

RISK ASSESSMENT

EVENT: MENDIP FARMERS HUNT OPENING MEET

LOCATION: PRIDDY VILLAGE GREEN, BA5 3BB

DATE: SATURDAY 04 NOVEMBER 2023

ASSESSOR: GEORGE PULLEN

CONTEXT: The Mendip Farmers Hunt meeting on Priddy Green is a long observed tradition and therefore attracts many members of the public who do not normally come to Hunt Meets or perhaps only come to the Opening Meet or the Boxing Day Meet. While the former is well attended, the latter normally draws several hundred members of the public to the village green. Given the nature of the event, horses pose a potential risk to members of the public while parking is an area of concern, particularly given that the ground conditions tend to be unsuitable in the winter months. Although the village hall/school car park is made available for parking, members of the public tend to park along the roads leading into Priddy, which leads to potential congestion issues immediately before, during and after the event itself.

HAZARD	PERSONS AT RISK	CONTROL MEASURES
Presence of Horses – potential injury to humans through barging, kicking etc.	All in attendance	Horses to stand in designated area of village green. Any young horse asked to wear the appropriate colour ribbon on its tail. BST hard hats recommended for all riders. Easy access to first aid – carried by designated member of the Hunt. Awareness of emergency telephone numbers – carried by designated members of the Hunt.
Presence of Hounds & Domestic Dogs – potential for dog fights and/or human attack.	All in attendance	Hounds to be held up in a designated area of village green. Domestic dogs to be kept on leads – signage provided by the Hunt and erected on the village green. Stewards briefed to approach the public if they see dogs off lead. The Hunt has reviewed the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 and does not deem any of its hounds to be ‘dangerously out of control’.

Horse/Canine Faeces – potential health hazards.	All in attendance	Hounds let out before attending the meet to minimise volume of waste matter carried. Designated team, provided with a manure scoop and barrow, to sweep the village green immediately after the event for all faeces and litter. These will then be disposed of in line with environmental regulations.
Presence of Cars – potential for injury when using roads or parking.	All in attendance	Designated parking stewards in high visibility jackets to ensure cars park considerately. Stewards placed on main arterial routes into village. Highways not to be blocked so as not to inconvenience/obstruct other road users. Cones used to block off any no parking zones. The Hunt has liaised with Somerset Council regarding the Highways Act 1980 and there is no requirement to close any roads when the Hunt meets on the village green.
Emergency Vehicles – potential for access to be blocked due to inconsiderate parking.	All in attendance	Parking stewards to ensure parked cars and crowd do not block emergency vehicle access routes.
Presence of Large Crowd – potential for crush or unintended interaction with horses and hounds.	All in attendance	Designated crowd stewards in high visibility jackets to monitor any overcrowding and to generally keep an eye on proceedings. Use of surrounding fields if village green not large enough to accommodate crowd.
Dry Stone Walls – potential for collapse, injuring members of public. The Hunt tend to move off through the field to the east of the green where spectators have in the past stood on the walls to obtain a better view.	All in attendance	Areas of wall will be fenced off and stewards will be keeping an eye on proceedings to make sure spectators do not stand on walls.
Hunt Jump – potential for riders/horses to fall and for spectators to be injured.	All in attendance	Hunt jump erected in field to the east of the green, usually marking the start of the Hunt's route. To be roped off so crowd cannot get close to it.

		Easy access to first aid, carried by a designated member of the Hunt. Awareness of emergency telephone numbers – carried by designated members of the Hunt. Valid hunt insurance with £10m public liability cover.
Surface of Village Green – potential damage from horses and vehicles.	Parish council	Should the weather be bad enough that the presence of horses on the village green would damage the healthy covering of grass, measures will be taken to stand the horses on an area of hard standing adjacent to the village green. Permission to be sought from local farmer/property owner. Parking stewards to ensure cars do not park in such a way that will damage the surface of the village green.
Presence of Anti-Hunt Protestors/Saboteurs – potential for conflict with pro-Hunt support and they sometimes deliberately make noise to unsettle the horses.	All in attendance	Open dialogue maintained with police to assess risk and seek advice. Police notified ahead of the meet and asked to attend if deemed necessary. Designated hunt official to interact with the protestors on the day to make them aware of risks they may be creating and seek their cooperation. All hunt followers briefed not to interact with them to minimise antagonism.
Presence of Pro-Hunt Protagonists – potential for individuals to interact belligerently with Anti-Hunt protestors.	All in attendance	All Hunt supporters are briefed not to interact with any protestors/saboteurs. However, there may be pro-Hunt members of the public in attendance who do not receive Hunt communications. Hunt supporters and stewards will be briefed to identify any untoward behaviour and report it immediately to the Master.