

**NATIONAL EQUINE FORUM**

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
15<sup>th</sup> NATIONAL EQUINE  
FORUM**

**held on**

**Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2007**

**at**

**The Royal Society  
Carlton House Terrace**

# NOTICES

**The National Equine Forum is run in conjunction with the British Equestrian Federation.**

**If you wish to make comments or suggest topics for future Forums please contact:-**

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## GOVERNMENT VIEW OF THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE EQUINE INDUSTRY

**Barry Gardiner MP**

Minister for Biodiversity, Landscape & Rural Affairs – Defra

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Fact: The average horse's heart is heavier than a human head. And I'm told that horses produce around 10 gallons of saliva each day. On paper, they don't sound like the sort of animal you'd fall in love with. But thousands of us, millions of us, have done just that. The British Equestrian Trade Association estimates that horse owners and riders contribute around £4 billion each year to the economy. BETA also estimates that there are around 1.3 million horses in Britain; and that around 4.3 million Britons have taken to the saddle in the last year alone. I say us because, I'm no exception. I fell in love with horses at the age of 8. The other day I spent a day in Cambridge at the British Horseracing School seeing young people taken in by the racing school. That's why I've been delighted to take the reins as Minister for the Horse.

I think my job is a particular pleasure because of the really quite exceptional partnership you have developed with Government. In Government, our approach to all environmental issues - to climate change, to conservation, to preventing or tackling animal disease – centres around partnership. Partnership between us, industries and individuals. I think that our partnership with you and the industry is outstanding. It's a benchmark by I would wish many other partnerships should be judged. It's a partnership that not only promotes the health of our horses; it's a partnership that also promotes the health and sustainable use of our environment, our countryside and our landscapes.

And this is a crucial approach. Let me explain why...If everyone in the world were to consume as many resources as we do in the UK, we'd need three planets to support us rather than the one we actually have. That is why within Defra we have been trying hard to live within environmental means – and have adopted what the WWF calls One Planet Living. I believe that people in this industry glad are already thinking along these lines.

The Horse Industry Strategy, for instance, makes a point of considering your environmental impact. It guides owners on taking measures that are good for them and good for the environment. I think it's vital the horse sector doesn't underestimate its importance in this. There's no doubt that you're as much land managers as farmers are. After all, 500,000 hectares of land being used for horses, is pretty big in anyone's estimation. And the way you manage this land can contribute to its sustainable use or not. And it can protect and enhance the natural environment. Horses keep hill vegetation open by eating rough grasses, for instance. They allow flowering plants and heathers to flourish which, in turn, increases biodiversity. They contribute to a healthy environment. This, in return, supports healthy horses.

Horse health and welfare is obviously crucial in everything we do in the horse industry. And that's why today is so important. The Equine Health and Welfare Strategy will underpin, will strengthen, the Horse Industry Strategy. It will be a vital guide for the next decade. It's been developed by you in the industry, for the industry.

And I'd urge everyone with an interest in horses to take it onboard and incorporate this strategy in their everyday working lives. What's particularly impressive is the way it's been carved up into eight achievable aims. Responsibility for promoting each of these aims has been allocated to a named industry body. I think this approach is key to ensuring that the strategy isn't left to gather dust after today's launch. I know many actions have already been achieved during the development process, for example, the Equine Industry Welfare Guidelines Compendium, which is a comprehensive document of health and welfare standards, was produced and launched last year.

But there are other areas that we need to work on. Reviewing Health and Welfare Standards, for instance, is crucial for the Strategy. We need to know where the gaps in our understanding are. And we need to plug those gaps by getting the relevant horse organisations to develop their own best practice guidelines. We can then set a baseline to gauge when horse health and welfare are being compromised. And we'll know that all the information available to the public on horse health and welfare will reflect agreed minimum standards. This will then ensure owners and keepers can meet the duty of care for their animals.

There's no doubt that this, combined with the new Animal Welfare Act, will raise our national game when it comes to caring for horses, ponies and donkeys. The strategy, as the name suggests, also tackles disease head-on. We need to be constantly prepared – to expect, as always, the unexpected. Equine Infectious Anaemia in Ireland, for instance, just shows what can happen if biosecurity standards are compromised. The horse industry and our equestrian sports teams rely on our ability to move animals around the world. It is vital that everyone takes their share of responsibility for keeping serious horse diseases out of Britain.

The strategy will help us get a better picture of the type of diseases that are out there now. It will help us improve disease surveillance. And it will help us prioritise resources as a result of that. An essential part of disease monitoring,

is to have a robust capability for horse identification. As I'm sure I don't need to tell anyone here, the regulations surrounding horse ID are likely to change under European direction. And the Equine Health and Welfare Strategy will put us in a position to review the effectiveness of any identification system that is ultimately adopted – primarily through the National Equine Database that's already having a significant impact in this regard.

So, the strategy came into being through partnership. And it will succeed through partnership. But partnership must go further than industry and Government. It has to involve everyone. And the only way we're going to encourage everyone is to communicate clearly. Make our findings easy to read, easy to access. That's why an interactive version of the strategy is being launched in May. It's literally designed to get everyone involved....local schools are being invited to the launch event, there will be games, info packs, stalls run by leading equine bodies, free information, and an opportunity to talk to those who developed the Strategy.

Good communication is how we make for real change. The strategy is a fine piece of partnership working but if nobody reads or understands it, then we have to ask what was the point in writing it in the first place? I want our nation to be enthusiastic about horses. And I want the nation to get behind the industry. And there are plenty of big international reasons why it should....

The European Jumping and Dressage Championships will be coming to Windsor in 2009. The first senior combined continental championships ever. They will bring two of the three equestrian Olympic disciplines together, just three years before London 2012 and all that it entails. The British Equestrian Federation is also bidding for the World Equestrian Games in 2014 or 2018. Hosting tremendously prestigious events like these, combined with the opportunities of 2012, all help to further cement the UK's position in the equestrian world.

I'm absolutely convinced that, together, we can not only have a healthy environment and healthy horses – we could actually at the end of it all have a healthy medal collection!

## **NATIONAL EQUINE DATABASE – AN UPDATE**

**R H Graham Suggett** OBE JP DL HonDSc FIBiol FRAGS

Director of Equine Development, British Equestrian Federation. Member of the NED Shadow Board

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As I travel around the World, as I am sure many of you do, I am struck by the fierce national pride shown by the citizens of overseas countries. They fly their flags proudly on every conceivable occasion, they support their home products....when did you last see a Frenchman driving anything other than a French car..... and loudly proclaim how good they and their products are.

The United Kingdom breeds some first class horses but often we fail to sell them for the prices they deserve due to poor or non-existent marketing policies or because we constantly knock our own products. It is no wonder that people flock to Germany and Holland to buy. My new clarion call to the equine industry is 'stop being self-deprecating'.

In addition to the Defra requirement for a database to monitor the passport scheme and to provide information for disease surveillance and control; the concept of the National Equine Database is to provide, in one convenient and easily accessible place, accurate data about the UK horse population. Uniquely, NED links breeding with performance and, given access to such data through NED there is a chance that we can reverse the trend of buying continental horses as the buying public become more aware of the quality and potential of home-bred stock.

The establishment of the National Equine Database is a win-win situation for the equine industry but, unfortunately, is falling foul of the British capacity to deprecate anything home-bred. Let me try and reverse that thought process.

The NED project has been enormously complicated. It has involved establishing a database capable of being used simultaneously by thousands of users worldwide at the same time and containing data collected on a regular basis from over 125 organisations all of whom use different nomenclature and storage procedures.

The project is behind schedule for which I apologise. However, the Shadow Board takes the view that it would be wrong to make a premature public launch and for NED to fall over and lose credibility. Far better to delay and have a product worthy of the effort. After all, in ten years time when NED has become a regular part of our daily lives, who is even going to remember the year of the launch, let alone the month?

Let us look, therefore, at what has been achieved to-date.

The first achievement is that the NED project has won the support of both Government and the BEF to cover the start-up and development costs. The whole of the cash funding has been met by Defra on behalf of itself and the devolved

Governments. The British Equestrian Federation has contributed staff time and there has been considerable time input from many volunteers, some of whom are in the audience to-day, and we thank them. There are those PIOs who have had to invest in hardware and software in order to transmit data to NED. However, this expenditure is part of their contract as a Passport Issuing Organisation whereby they are required to, and I quote from the Passport Bill, 'operate efficiently', 'can carry out checks....' and 'have the system for providing data....' and this expenditure should not, therefore, be levelled as a criticism against NED.

For the last 12 months, Phase One of the NED development has been fully operational. This is the mechanism whereby PIOs make an electronic monthly up-date of their data to NED. All 79 UK PIOs are using Phase One and we thank them for their cooperation. This assembled data is already being used by a wide spectrum of organisations.

NED has over 970,000 equine records in store. Please note, however, that some of these records are suspected duplicates and some are for dead horses (valuable information for breeding purposes), and, therefore, this is not the number of horses in the UK.

NED provides a link between breeding and performance data. There are other European databases which do likewise but only on a limited basis i.e. either linking performance with dressage results or show jumping results, some linking with both dressage and show jumping and only one with any reference to eventing. NED links with 14 competition disciplines (dressage (UK and Ireland), eventing (UK and Ireland), show jumping (UK and Ireland), endurance, reining, flat racing (turf and all-weather), hurdle racing and Steeplechasing, Arab horse racing and Anglo-Arab horseracing) and research is currently underway to include in-hand and ridden showing. This makes NED unique in the World.

NED has developed a system for comparing the performance of horses across competition disciplines called Nominal Database Groups (NDGs). This, again, is unique in the World.

However, NED will only be as good as the data it contains. In terms of pedigree data we have Sire and Dam information on 71% of those horses and ponies known to have pedigrees. I urge all Breed Societies who have not committed themselves to providing pedigree data to NED to do so as soon as possible in order that such pedigree data is in the database at launch.

All data remains the property of those who supplied it. Any voluntary data sold by NED will, once NED is into surplus, result in an income for those who supplied it. And, most importantly, when NED Ltd is firmly established, the company will be handed over to a Council of those in the equine industry who have provided Voluntary Data. i.e. a free gift from Government.

In addition there are many other features of NED which there is not time to describe but which can be viewed on our website [www.nedonline.co.uk](http://www.nedonline.co.uk)

The public-facing website is called *NED Online* and is Phase Three of the NED development.

When can we expect NED Online to be launched?

On March 31<sup>st</sup>, the software contractor is due to handover the completed database to the NED Team at Stoneleigh. The whole of April will be spent in intensive testing of NED by the Team and volunteers from the equine industry. If NED stands up to this testing it will then be launched following a two month period of marketing.

To close Mr Chairman, I thank the Minister for the financial support given to the NED project which is going to result in an invaluable, world-beating resource being made available to the UK equine industry and which is essential to underpin many of the initiatives described in the *Strategy for the Horse Industry in England and Wales*.



# STRATEGY FOR THE HORSE INDUSTRY IN ENGLAND AND WALES

## GRAHAM CORY

Chairman, British Horse Industry Confederation

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The Strategy for the Horse Industry in England and Wales was published on 6 December 2005, by the British Horse Industry Confederation and the Government<sup>1</sup>, and sets out a 10 year plan for developing the Industry's economic performance, enhancing the welfare of the horse, and promoting its contribution to the cultural, educational, health and sporting life of the nation. The Strategy identified 50 Action points that were needed to drive forward this vision. This Action Plan has been developed to map out who is responsible for taking forward each individual Action point and what steps are needed to fulfil each Aim.

This is a long term Strategy and the Action Plan will change as the Industry develops and Actions progress, so the process of review is important to ensure this Plan evolves along with the Industry. This Plan provides a means by which the effectiveness of the Strategy can be measured. It can be used as a guide to monitor success and forms the basis of regular progress reports, such as this one which has been produced to coincide with the 2007 National Equine Forum.

