

The Pony Club District Commissioner's Handbook

PREFACE

Welcome to The Pony Club, we hope that you will find the role of District Commissioner challenging and hugely worthwhile. The aim of this booklet is to provide you with a useful and handy reference. Most of the information has been extracted from either The Pony Club Year Book or the individual discipline rule books. This information is for your guidance, but please remember that your Area Representative, the Chief Executive and the staff at The Pony Club Office are there to help you too. So if you are concerned about anything give them a call.

INTRODUCTION

The formal appointment of a District Commissioner (DC) is dealt with in The Pony Club Year Book under Area and Branch Organisation, Section 1V.

The purpose of The Pony Club is:

- To encourage young people to ride and to learn to enjoy all kinds of sport connected with ponies and riding.
- To give instruction in riding and horsemanship and to educate Members to look after and to take proper care of their animals.
- To promote the highest ideals of sportsmanship, citizenship and loyalty and create strength of character and self-discipline.

Each Branch is self-contained, self-governing and self-supporting. Each Branch is unique. As a District Commissioner, you have control of your own Branch. Provided that you run the Branch according to the rules set down in The Pony Club Year Book and with the full support of your Committee, you may organise activities to suit specific, local needs. The Pony Club aims for excellence, District Commissioners can only do their best whatever the circumstances.

You are ultimately responsible for planning, guiding and implementing the teaching and competitive programme within the Branch. Your enthusiasm and encouragement for all activities, your concern for sportsmanship, good manners and neat turn-out, will define your Branch.

During the school holidays the job may take up a great deal of time. It is important to delegate areas of responsibility so that you are free to attend as many activities as possible. Your presence at activities is appreciated by Members, instructors and parents alike. Use this time to get to know your Members and their parents and to see how Branch activities are progressing.

The phone needs to be managed or you will find yourself being contacted at all hours by the membership. An answer-phone with a message stating the times when you will be available to respond to Branch calls is useful. If Members or their parents wish to speak to you personally they should try to call you during these times except in emergencies. Many DC's use this facility to tell callers that messages will be noted and but calls will not be returned. Some Committees provide a dedicated mobile number for the DC's use.

Obviously you will need to have different contact arrangements for your Committee Members. A system is necessary if you wish to keep the rest of your family 'on side'. For many DCs, e-mail and texting has become the best way to communicate.

At regular intervals throughout the year The Pony Club Office dispatches Bulletins and information. Take time to digest and disseminate this information to all the Members of

your Committee. The Year Book is published annually at the beginning of each calendar year. Allow time to read it thoroughly and keep it handy at all times. The essential sections are 'The Rules' and 'Administrative Notes'. Please try to buy a current copy for a proportion of Committee Members each year and try to replace all copies every three years.

You will have to make decisions, sometimes unpopular ones. Make sure that Members and their parents understand the reasons for the decision, ensuring that they represent the best interests of the Branch as a whole.

Do respect confidence, but avoid gossip. Be open to new ideas and invite discussion before decisions are taken. Be fair and ensure that Branch activities are delivered equally to all levels of ability.

Consider the geography of your district. Try to ensure that venues and activities are convenient for the majority of the Members. When you are planning activities, consider both the state and the independent school holidays. Finally, try to keep a sense of proportion and humour.

You will make new friends and learn new skills. When you feel your enthusiasm waning, do not be afraid to retire and allow someone else the privilege of becoming DC. Remember, at all times this special role should be enjoyable.

MEMBERSHIP

See also Rules of the Pony Club in The Year Book - Section 6

Membership is available to all children and young persons until the end of The Pony Club Year or Centre Membership Subscription Year in which they become 21 years of age.

- A) **Branch Membership** is open to all children. It is desirable, but not essential, that they should have the use of a pony. Membership is of a Branch and a Member cannot join more than one Branch. Usually a Branch accepts any application for membership from a young person resident within the district. Any application from outside the district should be discussed with and agreed by your Area Representative before final acceptance.
- B) **Centre Membership** is intended for children who do not have their own pony, either owned, hired, loaned, who ride at a Pony Club Linked Riding Centre. However, a child who owns a pony, keeps it at a linked Riding Centre BUT has no means of transporting it, may apply for Centre Membership. A Centre Member, who subsequently acquires a pony and has transport, should transfer to the local Branch.
- C) **Dual Membership** If a child who was a Centre Member obtains their own pony and has transport, they may apply to join their local Branch as well. Subscriptions should be paid to both the Centre and the Branch. Efficiency tests must be taken in the Branch.

Achievement Badges and Progressive Tests may be taken at either place. At competitions the Member must compete for the Branch.

- D) **Associate Membership** is available to persons from the beginning of January following the year in which they reach 21 until the end of the Pony Club year or the Centre Membership subscription year in which they reach 25 years. Associates must have previously been either Branch or Centre Members.

TRANSFERS

The Pony Club Equestrian Council believes it is in the best interests of The Pony Club as a whole, to discourage transfers between Branches.

However, where there is a permanent change of residence, a Member may either remain with the existing Branch or transfer to the Branch in the new district he is moving to. They have twelve months from the date of the move to request a transfer.

A Member who wishes to transfer to another Branch without a corresponding permanent change of home address may not compete in any Championship (Open, Intermediate, Novice) as an individual or team Member for fourteen months from the date of the transfer.

If a Member requests a transfer because his own Branch does not offer the opportunity to take part in Mounted Games, Polo or Polocrosse, at any level (e.g. rallies, friendly competitions, Area Competitions etc.) then the fourteen month rule does not apply to those disciplines. However, it does apply to those other disciplines in which they could have taken part, i.e. Dressage, Show Jumping, Eventing, Tetrathlon and Endurance.

Every request for a transfer must be made to the Area Rep in whose Area the Member resides. The Area Rep will issue a transfer form. The transfer form must be completed by the respective DC's i.e. donor and acceptor. Before a transfer can take place, both DCs as well as one or both Area Reps must all approve the transfer.

If this agreement is not possible the matter must be referred to The Pony Club Office who will pass it to The Management Board.

In the case of **lapsed membership**, a Member joining another Branch is subject to the transfer provisions set out above. A transfer form must be submitted. For competition purposes the new membership will be deemed to start from the date the subscription is paid or February 1st whichever is the later. Individual consideration will be given to lapses of over two years.

In the year of transfer no part of the joining fee or Annual Subscription of a Member will be payable to the "receiving" Branch, unless the subscription is paid to the "receiving" Branch after the transfer.

One of the two Branch Operations Directors (BODs) who sit on The Pony Club Management Committee may be asked to investigate and resolve a contentious transfer. If, after a BOD has reached a decision, there is still dissatisfaction, the Member may appeal to the Appeals Committee. The Appeals Committee has the ultimate discretion and authority to approve or reject any transfer, and will generally give reasons for doing so. If appropriate, the interested parties may be called to make a submission to Appeal. All parties will be given reasonable and adequate notice of this meeting. The decision of The Appeals Committee is final.

STRUCTURE OF THE PONY CLUB

i) The Board of Trustees

The ultimate authority of The Pony Club they are responsible for the administration and management of the affairs of The Pony Club

ii) Honorary appointments

The Trustees may make honorary appointments.

iii) The Equestrian Council

The Council is responsible for the full range of equestrian activities of The Pony Club. It comprises The Chairman of The Pony Club, The Vice Chairman, Area Reps, The Treasurer and Discipline Chairmen.

iv) The Audit Committee

The Audit Committee monitors the financial aspects of The Pony Club.

v) The Management Committee

The Management Committee is the executive body responsible for the administration of The Pony Club.

vi) The Equestrian Council Committees

The Equestrian Council appoints Committees to administer the disciplines and activities of The Pony Club e.g. Training, Centre Membership, Health and Safety, Dressage, appeals.

vii) The Area Reps Committee

The Area Reps meet twice a year with The Chairman to discuss their problems.

viii) The Appeals Committee

Hears complaints and issues not resolved by The Area Rep or The Management Committee. Legal and financial matters are referred to The Audit Committee.

The Pony Club Office is located at Stoneleigh Park, near Kenilworth in Warwickshire. The Chief Executive and all the Discipline Secretaries are based here. There is a merchandising facility which deals with Branch orders.

There are 350 Branches of The Pony Club grouped into 19 Areas. There are in excess of 555 Centres.

LOCAL ORGANISATION

THE DC AND THE BRANCH COMMITTEE

See Section 8 in the Year Book – Area and Branch Organisation

Every Branch is run by a DC, with the support a Branch Committee. If the Branch is newly created, the first DC is responsible for selecting the Committee within three months of appointment. Otherwise the existing Committee is inherited. The Branch Committee must comprise a minimum of 5 persons including the DC, Secretary, Treasurer, Health and Safety Officer and Child Protection Officer. The people in these positions are chosen by the Branch Committee. The DC may not also be the Treasurer. The Treasurer may not reside at the same address as the DC. A quorum consists of not less than three Members of the Branch Committee.

In a new Branch the DC and the Committee Members are appointed to serve for a term of three years terminating on the third 31st December after the date of their appointment, after which they must be re-elected.

In existing Branches the DC and all Members of the Committee must be re-elected at the end of every third year terminating on third 31st December after their appointment. Committee Members may resign or stand for re-election. The elections should be advertised in the newsletter/on the website and nominations (proposed and seconded) invited. The DC or Secretary should provide voting slips and a ballot box so that the Branch Committee can record their preference(s). The result of any election must be recorded in the Branch minutes. Ideally, the Committee should be 'rolling' to ensure continuity. A rolling Committee is one where a 1/3 is re-elected every year.

The DC is Chairman of the Branch and has the casting vote in elections. If the DC is not able to attend a Branch Committee meeting the other Members shall appoint one of them to chair the meeting. A Committee Member absent from a Branch meeting cannot appoint a third party to represent and vote on their behalf.

Immediately after appointment, a new DC may, after consulting and with the approval of the Area Rep, ask for the resignation of up to 50% of the existing Branch Committee. The duties of the DC are set out in The Pony Club Year Book. Many of these duties may be delegated. You may wish appoint an Assistant D/C or operate the Branch with Joint DCs. If you wish to appoint a Joint DC you should discuss the matter with your Area Rep.

The DC must ensure that:

- The Branch complies fully with The Pony Club's Health, Safety and Welfare Policy and other statutory obligations
- He/she is familiar with The Pony Club's Health and Safety Rule Book and that a copy of it is given to every camp organiser

- Rallies, camps and other activities are arranged for Members
- Accurate membership information is maintained.
- Annual subscriptions and Joining Fees are collected
- All returns and moneys required as set out in the rules are sent to The Pony Club Office on time. Failure to comply may result in financial penalties being applied.
- The names of instructors, their qualifications and their most recent accreditation date must be maintained and a list forwarded to The Pony Club Office annually, for approval. It is likely that this information will be held on the database in the near future.
- Ensure that the Branch Committee Members work efficiently.
- Minutes of Branch Committee meetings and annual meetings are kept in a Minute Book.
- Simple Branch accounts are kept.
- Complete annual accounts are returned on time using the form provided. The DC has to sign that these accounts are accurate.
- Accounts should be checked by a third party with financial experience.
- A register of all fixed assets is maintained
- The committee is made aware of all important information from The Pony Club Office
- Directives from The Equestrian Council are fulfilled

The Branch Committee should meet frequently. There must be at least four Committee meetings every year. Usually, Branches need to meet more often than the required minimum. At the end of each main holiday period the meeting should review past activities and plan for the future. For maximum efficiency use an agenda so that matters can be dealt with in an orderly way. This must be circulated to all the Branch Committee well in advance of each meeting. It is important to know in advance when venues are available and school holidays are scheduled, so that planning decisions can be made at these meetings.

If the Branch district is geographically widespread, it might be practical to divide it into sub-districts each with its own responsible Committee Member to attend the local rally venues.

Financial guidance, the role of the Branch Treasurer

As DC you should keep a record of all your personal expenditure incurred as a direct result of attending Branch activities. Some Branches are able to reimburse a proportion of a DC's expenditure. Some Branches are not in such a strong financial position and may be unable to assist. Raise this matter with your Committee.

The financial year end for the Pony Club is **December 31st**. This date is published in The Year Book. Branches must send a complete set of their accounts, including those of the

supporters'/parents' associations and any other Sub-Committee accounts to The Pony Club Office. These amounts may be itemised separately or incorporated in the main body of the account. Additionally, signed copies of all the relevant bank accounts must accompany this return. The complete financial record must arrive there no later than two months after the published year end i.e. by **February 28th**.

A form on which to record all this information is sent to the treasurer or is available from The Pony Club Office. This form assists the presentation of the financial information in such a way that it is acceptable for scrutiny by both our auditors and the Charity Commission. All Branch accounts are consolidated at The Pony Club Office before the final submission. Only simple Branch accounts need to be kept to include:

- Income from annual subscriptions and fund raising
- Annual expenditure to include camps, rallies, equipment, stationery, phone.
- Current and deposit account details.

A small Branch may operate using only a cash book. Most Branches run current and deposit accounts. Some have an account for each main activity. All Branch cheques must be signed by two of three nominated persons usually the DC, the Treasurer and A N Other (in case of absence). Never hand out a blank cheque. It is acceptable to have single signature cheques for smaller sums of money, to be agreed with your Bank, possibly up to £250.00. The DC and Treasurer should both receive duplicate Bank statements. Banks do not charge extra for this service.

A Branch Finance Sub-Committee can be invaluable for identifying needs, raising funds and sourcing grants. A separate record i.e. a bank statement must be available for examination at every Committee meeting and as required. Increasingly, Branches use computers to store their financial information. If your Branch accounts are stored on computer and the information is password protected ensure that you know the password. The Pony Club is a registered Charity, No 1050146. The Pony Club can recover tax on donations made under Gift Aid on behalf of the Branches. The Charity Commission has the right to check any Branch accounts. It is unlikely that Branches will need to be involved with VAT. Taxation on investments and fund-raising needs specialist advice. Initially contact The Pony Club Office. Gift aid repayments are returned to the Branches at regular intervals throughout the year. Each year about six Branches are selected randomly to have their accounts inspected by the IR.

Some instructors still work on a voluntary basis and only require their travel expenses to be reimbursed. Most are full time instructors who require payment for their time teaching in the Branch. All instructors' fees should be paid out of Branch funds. The Pony Club Office will reimburse the travel costs of approved Visiting Instructors (VIs) - see The Pony Club Year Book. Their charges for instruction should be agreed beforehand and are paid directly by the Branch.

It is imperative that Branches keep records of the names and addresses of all instructors and of the payments made to them. These records should be sufficiently detailed to allow an annual schedule of payments to be completed, if required, by an Inspector of Taxes. Branch payments can be made by cheque or through BACS electronically on production of an instructor's invoice itemizing their hours claimed. Try **not** to pay cash, if really necessary issue a receipt and ensure the instructor signs that the payment has been received. The payment of individuals' expenses 'wholly, reasonably and necessarily incurred' in the proper running of the Branch is allowed. All these payments should be clearly defined in Branch financial records. You should comply with any instructions from your local Inspector of Taxes.

A Tax Inspector can back-investigate for up to six years and could impose a penalty. These notes are provided for initial guidance to Branches. If more or specific help is required please ask The Pony Club Office and read 'Financial Guidelines' document.

