



BKFA Update

No 7 May 2008

Chairman's message

Welcome to the April News update.

Over the winter, we have been busy again behind the scenes with various initiatives and updates.

One thing we do need your help with is information regarding things that are going on in the kiting world. We try to keep our ear to the ground but we can't keep up with everything. One example of this is Chris Dowie's "Free the Fields" Campaign. This is some very creditable work by Chris (more details below), but we only found out about it more-or-less by accident! Had we known about it sooner we could have supported it a lot earlier.

So, we rely on the kiting community to be our eyes and ears and to let us know if there is anything that we should be involved in. Please, help us to help you!

We intend to have a BKFA presence at more festivals this year, so we hope to see you at some of those.

Jon Caton

Update on Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups now on website

Following the CCPR seminar late last year, the presentation and notes from the session are now on the website.

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 is being progressively implemented. The Independent Safeguarding Agency (ISA) expects to be fully operational in Autumn 2008. The impact on clubs is far from clear and indeed the ISA highlighted that issues around what they described as 'Saturday football' are yet to be resolved. Clearly, this concern applies equally to any sport that could involve vulnerable people and coaching.

The requirements for CRB (Criminal Record Bureau) checks when remain unchanged, and as a number of clubs have found, CRB checks may be required when coaching in schools and similar situations. BKFA is working to make access to CRB checks as easy as possible.

We will keep you posted in ISA developments.

Insurance update

Disappointingly the manager we were dealing with has left Perkins Slade – it explains why we were getting no replies. We are now talking with someone else at the company and remain hopeful that we can make progress in this important area. The key issue remains the number of people that we can attract to any scheme.

Map access

We get a steady trickle of enquiries through the website from people looking for their local club. In an effort to promote all clubs (not just BKFA members), we are developing an interactive map for the website. Moving over an area will bring up a list of all relevant clubs:

we then hope to add further detail such as websites and possibly contact details, subject of course to clubs agreeing to have this data on the site.

Jerry Swift is trying to contact every club in the country to check whether they wish to be included. If you haven't responded to his email, please do. It will cost nothing and there is no implied support for BKFA, just we hope a useful service to people looking to get into kiting.

CCPR

We have been accepted for membership of the Central Council of Physical Recreation (website www.ccpr.org.uk). CCPR is the national alliance of governing and representative bodies of sport and recreation. Almost every organised sport and recreation in the UK has its own governing or representative body – organisations like The Football Association, British Water Ski and the Ramblers' Association - which exists to organise, to set rules and to encourage more people into their sport or activity. Together, these bodies form CCPR's membership and it represents 150,000 clubs and millions of individuals who regularly participate in sport and recreation.

Established in 1935, CCPR represents 270 member organisations which in turn cover 150,000 clubs. With around 13 million regular participants, CCPR estimates that the value of sports volunteering to the UK economy is £1.4bn through 5.8 million volunteers in sport.

CCPR provides a single voice for all these organisations and individuals, ensuring that it is heard and listened to by people who make decisions which may affect the sector. It also provides essential services to its membership, freeing up capacity for them to concentrate on their core role – providing sporting and recreational opportunities to people across the country.

BKFA is a member of the Outdoor Pursuits Division. The Divisions provide the forum for members to come together, to share their concerns and to direct and prioritise CCPR's everyday work. CCPR has always enjoyed strong engagement from its members and it is their contribution through the work of the Divisions which ensures that CCPR's activity remains focused and relevant.

Through CCPR's corporate partners we now have access to a number of services, including insurance and Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks at a reasonable rate. We will be exploring how best to use these services over the coming months.

AGM

The draft minutes from the AGM are now on the website.

Risk assessment

We have recently reviewed the risk assessment. We received some really helpful information on kites and horses provided by horse owner and kiteflyer, David Ford. We discussed the advice with the British Horse Society who were happy to endorse them with a minor suggested amendments. Our thanks go to David Ford and Sheila Harvey, Senior Executive, Safety at the BHS.

The risk assessment will be amended to reflect this and information on a 'near miss' last year when a quick release failed, meaning the reserve method of freeing the kite had to be used.

We have now placed the Code of Conduct and the Advice on Kiting and Horses on the website.

We will be reviewing the short form risk assessment next.

Free the Fields Campaign

The Free the Fields campaign is determined to have a set of rules changed to favour kite flying.

The campaign will have been running for a year in June, but has been pushing the RPA (Rural Payments Authority) to change their initial decision since 2005. The campaign is striving to have "Kite Sports" added to a list of activities that a farmer is allowed to permit without any restriction.

The campaign, led by Chris Dowie, aims "To have Kitesports expressly listed in the Single Payment Scheme, Cross Compliance Guidance list for Permitted Activities as a Group A (Permitted Without Restriction) activity."

Currently if a farmer allows us to use his land he could loose his entire "single payment", a large source of income for many UK farmers. More specific details are available on the campaign's blogsite (below).

A petition (<http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/safelyzones>) was started to demonstrate how many of us there are who are impacted by what could amount to a ban. The campaign has pushed the RPA to change their position three times; so they appear to be on the right track but there is still some way to go.

Jerry Swift from the BKFA will be raising the issue with the CCPR. They have been involved in a number of access issues recently so it is hoped they can bring more pressure for change.

By adding 'Kite Sports' to the Permitted Activities list, Chris suggests there may be real opportunities in the kite flying world. With farmers able to work with small kite groups, our sport would be strengthened, building momentum towards recognition by Sport England, with recognised status giving clubs eligibility to Sport England Funding. Access to farm land would also relieve pressure on public spaces and beaches.

So Chris sees it as all about allowing the sport to develop without hindrance. So please help out : sign the petition, read, subscribe or bookmark the blog . (<http://freethfields.blogspot.com>). If you have any questions or want to help out some more email Chris at, freethfields@gmail.com.

Jerry Swift
10 May 2008