As the Action Plan makes clear, work is already progressing well in a number of areas. However, full implementation of all the Actions cannot happen overnight and requires ongoing commitment and cooperation from all sectors of the Industry to ensure that continuing progress is made.

This Action Plan is housed and updated regularly on the new British Horse Industry Confederation website at – [www.bhic.co.uk](http://www.bhic.co.uk) . In addition, regular updates on actions are sent, together with other equine policy news in our e-newsletter to those who sign-up through the website.

<sup>1</sup> Including the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, the Department for Culture Media and Sport and the Welsh Assembly Government.

## THE SHOELESS PARADIGM

**K C La PIERRE** PhD, RJF

Founder of the International Institute of Podiatry

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The desire to leave the horse barefoot has been in existence for hundreds of years, since man first discovered a need for horseshoes. Horseshoes then, as today, were viewed as somewhat of a necessary evil. In the beginning, it was a matter of survival. Still today, many view horseshoes as necessary for performance, others as a therapeutic tool, and still others as a means of survival. The truth be told, all these reasons still exist today. Shoes in many situations do become a necessity. What needs to be taken into account is today's horse owner, and that the world of the horse has evolved. The advent of the computer and world communication has spurred a new era of domestication, where the horse owner's compassion for the animal out weights their instinct for survival. Barefoot, and the move towards what is natural, is often a display of this desire. In today's world, "Shoeing is no longer the necessary evil; it is a lack of knowledge that makes shoeing a necessity, that is the true evil."

Over the past three decades, there has been a growing movement aimed at meeting the needs of those horse owners that wish to provide for their equine wards in a more natural way, the evolution of Natural Horsemanship. The state of going barefoot, or the act of shoeing one's horse, should be viewed as that person's understanding of how to provide what is best for their horse. The problem arises when a lack of education or better stated a lack of understanding exists. All too often, compassion dictates the horse owner's actions. This in itself can lead to disaster, whether one chooses to go barefoot, or to apply the latest development in shoeing. "Compassion without knowledge and discipline is kith and kin to the wild fire; compassion alone consumes massive amounts of energy leaving little of worth in its path."

It is my belief that today's horse owner, and their thirst for knowledge, coupled with their desire to show compassion has brought to a head the need for a new science. Mankind has seen this occur in the past, at the turn of the century, and the birth of the industrial era. The science of that age, Static mechanics, no longer sufficed and we saw the development of a new science, Kinematics mechanics. Understanding Kinematics was necessary for the development

of the faster moving machines of the time. Today, I believe we are in need of a new science of hoof care, one where a paradigm exists, where none previously existed. This new science will responsibly meet the needs of today's horse and horse owner.

The importance of having a paradigm in the practice of any science is critical. Without a paradigm, our efforts are based on presumption and conjecture. Shoeless, not barefoot, represents a paradigm for the treatment of the equine foot, not for going barefoot. A true science is based on a model, the paradigm. There are rules and guidelines to be followed. It is based on fact, this allowing for the development of theory, model and method. There has been no true paradigm for the treatment of the equine foot. If in fact, a paradigm did exist, horse owners would not be abandoning the conventional Farrier practice for the promise of something more.

Barefoot can and does bring with it problems, with the greatest problem being that many of the barefoot practices base their practice on the feral horse. This practice cannot work for the domesticated horse as there are laws of nature that dismiss this practice, the most obvious being  $F = M \times A$  (force = mass x acceleration). The practice of using the feral horse disregards the need for the establishment of a valid science. So where do we go?

A paradigm for the treatment of the equine foot does exist, and I am certain it is only the first of many to come. The paradigm that I developed and teach is Applied Equine Podiatry. The definition of this science is: Applied Equine Podiatry is the conscientious study of the equine foot, always striving to expose it to proper environmental stimuli, making every effort to promote proper structure and function, as we attempt to achieve high performance. It is accepting that the horse has the innate ability to heal itself, provided the correct environment exists.

The paradigm of Applied Equine Podiatry finds its foundation in the following:

- Structure + Function = Performance
- The horse has the innate ability to heal itself.
- Correct pressure is the stimulus for correct growth.
- Utilize time as a dimension in the positive treatment of the equine foot.
- Do no harm.

Do no harm can only be practiced with a strong understanding of the equine foot, and the application of all principles? Applied Equine Podiatry is a science for the treatment of the equine foot, and should not be considered exclusive to the shoeless horse. Whether to shoe or not to shoe is not the question. The question is how do we provide the correct stimulus for the development of proper structure, function, and performance while protecting and safeguarding the welfare of the horses in our care.

## **TO SHOE OR NOT TO SHOE – THE FARRIER'S VIEW**

**SIMON CURTIS** FWCF, HonAssocRCVS

Farrier

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### **Introduction**

Having been asked to give “the farriers view” on hoof trimming, I find I can only give my personal view. Simply put, horses are not born wearing shoes and therefore if they do not need them then why shoe? The subject, however, is deeper than this and therefore this paper looks at why and when it is often necessary to shoe. In the current debate it is also frequently forgotten that farriers do trim for turn-out and work.

### **History**

It is believed that horses were first shod 2,000 years ago, the oldest horseshoe being found in Gloucestershire; from around that time is made from iron and titanium. Zenathon and Simon of Athens wrote on the subject of hoof care, 500 years earlier, but never mentioned shoes. The Assyrians 3,000 years ago, had the technology to make and fit horseshoes but never did. Their environment and use of the cavalry meant that hoof protection was not a necessity. However, Alexander's advance across Asia Minor was frequently held up while footsore horses recovered. Horses only became shod when they reached our damp climate. Iron was very valuable and nobody would waste it on a horse unless it was a necessity.

### **Reasons for shoeing**

The reason for shoeing horses has not changed significantly in centuries. We still need to protect hooves from excessive wear. They require extra grip and purchase because of the surfaces we chose to use them on. We can use our ability to firmly attach shoes to the hoof to bring about correction in young stock and support the limb in cases of injury.

### **Protection**

Shoes, which are usually made from steel or aluminium, have a greater wear resistance than horn. In the damp northern European climate horn is softer and cannot cope with the abrasive surfaces that we work horses on. On rough terrain hooves may also split and crack. A shoe also lifts the sole clear of the ground which improves the soundness of some flat footed horses.

### **For Grip and Purchase**

Grip is often needed because of the type of work we expect horses to do on surfaces which would allow to much slippage. Horseshoes allow us to attach a number of devices that improve both grip and purchase. Caulkins, road studs, and tungsten nails are examples of grip which can be added to shoes. Traditional shoes concave fullered, give extra grip just by the shoe design. Purchase is the way that a horse uses its foot when galloping, jumping, or pulling a load. Screw in studs, toe grabs and toe pieces improve a horse's performance.

### **Remedial Shoeing**

Horseshoes are used in a multitude of ways to help conditions and injuries to the equine limb. In these situations horseshoes are used as orthopaedic devices. Whether it is a one month old foal with a varal fetlock, requiring a lateral extension shoe, or an eighteen year old with a severed flexor tendon needing a fishtail shoe, there is a horseshoe for the job. The ability of the farrier to design, make and attach shoes is often critical to successful healing.

### **Trimming**

There are of course many horses in a situation where they do not need shoes. If they are not wearing their hooves quicker than they are growing or if they grip adequately barefoot then why shoe? This author spends more time with unshod horses than shod. Trimming must be of a style suitable to the horse and its purpose. Care must be taken to leave enough protection to the overlying sensitive areas. The hoof needs to be rounded more when trimmed for turnout or work and the sole needs to be clear of the ground.

### **Current Farrier Training and Examinations**

All farriers learn to trim before they learn to shoe. The syllabus for apprentice farriers in the UK is taught at 4 colleges to level 3 NVQ and the final examination is by the Worshipful Company of Farriers. The Diploma of the Worshipful Company of Farriers (DipWCF) is the technical certificate recognised by government and the Farriers Registration Council for legal registration of farriers. Both the NVQ and the DipWCF include trimming for unshod horses in various situations.

### **Conclusion**

In simple terms, it seems to this author, that the difference between the various "barefoot trimmer" people and farriers is the differing philosophy. Hoof trimmers, as I understand, will advise on the whole horse and ask the owner to adapt the horse's lifestyle to enable them to be barefoot. Farriers, on the other hand, are trained to recognise a horse's situation, type and work and shoe or trim accordingly.

## **OPPORTUNITIES FOR UK COACHES**

### **COLIN WILSON**

Head of Sports Development. BEF

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### **What is the United Kingdom Coaching Certificate in Equestrian Sport?**

All member bodies of the British Equestrian Federation have worked together to produce a United Kingdom Coaching Certificate in Equestrian Sport. The UKCC is a UK wide, 5 level framework for endorsing qualifications providing a framework for coaches working at all levels in all environments.

The UKCC will ensure that equestrian coaches are delivering safe, high quality, rider centred coaching. Ultimately this will lead to success by helping to raise performance standards and increase enjoyment of riding and all equestrian activities ensuring that the UK becomes recognised as a world leader in coach development.

The UKCC qualifications are being developed across all sports and equestrian is one of the first 21 priority sports to be leading this initiative.

### **How will the UKCC benefit equestrian coaches and instructors?**

- Enhance coaching skills, linked to the equestrian pathway
- Raise the profile of and further professionalise equestrian coaching
- More flexible coach centred training programmes
- UK wide recognised qualifications linked with other sports
- Provides a benchmark for employers and deployers of coaches
- Core coaching skills are recognised and are transferable between sports

- A UK wide endorsement of top quality, safe coaching
- A clearer and more structured pathway in equestrian coaching with increased opportunities for personal and career development
- It will encourage you to be the best you can be

#### **How will the UKCC benefit equestrian sport?**

- Coach education will be at the cutting edge
- Access to expert advice and support from both sports coach UK and the BEF
- There will be a consistent standard of coach education between and within equestrian disciplines as well as other sports across the UK
- UK coaching will be recognised as world class
- Great education and coaching will result in great sporting success for participants and performers

#### **What happens now?**

Within Equestrianism, many of you will already be working and practicing as coaches and hold related teaching or instructing awards. Your qualifications and experience gained to date will be accredited and valued in the process of transferring to attaining a UKCC.

#### **What will happen to my existing qualification?**

Your existing qualifications are still recognised and valid. Each member body is putting in place a transfer mechanism to the UKCC Qualification. Registration for the qualification and training is via your member body and they should be contacted in the first instance.

#### **Who should I contact?**

Please contact your member body and state your interest. You will be sent an information leaflet and information on how to proceed

#### **How will I register?**

You will register via your member body.

#### **How will I achieve the qualification?**

Via a variety of means - most member bodies will provide training and workshop days for you to attend which will be supported by workbooks and a learning resource. You will attend specific assessment days conducted by trained assessors from your discipline. You will be expected to demonstrate coaching skills and knowledge and be gathering together evidence in your coaching log book.

#### **What will I receive at the end of my UKCC course?**

Upon successful completion of any level of the UKCC, coaches will receive a nationally recognised, certified qualification. Your qualification is awarded in partnership with the BEF's independent awarding body, Equestrian Qualifications Limited in England and Wales and the Scottish Qualifications Authority in Scotland.