THE BRANCH TREASURER

Responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that subscriptions and other payments are collected on time.
- The payment of invoices authorised by the DC.
- The production of simple Branch accounts. Accounts and all bank statements should be available for scrutiny by the Branch Committee at every meeting. An annual set of accounts must be produced. The annual accounts should be reviewed by a third party who has financial experience to ensure accuracy.
- When necessary select and open an appropriate named branch savings account approved by the DC and Branch Committee. To ensure that the collection of Gift Aid from Members' parents/sponsors is efficient, the signatory must provide an address and declare that they pay tax in the UK. Gift Aid income is refunded directly to the Branch from The Pony Club Office at regular intervals during the year remarkably **IT COSTS THE PARENTS NOTHING** and benefits the Branch considerably.
- To ensure that Capitation Fees are paid on time the first due by 28th February and the second due by 30th September.
- The completion and return to The Pony Club Office of the Annual Financial Return by February 28th following year end of December 31st.
- To arrange the purchase of Branch equipment as authorised by the DC and the Committee.
- To ensure that all Branch equipment is adequately insured.

Annual Membership Subscriptions are confirmed by The Equestrian Council following advice from the Management Board. These amounts are published annually in The Pony Club Year Book.

Annual subscriptions are due from the 1st of November for the following year. They must be paid by the following January 31st, or membership is terminated and insurance cover ceases until full payment has been received by the Branch. A fixed proportion of the membership fee is retained by the Branch, the remainder is sent to The Pony Club Office included in the capitation return. New Members pay a small joining fee which is retained by the Branch. New Members who join on July 1st pay a reduced subscription for the rest of the year. Members who join in November and December pay a full subscription which covers them until the end of the following calendar year.

Subscription renewal forms can be downloaded from the web site and forwarded to the membership.

All new membership subscriptions and all annual renewals must be acknowledged on either:

- (1) an official Pony Club receipt form
- (2) a membership card both of which are available from The Pony Club Office.

Either method confirms that the Member has paid his current subscription to The Pony Club.

If the your Branch Treasurer is unable to carry out his responsibilities through illness or other personal reason please inform your Area Rep and The Pony Club Office as soon as possible.

THE BRANCH SECRETARY

Responsibilities:

- Record and keep the minutes of all Committee meetings all persons present should indicate a conflict of interest if appropriate.
- The production and distribution of the Branch holiday programme to all Members, instructors and the Area Representative either by post or on line. Many parents still prefer a hard copy which they should be able to download from the Branch website.
- Check that Capitation Fee has been sent to The Pony Club Office on February 28th and October 31st of each year and that the statistical and Branch information comprising The Annual Report is sent to The Pony Club Office on October 31st each year. Failure to do this may mean that incorrect information is included in the following Year Book.
- Keep a supply of stationery, rosettes, dressage sheets, test cards, rule books as well as recording the sale of Pony Club items e.g. badges and ties. These items can be purchased from The Pony Club Office to be delivered to your Branch.
- The maintenance of a record of all Branch Members' activities e.g. tests passed as well as rally and camp attendance. Usually this record is entered on the Branch database although some Branches still prefer to use paper.
- The maintenance and safekeeping of the incident report file and all risk assessment forms. Some Branches keep a simple rally diary listing when rallies were uneventful or only a minor bounce occurred.
- In smaller Branches the secretary may manage the new membership role too. Prospective Members should be sent a membership form and after subscribing are sent Branch welcome pack.
- Every autumn all existing Members are invited to renew their membership subscription for the following year.

In larger Branches a membership secretary may be appointed, to deal solely with the membership function. This person works closely with the Branch Secretary.

The Pony Club has a Membership database known as 'The Pony Club Membership Administration Portal'. Each Branch has access to a private and secure area of the database which is used to keep records of current and past Members' for insurance purposes. The database must be kept up-to-date throughout the year with new Members' or renewals being recorded as soon as is possible. Failure to keep the database up-to-date within a reasonable time period may lead to the invalidation of your Members' insurance policy.

The Database has been created specifically for The Pony Club and training materials, including videos, have been included to help you complete common tasks.

Access to the database is tightly controlled to maintain security. Each Branch can have multiple users access the database although all of these will require their own username and password to be created. Requests for the addition of new users or removal of old users should be made to The Pony Club Office. Note that due to Data Protection Regulations, only users who NEED access to the data shall be given access.

The Database also allows a Branch to perform tasks such as sending a mass e-mail to Members', recording Tests / Achievements, generation of reports / statistics and

recording event attendance. New features are being added at regular intervals to help ensure that we are able to make many tasks more efficient.

Aside from providing a practical way to store the required 25 years of Membership records, the database also ensures that the data is regularly backed up, kept secure and is readily available to Committee Members as required. Records are now protected against loss during computer failure, disasters such as fire / theft and against record lost during Committee handovers. Anyone who has access to the data will also have the benefit of seeing a complete and accurate record of all information in a consistent and easy to use format.

THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OFFICER

Appointed by the DC this person is responsible for ensuring that all Branch activities are run according to the current Pony Club Health and Safety Rule Book. He/she ensures that risk assessments are carried out and are completed **before** every Pony Club activity for every venue that hosts a Branch Pony Club activity and ensures that they are kept in a safe place (liaising with the Secretary) for the specified period of time. Where there has been no material change a risk an assessment may be re visited quarterly, signed and re-used. It should be re written every two years.

The DC or in case of illness etc the Assistant DC is responsible for ensuring that The Pony Club Health and Safety Policy is carried out within the Branch. In situations where neither is able to be present at a Branch activity an appointed Branch official must be there to ensure that the guidelines are enforced.

PONY CLUB HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

It is the policy of The Pony Club to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of its employees, Members and their families as well as Members of the general public who may be assisting in whatever capacity.

The Pony Club sets out management procedures and rules to ensure that all Pony Club activities are run with due regard for the health and safety and welfare of all those people who may be affected by those activities, and to ensure all statutory duties are met. Each employee, Area Rep and DC shall be given information and training as necessary for them to perform their duties in safety. DCs **must** have attended an official DCs' training day either at Stoneleigh or other centrally designated place before they can be confirmed by The Equestrian Council.

When tasks require particular skills additional to those of The Pony Club staff and volunteers, a competent person or contractor with the necessary experience and training must be employed.

Each employee and volunteer will be expected to co-operate with The Pony Club Management or DC to ensure that any statutory duties are complied with and that all work activities are carried out safely. Each individual has a legal obligation to take reasonable care for his/her own health and safety and the safety of others who may be affected by his/her omission/s. Any person who is concerned about any issue relating to health and safety should raise the matter with their DC immediately. Health and Safety Rules and procedures are published and updated annually see The Pony Club Health and Safety Rule Book. Adequate employer's liability insurance and public liability cover is always in place.

Health and Safety guidelines ensure that:

- Appropriate training is available to all volunteers.
- All activities are run according to current Pony Club Health and Safety policy.

- Adequate child protection procedures are notified to the Area Reps and DCs for implementation at all Pony Club activities.
- Regular communication on health and safety information is maintained.
- Accident investigation is thorough so that causes can be identified and actions taken to reduce the risk if appropriate.

THE CHILD PROTECTION OFFICER – CPO

The Area Rep and The Pony Club Health Safety and Child Protection Secretary should be given the name of the person appointed within the Branch. Their appointment will be confirmed after an Enhanced Disclosure has been completed satisfactorily. The CPO ensures that;

- All disclosure checks are carried out.
- All records are maintained.
- The DC and Branch Committee are advised on current Child Protection issues.
- The DC is assisted in child welfare concerns

THE CHIEF INSTRUCTOR

This person should have a considerable knowledge of riding and horse and pony care and be comfortable/experienced working with children and young people. It is also vital that this person has the ability to recognise good and poor instruction within the Branch. The Chief Instructor and DC need to develop a close working relationship for the benefit of the whole Branch. Occasionally a DC may choose to be the Chief Instructor as well.

Responsibilities:

- Planning and organising the instruction for Members and planning the sequence of instruction.
- Planning, organising and running mounted and un-mounted rallies according to The Pony Club test card, achievement badge and competition requirements so that Members are prepared in a systematic way.
- Selecting and booking suitable accredited instructors for all rallies and camps.
- Dividing Members into ride groups for rallies and camps compatible with age and ability, wherever possible.
- Arranging Branch team and test training as necessary.
- Arranging Branch Instructors' training by sourcing local, regional and national training sessions for accreditation and encouraging attendance to enhance career development. Ensuring that all Branch instructors are conversant with current Pony Club training policy. Encouraging Members who have passed their full 'B' Test to attend an Introduction to Pony Club Coaching Year 2 Course. Once accredited, these young people can be used to help with the training of younger Members in the Branch.
- Maintaining a register of accredited Branch Instructors and Trainers.

SHARING THE WORKLOAD

Every Member of the Branch Committee should have a specific role and be prepared to report on their designated activities at these Committee meetings.

a) Instructors

You may choose to include one/two on the Branch Committee. They should not be expected to help with Branch administration. They should have access to the Manual of Horsemanship, the Instructors' Handbook and any other relevant Pony Club publications including the current test cards and training files.

b) First-Aid cover

It is essential to read The Pony Club Health and Safety Rule Book pay particular attention to Table 1 in the Appendix.

The level of cover depends on the activity and the number of Members attending.

It is essential to have a Trained First-Aider with a current First-Aid Certificate and mobile phone at every Pony Club activity where it may be necessary to offer basic First-Aid assistance. Additionally, ensure that the Appointed Person on the day has the site OS grid reference. A properly equipped First-aid kit must be available, try to use approved HSE kits for 10, 20 or 50 persons. A Trained First-Aider has an Emergency First Aid at Work or BHS Specific Equine First Aid Certificate. A Qualified First-Aider has a First Aid at Work qualification. It is good practice to separate the role of Instructor and First-Aider. In a serious emergency one cannot cover both roles simultaneously. It is useful to offer basic First-Aid training to suitable Committee Members, Officials or Parents so that they may be called upon to help at rallies and other activities. Parents who are medically qualified are a great asset to the Branch and are covered by The Pony Club Insurance Policy when assisting in the Branch.

First aid courses are provided by various training providers and are valid for a period of up to three years. Refresher training and re-examination should be completed before the certificate validation date expires. Failure to comply with this rule may mean that a completely new course has to be undertaken.

c) The Rally Organiser

This person can help the DC and Chief Instructor by running rallies on their behalf. For example, a rally organiser may be the owner of a venue and choose to organise the rallies there throughout the season. He/she will work closely with the Chief Instructor and if sufficiently knowledgeable may stand in for the Chief Instructor at the venue on the day, provided that the DC has given permission beforehand. The organisation of working rallies is dealt with in The Year Book.

d) Publicity Officer

The right sort of publicity is important to the image of the Branch and will encourage new Members to join. You may wish to appoint someone to fill this role. With your approval they should be responsible for informing the local press of Branch activities/successes. Help is available to them from the Pony Club's in house Press Officer, based at The Pony Club office and also online.

e) Social Secretary

This person is responsible for planning/running discos, suppers and other activities. He/she may also organise camp catering and food for judges and helpers at Branch competitions.

f) Members' Representative

This person could be a senior Member of the Branch who is elected by a majority of Members from nominations proposed by the Junior Committee. Their role is to put forward the views of Members on relevant subjects. He/she is not a Member of the Branch Committee but may be invited to attend Branch Committee meetings to report or discuss items on which the Committee requires the view of the membership.

g) Website Manager

The Pony Club provides each Branch with the facility to host a website free of charge. It is strongly recommended that all Branches have a website so they can easily communicate with their Member's but it is vital that the information is kept up to date.

Note that as of 2009, The Pony Club released a new version of their Branch Website systems which is fast, easy to use and stable. It is recommended that all Branches using a previous system switch over as soon as is convenient to ensure that they are able to get the most benefit.

Editing the websites requires no special software and can be done without any prior experience although if possible, it is recommended that someone familiar with formatting images or with website editing should take on the role of administrator.

SUB COMMITTEES

Sub Committees are under the control of the DC. No Sub-Committee should involve itself in the policy decisions reached by the **Elected Branch Committee**. Their activities should support the activities of the main Committee as directed by the DC. **As DC, you or your appointed representative must attend every Sub-Committee meeting to ensure** (1) that they are working according direction and (2) that all their decisions are recorded accurately.

a) Junior Committee

This group can help maintain the interest of the older Members and can be useful to organise discos, junior shows and gymkhanas etc to raise money for the Branch. Usually it is formed by a group of older Members plus **an appointed Branch Committee Member**. The experience and commitment gained from working on a Committee is a useful addition to a young Member's CV.

b) Parents' or Supporters' Committee

Their main role is to run fundraising activities for the Branch. The DC approves the composition and activities of the Committee and **a person appointed by the DC attends all their meetings and reports back to the Branch Committee**. The group may provide assistance at a competition e.g. jump-judges, catering, stewarding.

Parents could be asked to run a second-hand clothing rail at rallies. A fixed percentage of the value of an item is returned to the Branch whilst the remainder is returned to the vendor. A parent could collate the names of other parents who are prepared to move Branch 'props' around the district for rallies and shows and inform the DC accordingly.

Many Branches derive considerable assistance from their Supporters' Committee. Do be aware that occasionally a Parents' Committee may try to take over the organisation of activities for the exclusive benefit of their own children. It is important that parents are thanked for any help they give. It is difficult to run a Branch without their help. A word of appreciation at the right moment will encourage their continued support.

c) Others

They may be appointed for a specific activity e.g. fence judging, providing food for the Branch camp. It is better to appoint one person to be in charge of an activity and leave it to them recruit others to help them.

If you lose a good Instructor or Committee Member or parent due to a house/job move, please let the DC or Area Rep in the new district know about them, so that their skills are not lost to The Pony Club.

GENERAL PLANNING OF BRANCH ACTIVITIES

The range of Branch activities is decided by you the DC and the Branch Committee. It should reflect the local needs of the individual Members. Try to be flexible in arranging rallies and training venues at times when most Members can attend. It is important to ensure that Members learn skills in a supportive and friendly way. Include all relevant details for each planned rally/activity in the main Branch bulletin and post the information at regular intervals on the web-site. Most Branches e-mail their activities/holiday rallies to their Members.

Ideally, Members should complete a rally slip for every activity they wish to attend. Some Branches do block bookings. Booking forms should be returned, with full payment, in advance, to the named rally organiser, by the date specified. Remember cash with order is the name of the game. Once the number of Members wishing to attend an activity has been confirmed the DC, Secretary and Chief Instructor can finalise details regarding venue/time and instructors. Encourage Members to access final arrangements from the web-site to save you spending hours on the phone. Some Branches still operate on a turn up basis with no advance booking. The risk of operating this system is that may not have enough resources when and where you need them. Refunds, try to be fair in cases of genuine illness /injury of Member or pony and offer a credit for a future activity if possible. There is no obligation to offer free rallies.

Regular annual activities include;

- Camp, residential or daily for mini, junior, senior and 16/18+ Members
- Competitive events
- Picnic-rides give an opportunity to include training for Achievement Badges. (See Pony Club Rule Book, non competitive activities)
- Social activities, quizzes and games, swimming, skating, bowling, rounders, equine DVDs.
- Visits to places of interest or trips to major equestrian events e.g. Badminton, Burghley, HOYS and Olympia
- You could also try polocrosse practice, dressage to music, fitness for endurance, explore Pony Club racing.

