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Introductory Safety / Competence Assessment of Club Members

Notes for Assessors

The Purpose of the assessment

The objective of this assessment process is to ascertain whether a driver and his turnout are sufficiently competent and safe to take part in any Public Outing organised by the Club

The Assessment procedure

The member will be asked to produce his horse, harness and vehicle for inspection, harness up and carry out a simple driving test. He may be asked to answer questions to get an insight into his basic knowledge but unlike a test, he will not be required to talk himself through all his procedures.

The Aim is to EDUCATE and ENCOURAGE.

The Emphasis of this Assessment should be on SAFETY.

The Assessment will be divided into 5 parts under the following headings:

Part I	Inspection of the Horse, Harness and Vehicle
Part II	Harness Up and the Correct Fitting of Harness
Part III	Putting Horse to Vehicle
Part IV	Safe Driving Techniques
Part V	Take Out and Unharness

Try not to make the candidate feel that they are being examined, be neither superior nor patronising. Make the experience enjoyable for both of you.

It is useful to try and gauge the candidates prior experience first, before putting your foot in it !

If after assessment, you feel the candidate is not yet ready, go through the assessment with them and explain where they lack knowledge/skill, and be constructive by suggesting where they can get help or lessons.

If the assessment is done at the home or stables of the applicant rather than at a training day, it is suggested that they are then checked at a training day to ensure their horse/pony is not a problem in company.

It is also worth discussing the following points:

1. Establish if they have insurance cover (Associate membership of BHDTA gives cover at a very reasonable cost and will keep them in touch with the driving world).
2. Examine vaccination certificate(s). Advise they must have animal fully vaccinated before attending any event (depending on individual Club rules).
3. Give advice on Club safety rules such as:
 - Hard Hats
 - Fire extinguishers in horse boxes and caravans
 - No trotting in box parks
 - Dogs must be kept under control at all times
4. If possible, assign an open driver as a mentor to help them on their first appearance.

Guidelines for criteria to qualify as an Assessor:

National Judges
UKCC Level 2 or Level 3
LHHI Instructors
BDS Level III, IV
British Carriagedriving National Open class competitor of three years