Below is the list of Coaching Development Officers who you can contact to receive more information:

- Association of British Riding Schools - Duncan Brown – 01736 369440
- British Dressage - David Holmes – 02476 698830
- British Eventing - Sarah Hamlyn – 02476 698859
- British Show Jumping Association - Nicky Fuller – 02476 698800
- British Horse Society - Margaret Linington-Payne – 01926 707700
- The Pony Club - Nicola Fitter – 02476 698300
- British Equestrian Vaulting - Jenny Leggate or Ann Hunt - contact Ann on 01764 682268
- British Horse Driving Trials Association - Andrew Counsell – 02476 419078
- British Reining - Pauline Brimson – 01453 547666
- Endurance GB - Larissa Whiley – 02476 698863
- Scottish Equestrian Association - Muriel Colquhoun or Karen Murray – 01475 540687
- Riding for the Disabled Association - Maggie Bradley – 0845 6581082
- British Horseball Association - Mary Pettifor – 01159 664574
- Mounted Games Association GB – TBC
- UK Polocrosse Association - Jane Wright Roberts – 01226 765126
- Equine Qualifications Ltd - Linda Haworth - contact via BHS central office (01926 707700)



## OPPORTUNITIES FOR THOSE WITH DISABILITIES

### ED BRACHER

Chief Executive, Riding for the Disabled Association

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RDA, as many people know, is a national charity dedicated to improving the lives of people with disabilities, through the provision of opportunities for riding and/or carriage driving. It was this aim that drove a number of energetic and dedicated people to start this type of activity during the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and that eventually led to the formal creation of RDA in 1969. Today more than 500 Member Groups (varying in size from the very small to large purpose-built centres) make up the RDA federation and these Groups bring together over 18,000 volunteers, who contribute their time and effort to RDA. Currently around 24,000 people (with a wide range of disabilities and of all ages) ride or drive with RDA. This enables delivers real and lasting therapy that not only benefits mobility and co-ordination, but encourages confidence and self worth.

Importantly, though, RDA is much more than simply offering rides or carriage drives to people with disabilities. Broadly, the opportunities offered today can be split into four areas:

**Therapy** - RDA works closely with physiotherapists to make sure that the experience is one which delivers real therapeutic value to those with physical disabilities. However, increasingly there is work with riders with learning disabilities, where the therapeutic value is equally important, but has more to do with confidence, self esteem and social contact. There is also increasing interest in Equine Assisted Therapy, where participants gain from contact with horses, not necessarily as a rider. Although a growth area, RDA can argue that it has been delivering this type of benefit for many years and others, such as the Fortune Centre for Riding Therapy (with which RDA works closely) is a key provider of this type of holistic approach.

**Education** – Increasingly, the therapeutic value alone, although recognised by many, is not enough for the educational establishment to justify time spent by pupils riding. Many of our riders (50%) are of school age and so informing people of the educational value is vital. Equestrian activity offer many learning benefits, not just as a skill in its own right, but also through peripheral activities such as learning about animal care or counting out feed measures. This approach has been the core of the Fortune Centre’s approach for many years – bringing the positive benefits of delivering this type of education to college-age students in a residential setting. Many of their students are referred on from RDA groups; however, we are now keen to develop programmes for younger students. Last year we successfully piloted a programme to offer educational awards to KS 3 students, which has proved both successful and popular with students and the educational establishment alike. We are now aiming to promote this further to ensure that schools understand the benefits that can be gained through RDA activities. Plans for primary students are also underway.

**Skills and Training** – Many riders are introduced to RDA as a therapy or educational activity, but having discovered it is something they can do well, they continue beyond their initial objective and start to become interested in training and competition. RDA offers the opportunity of training these riders from beginners right through to the highest standards. We take pride in the skill and dedication of our coaches and are working closely with the BEF to develop the UKCC for RDA coaches. We offer a comprehensive National Championships with 18 Regional qualifiers feeding into the annual National Championships at Hartpury – now the world’s largest event for riders with disabilities – an important recognition of the achievements and ability of our riders. We are pleased to be working closely with BD to ensure that our most talented riders are picked up by the system and fed through to international squads.

**Leisure and Fun** – A sense of enjoyment and fun is vital to all aspects of RDA and in all areas we work to ensure that this pervades – it is a chance for many people to get out and do something they are good at and where their disability does not count. In addition to the activities mentioned above, we offer residential holidays at places such as the Clwyd Special Riding Centre, where riders can live and work with horses over an extended period. It is a vital and challenging programme, giving participants a chance to experience a new environment, learn new skills and make new friends.

In all of the above areas, the National Body exists to support RDA Groups and help them deliver these services. We are aiming to increase the capacity and extent of RDA and offer more opportunities to more people. To do this we need to increase the number of people and places involved and this is an area of focus at the moment, including the opportunity for those with disabilities to get involved as volunteers. Funding is, as ever a priority and although the activity is generously supported there is always room for more!

## **OPPORTUNITIES FOR 2012**

**BARBARA CASSANI CBE**

Chairman of BEF London 2012 Legacy Advisory Group

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The BEF was one of the first national governing bodies to look at how the Olympic and Paralympic Games could be used to develop long term benefit for the UK and London in particular. The Legacy for London Advisory Group, headed by Barbara Cassani, was set up in order to investigate ways of significantly increasing the level of equestrian activity in London as a result of hosting the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The group took as its starting point Lord Coe's promise "to stage an inspirational Games that captures the imagination of young people around the world and leaves a lasting legacy". As a result the equestrian legacy recommendations concentrate on the possibilities for bringing a wide range of equestrian activities within the reach of Londoners, particularly children.

The key recommendations are:

### **Set up new riding facilities in London**

Facilities for riding in London have been in decline for many years due to high property prices and the rising costs associated with running a riding school. Currently 12% of the population live in London, while only 6% of approved riding schools are in London and a third of London Boroughs have no approved riding schools. Nonetheless there are outstanding models of urban riding schools in London and in other UK cities proving that they can operate effectively. Preliminary discussions in London have shown that with the right drive and the focus that 2012 brings, it should be possible to start up new riding facilities. Projects could be generated in partnership with local authorities and driven by promoting the wider social and health benefits of riding, using examples of where others have been successful.

### **Bring together all equestrian related activity via a "London Horse Network"**

A "London Horse Network" could provide a central hub to facilitate sharing of information and support for the London riding community, possibly through the formation of a sub-group. Shared problems could be tackled via the network and the community could be encouraged to work in partnership to promote riding and related activities in the capital. It would have the potential to provide a single, stronger voice for lobbying on issues such as access routes and the mounting pressures faced by urban riding schools. Communication tools such as a website could be introduced for the whole community to use.

### **Establish a schools programme for children in London**

A sustainable and funded programme to widen the opportunities for London children to ride regardless of their background or location should be a key part of the legacy work. The London Horse Network would be the ideal forum to provide linkages across the community and between schools and riding centres. Support could be offered to schools to enable them to offer riding as an option through and beyond the national curriculum. Riding related education packs could be created for use at primary schools across London and related opportunities might also be possible for school children to attend major equestrian events across the country.

### **Establish the "London Festival of the Horse"**

An annual event held in central London, the group envisaged that the festival would feature high level international competition with wonderful spectator opportunities for all as well as a range of other equestrian activities throughout the capital geared particularly to families. The festival would represent a broad spectrum of equestrian sports and encourage increased participation across equestrianism.

### **Roll out the London initiatives to the rest of the UK.**

The group focussed its attention on London. However the recommendation is that the ideas and initiatives developed for London be rolled out to other parts of the UK.

### **What Next?**

The BEF will appoint an equestrian legacy group which will be responsible for drawing up and implementing a 5 year plan based on these recommendations. The group's members will represent a wide range of equestrian interests. It is expected that the group will launch the implementation plan within the next two months.

# OPPORTUNITIES FOR REDUCING STRESS IN TRAVELLING HORSES

RACHEL KAY BSc (Hons)

Winner of the 2006 Equestrian Duo Thesis of the Year Competition

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Previous equine transport studies document the adverse effect transportation can have on health, welfare, behaviour, and performance even in horses that adapt superficially. There is a need therefore, to limit potential sources of stress during transportation to ensure adequate performance in equestrian sports, as well as to prevent poor welfare. Stress can be defined as “when adverse conditions force an animal to make abnormal or extreme adjustments to physiology or behaviour to avoid physiological malfunctioning – so it helps the animal cope with its environment” (Stull, 1997). When stressful situations are regular or long-term, the adrenal glands in the kidneys release glucocorticoid hormones such as cortisol, representing the chronic response to stress. Human medical research suggests that these hormones can cause immunosuppression, and pharmacologic doses of glucocorticoids are used for allergic, inflammatory, & auto-immune disorders to purposefully suppress the immune system (Pruett, 2003). Studies using sheep & goats have found that transportation can enhance susceptibility to infection & disease, and immunological compromise is thought to be a predisposing factor in development of respiratory disease (Oikawa *et al.*, 1995; Brodgen *et al.*, 1998).

Studies investigating isolation in horses indicate that this causes acute physiological & emotional stress (Alexander *et al.*, 1988; Mal *et al.*, 1991; Jezierski and Gorecka, 1999, 2000). Observations of stabled horses’ report that less time was spent eating when visual contact was prevented (Sweeting *et al.*, 1985; Houpt and Houpt, 1992; Strand *et al.*, 2002). Modifying the stable to increase visual horizons or provide visual contact with another horse (or mirror) also document a reduction in the incidence of weaving and nodding in horses prone to such behaviour (Mills and Davenport, 2002; McAfee *et al.*, 2002). Exposure of isolated sheep (Parrott *et al.*, 1988; Parrott, 1990) and heifers (Piller *et al.*, 1999) to a mirror also suggest that the mirror reduces the stress of social isolation. Of interest to this study was whether isolation during transportation can be associated with signs of stress & if so, what effect would be recorded when travelling with another horse or with a surrogate companion in the form of mirror.

Physiological indicators of stress are commonly assessed from serum samples along with heart rate. Studies investigating the effects of transportation/isolation on peripheral body temperature in sheep (Ingram *et al.*, 2002; Lowe *et al.*, 2005) suggest that the defence reaction in sheep involves vasoconstriction & a subsequent decrease in ear-pinna temperature along with an increase in core body temperature – as the body redistributes blood flow for critical organs. Peripheral sites such as the ear-pinna are advantageous as they are readily accessible & the invasive load on the animal is small. Behavioural changes during transport can be easily ignored - but together with physiological measures provide good indication of an animal’s reactions.

The physiological and behavioural responses of twelve mature horses were measured during a 30 minute journey by trailer under three treatments: isolation, live companionship, and surrogate companionship in the form of an acrylic safety mirror (measuring 81 x 61.5 cm). Measurements of ear-pinna and rectal temperature were taken before and after the journey (as a means of assessing circulatory changes that occur as part of the stress response), and during the journey heart rates were recorded continuously, and behaviour recorded using a video camera

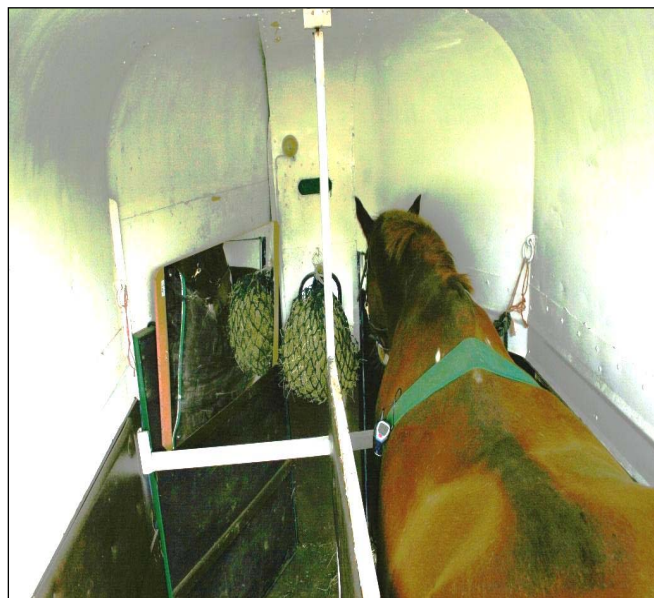


Fig. 1. View from video camera

Provision of the mirror significantly reduced the duration of vocalisation, turning round, and head tossing, and increased eating behaviour in comparison to travelling alone. Travelling with a live companion, however, had the greatest effect on results; significantly reducing the duration of vocalisation, turning round, head tossing and pawing, and increasing eating behaviour; heart rate’s were also significantly lower, and both the rise in rectal temperature and fall in ear-pinna temperature were significantly minimised when compared to travel alone.