When planning Branch competitions it is wise to contact adjacent Branches, particularly if they are in another Area to compare dates/activities to avoid expensive clashes. Each Area Rep creates an Area Calendar. Calendars list the notified Branch competitions within the Area. The Area calendars are circulated to DCs in early January. Make sure that the important dates planned by your Branch are included. It is important to publish the dates of all of the next years Area Competitions on the Branch website as soon as they have been agreed with the Area Rep.

Whilst some small Branches cater for activities solely in the main holiday periods, other Branches run activities throughout the year. **Remember all Area Team Members representing your Branch must have attended 3 normal working rallies (read Discipline Rule Books and The Year Book for eligibility) this includes both pony and rider** The duration of rallies will vary according to local conditions and needs. In the winter, the use of an indoor school if close by, is appreciated by everybody. If the school is very large it may be possible to divide it in half and have two rides running simultaneously. Careful planning is required with flatwork at one end and jumping at the other and riders moving from one activity to the next.

DRESS FOR MEMBERS OF THE PONY CLUB

a) Hats

It is mandatory for all Members to wear an approved protective helmet, with the chinstrap done up when mounted, at all Pony Club activities. All hats must be tagged by the Branch, using the current official Pony Club tag. You should appoint a couple of knowledgeable Branch Officials to carry out this task on your behalf. **Only they** are permitted to fix the tags. Every hat should be inspected carefully to ensure that it conforms to current requirements before being tagged. Replacement hats must be tagged before being worn at a rally. Tagging confirms that the hat reaches the current safety standards required by The Pony Club. It is the responsibility of the Member's parent or guardian to ensure the fit and condition of the Member's hat.

Currently for **2010** all hats must conform to:

A CE mark with a quality symbol, either a BSI Kitemark or a SAI Global symbol or the Official Snell label and number. The CE mark is insufficient on its own. PAS015 and Snell E2001 meet higher impact criteria and give more protection. For cross country riding (over fences 0.80m high and above), including Eventing, Tetrathlon, Horse Trials and Pony Racing, whether it be tests, rallies or training, a jockey skull cap, with no fixed peak, must be worn. It is also strongly recommended that a jockey skull cap is worn for cross country riding even over lower fences. See Appendix G in The Pony Club Health and Safety Rule Book.

Hats should be worn properly secured, when mounted and at prize-giving. Hat covers for Dressage, Show Jumping and Mounted Games are only permitted in black or navy blue. For cross country silks may be any colour. Branches may have specific cross country silk colours for their team activities. Hats with vertical plastic/metallic strips are permitted. Long hair must be secured.

b) Ties and stocks

Members should wear the approved Pony Club tie whenever attending a Pony Club activity. Some Branches have their own historic tie. For Members over the age of 18 years there is a plain navy blue tie. Alternatively, a plain white or cream stock may be worn with a black or navy riding jacket; a coloured stock should be worn with a tweed hacking jacket.

c) Badges

The official metal Pony Club Membership Badge **must be worn** at all Pony Club activities when a jacket is worn. It is courteous to display a Pony Club badge when out hunting. A coloured disc of felt indicating the current test standard achieved by the Member should be displayed under the metal badge. Cloth achievement badges should be sewn onto the Branch sweatshirt.

d) Body Protectors

The Pony Club does not make the use of body protectors compulsory except for cross-country (X/C) riding and Pony Racing whether training or competing. The responsibility for choosing body protectors and the decision as to their use must rest with Member and their parent/s. The protector should not be more than 2 % of the Member's body weight. When worn, body protectors must fit correctly, be comfortable and not restrict movement. If a Member chooses to wear a Woof Wear Exo Body Cage the key must be left with a named appointed person for the duration of the rally if the parent is absent.

Air vests are designed to be worn over a normal body protector. If a rider chooses to wear an air vest it must only be used in addition to a normal body protector. In the event of a fall, it must be fully deflated or removed before continuing.

e) Medical Armbands

They are recommended to be worn at all times.

f) Clothing and Footwear

At mounted Pony Club rallies Members should wear a riding jacket or Branch sweatshirt with a plain pale coloured shirt with collar and official Pony Club tie. Older Members may prefer to wear a stock. Brown or black jodhpur boots with or without matching plain half chaps should be worn with jodhpurs. No tassels or fringes are allowed on half chaps. Breeches may be worn with jodhpur boots and half chaps or with long leather or rubber riding boots. All footwear must have a **smooth** sole and a well-defined square cut heel. For safety reasons, wellington boots, 'muckers' or trainers should never be worn when mounted.

For competitions, a tweed hacking jacket or a plain navy or black riding jacket should be worn over a long sleeved shirt with a collar and Pony Club tie. This shirt may be white, pale blue, cream, white or yellow. When a stock is worn it should be worn with a stock shirt. Jodhpurs and breeches should be beige, cream or white although dark colours may be worn at rallies. Some Branches allow Members to wear Pony Club logo polo-shirts for rallies and informal events. They are comfortable and popular. New clothing is not essential, but what is worn must be clean, neat and tidy. Jeans should not be worn when mounted.

g) Spurs and Stirrups

Spurs may be worn at rallies and other events when a Member has passed the full B test. The red felt disc, evidence of a full B test pass should be displayed under the metal Pony Club Membership badge. Members without their B test must have the written permission of their DC to use spurs. This letter should be available for any Pony Club official to read at any venue e.g. at another Branch's competition. Only blunt spurs without rowels or sharp edges, may be worn. If the spurs are curved, the curve must point downwards and the shank must point straight to the back and not exceed 3cm in length. Spurs with a smooth rotating rubber or plastic ball on the shank are permitted.

Stirrups must be the correct size to accommodate the rider's foot. There must be a clearance of 1/4inch on both sides of the boot.

h) Jewellery

This rule applies to all Pony Club mounted activities. For safety reasons, no jewellery may be worn except a wrist watch, a wedding ring, a stock pin worn horizontally or a tie clip. All Members who are contemplating piercing their ears or any other part of body should be aware that they will not be allowed to participate in Pony Club mounted equestrian activities until such time as the 'sleepers' can be removed safely.

RALLIES

The working rally is the backbone of The Pony Club. Rallies should be held as and when required. No person shall hold a rally or give instruction at a rally unless authorised by the DC. If a rally or event is scheduled to be held in the district of another Branch it is polite to notify that DC beforehand. Most Branches have to charge for all their rallies. Charges should be in proportion to the expenses incurred.

A good Branch delivers quality instruction to their Members by using motivated, trained instructors. Look after good instructors, they are very difficult to replace.

Some Branches appoint a rally secretary to book instructors and venues, liaise with the Health & Safety Officer regarding current venue risk assessment(s) and secure appropriate first aid cover. An 'appointed' rally organiser should be booked to attend and be responsible for the planned activity.

At Pony Club rallies the following categories of pony are not allowed.

- a pony that is ill, thin or lame.
- heavily pregnant mares or one with a foal at foot.
- ponies under 4 years of age.
- ponies obviously infirm through old age.
- ponies that are considered a danger to their riders or to other Members.

If a pony is unwell or not sound, the Chief Instructor or other instructor should discuss the problem with the DC or their appointed person before the Member's parent is approached. When there is genuine concern the approach should be sensitive but firm. Give reasons for your concern and suggest ways to improve matters, always have the Chief Instructor or an equivalent trained person with you. You may wish to make a note of the discussion for future reference.

Instruction at Rallies

Ideally every Member should be given a logical sequence of instruction according to his ability. This is seldom possible as Members cannot always attend rallies on a regular basis. The main aim should be to give every Member a safe, enjoyable time during which they learn something. Equal attention should be given to both horse and pony care and to riding. Members vary enormously in their ability, knowledge and standard of pony. A good team of Branch instructors should be able to cover the needs of every Member.

Ways to run a rally:

1. A ride stays with the same instructor and starts with flat-work moves to jumping and finishes with a mounted games practice. After returning their ponies to the box park, the rally ends after a period of horse and pony care.
2. A ride spends an initial period with instructor A on the flat and then moves on to instructor B for jumping, etc.

The first method ensures continuity of instruction the second gives the Member variety of different instructors.

At an all-day rally or at a camp the ride usually stays with one instructor for the duration.

Briefing the Instructors

Try to book instructors early, good ones are always busy. A few days before the rally ensure that each instructor has been given a ride list with the Member's name/pony/ability and map/instructions on how to find the rally. Define arrival and departure times.

Preparation of the Venue

A risk assessment must be completed before every rally by the branch Health and Safety Officer. Where there are **no significant** changes the assessment may be initialled and dated at every visit for about 18-21 months maximum, after which a new one **must** be carried out. The rally organiser should have been told how well in advance how many Members are expected on the day to ensure that there is sufficient equipment on site before for the planned activity begins. Direction signs help new Members to find their way. First aid equipment and appropriately Trained First Aiders must be available. A mobile phone must be available. The O/S grid reference for the entrance to the venue or the post code should be recorded in case emergency help is needed.

On the Day

- The DC or rally organiser should arrive early to welcome instructors and Members. It is especially important to seek out new Members who may not know what to do. All Committee Members should wear their official 'Pony Club Committee' metal badge so that parents know whom to approach for help or advice.
- At the assembly point a notice board with information listing the names of Members, their ride and the name of their instructor should be displayed. Make sure that Members know where to go and that they know who their instructor is. Be prepared for emergencies, instructors may be delayed, punctures occur, people get lost. Ensure that the Incident Book and Accident Report Forms are available.
- A rally is a good opportunity for the organiser of the Branch second-hand tack and clothing stock to display items for sale. Members who have forgotten vital tack can purchase items or loan items from the stall for the duration of the rally.
- Once the rally has started, the DC and or rally organiser should check that each ride is progressing well. Sometimes immediate ride changes need to be made to ensure that Members have a positive learning experience. Check parents in case one is making an unwanted contribution to the lesson, distraction and relocation is effective.
- The names of all Members and ponies **actually present** at the rally should be recorded, as last minute changes could have occurred. Once all is running smoothly there are parents to talk to.
- When the rally has ended it is important that every instructor formally dismisses the ride. Legally this marks the end of the rally and clearly defines the parent's responsibility for their child once more. The rally organiser is responsible for ensuring that all equipment is put away and the site is left tidy, parents and Members should be asked to help. Some Branches operate a rota of parents to ensure that help is always on hand. At the end of the rally thank the helpers for their assistance. All the instructors should report on their rides and discuss problems encountered with the DC or Chief Instructor. Accident report forms should be completed if necessary and given to the DC or Chief Instructor for safe keeping in the Branch. Check that all Members have left the site. It is useful to make a brief note in the diary that no incidents occurred or log problems and reactions.

Examples and Ideas for rallies

The short mounted rally:

An evening rally planned to be held at a suitable venue from 4.15pm - 6.15pm for Members who have not passed their C Test. 20 mounted Members have pre-booked. Additionally two older Members who have passed their B Test are available to help.

Instructors are:

- Mrs Smith BHSI
- Mr White BHS AI
- Mrs Brown (knowledgeable parent)

Facilities are:

- Gated parking area
- Formal assembly area
- Enclosed area 50m x 60m.
- Adjacent 5acre paddock with 6 pairs of jump stands and 18 poles.
- Dressage markers

Rides are:

- D+ Standard with Mrs Smith and the two Members with their B test
- D Standard Mr White
- Pre D Standard Mrs Brown

The Chief Instructor has briefed the rally organizer and instructors and provided lesson plans as necessary beforehand. The Chief Instructor is unable to attend but the DC plans to call in for a short while. The rally organiser has divided the enclosed area into two halves using available equipment e.g. bollards and jump poles. In one half there are 3 pairs of wings and 6 poles. The remaining 3 pairs of jump wings and 6 poles are left in the 5 acre field. In one corner of the field a small arena has been created using cones and markers. In another corner of the field some games equipment is set out.

- At 4.00pm Members begin to arrive and gather at the assembly point in their rides.
- At 4.15pm the instructors meet them.
- The rally starts with some basic flat-work:
- Pre D uses one half of the enclosed area.
- D uses the other half the enclosed area.
- D+ uses the corner of the field where the arena area is set out.
- After 3/4 hr pre D has the whole of the enclosed area for jumping.
- D moves to the corner of the field for a mounted games practice.
- D+ moves across to the rest of the field to jump.
- At 5.45 p.m. all the groups walk back to the assembly point from where they are formally dismissed. At 6.15pm all Members have left the site.

Each Instructor completes either a rally form indicating no problems or in cases of accident a sheet from the Accident Report Book to be retained in the Branch. Remember for more serious accidents read Health and Safety 'Accident Reporting'.

The All Day Rally

The ideal venue could be an Equestrian Centre with a wide variety of facilities or a farm with Branch XC fences, tracks to ride along and a large area of flat land ideal for dressage and show jumping. There should be space for trailers and lorries to be parked in safety. Also beneficial, is access to adjacent undulating terrain for XC riding and jumping practice. A field-shelter, stable or other covered area is useful for horse and pony care sessions.

An enclosed covered yard or barn provides a safe place where ponies can be tethered over lunch-time or during extreme weather. Try to encourage all unattended ponies to be loaded in trailers/lorries. A hose pipe or water trough, and lavatories with adequate hand-washing facilities are essential.

All day rally for Members of all ages to be held at Manor Farm Equestrian Centre from 10.30 a.m until 3.30p.m.

Members have been asked to bring a head-collar, their packed lunch, a hay-net and/or short feed for their pony. 48 Members have booked in they have been divided into 6 groups of 8 riders. The Chief Instructor and DC have worked out a timetable for the day and the 6 instructors have all confirmed their attendance. It saves time if a group of helpers can arrive beforehand to set out equipment before the rally starts.

Facilities

A level, secure field where the main gated access is manned. For safety reasons this gate must be kept closed at all times during the activity. Parking should be in quiet area of the field well away from the planned activities. The field is large enough to provide space for 3 rides, an area with a full course of show jumps and a small area with 4 show jumps. There is a block of three stables and a small XC course with 12 jumps.

Specimen timetable

- 10.30a.m.onwards Members arrive.
- 10.45 a.m. instructors arrive and are briefed on their rides
- Rally organiser ensures that all riders are at the assembly point in their correct rides ready to start at 11.00 a.m.
- 3 mounted rides A, B, C to field for flatwork from 11.00 -11.45 a.m.
- 3 un-mounted rides D, E and F to stables 1, 2, 3 for practical from 11.00 -11.45 a.m. at 11.45 change over A, B and C to stables and D, E and F mounted to field
- 12.30 p.m. all rides return to parking area, un-tack, tie-up safely and ponies are given water then hay/ feed at 12.55p.m.
- 1p.m the Members eat their own packed lunch. Branch should provide Instructors with a packed lunch and a drink.
- 1.45 p.m. all rides return to their ponies and tack-up in preparation for a 2.00 p.m. start.
- A and B to X/C, A starts at fence 1 and B starts further out
- C goes to full show jumps course, D goes to small set show jumps in field.
- At 3.00 p.m. A and B un-tack and go to stables for care session
- C and D go to X/C course
- E and F to field for games or Riding and Road Safety practice.
- At 3.45pm all rides return to the assembly point for official dismissal.
- 4 pm rally ends.

Instructors complete their paperwork they may need to discuss with rally organiser etc. When all Members have left site the organiser is free to leave too.

