protective Headgear for Young Riders) Act 1990

Horses (Protective Headgear for Young Riders) Regulations 1992

Page 135 Code of Practice for Horse-Drawn Vehicles

The Code of Practice is available from the Department for Transport, Transport Technology and Standards Division 6, 2nd Floor, Great Minster House, 76 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DR. Tel 0207 944 2078

MCTTG CLEARANCE PARTIES RISK ASSESSMENT AND GUIDE

This is intended as a "starter pack" of things to consider for Clearance Work.

Applicability will vary.

All working parties should take "all reasonable precautions" (insurance quotation) to suit their particular situation.

PREPARATION

PERMISSION Ensure that you have permission to do the work. It is sensible to contact the County Council PROW or Highway departments and the landowner/occupier to discuss it, although Parish Councils, District Councils and Unitary Authorities do have powers to maintain rights of way.

LINE AND WIDTH OF TRACK TO BE CLEARED - there may be legal implications in this. Ensure you have discussed this fully with the authorities and landowner.

ROAD SIDES Do not plan to work on road-sides. This requires specific Highway permission (usually certificated), signs and insurance.

TIMING Consider the effect of your clearing with regard to nesting birds and, if heavier work is needed, the condition of the surface during and as a result of, the clearing.

INSURANCE Phone Pat Regan at the BHS Access Department to register the day you will be clearing and the place you will be clearing. This will activate the Group insurance coverage on the BHS database. Give 2 weeks notice.

If working via County Council PROW department, you will need to contact them with details of the proposed clearance to ensure that the insurance cover is activated for the clearance day.

RISK ASSESSMENT Check the route to be cleared in advance, so that the leaders can plan what needs to be done and prepare a preliminary Risk Assessment based on the items below, plus any other problems specific to the area.

FIRST AID Qualified first-aid is not a specific requirement of BHS insurance, but note anyone who has training.

MEETING Agree a time and safe place to meet and leave cars.

PREPARE NOTICES Put up a notice at the end points of the track, and adjoining tracks, indicating that work is in progress - (MCTTG 10). Do not put up a sign directly on a main road as this requires special permission, but place it near the end of the track so that users have the option to avoid the work parties if they wish.

CLOTHING Advise all participants that stout shoes/boots and gloves should be worn. High visibility clothing or hat covers are also good.

TOOLS Tools should have bright coloured marker tape or spray paint to assist in keeping them visible when working. Suitable tools might be a pruning saw, pruning shears, hedge clippers, a rake. They can be provided by the leaders or brought by volunteers.

No power tools should be used without proper protective clothing and training. Chain saws cannot be used without a proper license and individual insurance.

(Clearance parties continued)

DISPOSAL OF CLEARED GROWTH

A plan for the disposal of the growth cleared should be organised before you start.

It may be in a woodland that the owner is happy to have the brash put to the sides in the undergrowth to decay as part of the woods natural cycle. In this case care must be taken that no branches are left sticking into the path where they might become a trip hazard.

Cleared growth might have to be removed and disposed of or it might require a bonfire. It may require the use of a shredding lorry for removal or returning to the surface. Any of these actions will require clear organisation e.g. branches should not be dragged past other working groups. A clear system for dealing with the debris will need to be explained to all participants.

(Clearance parties continued)

ON THE DAY

RISK ASSESSMENT Fill in the actual Risk Assessment Form (MCTTG 8) on the day, to ensure that changes in circumstances have been accounted for. This does not have to be done in entirety (e.g. if a long length), as the leader(s) could progress from area to area with smaller groups if deemed the more sensible option for assessing varying areas. Check with the Preliminary RA incase something was spotted there that has been missed.

Basic precautions should include the below, but individual sites may require more.

Check, assess and advise all participants of potential problems with regard to:

Condition of the ground - wet, steep, boggy, stoney, etc.

Weather conditions - heat, ice, wind, etc.

Type of growth to be cleared - brambles, whippy branches, heavy branches, barbed wire, etc. -

Line and width of track to be cleared

Who is working -

their capabilities - children, disabled, elderly, etc.,

their protection - child and vulnerable adults protection, etc.

Use of the Tools

Consideration of Neighbours - houses, gardens, livestock, etc.

Disposal of cleared growth

REGISTERING Fill in form(s) MCTTG 10 for all people participating. Do not allow people to join in without being registered. Take an emergency phone number in case of accident.

CHILD AND VULNERABLE ADULTS PROTECTION Typically, schools, activity groups and special needs groups will arrive with authorised adult supervision, and should remain under the protection of these adults. Children arriving as part of a family group must remain under the strict supervision of the adults accompanying them. Note who they are accompanied by on the register.

TOOLS List against each person the tools that they have brought., or if they are provided, list the tools assembled. This list must be ticked off at the end of the day, or if anyone goes home, to ensure that all tools are accounted for and non are left on the track or in undergrowth.