In summary, this study evaluated the efficacy of peripheral blood flow as a non-invasive measurement of the stress response in the horse. A wide range of ear-pinna temperatures were recorded & several horses recorded contrary results, further experimental work is therefore recommended to refine both the procedure and technique, and to verify

these preliminary results. The experiment also indicated that isolation during travel can suppress feeding behaviour, which on longer journeys may be a welfare concern. Optimising conditions during travel is important in order to minimise level of stress experienced, as horses are highly social animals most will travel better with another horse, but this is not always practical. Providing surrogate companionship in the form of a mirror is preferable to travel alone, but where possible using a live companion is recommended.

Acknowledgements: Dr Carol Hall and Dr Andrea Ellis (Nottingham Trent University).

## **OPPORTUNITIES FOR EQUINE TOURISM**

**WENDY HOFSTEE** BVSc MRCVS FRGS

MD Unicorn Trails

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Defining equine tourism and scope of talk - we will confine ourselves to riding activity undertaken away from home while staying in holiday accommodation.

Industry numbers illustrate an increase in the number of leisure riders and those riding abroad. People are increasingly travelling to further destinations and take more frequent but shorter holidays. There is a trend to interest-led holidays. The rise of the low cost airlines is important here.

Consider the many opportunities for the various equine industry sectors such as: riding schools; rural accommodation; equestrian retailers; breed societies; welfare organisations.

A brief discussion of what equine tourists look for, what motivates their decisions; location, accommodation, type of riding, available information, price, how riding holidays make it easy for people to have a positive experience with little commitment.

How potential intermediaries and tour operators like Unicorn Trails fit in: advice on market, product development and positioning; marketing; booking agent.

Some threats/obstacles to growth of the equine tourism sector are considered: the main threat is competition for people's leisure time, from other activities as well as other sports; preconceived perceptions of riding can be a problem; the increasingly litigious nature of customers and associated liability insurance costs; lack of access to the countryside and increased road network; lastly but not least there is stiff competition from other countries with a well developed equine tourism offering such as Ireland and France.

How organizations such as BETA, BHS, and ABRS are working to enable their members to take advantage of new opportunities, some examples are given.

A few ideas for future actions that will help the equine industry take advantage of the equine tourism growth. An overall organisation for equine tourism in the UK would have many advantages. Such an organisation could: tackle problems/issues jointly; collect and collate data (BETA); undertake training; potentially in the future set standards or undertake grading; potentially channel funding.

It is important to involve tourism boards on a national level; regional tourism funding has led to a competitive and divisive policy for equine tourism. Organisations could become far more aware of the commercial benefit of equine tourism.

Benefits of equine tourism: availability of horse riding to a larger sector of society; revitalisation of riding schools – see French model; greater understanding of rural affairs by public; significant income potential for the industry; potential to use and highlight local breeds of horses; increased UK and inbound tourism and peripheral spend; cross cultural communication on a personal level of one horseman to another.

Much work has been done over the past 12 months to finalise the first ever National Equestrian Facilities

## A PERSONAL VIEW

HRH The Princess Royal KG KT GCVO QSO

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Once again may I start by thanking the NEF committee and all those who put it together – it is a real pleasure to see so many people here today.

This date is never specially chosen for any particular reason – it just seems to fit around the chairman’s birthday. In spite of that he is still with us and it is very good to see him, and still celebrating. Well done!

I am going to confine myself to three areas. One I’m afraid is one of those subjects you haven’t touched on today. It is related to why the forum is so important as it reflects so many of the equine interests around the country in all their shapes and forms. The more we can get here the better. Sometimes you debate things that you would not consider strictly relevant and other times it is very obviously relevant - farriery subjects in particular although they change from breed to breed. There was one event I went to quite recently which I think highlights an overall issue which is Strangles. That was a launch between the BHS and AHT for an appeal to research into Strangles. You would think that in this day and age this was an unnecessary thing to do in spite of the fact it is the oldest identified equine disease - it sort of comes and goes, in terms of people’s vision of it and indeed its interpretation and understanding of it, and if we have a rather less equine understanding population than we did, Strangles is now an issue that really does require much more research and education. It is an unattractive and wholly undesirable disease but nobody is quite sure how to avoid it and we need to know a lot more about it - that covers every equine in these islands. It is not something that will pick and chose where it goes - any equine any time, anywhere can get Strangles and any yard irrespective of how well run it is, any owner irrespective of how careful they are could get it. And that is a very combining attitude. If you were looking to increase levels of cooperation then I suggest that this is a very good place to start.

It is often one of the difficulties of the equine industry to see whether there are common roots but this is an issue that does require a great deal more knowledge and it does cause an unnecessary amount of suffering to the equine population, and a degree of stress to the owners as well so I hope this is one area that you will take an interest in and hopefully support.

That leads me on to another level of common denominators within the equine field that you do talk about here quite a lot and that is participation. I have the pleasure now of being more involved with the Pony Club and they have set a very good example through centre membership, adding over 3000 members last year. That is a very good level at which to bring in new participation and very much echoes what Barbara Cassani was saying about bringing in young people who really have the interest and enthusiasm to continue. And it is very much about being open to as many children as possible. When Bobby Charlton said to me that his daughter rode, and I apologised, he said never apologise for horses - he was always extremely grateful that he always knew where his teenage daughter was at every time of the day. He was also grateful that the whole family was involved whether that was packing the picnic or helping at a show - they all had a job to do, and that was from a person who had had no previous involvement with horses, but was very sports aware. I have always quoted this as it seems to me that it is that sort of attitude that we forget the closer we are to horses. We tend to forget the real advantages, particularly for that younger age group. Participation at the earliest possible stage is the right time to get them involved. It is a risk sport, and that is part of the reason why it is attractive. It is part of the survival gene mechanism that wants young people to challenge their own ability and it is a very good way of doing it. So the Pony Club has an important role to play and it has responded in that respect.

The other one that hasn’t been mentioned today is the National Riding Festival. I make no apologies for mentioning it because when Barbara Cassani was going through some of the legacy issues and how to encourage riding schools especially in the case of London, I thought that the National Riding Festival already does that – the plan is there for involving schools, for getting people out, for involving the media at all levels. If you look at the work they have done, the impact they have made each year is pretty impressive, in spite of the fact they didn’t have a sponsor. This year they have a sponsor in Petplan who will make a real difference. There is no doubt that we could make more of a difference and it won’t surprise you to know that that includes a bit of funding for the website which has had a huge impact but needs a major update. That could be the basis of your network, because of the work they do with schools and the amount of work they have already done in taking riding out to so many places – for involving so many centres as well as those in London. I would look no further than the National Riding Festival for a blueprint of what can be done and the layout and the involvement that it needs. But it needs people to pursue it as that is what brings participation in its wake.

And the other part of that participation issue if 2012 - especially if you would like participation to be lead by interest in 2012. Actually though 2012 is only part of it and it is a hook, certainly, and I hope that it will lead to a much higher level of interest particularly in London. And that is where the legacy should be focused. But if it can work in London, it can work anywhere – London is a difficult place to engage large numbers of people. But there are a lot of interested people out there; they just haven’t found a way of perhaps being able to access the particular activity that they may want to. There are also other difficulties in dealing in London, and the Royal parks is one of them, though not so long

ago there was a combined plan to open a properly constructed centre in Hyde Park, but that in the end proved to be too difficult and maybe it is worth reconsidering with that legacy thought. But we come back all the time, in legacy, schools, in access to the problems that we face here, not just in litigation, in the law, in business rates in Britain. This isn't a forum that can make representations and there are other forums that are constantly working on that basis. But with any luck the two can come together – if you can make the participation and the legacy come together and work really well, then the impact of the level of importance of the equine industry into the economy will become much more obvious and hopefully it will raise your abilities to make at least a change on those particular issues. They will not turn the clock back on all of them - litigation is always going to difficult to deal with. You have to take it on and do as well as you can.

Part of that experience, and we have just touched on holidays and riding experiences such as trekking is making use of native breeds which something we probably haven't done as well as we should have done. I suppose you could extend that process to "First catch your new forest pony" and if you can ride it by day 8 you will doing quite well, They do that in Iceland – with the Icelandic horse, not pony. But the Icelanders have slightly less of a problem in that they have only one breed. But it is very specific and they have been very careful with it and made very good use of it, and their ability to make it pay in terms of their tourist attraction is well worth looking at though they do only have one to consider. But they do have lessons for us to learn in the way that they do it.

So fundamentally, the basis of the interest that comes together at the Forum is about participation. But I'm not just talking about participation in terms of riding, but about participation at all levels. And the one thing that we do forget when talking about participation is that there are so many people involved – and I go back to Sir Bobby Charlton's comment that whole families can be involved - they need never set foot on a horse and there are lots of other activities for people to do around the animal and its enjoyment by a rider. BETA knows only too well about how many parts of the industry are involved and how important they are, and I hope that they too will be able to take advantage of 2012 and its legacy in raising the profile of the industry in this Country, and in its expertise and its quality.

So the legacy from 2012's point of view, having just come from a LOCOG meeting, is much wider than people immediately think. Regeneration for a large chunk of London, which I would argue is 30 years development done in 6, which makes the figures look slightly more realistic, the opportunity that it opens up on a much wider scale for participation, and using the legacy widely should not be underestimated. 2012 is just a date on that road and we just have to learn to make good use of it and that everyone involved in the Forum could have a spin off from that legacy if we can spread it from London. London, in a way has the ability to be those riders in suits which would have a key role in the future in terms of funding. But their interests could be wide and very different and they could support all sorts of aspects of the equine industry. Participation will though be that key, and this forum sets a very good example in participation and so do you for coming so thank you very much indeed.

## **EQUESTRIAN INSURANCE**

**DAVID BUCKTON** Cert CII.

Associate Director, South Essex Insurance Brokers Ltd

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It is recognised by all that riding schools are an essential part of the horse world. The local riding school is where most people first get on a horse or pony. We need good riding schools for a healthy equestrian industry.

In 2003 the Law Lords, in considering the *Mirvahedey* case, confirmed an interpretation of Section 2 (2) of the Animals Act 1971.

*A keeper may, in certain circumstances be strictly liable for damage done by a horse even when not at fault and without evidence of negligence.*

This case led to a flurry of claims against horse owners and Riding Schools. Significant increases in premiums charged by underwriters for equestrian establishment liability insurance followed. Riding Schools have enough problems without adding to their difficulties with steep increases in insurance premiums.

Attempts to amend the legislation in parliament have been unsuccessful.

The insurance industry is sympathetic towards the plight of stable yards. If riding schools were driven out of business insurers would have no customers. In order to tackle the issue a working party was set up, chaired by the British Horse Society with representatives from DEFRA and the insurance industry.

There will always be accidents around horses. Riding may not always be downright dangerous but it is certainly an activity that involves some risk. The Animals Act 1971 permits a defence where a person accepts the risk.

In order to improve safety and avoid accidents it is essential that riding schools carry out a proper risk assessment. A risk assessment is, however, pointless if it is not documented. The working party, therefore, urged better record

keeping. For example, when seeking to resist claims which have no merit it is important to have information provided by the rider about their own claimed levels of experience and competence.

The insurance industry has worked closely with the British Horse Society and the Association of British Riding Schools in assisting Proprietors to improve the quality of risk assessments and record keeping. Record forms are freely available and supplied by insurance companies and brokers to clients. The Rider Registration Form records the Rider's assessment of his or her own ability and includes a signed acceptance of risk. There is a form for recording the competence of the establishment's staff. The Horse Assessment Form records suitability for use of the animals owned by the Riding School.

A short while ago there was correspondence in horse magazines about overweight riders. This is clearly an animal welfare issue. There are, however, health and safety matters to consider. A horse or pony not up to the weight of the rider would be unsuitable. A subsequent accident might well lead to a claim on the establishment's liability insurance.