The un-mounted rally

This is best held in a working stable yard with a wide variety of safe horses and ponies to study and practice on. Have a variety of topics to study during the session. Feeding, basic veterinary care, bandaging, rugging, feed recognition are all easily managed in a yard environment. Perhaps a farrier or vet could come along and give a brief talk or demonstration. A selection of popular, remedial and unusual horse shoes is helpful. Team games e.g. race against clock to assemble a bridle correctly, or name points of the horse are popular with younger Members. A quiz using pictures/information gathered from various equine magazines provides a challenge. Identification of a range of foodstuffs.

An un-mounted rally is an ideal opportunity to use DVDs (see The Pony Club Instructors Folder). The Pony Club Office has a list of approved training aids.

Camp

For Members Branch camp is usually the highlight of the year. It can be expensive to run and some Branches subsidise the cost to their Members by using funds raised through their competitions and activities. It is a special time when Members can really progress in their riding and develop new skills both on and off their ponies. As Members have to work in groups all week, they learn life skills. For some Members it is the first time that they have stayed away from home for several nights. Camp can take many forms.

- Senior Residential Camp is usually for children staying at one venue for 5 + days. The ponies are stabled and the children live in a hostel, caravans, tents or a barn with on-site catering. It is probably best to restrict attendance to those Members who are over 11 years old.
- Junior (Day) Camp is for younger Members, children arrive each morning bring a packed lunch and leave each afternoon. The ponies stay for the duration of camp.
- Mini Camp is for the very young Member often on a lead rein. This group have special needs. 'Short and sweet' is often the best advice, so plan for three days in a safe, quiet environment. Minis have a short concentration-span, soon tire and miss Mum very quickly.

Many of the older Members, age 16+, prefer a completely different format. A short residential 3-5 day clinic is popular with a specialist instructor, at a different time from main camp. Here they appreciate being treated as students and relish non participation in the tack cleaning and stable marking routines, so much an important part of residential camp for the younger Members.

Some Branches have a massive combined residential camp for the whole branch, some run for 7 days. Whatever you choose, careful planning is important if camp is to run smoothly. Camp should be rewarding and fun for all. Try to schedule a little free time too.

Venues and Facilities

Racecourses, show-grounds, farms and Equine Colleges of Further Education are popular venues. Ideal facilities include:

- Dressage arenas.
- A full set of show jumps.
- A course with a variety of XC jumps.
- An enclosed flat area for other activities.
- Stabling either temporary or permanent with an adequate supply of water from hose or stand pipe. Temporary stabling is becoming more difficult to obtain, can be expensive and needs to be booked early.
- A clean, safe catering area.
- Lavatories, hand washing facilities and good showers.
- Safe trailer/lorry parking ideally adjacent to the stables as Members may need to use their trailers to store their hard feed/grooming/ tack cleaning and mucking out equipment
- Space for hay and bedding.
- Ideally lockable tack room/s
- A clean, safe eating area where evening activities can take place

All camps vary. Each day needs careful planning and advance preparation. Every stable should be clearly labelled with the Member's name before their arrival at camp. A large notice board in a prominent position keeps everybody informed of activities, programme changes etc. It is important that a 'stable routine' timetable operates so that all Members

muck-out and feed their ponies at the same times during the day. Likewise a timetable for Members ensures that everyone is in the right place at the right time for meals and other activities. Schedule regular periods of relaxation during the week, swimming and ten-pin bowling provide off-site interest and during the evening talks, demonstrations and games are appreciated. They need some time to crash out and do nothing too.

Suggested planning for a Summer Holiday Camp

Following on from the previous annual camp, arrange a wash-up meeting with the main camp officials and the Chief Instructor to discuss the camp. Besides noting the high points, identify weaker areas that could be improved. Evaluate the performance of every instructor and decide who you would like to invite back. Assuming it was satisfactory; re-book the venue immediately after the previous camp along with temporary stables and other essential items. Re-book the caterer if used.

Book key instructors early, those individuals capable of teaching to a high standard and who make the whole experience enjoyable, are in great demand. Always look after your special instructors they are worth their weight in gold.

At the first Autumn Committee meeting decide the following year's camp date/s and publish them on the website and in the next newsletter. Invite key helpers to assist again. Once the camp financial report is to hand, try to set the charges for the next year. It is helpful for parents to have this information as early as possible because they have their own family holidays to arrange along with other siblings' activities to consider.

At the beginning of the summer term send out a camp booking form along with a letter giving general information regarding camp. Remind Members about pony vaccination requirements in good time. Complete any basic work at the venue and check that all invited assistants are still available for the week. Members' applications should close by early May to allow time to make last minute changes to plans. Acknowledge all applications in order of receipt and send out acceptance letters along with detailed camp information, to all successful applicants. Keep a waiting list.

Camp Personnel

a) Pastoral care

Possibly the DC or the Assistant DC or a mature female person whose children have been at camp before, usually resident and responsible for the general discipline, rules, child protection, catering and all the domestic aspects of camp life. This person may be responsible for the petty cash, pocket money and the sale of confectionery etc. They must be CRB checked. Many camps have two or three people who take turns to stay and share this role. It is good practice to insist that all residential adults should have a valid First Aid Certificate. People who work in pairs and help for only one night per camp must complete a disclosure. All people staying longer need to be CRB checked.

A responsible person must be 'on duty' at all times whilst the camp is running. There must always be a Qualified First Aider present. Assistant/s may be assigned specific roles e.g. First Aid, Health and Safety and Secretary/Admin. The local GP practice and Vet should be informed of camp dates, in case of any emergency.

The Chief Instructor

In consultation with the DC, the Chief Instructor appoints the other instructors for camp one instructor per ride, and prepares an instruction time-table. With DC confirms that the Risk Assessment has been completed and signed off.

It is usual for the Chief Instructor to have had a pre-camp meeting with all the instructors to discuss camp activities. On the first morning, before the rides gather together, it is helpful to call an early briefing meeting of all instructors in case last minute changes have had to be made.

Other responsibilities include:

- Booking speakers
- Setting out flatwork arenas
- Allocating instructors to rides
- Dividing Members into groups of mixed ages for all other activities.
- Ensuring that accident report forms are available.
- Planning in case of bad weather.
- Preparing ride sheets for each instructor with relevant details of Members and ponies so that progress/problems can be recorded.
- If there are sufficient instructors the CI can act as a floating instructor and cover for delays/accidents/ injuries, as well as give specialist or remedial help where necessary.

Stable Manager

Reports to the Chief Instructor and is responsible for all stabling arrangements. He/she manages the supply of hay and bedding, muck heap, mucking out and all safety precautions. He/she checks the health and well being of all the animals in the stables and in consultation with Chief Instructor calls the vet if necessary. He/she has a veterinary first aid kit and the camp farrier's phone number. He/she may need DIY skills on temporary stables! This person may be paid, possibly use a Branch Member who has passed their 'A' Care test.

Night Watchpeople

Besides the pastoral care organiser and others who are in residence, a minimum of 3 people should be on hand every evening to patrol after lights out and ensure that the campers are safe. Ideally a male and two females should make up this group. A patrol should be made up of two people, never the male on his own. The group should stay all night and take turns to patrol the site at regular intervals throughout the night. This responsibility could be shared by a group of reliable parents on a rota for the duration of camp.

Senior Pony Club Members and others

Enthusiastic people who can come in and help to organise games and other activities for Members once the riding has ended. People who can help deliver essential equipment to the venue before and return it at the end of camp. Friendly parents to welcome new Members on arrival show them the ropes and help them to settle in.

Caterers

They are a very important part of camp. At colleges, some camps can book the term-time catering staff for their week. Others are able to import their own team of people to provide the food from a kitchen provided on site. The food may be prepared on site or delivered each day by parents according to a pre-determined menu. It is important that all caterers have and are aware of the appropriate hygiene certificates/standards necessary to store, prepare and serve food at camp. The camp kitchen is an important area to include in the camp risk assessment. Camps of two weeks duration may be visited by the local authority health and safety representative who may wish to review catering standards.

West Northford Branch of The Pony Club, Senior Camp

Pre Camp information

Our camp will be held at Go Faster Racecourse from Sunday, August 4th at 2.30 p.m. until Friday August 9th at 4 p.m.

Applications to attend camp close on May 10th 20XX.

Age Limit Members must be 11yrs and over on the-----

(CHOOSE THE DATE TO SUIT YOUR BRANCH) some apply ages according to The Year Book i.e. over 11 on January 1st of the current year.

Horses/ Ponies: Must over 4 years old, they should be fit, sound and recently shod. Unsound or unsuitable ponies will not be accepted. If in doubt contact the DC before applying for a place at camp.

Create a camp application form see example in Appendix 1.

Completed application forms with the non-refundable deposit of £XX.XX made payable to West Northford Branch of The Pony Club must sent to Mrs J Brown etc.

Final balance is due by June 30th 20XX. Please enclose a SAE.

As applications are received they should be acknowledged. This letter should include a camp information sheet for the benefit of parents.

Keep a waiting list. Here is an example of a camp information sheet;

WN Pony Club Camp

Members should arrive at camp between 2.30p.m and 3.30p.m. It is not necessary for Members to wear riding clothes on arrival day.

Before travelling check that you have your pony's equine passport and up to date vaccination certificate with you. Ponies should have been exercised before arrival.

All ponies are stabled on the site for the duration of camp. If you need an extra large stable please inform us immediately. Hay and straw will be provided. If you use another type of bedding please bring your own supply for the week.

Park in the 'Silver Car Park' leave your pony in the trailer/box. Go to the stable manager's office with your pony's vaccination certificate for registration. Read the notice board. Once registered, locate your stable, unload your horse and stable it. Place your tack in the tack room and your personal items in the dormitory. Make up your bed and be back by your stable to feed pony at 5.30p.m sharp. Supper will follow at 6.00 p.m in the canteen.

Bring the following equipment with you:

(1) For the stable

- Mucking out fork, shovel, broom, wheel-barrow or plastic sheet to cart muck to the muck heap.
- Complete grooming kit, head collar and rope,
- Complete set of clean tack, girth, numnah(s), rugs, boots,
- Water bucket, feed bucket and hay-net.
- Tack cleaning kit, plaiting kit, tail bandage, stable bandages and fibergee

(2) Feed for your pony / horse

- Bring enough of your own hard feed for the week. If you do not usually give hard feed ask us for advice beforehand.
- Feed scoop

(3) Personal

- 2/3 pairs jodhpurs, jodhpur boots, hacking jacket, tagged riding hat, 2/3 shirts, Pony Club tie or stock, hair nets, Pony Club badge, whip, Branch sweat shirt/s, waterproof riding mac, chaps, shoe cleaning kit, medical armband.
- Shorts / jeans, tee-shirts, trainers for wearing after riding has ended, warm sweaters, waterproof jacket, underwear and socks.
- Wellies and old clothes for mucking out.
- Swimming gear.
- Pyjamas, wash-bag with toothbrush/paste, soap, sponge, towels etc.
- Pillow(s), sleeping bag, additional blankets in case of cold.
- Pony Club Manual, notebook, pens.
- Label all equipment.
- Declare all medication on arrival.

Tidiness

Campers are expected to keep their stable and sleeping area clean and tidy. Members will be expected to carry out light domestic duties during the week.

Leave

No Member may leave the camp without the recorded permission of the DC or camp organiser.

Pocket money/valuables

A small amount of pocket money may be brought to buy sweets and soft drinks. Mobile phones, arrangements have been made for them to be left with --- Members will be allowed to use them at certain times. Please do not send your child to camp with items of value because the Branch is not liable for any personal loss or any damage incurred.

Alcohol/Smoking

No Member is allowed to consume alcohol or smoke during camp.

Welfare

Members should tell their instructor or the camp organiser if they feel unwell, unhappy or have been injured/bullied.

Parents

All parents are welcome to visit camp from 2 p.m. on the Friday afternoon to watch the final ride. At other times visits are allowed after the afternoon session riding has ended but before supper. Once the final Friday afternoon ride has finished all Members must return their ponies to their stables and assemble for tea and prize giving in the Milton Bar. After prize-giving has finished the Members are dismissed and **you** are responsible for your child again. Ensure that personal equipment is removed from the site and that your stable is left clean and tidy.

NB Parent(s) if you are planning to be away on holiday during camp week you must complete and sign a pro-forma and return it to the DC before camp starts. The secretary has copies of this form. Please do not do your child's camp jobs whilst visiting. It is an important aspect of camp for all Members to learn to muck-out, muck-in, clean tack and help themselves and each other with supervision.

If your child is a vegetarian has a special medical or dietary requirement please make sure that you tell us well beforehand.

Non-residential camp

This format is suitable for younger Members. A farm or parent's field is often the preferred choice. Ponies tend to stay for the duration, the riders attend every day. If ponies come and go each day valuable time is wasted directing parents and trailers.

All resident ponies should have had their hind shoes removed before arrival. Mares and geldings are best separated in small groups for overnight grazing. Arrange for one person to stay overnight to check that the ponies are safe.

Junior camps for approx 7 – 11yrs and Minis approx 4 - 7yrs

The daily programme will be similar to a residential camp with modifications. A good format is riding twice a day along with a short period of pony care followed by games. Demonstrations are popular. Talks require more concentration and little people get very tired as the day/week progresses. Children should bring their own packed lunch daily. Instructors should have theirs provided by the Branch.

Some Branches use this opportunity to run E, D and D+ tests and train for proficiency badges.

Competitions

Competitions of various types should be an important part of your Branch's activities. Most Members enjoy them as they provide an opportunity for them to make friends in adjacent Branches. Most Members enter into the general spirit of a competition quite happily, however, beware of the over competitive Member and parent. Every Branch competition must have an Official Steward on the day.

THE DISCIPLINE RULE BOOKS ARE ESSENTIAL READING FOR THE DC, CHIEF INSTRUCTOR AND ALL INSTRUCTORS WHO TRAIN BRANCH TEAMS. COMPETITORS AND PARENTS SHOULD READ AND BE ENCOURAGED TO PURCHASE THE RELEVANT RULE BOOKS TOO.

a) The Area Competition

The Official Inter Branch Area Competitions are run on an Area basis, annually. Different Branches agree to organise the various competitions after consultation with their Area Rep. The main mounted disciplines are:

Show Jumping, Dressage, Eventing, Tetrathlon and Mounted Games

At these competitions, all Branches within an Area are invited to send teams and /or individuals to take part in a specific qualifying competition for team and individual places at The Pony Club Championships.

There are Novice (Level 3) competitions in Show Jumping, Eventing and Dressage progressing to Intermediate (Level 4) competitions and ultimately Open (Level 5) in the same disciplines. Level 3 is the easiest and level 5 the most difficult.

Mounted Games has sections for Juniors and for Seniors.

In all the Area competitions the number of qualifiers depends on the number of competitors/teams who start on the day. Mounted Games has an additional tier of competition called the Zone Finals where several placed Area teams come together to play for qualifying places at for the Championships.

Polo, Polocrosse and Endurance have their own methods of qualification for their respective Championships. See corresponding Rule Books.

There are different requirements for medical cover at Area Competitions than for other Branch competitions, read current Health and Safety Rule Book for up to date information.

As DC, offer Branch training according to the popularity of the disciplines mentioned above. Complete information regarding the organisation of these competitions can be found in the individual Discipline Rule Books and The Pony Club Year Book.

b) Branch Competitions

The Branch competitions should cater for a wide range of abilities and include the activities mentioned above as well as hunter trials, dressage to music, and dressage with show jumping. These smaller Branch competitions are run according to the respective discipline rules.