It is a good idea to have a white or brightly coloured piece of cloth for each working couple/group, which they use as a tool dump. Every tool is replaced on the cloth when swapped for a different tool, taking care to place it safely, and the cloth and tools move along the stretch of path being cleared by each couple/group. This lessens the likelihood of stepping on or misplacing tools.

Care should be taken when carrying tools, keep the head or blade of the tool down and don't walk close to other people

TREES Do not climb trees to attach ropes etc.

GROUPS No-one should work alone incase of accident. Split into small groups, or preferably, couples. Each group should have a mobile phone. (check reception)

(Clearance parties continued)

Ensure you have swapped phone numbers so that contact can be made in an emergency, especially on a longer track. Each group should work in a space well clear of the others, for example: On a normal width track, let one couple start at point A, and get the second couple to start at point B which should be well clear of them - for example perhaps 50 - 100m., carrying on along the track to point C, where the next couple will begin etc.. This ensures that no couple bring down larger branches etc. any where near any other group. Should Couple A have cleared as far as the point at which couple B started, they then leap-frog the whole gang to the next unallocated section.

See Forms

MCTTG 8 CLEARANCE PARTY NOTES AND ASSESSMENT

MCTTG 9 CLEARANCE PARTY REGISTER OF PARTICIPANTS

MCTTG 10 CLEARANCE PARTY WORKING NOTICE

Section 5: Strategies

The Group began with the following strategies, and continues to implement them:

1. Networking

The Group is aware that a good working relationship with many other groups, authorities and individuals is essential to fulfil our aims.

Once formed, we immediately applied for affiliation to the British Horse Society. This affiliation gives us a reliable and respected source of information with regard to access issues, both technically and in regard to the wider picture across the UK. Knowing that we are working as part of the BHS Access system also assists other parties in their dealings with us (eg policy development, allocation of resources). Locally, we began by contacting Gloucestershire Rural Community Council to advise them of our existence and to invite a representative to meet us, to hear our aims and discuss the possibilities open to us.

2. Revising Cotswolds on Horseback

One of our first major tasks was to assist the BHS in updating and publishing The Cotswolds on Horseback, a series of circular rides in the Cotswolds.

3. Engaging in Parish Plans

We identified the need to introduce ourselves and our aims to all parish councils in our area with specific reference to recognising the value of their tracks and trails in their Parish Plans. We offered our assistance on any tracks and trails problems they might have.

4. Developing Databases and Strategic Links

We identified the need to recognise the value of the tracks and trails network for its contribution to mental and physical health, tourism and leisure for both young and old, male and female, able-bodied people and people with disabilities. We established a database of local people of influence to promote this awareness and wrote to all identified. This included landowners, council officers, councillors at local and county level and bodies such as the Woodland Trust and National Trust.

We developed a contact database of local organisations and individuals with an interest in local tracks and trails. These include riding schools and livery yards, farriers, stable and riding goods suppliers and equestrian B&Bs.

5. Liaison with Equestrian B&Bs

The Group intends to liaise further with the equestrian B&Bs to publish a list on our website and to devise routes to allow trail riding between B&Bs.

6. Publicity and Communication

We take regular opportunity to get articles and photographs about the group in local newspapers and other media to publicise our objectives. We have a website which is regularly updated and provides regular newsletters. Members not on email receive a printed copy of the newsletter.

7. Projects

Projects are identified as a result of the above processes and priorities established by agreement at committee meetings. Glos BHS CABO will be informed of these.

8. Fundraising

Any necessary fundraising for agreed projects is undertaken in conjunction with local groups and interested parties wherever possible. A sample Business Plan has been prepared to assist with any grant applications that the Group may wish to make. Details can be adjusted to suit the project (see Addenda).

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Section 6: Addenda

(SEE SEPARATE FILE FOR THESE FORMS)

i) Sample Business Plan (12 pages)

ii) Forms:

- MCTTG 1 Membership (8/11/11)
- MCTTG 2 Conflict of Interest (5/9/08)
- MCTTG 3 Expenses Claim (8/11/11)
- MCTTG 4 Individual Timesheet
- MCTTG 5 Group Timesheet
- MCTTG 6 Guided Rides – Rider’s Form
- MCTTG 7 Constitution Commitment
- MCTTG 8 Clearance Party Notes and Assessment
- MCTTG 9 Register of Clearance Party Participants
- MCTTG 10 Clearance Party Working Notice

iii) Task Sheets:

- MCTTG SI (23/10/08) Safety Issues on Existing Tracks
- MCTTG MO (23/10/08) Modification Orders
- MCTTG NL (23/10/08) New Links
- MCTTG Task continuation (23/10/08)

iv) Letter Heading

v) Sample Letters:

- Hedgerows
- Gates

vi) Sample Committee Agenda

vii) Sample for AGM -

- Preparation Procedure
- Agenda
- MCTTG 8 Attendance Record for AGM
- MCTTG 9 Apologies Record for AGM

viii) Handout Cards

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