The good news is that good practice is now being observed by many more riding schools. Claims with little or no merit are now being successfully defended when supporting evidence is available. Courts consider carefully individual circumstances; to be successful a claim must satisfy all the limbs of Section 2(2) and sometimes it has been possible for the defence to show otherwise. As a result liability insurance premiums for equestrian establishments are at last stabilising if not actually reducing. Genuine cases of negligence still have to be met; there was one last year settled at well over £2,000,000, and lawyers still have to be paid to defend disputed cases.

## THE ANIMAL WELFARE ACT 2006

**Lesley Barwise-Munro.** BSc BVM&S MRCVS CERT EP  
BEVA President 2004-2005, Hon Vice President NEWC.

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A Milestone in Animal Welfare Legislation

### Introduction

The Animal Welfare Bill was first introduced into the House of Commons on 13th October 2005 having already undergone three years of pre legislative scrutiny and extensive consultation with stakeholders which included the main equine welfare organisations, the British Equine Veterinary Association (BEVA) and the British Horse Society (BHS).

The Animal Welfare Bill finally received Royal Assent on the 8<sup>th</sup> of November 2006 to become The Animal Welfare Act (AWAct) 2006 for England and Wales. This new legislation comes into effect on the 6<sup>th</sup> April 2007 and will form a key part of the Equine Health and Welfare Strategy for the Horse Industry.

In the meantime Scotland has developed its own Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act which became law on the 6<sup>th</sup> October 2006. This legislation is based on similar principles to the AWAct but is not identical and reflects different Government priorities.

This dramatic overhaul of animal welfare legislation is hoped to significantly improve the welfare of the horse.

### Key facts about the Animal Welfare Act 2006

- A welcomed **modernisation** of the 1911 welfare legislation.
- Reflects **consolidation** of over 20 pieces of legislation in one act
- A very key part of the new Act is that it introduces an element of prevention by placing a **Duty of Care** on the owners and keepers of all vertebrate animals
- A **Duty of Care** means that an owner or keeper of an animal must take all reasonable steps to ensure the welfare of their animals even if it is not currently suffering. Specific guidance for horse owners through the production of Codes of practice is not yet clearly available.

However we do have The Horse Industry Welfare Compendium 2005 and there is currently an equine code under development in Scotland which is under consideration for use in England and Wales.

- The Animal Welfare Act is a **Primary Enabling Act** which is then supported by **Secondary Legislation and codes of practice** allowing a degree of flexibility for change in the future. Any Secondary Legislation will be subject to public consultation and parliamentary agreement. This information will be essential to provide guidance for animal keepers and to assist enforcement agencies to deal with and judge welfare cases. The details of the secondary legislation is at present far from complete and with only 15 days to go until the law comes into force the state of readiness could be questioned.
- The Animal Welfare Act brings **increased penalties** of up to 51 weeks in prison or a £20,000 fine or both, as compared with previous maximum penalties of up to 6 months imprisonment or a £5,000 fine or both. There are

also powers available to impose disqualification orders which will ban offenders from owning, looking after, dealing and transporting animals.

- **Enforcement** .The police, local authority inspectors and the state veterinary service are those that are empowered to enforce the Act. They can also recruit the assistance of other specialists such as veterinary surgeons.
- **The RSPCA** will not gain any more power than they have currently. They will continue to undertake private prosecution work in line with the new legislation.
- **Powers to gain entry** The RSPCA cannot gain entry to premises without being accompanied by a Local Authority inspector or a police officer as with current legislation.
- **Improvement notices** A step forward with the new legislation is that improvement notices can be served on a person who is not caring for their animals appropriately. The notice specifies the improvements that are required and the timescale in which they must be made. Non compliance when issued by legal enforcers will constitute an offence.

The RSPCA can use improvement notices which if not complied with may be used as evidence in court but will not constitute an offence alone.

#### **Timetable for introduction of secondary legislation under the new Animal Welfare Act**

- |                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| a) <b>April 2007</b>    | Mutilations. Tail docking in dogs.  |
| b) <b>2008</b>          | Racing greyhounds, pet fairs, primates as pets, circuses, cats code, dog code and possibly pet shops                |
| c) <b>2009</b>          | Game birds  |
| d) <b>No Commitment</b> | Dog and cat boarding, tethering of horses, riding schools, livery yards, animal sanctuaries and performing animals. |

#### **Horses on the back burner!**

Issues in The Animal Welfare Act that specifically relate to the horse have clearly been put on the BACKBURNER for at least two years.

This delay was imposed without further consultation with the horse industry.

The horse industry working party has liaised with the Government for five years on the justification and details of how livery yard licensing would greatly benefit horse welfare. Similarly a new code of practice for tethering has been written and agreed upon by this group.

To get back into the Government timetable for The Animal Welfare Act we need to state our case very clearly...AGAIN. We need your assistance.

### **BEF RESEARCH PORTFOLIO AND BEFRED (BEF RESEARCHING EQUINES DATABASE)**

**Georgina K Crossman** MBA, BA(Hons), PGCE(FAHE).

Research Consultant. BEF

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In the middle 1990's it became apparent that many equine undergraduates were researching aspects of equines and the equine industry, that their results were deposited in their Institution library and very few other people outside of the Institution gained any benefit. As a consequence, there were many instances of students, in other establishments, 'reinventing the wheel' when they could have been extending the previous work. Similarly, this work was not freely available to those in the equine industry who may have benefited most.

As a consequence, Graham and Arne Suggett, with the strong support of Pat Harris, wrote, developed and ran a web-based database in which this undergraduate research work could be made universally available at no charge.

This database was launched in 1999, with data included from 1995, as the World Undergraduate Equine Research Database (**WUERD**).

Bearing in mind the limits of the computers at that time the data provided about each thesis in addition to Name, Title of thesis, Year and Institution was limited to fewer than 200 words. Much of the data was transferred either by cut and paste methods or re-typing.

WUERD was a success and by July 2000 was getting some 3,500 hits per month. However, the time and finance required to maintain the ever-growing site proved to be prohibitive. Weatherby's stepped in to run the site but, due to staff and policy changes, this did not prove to be possible and, apart from up-dating with about ten theses per year from entrants in the Eqvalan Duo Thesis of the Year competition, the site remained static.

In 2006, there were two significant developments: the British Equestrian Federation (BEF) included Research and Education in the portfolio of the Director of Equine Development and WUERD was given to the BEF by

Weatherby's. The BEF has invested in a complete re-write, again using the expertise of Arne Suggett, in which the transfer of data from Institutions has been made extremely simple and research at masters, doctor and post-doctoral level has been included, along with the facility to incorporate commercial and independent research. Consequently, the database has been renamed the British Equestrian Federation Researching Equines Database (**BEFRED**). The site is very easy to use with an extremely user-friendly search facility which enables a single word to be entered to bring up all entries bearing that word e.g. entering 'feed' returns 55 research projects.

The Research Portfolio has been created to forge closer links between the BEF, its Member Bodies, academic Institutions and research organisations. BEFRED is a key facilitator of this process, along with the establishment of a permanent route of communication between the BEF, Institutions and other interested organisations.

BEFRED is currently undergoing a period of Institution Beta testing. Registered Institutions can test the database and make comments on its operation, which will then be considered and reflected in the final design. BEFRED will be formally launched to academic Institutions later this year, followed by further consultations with commercial and independent research organisations.

There is no charge to use BEFRED as the initiative is supported by the BEF. Further information about the Research Portfolio can be found on the BEF website [www.bef.co.uk](http://www.bef.co.uk). BEFRED can be found at [www.befred.org](http://www.befred.org). Alternatively information can be obtained from Jan Rogers, BEF Head of Equine Development on +44 (0)7725 332595 or [janrogersequine@aol.com](mailto:janrogersequine@aol.com)



## QUESTIONS, COMMENTS AND DISCUSSION

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### **BARRY GARDINER, Minister for the Horse Industry**

#### **Tony Silverman, Secretary of the Greenway Committee**

Last year I presented a paper on the crippling problems of business rates and third party insurance liability faced by riding schools. I sent a paper and letter to the Minister in 2006 who replied in writing, saying that business rates needed to be raised. Riding schools are going out of business, uncomplainingly and nothing has been done to alleviate the problems. As the Minister and leader of our industry, when will he do something about the current situation?

**Response:** The Minister stated that he is at one with the industry in wishing to look at the insurance problems raised by the Mirvahedey Case. Robert Lawrence MP had introduced a ten-minute bill to mitigate some of the problems and Government had provided all the help they could, including trying through the Private Members Ballot, when the Bill ran out of Parliamentary time. They were still looking for an opportunity to introduce legislation to tackle this point. The Minister agreed that the industry does need help to lower insurance costs.

On the issue of riding school rates, he believed that riding schools have to be run as commercial businesses; perhaps through moving to more of a club approach. "That the difference between running a profitable enterprise and one going out of business is alone down to business rates being paid is not credible." He understood the differences; between riding schools that treated animals properly and do not just get rid of them in old age but treat them as treasured members of the family and those who do not and agreed this can impose a huge strain on business.

Industry should not expect Government to come along and fix these problems. Insurance and business rate costs should though be reflected in a charging structure. Business practice needs to be addressed and the industry needs to act.

#### **Andrew Finding, Chief Executive, British Equestrian Federation**

In the light of the substantial pressures being placed on Government departments by the Chancellor and the likelihood that Defra's budget may be reduced; how might future plans impact on the industry's relationship with Defra.

**Response:** The Minister confirmed that for the first time in 10 years, they were going into a CSR round where instead of there being unfettered growth, there would be constraints and, for some, there may be cuts in real terms. Within Defra, the expectation was that they were to proceed on a cash-neutral basis, but focus their intentions increasingly on areas of greater priority, i.e. put the investment into areas at the right time in the right way in the right place. He

believed that the investment made into the horse industry was right and an investment put there because it had been led by the industry and there have been huge amounts of progress because of the investment put in and for which results are coming through e.g. the Strategy and NED. It was not right to expect the same level of investment in the future in terms of cash resource.

In this context, he wished to tackle something that some may have read in *Horse and Hound*. A recent story suggesting that the five-strong team at Defra was going to be decimated by the future cuts the Department was facing had not been factually accurate. One member of staff was about to take maternity leave. When she returns if we were to have no reduction in numbers from the 5 that were reported, we should still have either 4 or 5 in the team which is actually 2 or 3 more than we actually do have. We have in fact one full-time-equivalent person in that team and this will continue to be the situation. He confidently expected that they will be able to continue to work in partnership at an appropriate level given the level of investment that has already taken place. We must now as an industry continue to capitalise on that investment and make best use of the results.

#### **GRAHAM SUGGETT, NED Shadow Board Member**

##### **Miles Williamson Noble, Farriers Registration Council**

Comments are often made, on the one hand that there are not enough farriers and on the other that there are not enough horses for the existing farriers. It has been extremely difficult to get any useful figures. BETA had provided some statistics which were useful but too general for addressing this problem. NED had provided the necessary figures to assist with his calculations on the future need for farriers in defined areas which endorsed the value of NED.

#### **K C La PIERRE, Founder of the Institute of Equine Podiatry** **SIMON CURTIS, Farrier**

##### **Terry Hargreaves, Farriers Registration Council**

The problem is that many people are undertaking bare foot treatments without any qualification or membership of any professional body and horse owners need educating as to the difference. How can unqualified people be stopped?

**Response:** Simon Curtis said that you could not; as, unlike shoeing, it was not illegal, under the Farriers Act, to trim hooves. He believed that the recent high profile given to barefoot treatments had given farriers 'a kick in the pants'. KC La Pierre agreed that there was a problem with some individuals going on a three-day course to be taught how to trim. Under his system there is a strict training regime totalling 500 hours, including 200 hours of practical trimming. There is a need to have principles, rules and guidelines. Barefoot techniques have caused welfare problems and 'Strausser trimming' has been one of the biggest roadblocks he has had in trying to encourage correct procedures.