Some entry forms request that the DC signs to certify that the entrant is competent to take part. You only need to certify that they are a current Member of The Pony Club strike out any other request and initial.

It is important to use properly qualified properly trained judges and officials.

Eventing

The three phases are Dressage, Show Jumping and Cross Country. This discipline tests the all round riding ability of the Member. Participants need to have had systematic training in all three phases to compete. Events can vary in difficulty according to the age and/or experience of individual competitors. All competitions must run according to The Pony Club Eventing Rule Book.

Show Jumping

Branches who wish to run team or individual competitions at any level should refer to The Pony Club Show Jumping Rule Book. The height and spread of fences is varied according to age and ability. Official Show Jumping Judges and Course Builders are listed in the BSJA Handbook. It is recommended that BSJA judges are used at competitions.

Dressage

The Pony Club publishes a range of Dressage tests of varying standards from absolute beginner upwards. These can be found in The Pony Club Dressage Rule Book, downloaded from the website or purchased from the merchandise department. Wherever possible use Pony Club tests. Some of the British Dressage (BD) tests are suitable for inclusion in a Branch Dressage competition. All Branch competitions must run according to The Pony Club Dressage Rules and it is recommended that BD judges are used at competitions; a current list is published in The Pony Club Year Book. Dressage to Music is a recent and increasingly popular addition to the sport. The Pony Club Championships have Dressage to Music competitions.

Mounted Games

Mounted Games teach balance and co-ordination and encourage team work and team spirit. They are fun and useful for the younger Members, particularly those whose pony(s) may not be talented in other competitive spheres. Many Branches run 'friendly' mounted games competitions' open to other local Branches. This type of competition is invaluable to help Members become proficient and confident. The Pony Club publishes two books 'Gymkhanas and Rally Games' and 'The Pony Club Mounted Games' Rule

Book. All current games are described in the latter. From time to time new games are added and old games are withdrawn. At the top level ponies are highly trained, fast and riders are very proficient.

Tetrathlon

This is a challenging 4 phase competition. It encourages all-rounders to maintain an interest in The Pony Club by combining their riding skills with their general athletic ability.

The phases are:

- Shooting using an air pistol aimed at targets.
- Swimming based on distance covered within a certain time.
- A cross country run
- Riding over a cross country course

Branch competitions are usually run over two days. Triathlons are popular at the beginning of the season and exclude the riding component. Biathlons comprise swimming and shooting.

The Pony Club Tetrathlon Rule Book contains all the information required to organise a competition.

Polo

Pony Club Polo provides Members with an introduction to Polo and trains children to understand the basic principles, rules, riding and tactics of polo as well as how to care for and look after the welfare of their ponies. Polo provides high standards of conduct with a competitive spirit in a team sport and provides a bridge to the adult game. Pony Club Polo is based on the principle of "one player, one pony". Initially Members ride their own Pony Club ponies. As they progress they may have the opportunity to ride trained polo ponies. It acts within the rules of the governing body of the sport, the Hurlingham Polo Association (HPA), except where specifically shown in the rules of the Pony Club Polo. Junior HPA sections are run alongside The Pony Club. Branches may combine forces to make up mixed teams that conform to the certain restrictions regarding handicaps, ability and ages. The season includes friendly and qualifying tournaments that lead to the Pony Club Polo Championships. There are also Arena polo tournaments in the Spring which are played on an arena surface and comprise of three player teams.

Polocrosse

The rules are based on the UK Polocrosse Association and are published in The Pony Club Polocrosse Rule Book. This team game can be played on any large flat field. The pitch is 146.5m (160 yds long) x 55m (60 yds wide) with 6 yd surrounds down both long sides and 10 yd surrounds across the short sides. Sets of sticks may be loaned from The Pony Club for a limited trial period. The Polocrosse Committee runs annual training courses for coaches, umpires and competitors. This exciting game is suitable for any group of children/ponies and encourages a strong and unselfish team spirit. There is a National Competition in Polocrosse at The Pony Club Championships.

Endurance Riding

Some Branches are able to offer endurance riding. There are four levels of difficulty

- Merlin Training Rides 8-15km
- Kestrel Novice Qualifiers 16-25km
- Osprey Intermediate Qualifiers 26-35km
- Eagle Open Qualifiers 36-50km

For information regarding the rules of Endurance Riding or help on organising rides please see The Endurance Rule Book

In 2010 the Championships will be held at The College, Keysoe, Bedfordshire.

Pony Racing

Pony Racing is a new Pony Club discipline. Pony Club Race Days introduce Members to the sport of racing.

Unmounted Competitions

The Pony Club National Quiz takes place in the early Spring. Every Area runs a National Quiz qualifier open to both Branches and Centres. Teams are made up of 4 Members:

- 1 Member **any age under 12** on 1st January
- 1 Member **any age under 14** on 1st January
- 1 Member **any age under 16** on 1st January
- 1 Member **any age under 21** on 1st January

N.B. A team may consist (e.g. 4 Members under 12). In this case they would be asked to nominate which Member of their team will answer the more advanced questions). **One AH test holder in each team will be allowed to take part in the National Quiz.**

The qualifying competitions takes place during the late Autumn or Winter. The highest placed Branch team and Centre team from each Area go forward to the National Final which is held at Moreton Morrell in Warwickshire.

The Area Rep and Branches decide how the qualifier is run each year. The questions cover a range of activities.

The Horse and Pony Care Competition

Each Area holds a qualifying competition and Branch / Centre teams of 3 are marked on a variety of practical tasks involving Horse and Pony care. The winning team from each Area takes part in the Final at The Pony Club Championships in mid-August.

A brief summary of the Rules for the Area Inter Branch Competitions

This is a quick reference always consult the individual discipline rule books.

The Pony Club Year starts on January 1st

Ensure that all Branch competition entry forms are returned on time.

Official entry forms are sent out in late Spring.

Eventing

- Inter-Branch competition at Open (Level 5), Intermediate (Level 4), and Novice (Level 3).
- For teams of three or four Members and individuals under 21 at the start of the current Pony Club year. Open teams may include one Associate Member, and Associate Members may also compete as individuals **at Open Level**.
- Combined Teams. Individuals may be combined with others to make a team of four (see Eventing Rule Book). Combined teams are not eligible to compete at the Championships but they boost the start numbers. The number of qualifying places depends on the number of teams starting. Horses graded BE Advanced (Grade 1) or Eventing Ireland Advanced which have competed at OI, AI, or A in the current year are ineligible at all levels.
- See Rule Book for specific horse/pony/combo eligibility.

Show Jumping

- Inter-Branch competition at Open, Intermediate and Novice standard.
- For teams of three or four Branch Members under 21 at the start of the current Pony Club year. **Open teams** may include one Associate Member. A best turned out

team /competition for all competitors is held at the Area Competition and at the Championships.

- Individual competition. All team Members take part in the individual competition. In addition to their team, Branches may enter additional Members for this competition. Associates Members may also compete as individuals **at Open Level only**. See Rule Book for specific horse/pony/combo eligibility.

Dressage

- Inter-Branch Team Competition at Open, Intermediate and Novice standard. For teams of three or four Members under 21 at the start of the current Pony Club year. **Open** teams may include one Associate Member.
- Individual Competition. All team Members take part in the Individual Competition. In addition to their team, Branches may enter Individuals for this competition. Associate Members may compete at **Open** level.
- Combined teams may also be entered (see Eventing above).
- See Rule Book for specific eligibility regarding horse or rider as it varies for each level

Mounted Games

The Official Competition is in three stages:

- 1 Area Inter Branch Competition
- 2 Zone Finals
- 3 The Championship

- **Inter-Branch competition**

Members under 15 years of age at the start of The Pony Club year. Ponies must not exceed 148cms unshod. Branches may enter more than one team.

- **Junior Competition**

Members under 11years of age at the start of the current Pony Club year.

- A turnout competition is held at Area and Zone competitions.

Tetrathlon

There are separate competitions for girls and boys.

- **Inter-Branch competition**

Teams of three or four Members under 21 yrs of age at the start of The Pony Club year.

- **Individual Competition**

All team Members take part in the Individual competition. A Branch may also enter additional individuals

- Junior competition Members under 15 on January 1st of the current Pony Club year. It may be organised as either an Area or a Regional competition. See Rule Book for eligibility rules.

Polo

There are no Area Competitions but a series of Friendlies and Qualifiers are held building up to the Championships which is run under Pony Club Polo Rules. Pony Club Polo is run in different sections according to age and ability and follows the rules set out in The Pony Club Polo Rule Book. The sections are as follows:

SECTION	AFFILIATION	MIN AGE	AGE on 1 st JAN	CHUKKAS
Gannon (GAN)	Junior HPA	16	Under 21	4 chukka matches
Rendell (REN)	Pony Club	15	Under 21	2 chukka matches
Ledner (LED)	Pony Club	15	Under 21	1 chukka matches
Langford (LAN)	Junior HPA	15	Under 18	4 chukka matches

Loriner (LOR)	Pony Club	14	Under 17	1 chukka matches
Hipwood (HIP)	Junior HPA	12	Under 15	3 chukka matches
Surtees (SUR)	Pony Club	11	Under 15	1 chukka matches
Handley Cross (HX)	Pony Club	9	Under 14	1 chukka matches
Jorrocks (JOR)	Pony Club	6	Under 11	1 chukka matches

Polocrosse

The Championships are run under Pony Club Polocrosse Rules. There are four Classes. No rider or pony may compete in more than one team. See Polocrosse Rule Book.

- **Class 1 The Malden Championship**
Teams of six players
Ponies must be a minimum of 13.2 hands but there is no maximum height.
One Open Section and One Junior Section of three players each from the same Branch.
- **Class 2 The Charles Mason Open Championship**
Ponies 13.2 hands and over.
Open sections of 3 players
- **Class 3 The Stoneleigh Junior Championship**
Ponies up to 14.2 hands
Riders 14 years and under on January 1st current year
Junior sections of 3 players
- **Class 4 The Brookes Mini Championship**
Ponies up to 13.2 hands. Riders 12 years and under on January 1st current year

Open Sections - 3 Members or Associates of any age

Junior Sections - 3 Members who have not attained their 15th birthday on January 1st of the current year.

Instructors Courses

As DC make sure that your Chief Instructor keeps Branch instructors up to date by organising groups to attend National, Regional and local training courses promoted by The Pony Club. Information regarding these courses is published in the regular Bulletins from The Pony Club Office and on the web-site. Other courses are listed in The Year Book. There are two Annual Instructor Conferences held annually for instructors as well as other Regional Training Days. Encourage your Chief Instructor to run courses at Branch level for your regular instructors. Encourage Branch instructors to be trained in First Aid.

All Branch instructors must be accredited i.e. their names must appear on the Branch accreditation list. Accreditation involves attending a Pony Club Instructors Training Day which includes mounted instruction, every two years. These courses are either run centrally or organised locally by the Area Rep. If an instructor is included on the current BHS register of Instructors, they are deemed Pony Club accredited. The Branch should keep a current register of instructor accreditation and copy details to the Area Rep regularly. The Pony Club Office may request a copy of the register at any time.

New instructors should be assessed by the Chief Instructor. If they have moved from another Area refer to that Area Rep. Totally new ones should teach at a rally when the Chief Instructor can observe them before recommending accreditation. Log the date observed, the outcome, and the accreditation booking date and the date of confirmed attendance. When an instructor attends a training course they should have their

instructor log book signed by the organiser. It is usual for an organiser to confirm instructor attendance by email or letter.

Do not continue to use instructors who are not accredited. The Pony Club Insurance Policy requires that they should all be accredited regularly. Some instructors are happy to earn money from The Pony Club but are never available for training. If they refuse, stop using them. Where there is a genuine reason for a trusted instructor to have missed an accreditation, record the problem and find another accreditation for them to attend ASAP. As DC you can organise a Branch accreditation session. Discuss your plan with the Area Rep and with their approval go ahead.

Branch Equipment

The DC is ultimately responsible for all Branch equipment. It helps if there is a reliable person who can list, check and maintain equipment and ensure that all borrowed equipment is returned on time. An empty garage/barn is an asset. The Treasurer is responsible for ensuring that the insurance cover for Branch equipment is current and adequate following discussion with the DC.

Complete First Aid Kits must be available at all Branch activities. Appoint a person to check contents and ensure that used items are replaced as necessary.

See also;

- A Veterinary First Aid Box must be available at all Branch activities.
- Mounted rally props
- Direction signs.
- Arena markers for a ménage. Some Branches have purchased lightweight plastic arena boards replacing high maintenance, heavy wooden ones.
- Basic games equipment including bending poles, flag holders, buckets, balls. (See current Mounted Games Rule Book).
- Show jumps, either a selection of lightweight wings and poles or if funds permit, a complete set of show jumps. The new plastic coated sets are low maintenance and light weight to transport. Jump cups should conform to current BSJA safety standards see Pony Club Show Jumping Rule Book. The jumps require careful loading and transportation.
- Notice board etc.

Props for un-mounted Rallies

Over the years Branches tend to accumulate a collection of useful props for use at these events. If un-mounted rallies are held at yards they will often have their own equipment for you to use.

Possible props to supplement your own.

- Manual of Horsemanship.
- DVDs
- Quiz books
- Current test sheets
- A variety of tack
- Grooming kit
- Farrier's tools
- Feed samples.
- Laminated information charts
- Anatomical and physiological specimens

Small expensive equipment

Stop watches, timing equipment, tetrathlon pistols, cups and trophies.

Catering equipment

A boiler / urn, kettle and portable gas ring, electric kettle

Associated Activities

Hunting

Every Member should be offered an opportunity to go hunting. Hunting was the basis of The Pony Club and the first Branches were formed in hunting country. If possible, Members should be encouraged to maintain this link and learn about hunting. Most Hunts arrange special 'Pony Club Meets' during the Christmas holidays and encourage visits to their kennels at other times. **Members do not have to hunt.** Members who are interested should understand the need to support hunting both practically and financially. Most hunts offer subsidised subscriptions/caps for Pony Club Members. Contact the local Hunt Secretary for advice. When out hunting, out of courtesy, Members must wear their Pony Club badge and observe the dress code.

Riding Clubs

The Pony Club encourages links between local riding clubs and Branches. Members may join a local riding club.

Pony Club Merchandise

The merchandising section of The Pony Club Office sells a wide range of publications including the Pony Club Manual of Horsemanship, rule books, competition stationery, test cards, badges, felts, ties, DVDs etc. The full range of items available for purchase is set out at the front of The Pony Club Year Book and online at www.pcuk.org. Branches may purchase items directly using a credit/debit card.

Other suppliers of clothing who supply direct:

Wainwright Screenprint, Middle Street, Dewlish, Dorchester, DT2 7LX
supply Pony Club Logo Branch sweatshirts, polo shirts etc.
Phone 01258 837364 or 837380
info@wainwrightscreenprint.co.uk

World Equestrian, 46 High Street, Cowes. IOW, PO31 7RR
produce a complete range of Pony Club leisure clothing
claire@worldleisurewear.com
01983 291744

Sportsmark by Signam
Supply durable, lightweight dressage arenas, XC flags, Mounted Games equipment.
01926 417300
www.sportsmark.co.uk

Working Notebooks from A to E
Mrs P Adams, Moat Farm, Golden Lane, Lawshall, Bury St Edmunds,
Suffolk. IP29 4PS

The Pony Club Public Liability Insurance Policy

The Pony Club has insurance under a number of headings and policies. All Branches and Centres are covered for their legal liability for accidental injury or damage to third parties or their property arising out of the use of ponies at any time, not just Pony Club activities.

