Creating your Club Website

Creating a website for your club is a great way not only to keep your current members up to date on news and events, but to also market yourself to potential new members.

To set up a website you will need:
- A domain name, e.g. www.myridingclub.co.uk
- Some space online to host your site
- A website (the pages)

Usually people tend to register their domain name with their hosting company. However, you'll first need to check that the name you want is available. This can be done easily online and there are plenty of companies that let you register a domain name for a relatively small fee, typically around £10 a year. If you know someone who has created a website before they might be able to recommend a company to you.

When creating your actual site, you have a few options:

1. **Write your own** – If you are clued up on HTML or know someone who is, then you could try creating your own from scratch! Although it sounds complicated there are lots free tutorials on the Internet which give you easy step-by-step instructions to creating a website yourself.

2. **Buy some software** – Go online or to a computer store and purchase a package which will allow you to create web pages. These usually have tutorials that will guide you through how to use the software.

    Ardingly RC have used wordpress.org.

3. **Buy an entire package deal** – There are lots of web hosting companies online who, for a fee, will provide you with a package that includes everything you need, from a domain name and webspace, to the design software. Just search online or ask someone you know who has made one before.

    1 & 1 Website Builder has been used by Tendring Hundred RC – 1and1.co.uk.

    These two sites are also quite user friendly to design your own website and offer help and support:

    moonfruit.com

    simplesite.com

4. **Pay someone else!** – If you are intimidated by the idea of trying it yourself or you have some extra funds, you can always pay someone else to do it. Have a look online for website designers, or if you are lucky enough to know someone who is web savvy then you could always ask them to do it for you.

Here are some suggestions on what you could include on your website pages. Remember to update your site regularly and email your link to the office for it to be posted on the BRC website:

❑ **About your club** – Make sure you have a section about your club to introduce yourself to potential new members. Include the club's location and contact details and give a bit of detail of some of benefits of joining.
❑ **Who is who** – Include details of who is who on the committee, with contact details so your members know how to get in touch.
❑ **How to join** - Have a page on 'how to join' with clear and easy instructions for new members to follow and a contact for further information. Include prices and clearly list the benefits for joining your club. You may want to have a downloadable membership form or on line application. If you run any special offers of discounts publish them on your site as an incentive to attract new members.
❑ **Rules and constitution** – Some clubs like to post their rules and constitutions for reference to both current and new members.
❑ **News section** - Publish press releases and reviews on your clubs activities for members to read and new members to see what things your clubs gets up to. You could also include articles with photographs from competitions. Email any press releases to local newspapers, and include them in a monthly club newsletter, which you email around and have available on your site to download.
❑ **Events calendar** - Advertise dates of your upcoming events, along with the venue address, directions and contact details of so people can know how to enter.
❑ **Schedules** - Upload your schedules for competitions with times and other competitor information, so that your members can download these for free.
❑ **Members' area** – Some clubs prefer to include an exclusive area for members only which they can log into. Remember if you are going to put on personal information, ensure your site is secure, and always ask permission from your members when publishing details to ensure you comply with data protection laws.
❑ **Members' forum** - You could include a forum section to allow members to express their views and encourage them to be more involved in club matters. This might go in your member's area.
❑ **Notice board** – It may also be useful to post any reminders or advertisements on a notice board. If this is in your members' area it could be available for anyone to use.
❑ **Useful links** - Add links from your website to other useful sites, e.g. BHS, BRC, British Dressage, British Eventing etc.

Remember to post your website link on the BRC website - just email it with your area number to louise.nicholls@bhs.org.uk.