##### **Kerry de Silva, Harper Adams University College**

Would the new Animal Welfare Bill be more beneficial as it allows intervention before incidents become a welfare issue?

**Response:** Sir Colin Spedding commented that the Bill stresses a need for a duty of care, defined as meeting the animal's needs. It would depend a bit on what you think the needs are. Simon Curtis said that it is difficult to comment about the effect of the Bill until it is enacted. A change in the Farriers Act is unlikely but there is a possible chance for the Animal Welfare Bill to be used. KC la Pierre could not comment as the UK had a different system to the USA where every State has different regulations and there is no farrier's register.

##### **Mike Bullen, Worshipful Company of Saddlers**

Many years ago he had ridden with his uncle in Wyoming whose horses were never shod and the feet looked after themselves.

**Response:** KC la Pierre said that it is important to understand how to ensure horses can perform as required. In some environments, the shoe is not the best stimulus for the foot to perform optimally. Simon Curtis added that many farriers in the US do start as cowboys and used shoes to keep their horses sound. He agreed that you should not shoe unless you have to but would maintain that in the UK they are needed.

#### **COLIN WILSON, Head of Sports Development, BEF**

##### **Pippa Frances, OFSTED**

One of the key features of the new system seemed to be the assessment strategy, involving external scrutiny. How will you make sure that the qualifications are assessed in a way that will give them credibility and status?

**Response:** This would occur through the use of the awarding body structure (BHS and the Scottish Qualifications Authority). Each qualification programme already has, or will have, a formal assessment strategy criterion in place. Through using the two awarding body, the QCA will recognise the assessment strategy which is expanding on current good practice.

**Sarah Houston, BHS Instructor.**

As someone with all round experience in instructing, how limiting is the new coaching certificate for someone who covers many aspects across all disciplines?

**Response:** The intention is to be more inclusive. For the future it is trying to establish that if someone has coaching skills then if they have technical skills in another area it is easy to be recognised in others. For example the Level 3 qualification, involving autonomous coaching with no supervision, there will be a level 3 for general riding, dressage or show jumping. There is a large common route. A general riding coach cannot coach in specifics. Under an accreditation of prior learning, other technical skills will be acknowledged.

**Edith Rutherford, Sports Pony Studbook Society**

To what extent can “soft” people skills (such as motivating people) be assessed as opposed to hard technical skills?

**Response:** The assessors will look at, as well as the technical ability, the ability of the coach to empower the rider, rather than the coach as puppeteer (telling the rider what to do to get the horse to go better, rather than giving the rider the skills to do this), getting the rider to be more self sufficient, and the communication techniques used. The assessors will look at the style of coaching as well as the transference of knowledge.

**ED BRACHER. CEO, Riding for the Disabled Association**

**Tony Silverman, Secretary of the Greenway Committee**

Did Mr Bracher feel that mechanical horses play a role in the work of the Association? And had he been successful in getting the Minister to provide funding?

**Response** Mechanical Horses are of benefit, with currently 30 RDA groups having them. They are of particular benefit with riders with confidence problems in changing paces. They were working with the BEF on the issue of mechanical horses as part of the facilities strategy. And no, they hadn't been able to get funding from government for these.

**Jennifer Dixon Clegg, Fortune Centre of Riding Therapy**

The Association of Chartered Physiotherapists has strong views on the mechanical horse. We both work very hard to get funding from government. Our students are funded by the Learning and Skills Council and in order to make the provision available to every one who needs it rather than just those who can afford it one has to make that provision in a certain way. We have learnt a tremendous amount by being inspected by the Office for Standards in Education etc. There is a huge need for the sort of work that we are doing and, providing that it is being done following the processes and policies we have adopted over the years, there is a huge amount of funding available. But this does require interest and understanding about what it can do for peoples and the needs thereof. The needs of people are great and there is a very great deal more that the horse and the horse industry could be doing for an unexplored market.

**Pippa Frances, OFSTED**

Expressed delight at hearing of the wider role being taken by the Riding for the Disabled Association. She asked if they were perhaps selling themselves short by the name used by the organisation. They were talking about more than disability and moving into, amongst other areas, learning difficulties. Should you widen your remit to learning as well as physical disabilities?

**Response:** RDA was hoping, this year, to research that issue. It was not the first time that it had been raised and it was a controversial debate. They were more than just about riding, but more about opportunity and achievement which is not mentioned in our name. It is important to get the message out about our broader remit.

**Mark Weston, British Horse Society**

He wished to comment that in the fight for off-road riding and driving opportunities, they were encouraged that the RDA was joining them on the Rights of Way Review Committee.

**BARBARA CASSANI. Chairman of BEF London 2012 Legacy Advisory Group**

**Terry Hargeaves, Farriers Registration Council**

In past years when we went onto yards there would be hordes of children helping-out in return for rides. Now legislation has stopped much of this. Children are our future but they are being denied this future. What comments did Mrs Cassani have to make on this?

**Response:** The Olympic magic wand can solve many things and it will enable us to proceed in some areas, but it won't solve all of them. The first step is finding a way of ensuring after-school sports vouchers, that are being disseminated throughout London, can be used at riding schools. The next step is getting the kids to the yards and that is what I think we can do here.

### **David Clark, Shire Horse Society**

It may be of interest to the previous speaker, that the Government seems to have changed its opinion on having kids on farms. They ask all schools to get children on farms. My question is that up to 2006 there used to be a heavy horse parade at Battersea Park. Why was it moved?

**Response:** Barbara Cassani had no idea as to why it had stopped happening. From talking to those who run the parks, they have a lot of demand for the usage within the parks and they also seem to be trying to balance the needs of many different sporting and interest groups. In order to get activity back, we need to think like the parks do. They ask themselves how many will benefit from a specific activity or event. If the number who benefit can be expanded then riding becomes more attractive. Look at the Tour de France which will be starting from London. They are shutting Hyde Park Corner for two days. On day one they are doing the elite trial and on day two an amateur race with a fun bike ride for all in the afternoon. The event encapsulates a broader range of society than just an international cycling event. Many equestrian events are too narrow in appeal. We have to start to think differently and then, I am sure, that the parks will offer access.

### **Sarah Houston, BHS Instructor**

Regarding the school sports voucher, surely there is a difference in cost between swimming lessons and riding lessons. I also feel that there are not enough horsey people in suits i.e. in local authorities and Government to understand this need.

**Response:** Barbara Cassani agreed that there was a lack of understanding from city people of matters equine and riding. Much of it is about communication. They needed people to connect the equine and Council worlds. Volunteers like her in London will help educate the Councils. One of the things to be done was to set up a foundation to help fund riding. But they also need kids who can afford to pay so there is a need to embrace all.

### **Tim Hadaway, Consultant for the BEF on Facilities and Participation**

The BEF was well aware of the need to spread the word about equestrianism and as a result he had been to all Sport England and regional development offices, to explain the position of equestrianism, including in London. On the funding side there are many ways to crack an egg. Another thing they were doing is beginning to work through School Sports Partnerships, whereby a more coordinated approach is taken to the provision of sports across a number of schools in an area in a part of a city etc. A part of the job of those SSPs is to take advantage of the funding opportunities that do exist. We have been doing this in Birmingham where 7 secondary schools and 27 primary schools have been discussing the opportunity to fund and introduce riding to these schools. The two issues are definitely linked. If we can be more effective in spreading the word of equestrian sport beyond our own four walls to people who then have access to, and can guide us towards, better levels of funding to tackle some of those school link issues.

### **Karen Spinner, Horse & Hound**

You talk about creating a lasting legacy in Greenwich Park. What do you envisage that being or what kind of format do you see it taking? I assume the BEF remain fully committed to staging the equestrian events in Greenwich Park.

**Response:** Greenwich Park are really honoured that they have been selected to host one of the Olympic Sports. We met with the manager of the Park a number of times and there are a couple of different ideas. One idea is to hold high level competition on the site annually, whether that is all three disciplines is yet to be decided.

Obviously there is a lot of sensitivity about talking about an Olympic venue on the run up to it, but discussions have begun.

The other discussions are about a small facility within the confines of the park for locals to use. We are at very early stages and this idea is at the other end of the spectrum. I love the idea, of at one end of the park hosting a child on a lead rein for the first time, and the other end of the park hosting an annual elite competition.

Nothing has been worked out in detail but the level of support is very strong. At this stage anything is possible and seeds have been planted.

### **RACHEL KAY, Equalan Duo Equine Thesis of the Year winner**

#### **Sir Colin Spedding**

What do horses think they see in the mirror? Do they try to interact with it?

**Response:** That is the million pound question. Research results show that they seem to see another equine form and there is no reason to doubt that. I didn't observe any interaction in the trailer but there was a case in the stable.

#### **Unknown Contributor**

Query about the heart rate of the horse. You showed a three coloured graph on which the first result started at 50 beats per minute was that before transport or during?

**Response:** The starting heart rate was at 37 beats so the 50 beats measurement was at minute into the transport.

**Unknown Contributor**

Had any checks had been made on the effect of the direction of travel.

**Response:** There had been some work that had shown that horses travelling with their backs to the engine found it less stressful. She had not done the work herself but the work had shown mixed results, possibly due to horses having their own preferences.

**Unknown Contributor**

Regarding hierarchy in travelling, i.e. does travelling the lowest ranked with the highest rank have any affects?

**Response:** This hadn't been considered when choosing the animals for the study as it was done randomly. No reaction had been noticed though, as the main differences were noticed between companion and no companion.

**Kelly de Silva, Harper Adams**

The time that the horses were travelling seemed quite short. If the journey had been longer would they have realised that the mirror was exactly that?

**Response:** Rachel Kay said that a second phase would be required to establish whether time played a role.

**Miles Williamson Noble, Farriery Registration Council**

Was any consideration given to what constitutes a suitable mirror, would a small one suffice?

**Response:** The study had opted for a stable mirror of 65 cm x 81.5cm, rather than a travelling mirror. To investigate size further a new study would be required, perhaps positioning it where a companion would be expected, rather than in front. She would not advocate always having a mirror when in transit as if not available it could make a journey more stressful if suddenly not there.

**Steven Horrell, Veterinary Surgeon**

In practise they work with transporting companies involving stressful situations. He was interested that the heart rate increased at 15 minutes, midway and 30 minutes when returning home.

**Response:** The peaks were at 5 minutes, which was when driving down the long track where the others horses were grazing. The mid peak at 15 minutes was at a stop at the junction when turning round where the horse may have through it was the end of the journey and the peak at the end was when going back down the track and passing the other companion horses.

**WENDY HOFSTEE, MD Unicorn Trails****Sarah Houston, BHS Instructor**

She expressed commitment towards horse welfare and was concerned for people's welfare in cases where equine facilities are converted from farming. There has to be expertise behind the business.

**Response:** Wendy Hofstee agreed and said that there was an opportunity to grade the facilities according the level of equine welfare and safety standards.

**Richard Matson, Vice Chair of the Forum**

He felt that one thing had been left unsaid i.e. the subject of hats. There were many riders who would love to visit Scotland from Germany but they did not want to wear hats. He felt that wearing them should be voluntary and not compulsory.

**Response:** Wendy Hofstee agreed that this was a thorny issue. The view is to advise all to wear hats because of litigation. In some parts of the USA such as Wyoming there is an exemption. In the UK it is impossible to get liability insurance without hats being worn.

**Tony Silverman, Secretary of the Greenway Committee**

Asked about the effects of insurance on the UK industry.

**Response:** It was one of the biggest threats. Others though are being particular about record keeping to reduce the threat.

**Lady Vestey, National Pony Society**

Disagreed with the comment on hats. A friend of hers had been killed in Zimbabwe whilst riding. Today's riders are not like those of former years with much more background in riding and felt that hats were vital.

**Response:** Ms Hofstee agreed that it was vital to be as safe as possible but that people need to be allowed to take risks if they wish to.