Legal Liability

Neither The Pony Club, the Trustees, the Equestrian Council nor any person acting on behalf of The Pony Club will be held responsible for any accident, damage, injury or loss at rallies or any other meetings to Members or their ponies.

The insurance is arranged through Windsor Partners Ltd. Notifications should be sent to them at:

Equine Division,
Windsor Partners Ltd
America House
2 America Square
London EC3 2LU
Tel 020 7133 1200

For further details refer to The Pony Club Year Book, Part C, Administrative Notes, Insurance.

AMN April 2010

Appendix 1

Most Branches have created their own personal welcome letter for a new Member. Here is an example:

Welcome to the South Norford Branch of The Pony Club

Our District Commissioner is

Address

Telephone Number/email

Our Secretary is

Telephone Number/email

Dear

Thank you for joining the South Northford Branch of The Pony Club. We hope that you will enjoy your time with us. The Pony Club is the largest association of riders in the world, and our Branch is one of around 350 in the UK. Please encourage your parent(s) to stay and watch you ride at rallies and other events. It gives us the opportunity to meet them and helps them to make friends with other parents.

We are here to help improve your riding and your knowledge of pony care. When you are at a rally you will be taught by experienced instructors. You will be encouraged to take proficiency tests from time to time.

The Pony Club is meant to be fun, and we will do our best to make it so. Try to participate in as many activities as possible. Remember to read the information about rallies and other activities found on our web site or delivered to you by post. We send information out at regular intervals. With your parents' permission, complete and return the rally booking forms as quickly as possible, remember to make a note of rally dates in your diary. Look out for our summer camp. Our venues are easily accessible and well signposted.

We are all here to help you. If you have any problems, please do not hesitate to ask me, your instructor or any Member of the Branch Committee. At all Pony Club Branch activities our Committee Members wear Pony Club metal badges which should help you to identify us. Please ask your parent to complete the enclosed form for additional information we may need it in an emergency and return it to me as soon as possible.

Finally, now that you are a Member you can wear The Pony Club tie and badge. Wear them with pride - you belong to a very large voluntary youth organization, known for its courtesy, consideration, good sportsmanship, self-discipline and loyalty.

Best wishes and happy Pony Clubbing!

xxxxxxxxxxxxxx
District Commissioner.

Appendix 2

We need this information when your child is at a rally or a camp in case of emergency.

In Confidence

This form must be completed by the Parent/Guardian of each Pony Club Member and returned to the District Commissioner

Name of Member:

Date of Birth:

Name of Parent/Guardian:

Address of Parent/Guardian:

.....

.....

Telephone number - Day time/work:

Day time/work:

Evening week-end:

Evening week-end:

Mobile number(s)

1

2

Email

Authorised contact if parent is unavailable:.....

Telephone Number:

Name of Member's GP

Address of practice:

Does he/she suffer from:

- Asthma YES/NO
- Migraine YES/NO
- Allergy/Hay Fever YES/NO
- Diabetes YES/NO
- Any skin complaint YES/NO

Does he/she have any visual, hearing or learning difficulties

Please give details;

.....
.....
.....

Religion, if applicable for Medical Treatment:_____

Does he/she regularly take any form of medication? YES / NO

Details:

Date of last Tetanus Injection Any adverse reaction? YES/NO

In the event of my daughter / son requiring emergency medical or dental treatment whilst taking part in a Pony Club activity, and an Officer or other appointed person has been unable to contact either myself or named other person, with a parental responsibility for my daughter / son. I authorise the District Commissioner or other Officer of the Pony Club to obtain such medical or dental treatment for my child as they in their absolute discretion think necessary, after consultation with a registered medical or dental practitioner. This authority extends to all medical and dental treatment including the giving of an anesthetic where necessary.

Signed:Date

Additional Information

How long has he/she been riding?.....

Name of pony:

Age

Heightin hands

Where is the pony kept?

.....

Do you have transport for your pony?

Your vet's details:

.....

.....

APPENDIX 3

Notes for Parents of New Members of The Pony Club

Welcome to the Pony Club. We are pleased that **(NAME)** has joined our Branch. You may be wondering how The Pony Club works. The Pony Club is a Registered Charity (No: 1050146). It is a social club. It strives to promote the highest ideals of sportsmanship, citizenship and loyalty. We will teach your child how to look after and ride his/her pony. Membership encourages confidence and self-discipline and covers the majority of equestrian disciplines. It is not an elitist club because we welcome Members from all backgrounds. Finally, a friend made in The Pony Club is often a friend for life.

Facts

- Each Branch is self-contained and administered by an elected, voluntary, unpaid District Commissioner (DC) who is assisted by a Branch Committee. A proportion of each Member's annual subscription is returned to The Pony Club Office to cover insurance and administration costs. Pony Club insurance is operative 24/7 and covers accidental damage to a third party. Personal injury cover is not included.
- Membership is open to all young people up until the end of the calendar year in which the Member reaches 25 years of age.
- There are approximately 360 Branches of The Pony Club in the U.K.
- For administration purposes, Branches are grouped into 19 Areas. Each Area is administered by an Area Representative, abbreviated to A/R.
- The 19 Area Representatives form part of The Pony Club Equestrian Council.
- The Council is presided over by The Chairman of The Pony Club.
- The Pony Club Office is at Stoneleigh Park, Kenilworth in Warwickshire.

Branch

- District Commissioners are elected by the Branch Committee and usually serve for a term of three years. The DC is never elected by the Members or the parents.
- Branches do not hold an AGM. Instead, an annual parents meeting is held. The Branch Treasurer makes a short financial statement and parents have the opportunity to raise points directed to the DC and Committee. The annual meeting is not the place to air grievances.
- The Branch depends on voluntary help from parents and Members at all activities. Only the instructors are paid.

General

The Pony Club employs a CEO and administrative staff who deal with the day to day running of the club. They are all based at Stoneleigh.

The DC is responsible for Health and Safety and Welfare at Branch level guided by directives from The Pony Club Office and The Equestrian Council.

Rallies

Rallies are the back bone of the Branch. For efficiency, rallies are usually organised in rides based on ability from the lowest E, up to B and beyond. There will be occasions when your child may have to be placed in a mixed ability ride. Our instructors are trained to give all Members in a mixed ability ride a positive learning experience. Achievement Badges are very popular with the younger Members. They provide a great incentive to learn about all aspects of pony care. Members enjoy displaying their Achievement Badges sewn onto the arm of their Branch sweatshirt.

Camp

Most Branches offer an annual camp which is an important part of Pony Club life. For many children it is the first time that they have left home, slept in a tent or caravan, eaten different food, in communal conditions, looked after their pony under instruction and ridden all day. For some it is their only holiday. Camps comply with current health, safety and welfare regulations. Camp comfort does not compare to a 4**** hotel. If you are concerned about camp for your child, speak to the DC before booking a place.

Inter-Branch Events

The most basic form of Inter-Branch event is a competition open to a Pony Club Member at an adjacent Branch. Area Inter-Branch qualifying competitions are held for Branch teams and individuals to qualify for places at The Pony Club Championships at novice, intermediate and open levels. Championships are held for Eventing, Dressage, Show Jumping, Mounted Games, Tetrathlon, Polocrosse and Endurance. Polo has its own National Tournament at Cowdray Park. Each of the disciplines mentioned above is governed by a set of rules laid down by the Committee responsible, and ratified by The Equestrian Council. Rule books for each discipline are published annually. All Branch competitions are run according to the specific discipline rule books.

Saddlery

It is Pony Club policy that saddlery is plain, practical and safe. Tack inspections are a regular part of Pony Club life. They are carried out to check that:

- (1) the tack is safe for your child to use
- (2) the tack fits and is suitable for the pony

Clothing

Riding hats are particularly important. Members must wear an approved riding hat, with their chinstrap done up when mounted, at all Pony Club activities. All hats must be tagged by the Branch, using the current Pony Club tag. The DC appoints one/two Branch Officials to carry out this task. Only they are permitted to affix the tags. Every hat should be inspected carefully to ensure that it conforms to current requirements before being tagged. Replacement hats must be tagged before being worn at a rally. Tagging confirms that the hat reaches the current safety standards set by The Pony Club. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to ensure the fit and condition of the hat.

Currently for **2010** all hats must bear the CE symbol plus BSI kitemark or SAI Global Symbol or the official Snell label and number. PAS015 and Snell E2001 meet higher impact criteria. For cross country riding tests, rallies, competitions, Eventing, Tetrathlon and Pony Racing and training where jumps are above 0.80m a jockey skull, with no fixed peak, must be worn.

Where necessary the hat should be covered with a silk in navy blue, dark brown or black. Hats with vertical plastic/metallic strips are permitted.

For other information regarding dress we advise you to ask the Branch Secretary or DC before spending any money.

The Rally

The first rally can be a nerve-wracking experience for Member and parent.

You may be fooled into thinking that you are surrounded by efficient parents, polite ponies and calm children. Do not despair you will soon be confident. Do not be afraid to ask for help. Most parents are only too pleased to help if asked and will continue to do so until you are 'settled in'.

Seek out the DC or other Branch official if you need help or advice. They all wear official badges. Remember though, your initial approach may be at an inconvenient moment, be patient, they will get back to you as soon as possible. One of the best ways to integrate in a Branch is to offer to help in some way. There are never enough people to help set-up and pack away the equipment. Without support the DC and Committee have to stack the show jumps and dismantle the arenas after the rally has ended.

They have to put them up the day before the rally, ready for your child to use. They all have families to feed and deadlines to meet too. They all want to get home as soon as possible after a rally ends. If you can offer some help either before or after a rally it will be gratefully appreciated. Enjoy your child's time with The Pony Club.

THE PONY CLUB TESTS

What they are and how to run them

The Efficiency Tests

These are an integral and important part of The Pony Club, enabling a Member to record progress in riding and pony care. All Tests must be organised properly in order to maintain our standards. Members cannot be examined in another Branch without the consent of their own DC. The Tests are described in The Year Book see Section 12, The Pony Club Tests. There are 9 Pony Club Tests graded from E, the simplest to A Riding, the most difficult. There is also a coaching certificate. It is vital that the Member has attended a well structured course of preparation for each level of Test. Appropriate sections of The Manual of Horsemanship and other recommended Pony Club publications must be read during the training. Road Rider tests are interspersed between the efficiency tests and are mandatory before moving up the scale.

The syllabus for each level of Test is set out on a 'Pony Club Test Sheet'. Copies can be ordered from The Pony Club Office or downloaded from the web site. Pony Club Members taking the E, D, D +, C and C + are not charged an examination fee. However above this level, a fee is charged for each attempt at B Riding, B Horse and Pony Care, AH and A Riding. Members must take the Tests in order i.e. from E (optional) to D and eventually up to A riding.

Some Members may have special needs. It is important that we try to help these children to succeed. If an Examiner is made aware of a Member's specific problem before the start of a test, an allowance can be made. It is reasonable as DC, to ask a parent to provide a letter from a health or educational professional (to be produced before the day of the Test please) to support their claim. Unfortunately some parents only advise the DC or Examiner of problems after the candidate has failed, regrettably, at this point, there is nothing that can be done to alter the result.

Members who are successful at each level are awarded a specific coloured circular felt disc designed to be worn under their membership badge. Members also receive a pass certificate signed by the Examiner/s and the DC. This certificate is invalid without all of these signatures. You may choose to allow candidates to keep their pass certificates immediately after taking the Test or you may choose to retain them for presentation at your annual prize-giving.

At the beginning of each year you need to know the names of the Branch Members who are keen to take one of these Tests. Many DCs appoint a Committee Member who on the advice of the Chief Instructor, contacts the Members and confirms groups for training.

Arrange special riding and horse/pony-care training sessions, to prepare the candidates for the Test later in the year. Group training is beneficial it keeps Members together offering support and friendship. A charge to cover the cost of the trainer's time and the hire of a training venue, shared between the Members attending, is quite in order.

Beware of the over competitive parent who may apply pressure to have their child 'fast-tracked'. You and your Chief Instructor are the people best equipped to decide when and where, so do not allow yourselves to be bullied into submission!

Members should be slightly above the level before being entered for Tests to allow for 'nerves on the day'.

There are parents who insist that their children take every test regardless of the child's wishes, it is wise to monitor this. Simply - ask your Members if they would like to take the Test before training starts. There are some children who do not wish to participate in tests please respect their decision. It is a good idea to decide which venues in your district are best suited for each Test and book them well in advance. Some Branches use their own Pony Club field, others use a local yard, and others choose to use their camp site.

As DC you or your appointed representative are responsible for all the necessary arrangements and booking of Examiners for E, D, D +, C and C+ Tests.

Tests above this level are discussed later. Normal Pony Club insurance covers Examiners and Members in all phases of Pony Club Tests.

Once a Test date has been set:

- Book the venue.
- Book the Appointed First Aider.
- Make sure that you have a supply of specific 'pass certificates' and appropriate coloured felts ordered through The Pony Club Office in advance.
- Book the Examiner(s), well ahead of the date, tell them the venue and start time and tell them how many Members need testing. Agree a fee with the Examiner.
- Follow this up by letter.

If you are unsure what to offer do not be afraid to ask an adjacent DC or your Area Rep for advice. Provide the Examiner(s) with a lunch if they are booked for most of the day. Soup, bread and cheese are fine, a piece of fruit goes down well also yoghurt. Biscuits are popular as well as chocolate cake! Offer tea, coffee or water at regular intervals.

Confirmation of Test

Contact all relevant Members by phone/letter/e-mail with the following details:

Date and Time

Address of Test venue, with post code and simple directions

Arrival time and_start time give an indication of how long the Test takes.

Clothing clean kit_jodhpurs, shirt, Pony Club tie and badge, tagged riding hat, riding jacket, Jodhpur boots, gloves. Bring a Branch sweat shirt, to wear for the practical part of the Test. Back protectors may be worn for the riding phase.

Groomed pony with clean tack

Water for pony of none available

Hay net

Remind the younger or new Member/parent that their pony's feet should have been trimmed or shod recently.

Remind them that if their pony is showing signs of ill health it will not be allowed to start or continue depending on circumstances.

Give Members an emergency contact number for use on the day.

Insist on written confirmation of the Member's attendance, giving a reply deadline to allow for substitutions.

Advise Members to allow plenty of time to prepare, travel and familiarise themselves with the venue and to walk show jumping and cross country courses as required.

The Day

All Pony Club Tests must have a Qualified First Aider in attendance with an Approved First Aid kit and a mobile phone. Have the contact number for a local Vet to hand.

Arrive early to put up direction signs if required. Set out the necessary equipment for both the care and ridden parts.

Once Members have arrived at the venue, check them in and group them according to their Test. (Some Branches will have different Tests running simultaneously). Make/borrow sets of different coloured adjustable arm / body bands and give one to each Member in the Test group to wear. Fix a named sticky label on to each of their jackets for additional identification by the Examiners.

It is wise to separate parents and friends from the candidates while the Test is taking place.

When the Examiners arrive offer refreshments whilst they look at the running order for the session. Introduce the Examiners to the group of candidates and leave them to it. Some Examiners like to have a reminder at half time to ensure that the Test runs on schedule.

Decide in advance how and where the candidates are to be debriefed. As a rule, parents/Members prefer to be dealt with promptly after each group has been assessed because they may have other activities/children to consider during the rest of day.

