

## **Bookmaker Liaison Committee Notes**

### **Aintree Racecourse**

**13<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

#### **In Attendance**

Aintree Racecourse - Dickon White, Steve Claire, Carl Pastor, Stephen Mansfield, Morgan Hodgkiss, Darren Irving, Neil Pateman

Bookmakers – Chris Kirk, Simon Wallis, Richard Johnson, Paul Colley

Apologies were received from Andy Melia, Bill Colley and Paul Dolan.

#### **Review of 2025 Bookmaker Trade**

A discussion was held regarding bookmakers' trade at the 2025 fixtures at Aintree racecourse.

Overall, trading performance was broadly in line with 2024 across most areas and on most days.

The Embankment was noted as proving difficult, and trade was underperforming. So far 500 tickets have been sold for 2026. The attendance of students in 2026 will be confirmed at a later date.

The attendance on Boxing Day was approximately 9000 and will hopefully continue to rise in future years.

#### **2026 Fixtures**

May 15<sup>th</sup> - Evening Racing. No music fixture has been booked yet. Efforts are ongoing to secure a suitable act.

9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> April - The Randox Grand National Festival

25<sup>th</sup> Oct - Halloween Family Raceday, 7<sup>th</sup> Nov-Grand Sefton Day, 5<sup>th</sup> Dec-Becher Chase, 26<sup>th</sup> Dec-William Hill Boxing Day.

A decision on a student race day will be made later in the season.

#### **2026 Grand National Festival Planning**

The Grand National will be run at 4pm, with one race to be run after at 5pm. The card will consist of seven races with the first race at 12:45.

Ticket sales are strong and are currently in line with 2025 at the same stage.

The new bookmaker betting areas will be allocated in the same manner as in 2025, with locations remaining unchanged. The Hedgehunter Bar will operate as an alcohol-free bar on all 3 days. The Tiger Roll facility will no longer be located near the parade ring.

The Grand National start hospitality facility has been expanded from a double-decker to a triple-decker, providing capacity for approximately 600 additional guests. The West Tip zone will operate at a similar capacity level to 2025.

Lanyards for bookmakers will be distributed on the day of racing by the Betting Ring Manager for bookmakers that need to enter the County Enclosure.

Pitching Up Times are as follows,

- Thursday: Tatts/Rails 10am - County 10:00am
- Friday: Tatts/Rails 10am – County 10:00am
- Saturday: Tatts/Rails 9:30am – County 10am – Embankment 10am

The Betting Ring Managers in attendance will be Darren Irving, Neil Pateman, Mark Ryan and Malcolm Hart on Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Stephen Rann and an RDT- BCO will be offering additional support on Saturday.

Racecourse access will be available from 9am on Thursday and Friday, and from 8:00 am on Saturday.

Bookmakers may drop off equipment on Wednesday, between 1:00pm and 3:00pm. Prior arrangement with Darren Irving is required.

The bookmakers purchasing link will be available shortly.

Bookmakers are reminded that the Daily betting badge is charged at 8x the gate admission fee (7x online plus one admission ticket)

\*Following the meeting, an Aintree bookmarker (not present) queried the admission price used for the DBB calculation when online sales have sold out. Contractually, bookmakers are charged based on the day gate price. Although Grand National public tickets might sell out online (most often Saturday) a number are always retained for sale on the day of racing. Therefore, the DBB prices charged on the bookmaker portal are correct.

Steeplechase car park labels are available to Bookmakers, with the shuttle bus service in operation.

The 2026 exit strategy will mirror the arrangements used in 2025. The exit at the rear of the Equestrian Centre will be open for bookmakers.

Cash machines will be available on site. Exact location will be communicated nearer the time.

Starlink is permitted on the approved permitted channels: Channels 36, 40, 44, or 48 within the 5GHz band may be used. Use of 2.4GHz band should be avoided wherever possible and must not be used without prior agreement.

Green Course Wi-Fi is available to all bookmakers and provided a very strong signal last year.

Bookmakers are reminded to maintain a tidy working area around their joints. Rubbish bags will be provided. Umbrellas must be lowered during a race when it is not raining. Rails boards may remain in place.

Trading Names must be displayed at the bottom of the joint and on the Rails. Hired joints must be fitted with a wrap-around.

Action Points - Racecourse to clean out all anchorage points and check the power on the rails.

## **AOB**

There were no further items discussed.

The next meeting will take place in January 2027 (date to be confirmed).