**Wendy Peckham**

Expressed disappointment that the BHS tourist qualification had not been mentioned.

**Response:** This may be because none of the operations are promoting these or using them as a selling point.

## **LESLIE BARWISE MUNROE, Former President BEVA**

### **Wendy Peckham**

Asked about the delay on the licensing of livery yards. Was there any way the industry could help to speed this up?

**Response:** The working party that had existed for five years needed to state its case again. It was also important to record evidence of problems on yards. They were not trying to overburden people with legislation or red tape but introduce a practical system

## **GENERAL DISCUSSION**

### **Carrie de Silva, Harper Adams**

Reported that she had recently set up the equine law centre established at Harper Adams. She runs seminars in house or at university on information and the law concentrating on vital information relevant to equestrian activities such as what do you need to know setting up a yard, or teaching.

### **Una Harley, Lipizzaner Society of GB**

Can anyone explain why dressage arena letters are what and where they are?

**Response:** Desi Dillingham, Supporters of British Breeding

They date from the 1400's in the German court where nobility would have their horses tied out in the courtyard for riding for the Kaiser and his court. The Kaiser always had his horse at K with the other letters standing for the initials of various courtiers.

### **Rachel Campbell, Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals**

She had noted a link between cruelty to animals and domestic abuse. *First Strike* has been set up in Scotland to try and link the departments. If there is animal cruelty then social welfare would be informed because of the possibility of child or domestic abuse. With all the social problems rife today, it is not then a huge leap of imagination that if you can target people and children who may be subject to such problems that the use of the horse may be a benefit.

**Response:** HRH The Princess Royal The RDA has helped young offenders and the work with Suffolk Punches in prison have been good examples of this, but there are not enough options for this work to continue.

### **Lady Vestey, National Pony Society**

Asked whether it was time for Strangles to be declared a notifiable disease. She felt that there should not be any stigma attached to it and people needed to be alerted in order to isolate cases. In many native breeds it is endemic.

**Response:** Leslie Barwise Munroe said that the Horse Trust had undertaken to do research on the disease. It is a difficult disease to identify as it is difficult to identify carriers. There are also complications in making the disease a notifiable one.

### **Philippa Gammel, the Equine Grass Sickness Fund**

Reported that she was trying to access a work permit for an elite groom coming in from Australia. She had though come up against an unexpected obstacle. In the processing of the application, with Work Permits UK, it became apparent that the wage scale being applied to her sport of Carriage Driving was that which applied to Horseracing and was the only one available. There was not a lot of relevance for carriage driving in the scales used for horseracing. She was therefore battling against the officials who were now demanding that she used the horseracing pay rates. She had contacted the National Trainers Federation to ask them to write a letter to establish that their rates should only apply to horseracing applicants. They said they would not want to do that, but instead suggested she alert the disciplines that if they are trying to bring in staff, they will have to satisfy the horseracing pay rates criteria unless they submit different criteria to Working Permits UK.

### **Tony Silverman, Secretary Greenway Committee**

Referred back to the Minister's response in commenting that inefficiency is the limiting factor in riding school growth. He argues that, like for like, in turnover and the return in profit and in employment levels is widely different for riding schools and shops and yet they will pay the same rates. He asked that all lobby the government to change its mind about the business rate situation.

## A BRIEF HISTORY

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The late Mr Arthur George MBE, former Secretary of the Welsh Agriculture Society and a member of the Welsh Agricultural Equine Association, was very concerned that those in the Horse World did not appear to act in concert. He, therefore, invited Professor Colin Spedding and Graham Suggett to meet with him on the Welsh Stand at the 1991 Royal Show to discuss what might be done.

As a result, during 1992, representatives of a number of organisations (especially the Welsh Agricultural Equine Association, the Association of British Riding Schools and the National Farmers' Union) met to discuss ways in which the horse and pony industry could "speak with one voice" when that was needed and appropriate. The outcome was a proposal to establish a National Equine Coordinating Council (NECC) and as a first step a Seminar was organised at the NFU headquarters, Knightsbridge (on 10<sup>th</sup> October 1990) to discuss issues of immediate importance and to float the idea of a NECC. The concept was well received and development work commenced, only to founder over the issue of funding. Whilst being disappointed those who had been members of the small organising committee believed that the concept of the Forum should be maintained as it had had such a good reception. Thus was born the National Equine Forum with an organising committee, formed from a nucleus of those who had pioneered the original concept, with Professor Colin Spedding at the helm as Chairman, and the secretaryship funded by the Association of British Riding Schools through the generosity of the then Chairman, Mrs Pauline Harris.

The organising committee is a freestanding body with no other remit than to run this national event. All the members of the Committee are unpaid volunteers and only exceptionally are essential and travelling expenses paid. The format of the Forum evolved as a low cost operation due to the fact that no-one wanted yet another competing body, or the cost of running it.

The first Forum, held in 1993, could not, of course, assume that it would be annual, but it was so well received that a decision was made to run it annually, if possible. The possibility became fact due to generous sponsorship and speakers giving of their time without payment which has made it possible to operate without any charge to participants.

The organising committee has been encouraged by the appropriate Minister in DEFRA, previously MAFF, opening the Forum (Nicholas Soames in 1993 and 1994; Angela Browning in 1995 and 1996; Lord Donoughue in 1998, Baroness Hayman in 1999 and 2000 (with only the FMD outbreak preventing her from taking part in 2001), Elliot Morley (standing in for Alun Michael) in 2002; Alun Michael in 2003, 2004 and 2005, Jim Knight in 2006 and Barry Gardiner in 2007. The Forum has also been greatly honoured by the presence of HRH The Princess Royal, who has contributed her ideas as part of the programme, in 1996, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007

Each year the programme is determined by topical issues with ample opportunity being afforded for questions, contributions and discussion from the floor. The main purpose, however, remains as being an opportunity for the equine industry to speak with one voice, when that is appropriate, and to serve as a sounding board for others to float ideas and proposals.

The Committee only exists to organise each Forum, not to follow up whatever may emerge at the meeting. Where such follow-up action is needed, we try to identify an existing body as the appropriate channel. Very often this has been the Horse and Pony Taxation Committee but sometimes a commercial organisation or individual has taken up a programme initiated by the National Equine Forum.

The Forum is not a threat to any other body and does not seek to usurp their functions. It provides opportunities that can be taken up when participants want or need them.

These opportunities are appreciated by the 190, or so, people who attend by invitation each year but many breed societies, for example, are never represented and, indeed, do not respond to letters. This is a pity and, whilst no-one is obliged to participate, we are very anxious that the members of these societies do actually know about the Forum, so that at least they have the choice and can be represented by their Chairman and Chief Executive Officer.

We became embarrassed by the fact that we could not fit into the Royal Veterinary College all those who wanted to attend. Therefore, in 2006 we moved to the Royal Society where we can accommodate all who wish to attend, including those involved in relevant trades.

## CURRENT and PREVIOUS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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Name	Period Served		Position Held		
	From	To		From	To
Colin Spedding CBE. Professor Sir*	1992		Chairman	1992	
Pauline Harris	1992	2004	Joint Secretary	1992	1994
J Arthur George MBE *	1992	1996	Joint Secretary	1992	1994
Edward Bonner-Maurice. Major	1992	1996			
Peter V Clarke	1992				
Pat Harris. Professor	1992				
Richard T Matson	1992		Vice Chairman	1993	
Bob Phillips	1992	2000			
R H Graham Suggett OBE JP DL. Prof *	1992		Convenor	1998	
Cenydd Thomas	1992	1999			
Dinah Thomas	1992	1999			
Sue Viner	1992	1996			
K Gordon Wesley. Lt.Col	1994		Hon. Secretary	1994	1997
			Hon Treasurer	2000	
Brian Kavanagh	1994	1995			
Rosemary Philipson-Stow	1994				
Antony Wakeham MBE	1994				
Michael Overton	1996	2002			
Pippa Francis	1997	2003	Hon. Secretary	1998	2003
Rad Thomas *	1997	1999			
S Miles D Williamson-Noble. Air Cdr	1997				
Michael A Clayton	1999	2003			
John Tulloch	1999	2001			
Nigel Davenport	2001	2002			
Andrew Finding	2001				
Harry Greenway. Dr	2002				
Sarah Shepherd	2002				
John Smales. Brigadier	2002				
Ailsa Chambers	2003	2006	Hon. Secretary	2003	2006
Kirstin Alford	2004	2004			
Laura Stewart	2006		Hon. Secretary		
Len Bigley	2006				
Graham Cory	2006				

\* members of the 1990 working party

## PREVIOUS TOPICS AND SPEAKERS

<b>Year</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Speaker</b>	
1990 Fore- runner	Chairman	Colin Spedding CBE, Professor	1
	Farm Diversification	David Naish, President National Farmers Union	1
	Should the Horse be Classified as an Agricultural Animal?	Graham Suggett JP	1
	The Horse in Europe	Belgian speaker	1
1993	Chairman	Colin Spedding CBE, Professor	2
	Opening	Nicholas Soames MP, The Hon. Parliamentary Secretary MAFF	1
	Horse and Pony Taxation Committee	Adam Butler PC DL, Rt. Hon, Sir	1
	The British Horse Foundation	Tonie Gibson Jane Kidd	1 1
	The Joint National Horse Education and Training Council	Graham Suggett, JP	2
	National Welfare Council	Eric Collier	1
	Health and Safety in Reference to Horses	Gordon Wesley, Lt Col	1
	Equine Research Needs and Problems	Geoffrey Lane	1
	Panel Chairman Planning and Rating Set-Aside Embryo Transfer	Graham Suggett JP Rad Thomas Geoffrey Fairfoull Gary England	2 1 1 1
	Panel Chairman Prefixes AI	Richard Matson P Campbell Martin Boyle	1 1 1
1994	Chairman	Colin Spedding, Professor Sir	3
	Opening	Nicholas Soames, The Hon. Parliamentary Secretary MAFF	2
	Horse and Pony Taxation Committee	Adam Butler PC DL, Rt. Hon, Sir	2
	The Joint National Horse Education and Training Council	Graham Suggett OBE JP	3
	Marketing Horses	Richard Matson	2
	The Question of Health and Safety in the Industry	Judy Lyons	1
	EVA	Andrew Higgins, Dr	1
	Harness Racing	Jeremy Houghton-Brown	1
	The British Horse Database	Roy Bird MBE	1
	Horsewatch	Martin Taggart	1
	Horse Slaughtering on the Continent	George Stephens OBE, Colonel	1
1995	Chairman	Colin Spedding, Professor Sir	4
	Opening	Angela Browning MP. Parliamentary Secretary MAFF	1
	Horse and Pony Taxation	Adam Butler PC DL, Rt. Hon, Sir	3