It is kinder to call Members who have failed in first debrief them and allow them to leave the room before calling the others. It is becoming more acceptable to inform those who have failed, individually, not in a group. All candidates should be debriefed in a positive and friendly way after a Test. It is wise to offer positive as well as negative criticism. Give clear reasons for failure and indicate what specific help they need to improve. Pass candidates need to be debriefed because some are clear passes and ready to proceed to the next level whilst others need a period of consolidation before they are ready to move on. It is helpful to invite trainer and parent too. It is surprising how little information is taken in by candidates at this important time. If a parent is absent there are recorded reasons for failure to be discussed later.

Some children become very upset when they fail a test others appear less concerned.

Some children experience failure for the first time at a Pony Club Test. Children are used to continuous assessment at school and find it difficult to understand that a fail means fail on that day. Most parents are philosophical, only occasionally do they become difficult or unpleasant, just beware. Failure may be avoided by thorough preparation and only entering when ready.

Centre Members can take all Tests up to C+ at their Centre. For B they must contact the Area Rep who may place them with a convenient Branch or include them in their centrally run Tests.

E

This test is designed for the youngest Member. It is voluntary. A small, quiet, flat totally enclosed area is required plus one kind examiner

RIDING

- To be able to sit on a pony in halt and at walk.
- To be able to hold the reins.

- With help, carry out physical exercises such as:
- Touch parts of the pony, mane, neck, tail etc
- To be able to ride pony away from examiner at walk, turn round a cone and go back to the examiner.
- To be able to show trot (rising is not necessary) on the leading rein.
- To be able to stop at a designated point and say 'thank you'.

HORSEMASTERSHIP

An adult helper must attend every Member

To know the name and colour of the pony they are riding.

To recognise:

- Saddle
- Bridle
- Mane
- Tail
- Ears
- Eyes
- Mouth
- Legs
- Hooves

And able to feed a carrot correctly.

LOOK AT

Pony Sticker Books 1, 2, 3

Colour and Learn

Native Ponies Colouring Book

Trace, Colour and copy

Pony Guide File

To be followed by Pony Club bronze awards 3, 2, 1

Felt colour PALE YELLOW

Age 5/6years

D

This may be taken at any age, but it is designed to be the first Test taken by new, younger Members. The arrangements for the Test are made within the Branch or Centre. Usually Members are examined during a Working Rally or at the Summer Camp. One Examiner is required to conduct the Test. The Examiner should be an experienced Branch Instructor approved by the DC. Members should ride their own pony or a suitable pony borrowed or hired for the occasion. For this Test the usual age of the Member is 8 or 9 years. The Road Rider Mini Achievement Badge is pre-requisite before taking this test.

Facilities required A safe, small enclosed area within a level field. A head collar and a lead rope. Chopped up carrots or apples, dandy brush and rubber curry comb. One Examiner.

RIDING:

Members should have had preparation to enable them to;

- Mount and dismount
- A reasonably correct position in the saddle
- Hold the reins
- To be able to ride a quiet pony safely, in an enclosed area without the leading rein, in walk and trot

PONY CARE

- Approach and handle a pony correctly
- Know the basic needs of a pony in summer and winter.
- Catch a pony and put on a head-collar or halter
- Proper way to give a pony an apple or carrot
- Lead a pony in hand
- Name simple points of the pony
- Name different parts of saddle and bridle

READ

The Pony Club Manual. mount and dismount, points of the horse, length of stirrup, holding single reins, handling a horse, leading in hand, parts of saddle and bridle, putting on saddle and bridle.

VIEW

DVDs –Stable Management Series
Handling and Leading
Health and Condition

Felt Colour YELLOW

Minimum age 8yrs

D+

This is a Test halfway between D and C standard. It is a stepping stone towards C.

Facilities required. As for D, plus trotting poles and a small jump. Simple grooming kit with a hoof pick, stable and turn out rugs and a rug suitable for a sweating pony. One Examiner.

RIDING:

Candidates should be able to:

- Mount and dismount
- Know how to alter stirrups correctly when mounted
- Know how to check girths
- Sit correctly at the walk and be able to describe the correct position
- Hold the reins correctly and carry a whip in either hand
- Walk on a loose rein and shorten the reins
- Begin to demonstrate a balanced seat in trot and canter
- Count their pony's rhythm in trot
- Correct use of legs as aids
- Simple turns and circles in walk and trot
- Rising trot on either diagonal, change of diagonal
- Show a few strides of sitting trot through transitions
- Walk without stirrups
- Ride up and down hills in walk
- Ride over a single pole and very small fence
- To be able to control a quiet pony in company, on the roads and in the countryside
- To understand and describe the aids to halt, walk, trot, canter, and circles, and be able to apply them
- Give a simple definition of a pony working forwards
- Be able to explain rhythm – evenness and regularity in trot.

PONY CARE

- To have some knowledge of care and working a pony at grass.
- Put on a saddle, bridle and numnah (snaffle bridle only).
- Have some knowledge of correctly fitting tack (noseband, throat lash, numnah).
- Elementary care of saddlery (daily bit washing, importance of clean girths, numnahs and saddle cloths).
- Catch a pony and turn it out in a field.
- Lead a pony in hand at walk and trot and turn correctly.
- Names and uses of essential grooming kit.
- Show how to use a dandy brush.
- Pick up and pick out feet.
- Points of the pony, colours and markings.
- Be able to recognise Stable Rugs, Turn Out Rugs, and rugs suitable for travel and hot sweaty ponies.

READ

The Pony Club Manual. Read - points of the pony, colours and markings, care and working a pony off grass, putting on a head-collar, putting a saddle and bridle on, unsaddling, saddle and bridle fitting, tying up safely, care of saddlery, grooming, jumping position, wall chart points of horse, aids omit gallop and rein-back.

Pony Guide File

Keeping a Pony at Grass

Games Gags and Guesses

Tricky Tests and Teasers

Posers and Puzzles

VIEW DVDs

Stable management series Handling and Leading, Health and Condition, Road Rider

Felt colour WHITE.

Minimum age 10 years

C

A C Test Examiner must be a Branch Official, a Visiting Instructor, a B Test Examiner, or other suitable person. Your Area Rep should have a list of suitable C and C+ Examiners in the Area. A small number of candidates may be examined at a Working Rally. Larger numbers should be dealt with at another time, specifically set aside for the purpose. Before being awarded the 'C' Test Certificate, Candidates must have trained for and passed The Pony Club's Road Rider Achievement Badge or The Pony Club Road Rider Test or the BHS Riding and Road Safety Test.

Candidates at C should be able to express themselves much more clearly than those for the D+ Test. Examiners explore the candidate's knowledge through simple dialogue. The recommended minimum age for taking this test is 11 years. With the revised syllabus, the candidates will have to talk more. If you include un-tacking before the Care section the C Test will probably take two hours to complete.

Facilities required A marked schooling area, a small area for show jumping in an enclosed field partly undulating and partly flat. The 'Care' section requires a pony with well fitting tack and rugs as specified on the Test Card. A tail bandage, a bridle with a curb chain, a flash noseband, basic tack cleaning equipment, cotton wool, bowl and hibi scrub to clean a small wound. A full grooming kit for a grass kept pony should be

provided as well as some common feed samples and rugs. It is usual for the care part of the Test to be in a quiet sheltered area, stable or field shelter.

RIDING:

In addition to those skills required for D +, Members should be able to;

- Turn out both pony and rider correctly
- Alter their stirrups whilst mounted and adjust their girth
- Have a good position at walk, trot, canter and gallop
- Mount from either side
- Understand how to use their hands and legs as aids to change pace
- Walk on a long rein
- Ride simple turns at walk, trot and canter
- Describe the aids for canter on a named leg on a circle
- Safely in an open field, ride up and down hill, walk and trot over ground poles in preparation for jumping
- Ride across small ditches and fences cross country, be confident along bridle paths and across farmland.

As a useful guide, the Examiner may decide if the required standard is reached by considering whether the Member would be safe to ride in a small hunter trial or be reasonably safe out hunting on a quiet day mounted on a suitable pony.

PONY CARE

Following on from D + be able to, show or understand;

- Care and working of a pony off grass.
- Elementary feeding, watering and cleanliness of the pony.
- Groom a grass kept pony.
- Put on a tail bandage.
- Know when a pony needs shoeing.
- Put on a saddle, bridle and martingale.
- Have some knowledge of correctly fitting tack (saddle clearing withers, height of bit).
- Be able to do up a curb chain correctly.
- Know correct fitting for a flash nose band.
- Elementary care and cleaning of saddlery (tack care after daily exercise).
- Know the main indications for health in the pony.
- Know to clean minor wound.
- Know which wounds require veterinary attention.
- Understand the reason for anti-tetanus vaccination and know when their pony was vaccinated.
- Recognise when a pony is clearly lame.
- Know how to take a pony in and out of a horse-box or trailer with adult supervision.
- Understand the importance and the means of protecting the legs while travelling.
- Put on and take off, stable and turn out rugs.
- A greater knowledge of the points of the horse and colours and markings.

The candidate is expected to have both practical and theoretical knowledge of how to look after a pony. It is accepted that they will have to be supervised by an adult.

READ

Keeping a Pony at Grass

The Pony Club Manual: mounting and dismounting, the stirrups, rider position,, holding the single rein, rider position of rider in motion, the aids, the basic paces omitting rein back, jumping, the correct approach, classification and identification, saddlery general discussion, saddling up, putting on and fitting a bridle, care of saddlery, signs of health, lameness, assisted loading and unloading.

'The Country Code' –The Countryside Commission

Wall Charts: Tack, Grooming, Native Ponies, First Aid

VIEW

DVD: Road Rider

Felt colour GREEN

Minimum age 11 yrs

C+

Two Examiners should be appointed for the Test and ideally at least one if not both should be from outside the Branch. Before attempting C+ the Member must have passed C including Road Rider Achievement Badge. Riders may be asked to change horses or ponies for flat work.

Facilities required as for C with more show jumps and a greater range of X/C fences at about 90 cm.

RIDING

- Working towards a supple, balanced position on the flat and over fences
- Comment on the suppleness of your own horse
- Discuss horses' response to the aids and any loss of balance
- Apply aids correctly for increase and decrease of pace, turns and circles
- Turns on the forehand from the halt
- Stand still. Salute
- Free walk on a long rein or with a loose rein
- Change of leg at canter through trot and talk about balance of the horse
- Know the aids for and show leg yielding at walk
- Ride with reins in one hand
- Ride up and down steep hills and banks
- Jump a variety of fences show jumping and cross country
- Jump up and down hill
- Identify which fence was jumped the best and why
- Jump doubles

Understand the reasons for the equipment the horse or pony is wearing.

Discuss the advantages of a correct position.

Name the Scales of Training.

Discuss whether the horse or pony is working forwards in a suitable rhythm and tempo.

Understand the meaning of suppleness in a horse or pony.

Know the sequence of legs at all paces.

Facilities for the Care section several different feed samples, hay, haylage, a full grooming kit farrier's tools, a hunter shoe, single jointed snaffle, double jointed snaffle and a gag. A lorry or trailer to load into or candidates own, stable bandages and gamgee or fibre gee. Either a poultice or a simulation of a poultice for the leg.

PONY CARE

The Member must be able to talk about/ identify/ use

- Practical care and working of a pony off grass
- Knowledge of the care, feed and work of a stabled pony
- Know principles of watering and feeding
- Have knowledge of the different items of forage
- Understand the importance of roughage
- Recognise when to feed hay or haylage
- Know the articles of grooming kit and be able to use them effectively
- Know the structure of the horse's foot as shown in the manual
- Know the names of the farrier's tools
- Be able to name external parts of the foot
- Describe a hunter shoe
- Be able to fit a saddle and bridle
- Bits and their uses; snaffle, double jointed snaffles and the action of gags
- Prepare a horse for travel
- Load and unload safely
- Put on a stable bandage
- Know when a horse is lame
- Identify signs of illness
- Know the symptoms and reason for poor condition
- Know when to call the vet
- Be able to care for a wound until vet arrives
- Be able to put a poultice on a leg

READ

The Manual of Horsemanship

Keeping a Pony at Grass

The Country Code - The Countryside Commission

Pony Guide File

Achievement Badge Buddies: Lorinery, Cleaning Tack

Equipment Safety Achievement Badge Syllabus

Recommended minimum age 13 years.

This Test usually takes about two hours for a group of four Members.

Felt colour PINK

B

Before taking The Pony Club B Test Members must have passed their C+ Test and The Pony Club Road Rider Test or The BHS Riding & Road Safety Test. The Pony Club Road Rider Test is sufficient for those Members who are unlikely to need to take the BHS Stage Exams in the future.

An information sheet which sets out the difference between the C and B level rider is available; see merchandising. Candidates must be over 14 years. The Area Rep keeps an up to date list of approved B Test Examiners. They are the only people eligible to examine at this level. In some areas the Area Rep arranges B Tests centrally. In other areas local branches run their own Tests liaising with their Area Rep. Contact your Area Rep to find out how the Tests are run in your Area.

Some Areas run regular B Test Study Days to which prospective candidates are invited. The day gives candidates an opportunity to see the ridden and practical standard

required and understand how the test is run. All Members should be encouraged to attend one before attempting the test.

Many Branches find it helpful to have a B Test Organiser to liaise between Members and the Area Rep. They plan and organise special training sessions and an external assessment if necessary, to ensure that candidates are well prepared. The B Test requires significant, personal commitment in order to achieve a successful outcome. It takes about 2 years from the date of the C + pass. It is particularly beneficial for all Members to have practical experience of the care of their horse and of a stabled horse.

The Test may be taken as two separate examinations; it is more convenient for the Test Organiser if candidates are prepared to take both together, initially. There is a 1.5 hour riding test and a 1.5 hour Horse & Pony Care examination. Each section has two examiners.

- Candidates who pass the (1) riding phase are awarded a BEIGE felt and certificate
- Candidates who pass the (2) Horse & Pony care phase are awarded a BROWN felt and certificate.
- Candidates who pass/ have passed both (1) and (2) are awarded a RED felt and 'full pass' certificate.

Members have to pay a fee to take their B Test. The charges are published in The Pony Club Year Book. Some Branches pay for their Members to take the B Test until successful. Some Branches reimburse the Member after the successful attempt and some are not able to offer any support. The level of support is a decision for you and your committee to make depending on the state of your branch finances.

A candidate who fails any part of the B Test must wait for at least two months before re-taking the Test. Candidates are eligible to take the B Test up until the 31st December in the year they are 25.

The Test requires two Examiners for four/eight candidates. Only in exceptional circumstances will there be less than two Examiners and then only with the permission of the Area Rep and the Pony Club Office.

B Test Examiners are paid a set rate for a full day of examining. The Equestrian Council sets the rate. The rate for half a day is pro- rata per Examiner. Examiners are entitled to claim their traveling expenses. In some Areas it is normal for candidates to be asked to pay an additional fee to cover the cost of hiring the venue where the B Test is held.

Facilities required: usually a local yard where there are a variety of stabled horses, an area of level ground for flatwork, a course of varied show jumps including a double, a X/C course up to 1 metre in height, with a range of different types of fence over undulating terrain. A manege is useful for school movements.

