**Questions from BE RWG re BE Board Elections November 2021**

**Jan Cottam**

Thank you for this opportunity to explain why I want to be elected to the BE Board. I could write pages but, with some difficulty, have confined myself to the answers below.

I believe my knowledge is current & shows a depth of understanding that will make me an invaluable asset to the BE Board.

**Every Challenge is an Opportunity**

We need to work together. Over the last 2 years, Stakeholders have been meeting regularly. I helped instigate the talking. This must continue & strengthen.

1 **During your 4 year term as a BE Board Director, if you could change 3 things**

1. **In order of importance, what would these be?**
2. The perception that the BE Board & Office are not in touch enough with BE Members
3. Finances – It is clear BE is experiencing a worrying period
4. The loss of the spirit of the ‘Eventing Family’ – Trust, Pride & Fun
5. **What results would you hope to achieve from these changes?**
6. I would like to change the perception that the BE Board & Office need to be more in touch with Members. – Being more visible, open, transparent, approachable & accessible, will lead to improved relationships between all parties. Effective & easily managed channels of communication are key.

BE depends on its Stakeholders, including the growing voice of the Rider Working Groups.

By showing appreciation for everyone’s experiences we will reach a position where everyone feels they can have influence

* Communicate
* Collaborate
* Cooperate
1. Finances – Being honest & upfront about the exact state of play will create a level of understanding that will enable members to support BE much more willingly. A strong strategic plan will improve the health of finances to secure the future for our sport.
2. The Eventing Family – this is pivotal to our sport. Amateurs & professionals compete against each other on a level playing field. The unfettered encouragement & support to fellow competitors will grow. This atmosphere, translated through to those running our sport, will engender inspiration & enthusiasm.
Success breeds success. We must not waste our Olympic & European achievements. The ‘feel good factor’ will stimulate a level of interest & involvement which in turn, will enable growth & development, allowing us to focus on the future.

2 **What do you think BE should do to compete with the growing number of Unregulated events, targeting riders at 80, 90 & 100 levels & the linked grassroot series which have started up?**

* Unregulated Events are here to stay. BE should embrace them & use as a stepping stone to Affiliated competing. British Eventing is aspirational, so must be achievable & rewarding. We must focus on what we are good at. Put the ‘Great’ back in British Eventing.
* Ensure the quality & high standards at BE Events are second to none
* Advertise these superior standards
* Publicise that Affiliated Events are Accountable
* Ensure BE is affordable. The cost of eventing cannot continue to grow.
* Restructure membership & horse registration. Remove Day Ticket limits. The new initiatives on membership are very welcome & being received with enthusiasm
* Offer incentives with Membership that are undeniably attractive
* Generate a balanced calendar - classes & geography. The variety of venues play a pivotal role. Find the best settings for the various classes & the most suitable for the vagaries of the English weather
* Introduce an Unrecorded category to enable BE Members, in the safety of a BE event, to compete young horses whilst learning their job.
* Enable entering by booking a space and adding the horse’s name later
* Training & Coaching – offer to all but make cheaper for BE Members
* On – line help. For example:-
* Advice for newcomers - Your first BE80 – what to expect. What to wear. What will the course be like? Run into trouble – who to ask.
* Advice when you move up a level
* Dressage Tests
* How to cope with a Trot up
* International competing
* 3 Day Event Competing
* Area Festivals, Leagues, Championships. Opportunities for all members to shine
* Increase the focus on digital & social media. Bite size blogs, sharp, snappy posts & tweets. Communication to members in small, interesting chunks. Create something Eventers will find useful & better value.
* Improve relationships with Riding Clubs, Pony Clubs & other member bodies – BS & BD
* Engage public awareness

3 **What do you see as the biggest issue facing BE currently & why?**

* Finances – the current position must be faced & resolved. This is probably the biggest concern for our sport. It impacts on so much. Development & education in particular. Finances have curtailed the training of Officials & Course Designers.

BE must be exemplary in the standards they generate. The response to those not following these values must be addressed. Officials’ training is an essential part of upholding the superior qualities of our sport.

BE must look to the future. Where will we be in 5 or 10 years time? We must come up with a forecast – a plan to shape the future.

We must learn from past mistakes &, with learning & actions, allow the sport to move forward

4 **How do you see yourself serving the ‘middle tier’ member? The Novice/Intermediate riders who are not grassroots nor are they elite but that make up a great majority of the membership & are often the producers of the next elite superstar horses, so a very key part of our sport.**

* You are a valuable group of members. You have immense experience & your opinions must be valued.
* Opportunities should be found to enable you to contribute on how our sport operates & grows – committees/working parties
* Initiatives such as the Novice Masters need to be supported and developed, moving into other levels
* Regular meetings with BE & Stakeholders
* Specific training opportunities for this ‘middle tier’ e.g.
* Course Walks
* Cross Country Training
* Consider unrecorded entries as a method for introducing young horses to the sport
* BE must continually adapt & allow strategies to develop. BE must enable growth & focus on the future

5 **The Rider Working Groups have already demonstrated their beneficial input to BE, including Novice Masters, Area Festivals & Bicton 90/100 3 Day Event. If you were elected, what would you like from us in 2022/2023?**

* Meet regularly with Stakeholders & Board Members
* Participate in opportunities to understand your aims & work with you to achieve these
* Communication is key. I would want to know:-
* Where any frustrations are developing
* What you are thinking
* Your ideas & suggestions
* Try to inspire some of you to train as BE or FEI Officials