	Committee		
	Place of the Trade in the Horse Industry, with particular reverence to safety	Antony Wakeham	1
	Atlanta 1996	David Marlin, Dr	1
	Set Aside with reference to Horses	Tony Pexton	1
	Equine Veterinary Research Needs	Stephen May MRCVS, Professor	1
		David Marlin, Dr	2
		James Wood MRCVS, Dr	1
1996	Chairman	Colin Spedding, Professor Sir	5
	Opening	Angela Browning MP. Parliamentary Secretary MAFF	2
	In attendance	HRH The Princess Royal KG GCVO QSO	-
	Horse and Pony Taxation Committee	Adam Butler PC DL, Rt. Hon, Sir	4
	The Arrow Project and the 2000 Programme	Tim Eastwood, Col	1
	Grass Sickness	David L Doxey MRCVS, Dr	1
	National Riding Week	Antony Wakeham	2
	The Role of MAFF	Alistair Cruikshank, Under Secretary MAFF	1
	Atlanta 1996	David Marlin, Dr	3
	Equine Veterinary Research Needs	Stephen May MRCVS, Professor	2
		David Marlin, Dr	4
		Colin Roberts, Dr	1
1997	Chairman	Colin Spedding, Professor Sir	6
	Horse and Pony Taxation Committee	Tim Eastwood, Col	2
	MAFF Progress Report	Brian Dickinson	1
	The New Code of Practice for Equine Charities	Nigel Davenport, Major	1
		John F Sharples OBE, Lt Col	1
	Riding School Proprietors Professional View	Duncan Brown	1
	BETA National Equestrian Survey 1996	David Corbett	1
	Developments in Equestrian Education	Tony Fox OBE	1
	Adventure Activities Legislation	Dinah Thomas	1
	Strategy to encourage the Breeding of the Competition Horse of the Future	Jenny Loriston-Clarke MBE	1
		W (Twink) R Allen MRCVS, Professor	1
		Robert Warden	1
		Elaine Straker	1
	Equine Veterinary Research Needs	Stephen May MRCVS, Professor	2
	Post Atlanta 1996	David Marlin, Dr	5
	Funding for Equine Research	Libby Archer	1
	Problem of Equine Sarcoids	Derek Knottenbelt MRCVS, Dr	1
1998	Chairman	Colin Spedding, Professor Sir	7
	Opening	The Rt. Hon. Lord Donoughue of Ashton. Parliamentary Secretary MAFF	1
	MAFF Up-date	Brian Dickinson	2
	Horse and Pony Taxation Committee	The Lord Cope of Berkley PC	1
	Student Equine Research Database	Graham Suggett OBE JP DL, Professor	4
	British Equestrian Federation	John Tulloch	1

	Impact of a Ban on Hunting	Bill Andrews	1
	Are Para-professionals a Threat to Animal Welfare?	Sue Dyson MRCVS, Dr	1
	British Performance Test, National Stallion Association	Lady Victoria von Wachter	1
	British Horse Society Developments	Michael A Clayton	1
	The Incidence and Management of Equine Laminitis	Elaine Campbell	1
	Equine Veterinary Research Needs	Stephen May MRCVS, Professor	3
	Feedstuffs	Teresa Holland	1
	Position on Bute	Sue Dyson MRCVS, Dr	2
1999	Chairman	Colin Spedding, Professor Sir	8
	Opening	The Rt. Hon. Lord Donoughue of Ashton. Minister for Food and the Farming Industry	2
	In attendance	HRH The Princess Royal KG GCVO QSO	-
	MAFF Up-date	Brian Dickinson	3
	Horse and Pony Taxation Committee	The Lord Cope of Berkley PC	2
	World Undergraduate Equine Research Database	Graham Suggett OBE JP DL, Professor	5
	National Riding Festival	Jane Holderness-Roddam LVO	1
	Where have all the good grooms gone?	Peter V Clarke	1
	The New Certificate in Horsemanship	Tony Fox OBE	2
	The College and University Role	Elizabeth Warr, Dr	1
	Eqvalan Thesis of the Year	Karen Pearson	1
	ABRS Jeffress Scholarship Trust	Gordon Wesley, Lt Col	2
	A Breeding Strategy for the British Sport Horse Industry	Mike Ducker, Dr	1
	Equine Veterinary Research Needs	Stephen May MRCVS, Professor	4
	Equine Physiotherapy, Past Present, Future	Amanda Sutton	1
	Equine Medicines and the European Union	Richard Jones MRCVS	1
	Closing Remarks	HRH The Princess Royal KG KT GCVO QSO	1
2000	Chairman	Colin Spedding, Professor Sir	9
	Opening	The Baroness Hayman. Minister of State (Lords) MAFF	1
	In attendance	HRH The Princess Royal KG GCVO QSO	-
	MAFF Up-date	Brian Dickinson and Panel	4
	World Undergraduate Equine Research Database	Graham Suggett OBE JP DL, Professor	6
	Jeep National Riding Festival	Steve Gray	1
	British Equestrian Federation	John Tulloch	2
	British Horse Industry Confederation	Michael A Clayton	2
	Horse and Pony Taxation Committee	James Gray MP	1
	Principles of Good Staff Management	Desi Dillingham	1

	Strengths and Weaknesses of Staff Management	Jane Robinson	1
	Staff Retention on the Racing Industry	L J Richard Nash	1
	The Cost of Equine Colic Surgery	Elizabeth Barrett	1
	Importance of Foot Balance	Chris Colles MRCVS, Dr	1
	Diagnostic Imaging – Where are we now and where are we going?	Stephen May MRCVS, Professor	5
	BETA Feed Supplement Code of Practice	Teresa Hollands	1
	Veterinary Medicine Legislation	Michael Rutter MRCVS, Dr	1
	Equine Carcase Disposal	Peter Webber MRCVS, Dr	1
	Access	Stephanie Wheeler	1
	Rider Safety	John Lloyd Parry MD	1
2001	Chairman	Colin Spedding, Professor Sir	10
	Opening	The Baroness Hayman. The Baroness Hayman. Minister of State (Lords) MAFF (Unable to attend due to emergency Cabinet Meeting re: FMD)	-
	In attendance	HRH The Princess Royal KG KT GCVO QSO	-
	MAFF Report and Response to Questions	Andrew Perrins	1
	Horse and Pony Taxation Committee	James Gray MP (Did not turn up)	-
	Horse Registration	Michael A Clayton	3
	Ragwort	Derek Knottenbelt MRCVS, Dr	2
	Success in Competitions	Philip Billington	1
	The Sydney Olympics – Lessons Learnt	Matthew Straker OBE	1
	The Athens Olympiad – Role and Objectives of BEF	Andrew Finding	1
	Application of Science in Preparing Elite Horses	John C McEwen MRCVS	1
	Application of Science in Preparing Elite Riders	Michael Dooley FRCOG	1
	BEF Coaching Development Programme	Islay Auty	1
	BEF Breeding Programme	Richard Meade OBE	1
	Assessing the Fertilisation Capacity of Equine Spermatozoa	Susan E Cook	1
	Early Identification of Equine Venereal Disease	Claire Egan (FMD. Unable to attend)	-
	Impact of Injury, Disease and Dysfunction on Performance in the Athletic Horse	David Marlin, Dr	6
	Equine Tendon Injuries. Are they an inevitable consequence of athleticism or can we prevent them?	Roger K W Smith MRCVS	1
	Identifying the Problems Facing the Horse Industry	Duncan M Brown	2
2002	Chairman	Colin Spedding, Professor Sir	11

	Selective Breeding for Soundness	Nick Wingfield-Digby MRCVS	1
	Raising Sound Youngsters	David Marlin (Unable to attend through illness)	-
	No Legs – No Horse	Simon Curtis	1
	The Effect of Tungsten-carbide Stud Nails on Hoof Balance	Helen R Jacks	1
	The UK Horseracing Industry	Alan Delmonte	1
	The Rural Forum	Kay Driver	1
	Equine Passports, Disease Surveillance and Breeding Implementation Planning Team	Andrew Finding	2
	The Threat of an EU Directive to Horse Wormers	Claire Williams	1
	Fell Pony Syndrome	Derek Knottenbelt MRCVS, Dr	3
	New Forest Pony Problems	Anthony T Bradley	1
	Donkey Respiratory Problems	Nicholas J Bell	1
	Small Gene Pools	George Jackson OBE	1
	The Swedish Horse Industry	Olof Karlander	1
	A Government View	Elliot Morley MP on behalf of Rt. Hon. Alun Michael MP	1
2003	Chairman	Colin Spedding CBE, Professor Sir	12
	A Government Overview	Rt. Hon. Alun Michael MP	1
	Future Marketing and Promotion Strategies	Diana Rhodes	1
	The Temperature Effect of Powered Grinders on Equine Teeth	Lynne Uttley	1
	Care, Use and Disposal of the Ageing Horse	Derek Knottenbelt MRCVS, Dr	4
	What is exercising my mind about the Equine Industry is....	HRH The Princess Royal KG KT GCVO QSO	2
	The National Equine Database	Graham Suggett OBE JP DL, Professor	7
	A Groom for the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century	Lucy Katan	1
	West Nile Fever	Richard Newton MRCVS, Dr	1
	A Breakthrough in the Treatment of Equine Bone Disease	Henry Tremaine MRCVS	1
2004	Chairman	Colin Spedding CBE, Professor Sir	13
	An Evidenced-based Strategy for the Equine Industry	Rt. Hon. Alun Michael MP	2
	The National Equine Database	Graham Suggett OBE JP DL, Professor	8
	The British Horseracing Industry	Tristram Ricketts	1
	Foot Balance and the Farrier	Haydn Price	1
	The Effect of Different Coloured Ramp Matting on Loading Behaviour in Horses	Hannah Haskew	1
	Opening Discussion	HRH The Princess Royal KG KT GCVO QSO	3
	Strangles	Josh Slater MRCVS, Dr	1
	Up-date on Horse Welfare in Transport	David Pritchard MRCVS	1
	Code of Practice for Passport Issuing Organisations	Catherine Burdock	1
	Cloning Geldings: A Future Must for British Sport Horse Breeding	W R (Twink) Allen CBE MRCVS, Professor	2

2005	Chairman	Colin Spedding CBE, Professor Sir	14
	Government View of the Equine Industry	Rt. Hon. Alun Michael MP	3
	A Strategy for the Horse Industry	Tristram Ricketts	2
	The National Equine Database	Graham Suggett OBE JP DL, Professor	9
	Factors Affecting the Sales of TB Yearlings	Aideen Ó Dochartaigh	1
	Buying and Selling the Sport Horse	Georgina Crossman	1
	Role of the Colleges	Malcolm Wharton	1
	The 2004 Olympics and Paralympics	Will Connell	1
	BEVA Evidence-based Medicine Initiatives	Celia M Marr MRCVS	1
	The Breeders Quality Mark (BQM) Scheme	Christopher J Hewlett	1
	A Personal View	HRH The Princess Royal KG KT GCVO QSO	4
2006	Chairman	Colin Spedding CBE, Professor Sir	15
	Government View of the Equine Industry	Rt. Hon. Jim Clarke MP	1
	Strategy for the Horse Industry in England and Wales	Graham Cory	1
	Impact of the new Animal Welfare Bill	Mike Radford	1
	The 2006 National Equestrian Survey	Claire Williams	2
	Business problems facing yards and studs, a duty of care	Tony Silverman	1
	Osteoarthritis in horses and developments in knowledge	Kate Scothorne	1
	Increasing participation in sport	Jim Clarke	1
	Increasing participation in equestrian sport	Tim Hadaway	1
	Equine challenges for the 2008 and 2012 Olympic Games	Simon Clegg	1
	A personal view of the equine industry	HRH The Princess Royal KG KT GCVO QSO	5
2007	Chairman	Colin Spedding CBE, Professor Sir	16
	Barry Gardiner MP Government view of the opportunities for the equine industry.	Barry Gardiner MP. Minister for the Horse industry	1
	The National Equine Database	Graham Suggett OBE JP DL, Professor	10
	Strategy for the Horse Industry in England and Wales	Graham Cory	2
	Barefoot strategies	KC La Pierre RJF	1
	The farriers' view	Simon Curtis	1
	Opportunities in equestrian coaching	Colin Wilson	1
	Opportunities for those with disabilities	Ed Bracher	1
	Opportunities for 2012	Barbara Cassani CBE	1
	Opportunities for reducing stress in travelling horses	Rachel Kay	1

	Opportunities for equine tourism	Wendy Hofstee	1
	A personal view	HRH The Princess Royal KG KT GCVO QSO	6
	Equine insurance	David Buckton	1
	Animal Welfare Act 2006	Lesley Barwise-Munro	1
	BEF Researching Equines Database	Georgina Crossman	2

The Fore-runner meeting was held in Agriculture House, Knightsbridge after which all meetings up to and including 2005 were held at the Royal Veterinary College, Camden with the exception of that in 1997 which, due to refurbishment, was held in the Saddler's Hall. Currently the venue for the NEF is The Royal Society, Carlton House Terrace.

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