For the practical part a stabled horse, a wide range of feed stuffs in sample jars, a range of different rugs, bandages for travelling, a poultice or simulated poultice to put on a foot, a crepe bandage and duck tape or similar and foil, fiber gee, knee boots, tail and poll guards, exercise boots, bits, shoes, a farrier's kit, a wormer, a thermometer, a complete grooming kit. Different types of saddles and martingales. Access to a trailer or horsebox. Most of the equipment and facilities needed for this Test would be found in a high class private/livery or competition yard.

THE RIDING TEST

Members should be able to;

- Basically correct position at walk, trot, canter, gallop and over fences
- Try a horse at his basic paces, transitions, turns and circles
- Understand and apply the correct aids for the movements ridden during this Test
- Understand the aids for, and be able to ride, lengthened strides, rein back and leg yielding in walk and trot
- Work towards demi pirouette in walk
- Halt and salute
- Candidates may be asked to ride with two pairs of reins and should understand the influence of the two reins
- School movements, including work without stirrups
- Ride a show jumping course and assess the round
- Ride up and down hills and banks in trot and canter
- Jump a variety of cross country fences while maintaining rhythm and a balanced position
- Jump up and down hill; jump drop fences, jump doubles and awkward fences
- Show a knowledge of pace and balance suitable for the level of training and fitness of their horse whilst riding at a cross-country speed

Having tried a horse at his basic paces, transitions, turns and circles, comment on what you find using the scales of training as a template.

Analyse the horse's rhythm, tempo and suppleness.

Understand the meaning of contact, impulsion, and straightness.

Discuss the balance of the horse.

Know the distances of trotting poles, a placing pole to a fence and a one stride double of 90cm high.

READ

The Manual of Horsemanship

Young Persons Guide to Eventing

Young Persons Guide to Show Jumping

To be a Dressage Rider

Endurance Riding and Trekking

Fit for the Bit

Further reading:

The Scales of Training

The Discipline Rule Books Dressage, Show Jumping and Eventing

Wall charts, The Muscular System, Points and Skeleton of the Horse

THE HORSE AND PONY CARE TEST

- Knowledge of the care and working of a pony at grass and a stabled horse receiving hard feed
- A fittening routine suitable for Intermediate / Open Area Pony Club competitions
- The importance of exercise for stable kept horses
- Daily routine for grass kept and stabled horses
- Have some knowledge of stabling - ventilation, light, drainage, shelter and warmth
- Know principles of watering and feeding and why these principles are important
- Have a knowledge of the different items of forage, and their effect on a horse's condition and behaviour
- Put on a stable bandage
- Discuss types of rug, tail and poll guards etc.

- Inspect horse box or trailer for safety and road-worthiness
- Recognise good and bad points of conformation
- Know the parts of the horse's shoe and different types of shoe
- Understand the methods of shoeing
- Know uses of the farrier's tools
- Know when a horse is in healthy condition
- Know how to administer a wormer
- Know when a horse is lame or ill and discuss the most likely causes of these ailments
- Elementary first aid including colic, laminitis and azoturia / tying up
- Explain how to take a temperature
- Discuss how to administer medicine in food, tub a foot, hose a leg and put a poultice on a foot
- Organisation and fitting of tack room
- Understand and discuss the families of biting, characteristics, action and probable reaction
- Recognise badly fitting tack and inspect tack for soundness
- Know how to store saddlery, rugs , bandages etc.
- Recognition of various types of saddles, martingales and boots and their uses

Candidates must be able to discuss these topics with the Examiner in a clear, confident manner.

READ

The Manual of Horsemanship

Keeping a Pony at Grass

Young Persons Guide to Eventing

The Scales of Training

Vital Statistics

Body Basics

Fit for the Bit

Wall charts: Respiratory System, Digestive system, Points & Skeleton of the Horse, Areas of Common Ailments and Injuries, Poisonous Plants, First Aid, Lorinery.

Suggested Further Reading: Pasture Management

VIEW

DVDs: Stable Management Series (Handling and Leading, Health and Condition)

Holders of the B Test who are current and active Members of The Pony Club, may apply for direct entry to the BHS Stage 3 and the PTT exam.

Members who wish to apply must obtain a form from the BHS which has to be signed by their D/C and the Area Rep.

Members who join a Branch with BHS Stage 3 may have direct entry to the B Test. For further information contact the BHS or The Pony Club Office.

Only those 14 years or over are eligible for B Standard.

Recommended Minimum age: 15 years

Felt colour: RED - Both sections of B Test

BROWN - Horse & Pony Care Section only

District Commissioners and Examiners may be subject to unacceptable pressure to treat as special cases those Members who seek take/ use the B Test as an entry qualification equine courses. This pressure must be resisted.

Members who pass their B Horse and Pony Care and do not/ wish to take / have the riding section, can proceed to AH Test only. Members who pass both B Riding and B Care can proceed to AH and if successful on to A Riding. Before applying to take these tests all Members must pass the Pony Club Lungeing Test

THE LUNGEING TEST

Your Area Rep is responsible for organizing this test. Read The Pony Club Lungeing Test Card. A Member wishing to proceed should contact their Area Rep for dates. Candidates who have passed BHS Stage 3 have exemption from this test

AH TEST (A HORSE AND PONY CARE)

This Test is organised by the Area Rep at suitable venues within the Area. As numbers vary this Test tends to be run only once or twice in an Area each year. Some Areas do not have enough candidates to run one Test per year. As well as accepting their own candidates Area Reps will accept external candidates if space permits. The Pony Club Office keeps a record of when and where the Tests are going to be run and will put a candidate in touch with an A Rep and Test venue. This may mean that a candidate has to travel a distance to be examined, make sure that they understand this before booking. Area Reps nominate A Care Examiners and The Pony Club Office maintains a national list of all A Care examiners.

Candidates must be 16 years old although 17 plus is advised.

Background

The Test is usually run with eight candidates examined by four A Care Examiners and an external panel Examiner appointed by The Pony Club Office, as adjudicator. Each Examiner has one section to cover in the morning and another in the afternoon. Candidates may be examined in pairs or individually.

The Test takes all day to complete with each section taking about 40 minutes. It is recommended that a person from the branch is with the candidate when the results are announced and during the subsequent debrief. **Candidates are only allowed to attempt this Test four times.** If they wish to continue they must be reviewed by an AH Examiner. As DC you are welcome to attend any B or A Test days, check with your Area Rep first.

Nomination forms are available from The Pony Club Office and when completed, should be sent to the Area Rep, with the appropriate Test fee. Your Branch may decide how you are going to support your candidate financially (see B Test advice). Unless there are compelling medical reasons, once a Member has accepted a Test place they are not eligible for a refund should they fail to attend. This Test is expensive to set up and run and Examiners travel long distances to help us. As a general rule, candidates benefit from several months of intensive training if they are to be successful so candidates must be motivated. The Area Rep may run an AH study day. Members who attend and wish to proceed are given training dates/venues in preparation. It is usual to make a small charge for each training session.

The Pony Club Office has copies of the A syllabus and a leaflet 'Working for the A Test'; contact them for copies. Some Area Reps give these leaflets to candidates after passing their B Test. If you are in any doubt, contact your Area Rep for advice, before nominating candidates. Centre Members **must** join a local Branch to take AH and A Riding.

Successful candidates are awarded an orange felt and a pass Certificate which must be signed by all the Examiners and the DC. Exceptional performance/ability is recognised by a special award - honours and a salmon pink felt. The nominated Panel Examiner can choose to make this award following soundings from all the individual Examiners when the final assessment is complete and before the candidates are given their results.

A Riding

Without doubt this exam is highly regarded in the equine industry. Members who achieve success at this level are outstanding. **Candidates must be over 17 years old and can only attempt this Test four times.** A candidate may apply to take this Test at any time until the 31st December of the year following the one in which they were 25.

The Exam is organised through The P/C Office at regional centres throughout the UK. The A Riding exam takes place in the Spring and in the Autumn according to demand and weather conditions.

Contact The Pony Club Office for a nomination form. The DC must confirm that the candidate has received appropriate training and has reached the required standard. A completed form with the appropriate examination fee should be sent to your Area Rep who will countersign it and return it to The Pony Club Office. Candidates are notified once their A Riding request has been received. The Office sends forms with either the Spring/Autumn dates to all registered candidates. Every candidate is expected to select a centre and return the form to The Pony Club Office. All returns are dealt with in the order they are received. Where possible, candidates are offered their first choice centre and notified by letter. The DC receives a copy. Finally, candidates must confirm their acceptance in writing. The Test fee is forfeited if the candidate withdraws in the three weeks preceding the confirmed Test date. Late applications i.e. those within three weeks of the date of a test are charged an additional fee of £20.00

It is mandatory to have passed the AH prior to attempting the A Riding. It is possible to book an A Riding exam date without having the AH pass, provided the AH is passed before the A Riding exam date. No candidate may take the Test at a centre where they have received instruction during the previous three months. From time to time 'A Test Roadshows' are run to encourage Members to find out more the day. These events are advertised on the Web Site and in Bulletins.

The Exam is in three parts:

- (1) Morning- Outside Riding
- (2) Afternoon -Inside Riding
- (3) Training the Young Horse

Candidates must pass all parts to be successful. Candidates who fail the outside riding in the morning are allowed to continue for experience. Usually three Examiners taken from the A Test Examiners' Panel assess up to eight candidates. An additional panel Examiner may be sent to oversee the day. The standard is very high and the pass rate is about 33%. Members may attempt this test a maximum of four times. Before another application is made the Member must be assessed by a panel A Riding Examiner for permission to re-apply.

You are encouraged to attend and support your candidate. Speak to your Area Rep and Chief Instructor before nominating a Member. Members need to have access to special help from trainers who understand the Test and have had experience of helping successful Members before.

Successful candidates are awarded a royal blue felt. Exceptional ability is rewarded with an honours pass and purple felt.

Candidates who fail either AH or A Riding must wait at least three months before attempting the Test again. Candidates who have to make a return journey in excess of 140 miles are eligible for assistance with their travel cost. The P/C Office will advise on this.

Successful Members who have passed the Pony Club AH and A Riding Tests i.e. have obtained the full A pass are exempt from Stages 3 and 4 of the BHS exams, subject to approval by the Pony Club Training Committee and the BHS Training and Examinations Committee. Candidates must apply in writing to The Pony Club Office for approval.

Coach and Instructor Training with The Pony Club

The Pony Club has a long history of training its own instructors through a series of Instructors' Course. With the changing ethos in the world of sport generally, these courses have gradually changed to integrate new ideas.

YOUNG INSTRUCTORS

Introduction to Pony Club Coaching Year 1

Older Branch/Centre Members (16yrs or over), who hold C Test or above, can start their coach training with this course. This is a one day course designed for people who have done little or no coaching/instructing. It is limited to 12 participants with two tutors, and is a "hands-on" experience!

Members should be able to coach at D/D+ level – as assistants at first – having attended this course.

At present the course tutors' fees and expenses are subsidised by the Training Committee if tutors from the list held by the Office are used.

Introduction to Pony Club Coaching Year 2

Members of 17 and over, (preferably holders of C+ or above) who have attended the Year 1 course within the last two years and have gained some practical experience should be encouraged to attend this one-day course which concentrates on coaching simple cross-country riding. It is limited to 8 participants with two tutors.

At present this course is subsidised as **Year 1**.

Safe, Natural and Fun Learning (S.N.A.F.L.)

Members of 18 and over who hold B and are enthusiastic coaches with some experience may attend the S.N.A.F.L. course which is a 5-day residential course.

The course takes 8 participants with two tutors. This course is a tremendous experience for young coaches, with lots of discussion work and plenty of practical coaching. Participants should be able to coach at C test level following this course.

Young Instructors Advanced Course (Y.I.A.C.)

Members who hold their A Test are invited to join this residential course which is in two parts – five days one year and five days the following one. The course is led by two tutors, and a variety of invited speakers and demonstrators also attend.

This course will prepare the participants to coach at higher levels than the other courses.

ALL OTHER INSTRUCTORS

Every coach/instructor of **every** discipline who works for The Pony Club must attend an instructors' course or conference, which has a demonstration ride, at least every two years. The Pony Club provides Instructors' Logbooks which should be signed off by course organisers to show which courses have been attended.

Courses may be run by Branches or by Areas. Branches are often asked to organise Area courses. It is important that the tutor taking the course has some knowledge of The Pony Club and how it works, as well as being an inspirational coach/instructor.

Course subjects may be chosen to suit audience requirements, but are generally based around Test requirements or specific aspects of riding or horse & pony care.

Numbers on these courses and most of those below, are only limited by the size of the venue.

Fun Rallies for Grassroots Riders

This is a short (2 hours) course giving lots of fun ideas for mounted and dismounted rallies. It is a useful re-accreditation course and suitable for Centres.

The Straight Forward Riding Course

Pony Club senior Members and coaches, at all levels, in all disciplines and of all ages will benefit from this one day course which looks at the balance and training of the horse and the rider. This is a re-accreditation course.

Introduction to Pony Club Coaching Year 1 & Year 2

If these courses are not filled by Pony Club Members other inexperienced coaches/instructors, or more experienced coaches/instructors who need to re-accredit, may take up the free places.

The Pony Club Instructors' Conferences

These day conferences are organised by the Training Committee. They take place in two different parts of the country each year so that as many coaches/instructors as possible can attend.

The theme of the Conference changes from year to year. Past conferences have covered Show Jumping with Tim Stockdale, Cross Country Riding with Eric Smiley FBHS, and Dressage with Jennie Loriston-Clarke MBE FBHS.

They are open to all coaches/instructors, but numbers per Branch/Centre may be limited. They are re-accreditation days.

COACHING QUALIFICATIONS

The Pony Club Coaching Certificate

This is our own in-house Coaching Certificate for Members aged 18 or over who hold their B Test, and preferably have attended both Introduction to Pony Club Coaching courses. It is recommended that they have attended a Child Protection course and hold a First Aid Certificate.

Coaches who achieve this assessed certificate will be qualified to coach C Test level riding and C+ Test level Horse & Pony Care to Members at rallies and practices.

This Certificate is for use **only** within The Pony Club. It will not qualify the holder to coach free-lance.

United Kingdom Coach Certificate (UKCC)

This is a nationally recognised qualification across 31 different sports.

As a Member of the British Equestrian Federation, The Pony Club is entitled to train and assess candidates for the UKCC. This Certificate has three levels at present:

1. Level 1 is roughly equivalent to the Introduction to Pony Club Coaching Year 1 standard. Candidates have to be 16 yrs or above.
2. Level 2 is the same standard as the BHS Preliminary Teaching Certificate (part of the BHSI), and the Pony Club Coaching Certificate. Candidates have to be 18 yrs or above.
3. Level 3 is the same standard as the BHS Intermediate Teaching Certificate (part of the BHSII). Candidates have to be 18 yrs or above.

Candidates have to have attended a Child Protection Course, hold a First Aid Certificate and have been CRB checked.

Holders of Level 2 and above are eligible to join the BHS Register of Instructors if they hold the relevant First Aid qualification.

Apart from the Introduction to Pony Club Coaching, all of the other Instructors' Courses have been developed, and are taken by specific tutors. More information including who takes them, will be found on The Pony Club website under Training, as will further information about the qualifications.

For local re-accreditation courses, Introduction to Pony Club Coaching and Fun Rallies for Grassroots Riders, contact your Area Representative.

For S.N.A.F.L., Y.I.A.C., Straight Forward Riding, the Instructors Conferences and UKCC contact The Pony Club Office.