



The Fell Pony Society

North East Area Group

Registered Charity, Number 1104945

Happy New Year!

I would like to wish everyone a belated, happy and healthy 2022 and I sincerely hope that you and your families have found ways of coping in these extraordinary times. As I write this newsletter we are hearing that restrictions are being lifted but case numbers here in the North East are still very high. We now have a good vaccination programme which is protecting the most vulnerable amongst us but the daily death figures are quite alarming. Many of us are still afraid of getting too close to lots of people in an indoor space and it is this reason that caused me to cancel our Sunday Lunch Event which was due to take place on Sunday 6th February.

Trying to plan events for 2022 is rather difficult under the current situation but plan we must if we are to get on with our lives. The Fell Pony Society was formed 100 years ago so lots of events are happening during 2022 to help everyone celebrate. Something that most of you can take part in is the 'FPS 100 mile challenge' which was launched on 1st January 2022. Full details are on the FPS website at www.fellponysociety.org.uk The North East committee has discussed the possibility of holding a pleasure ride during the summer to help everyone achieve their miles. Further details will be posted on the FPS Website and our Facebook page when arrangements have been agreed.

It has been decided that our annual Dressage Competition which has recently been held during March at Houghall Campus, Durham will be replaced by a Dressage Training Day to be held at High Plains Equestrian Centre. This will be a combined event with HPEC but run as a High Plains event so no additional organising or helpers will be needed. The format will be three riders in a group for a 45 min lesson followed by completing a dressage test at the appropriate level. All riders will receive written feedback. Groups will be offered at several levels. This will take place on Saturday 12th March and will be bookable online. I will share details on the FPS Website and our Facebook page when the event is advertised.

On Monday 18th April, Easter Monday, a Native Pony Roadshow is being held at The Unicorn Centre, Stainton Way, Middlesbrough TS8 9LX. Five breeds of native pony will be represented; Fell, Dales, Highland, Dartmoor & Exmoor. Each of these breeds is on the Rare Breeds Survival List and will be represented by 3 ponies and a knowledgeable speaker. This is an event not to be missed, especially as it is being held in our area. I will share more details as they become available so make a note of the date and that places will need to be booked.

Hairy Pony Camp at Linnel Wood, Hexham is being planned in its normal format for the weekend of Friday 29th April – Sunday 1st May. This is a joint Highland & Fell pony camp organised by the Highland Pony Enthusiasts Club & North East FPS Group. Email hpecnortheast@hotmail.co.uk or telephone Chris on 07787124413 for more information nearer the time. My crystal ball is still very hazy for the end of April 2022.

The FPS Stallion Show will be held at Dalemain, near Penrith on Saturday 14th May. This will include a very special display to launch the centenary celebrations as well as a parade of stallions, so please try to attend and support the society. A full week of events has been organised to take place from Sunday 7th August through to Sunday 14th August. Details will be released in the FPS magazine but I can tell you that there will be four stud days and a Centenary Ball on Saturday 13th August so you need to get the dates in your diary and plan some time off work.

Finally, the annual Native Pony Festival held at Crescent Farm, Throckley, Newcastle NE15 9RE is being held on Sunday 22nd May 2022. There will be In-hand classes for all native breeds. Ridden and WHP classes. A schedule will be available early April.

Events in the North East do not go beyond May 2022 but we are thinking of holding a summer BBQ /Picnic on one Saturday or Sunday in June. We thought an outdoor event would be safer for those of us who are still very cautious about mixing. This will be a social occasion and if held here, at my home, will have the added bonus of viewing some ponies. We are looking at the option of a pleasure ride later in the year but will avoid any events during August so that we can all attend and support the events in Cumbria.

My main message at the moment is simply to look after yourselves and stay safe. I will send further information about additional events as they are organised.

Eileen Walker