

# *The Vale of Lune Harriers*

## *and the Three Counties Bloodhounds*

### **A few tips to ensure you have super day out hunting:**

Courtesy and good manners are required at all times, even if you may be feeling rather nervous. We hunt entirely due to the goodwill of the people who own and farm the land in our Hunt country.

### **Before setting off**

1. Remember to ring the Hotline to check if the meet is on and see if it has changed location.  
**07736 625128**
2. It is a courtesy to the Hunt and farmers for the field to be well turned out. After the opening meet the correct clothing should comprise:
  - White, cream or fawn breeches or jodhpurs
  - A dark or tweed jacket
  - A velvet hat or skull cap. Skull caps should be covered with a black or navy silk.
  - A white stock or a tie (juniors) are correct.
  - Gloves are not obligatory, but it is sensible to wear them. It can be cold in the hunting field. Gloves should be leather, string or woollen (black, brown or white).
  - A hunting crop/whip should be carried if you have one.
3. Make sure that your horse is clean and well turned out for the meet.
  - Plaiting is essential for lawn meets (identified by L/M on the meet card), the opening meet, and the Boxing Day meet.
4. Please allow enough time to arrive at the meet so that you can un-box, speak to the Treasurer or Secretary and be mounted and ready by the time on the meet card, normally 11.30am.

### **At the meet**

1. The first greeting to everyone at a meet is “Good Morning”, particularly to the Masters, Huntsman and Whips. After this please try to remember a few of these points of hunting etiquette, a simple code of good manners.
2. The first person to look for at a meet is the Treasurer (Becky) or Secretary (Jane) — do ask someone to point them out. You should offer to pay your cap/field money/wire money as soon as you get to the meet. Everyone, juniors in particular, please have your money ready in your hunt coat pocket as you will be asked for your money before the Hunt sets off — do not expect Becky or Jane to find your mum. If you are late please ensure you give your cap to the Treasurer or Hunt representative during the day.
3. When near hounds, make sure to face your horse’s head to the hounds, *at all times*, particularly at the meet. Do not allow your horse to tread upon or kick a hound. A horse will by instinct kick out at something that comes up unexpectedly from behind.  
*This rule applies throughout the day.*
4. Find out who are the Field Master and Masters (the Secretary will point them out). You must *never* overtake the Field Master — he is in charge of the field at all times.
5. The Field Master will give instructions to the Field throughout the day and he should be listened to and obeyed. If you are unsure of the meaning of the instructions, please check with someone riding beside you.
6. When asked to open a gate (or any other instruction) by the Field Master or Master, do so as quickly as you can. Juniors and visitors are expected to help too.
7. Stay behind the Field Master at all time and listen for his instructions. Commands such as: “Headland Please”, “Gate Please”, “Hold Hard” will be given.

- “Headland Please”  
Stay to the very outside, unploughed side, of the field; do not ride through plough or seeded fields unless following the Field Master.
  - “Sides please”  
Ride in single file round the edge of a field to limit the damage from hoof prints.
  - “Hold Hard”  
Stop *now*. And don't move until told to do so.
  - “Huntsman please” or “Whip please” or “Hound please”  
Make way for the hunt servants (Huntsman and Whips) or hounds. You should *immediately* give them right of way. Ask someone to point them out to you and give way to them at all times. They will try to say thank you.
  - “Quiet please”  
Please speak very quietly or remain silent; hounds, particularly young ones, are easily distracted by a noisy field and is disapproved of by the Huntsman.
8. When asked to “take” a gate by someone in front, take it immediately. They will raise their hand and whip high above their head, and look back. Lift *your* hand in acknowledgement; this means you have “taken” the gate. By holding your hand high and looking back and making sure someone acknowledges you, you have given the responsibility to the person behind you. If you are last, or there is no-one in sight behind you, please shut the gate. Those behind you that cannot see you will now know to shut the gate behind them.
  9. Be aware of what is going on around you. If someone is opening and shutting a gate, offer to stay with them as you ride towards or through the gateway. No-one should be left to close a gate on their own. Juniors are expected to help others opening/closing gates by holding horses or by doing the gate themselves.
  10. The Field are expected to keep up at all times with the Field Master. Do not loiter nor ride away from the Field (except when trying to find a way around a jump). Do not go a different way as you may go onto land that we do not have permission to go on.
  11. When jumping, please leave enough room (stopping time) between you and the horse in front, just in case they refuse or have a fall. You will then be able to avoid an accident.
  12. If you destroy a jump, break a rail or dislodge stones, please tell the Field Master or a Master.
  13. Always thank a foot follower with a smile for opening and closing a gate for you; it will be much appreciated. Do thank the farmer whose land you are riding on if you see him or hear others thanking him.
  14. Please remember to say “Thank You” and “Good Night” to the Field Master when you go home at anytime during the day and to the Huntsman after the day has finished.

## For the foot follower

1. Ideally, the vehicle and foot followers should find out at the meet where the vantage points are and go straight to them. This will help prevent congestion on the public highways during the hunt.
2. Hunt followers should not cross the drag lines after the runners have gone through, as the scent is carried by feet or vehicle tyres away from the true hunting line.
3. You should not block any gateways, lanes or other openings.
4. Vehicles should not be taken onto private land without the specific permission of that landowner.
5. While we welcome followers on quads, please remember the order of field, which means quads behind the non-jumping field. We all hunt courtesy of the landowners, and this includes quads. It is particularly important that quads not only behave, but are *seen* to behave.
6. Due to the number of quad followers we have to restrict numbers for meets. Can all those who intend to follow on quad please call Becky before the meet who will manage numbers.

## Remember

Hunting is a sport to enjoy. The more people you talk to at the meet, the happier the atmosphere that is created.

## Suggested reading

<http://www.horseandhound.co.uk/competitionnews/article.php?aid=98752>