

Advancing Equine Scientific Excellence

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INCREASING PARTICIPATION IN EQUESTRIANISM COLLABORATIVE PROJECT



November 2015

Advancing Equine Scientific Excellence is a committee of the British Equestrian Federation's Equine Development Portfolio

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The British Equestrian Federation (BEF) has been working with Sport England to encourage people to start or return to riding and to continue to ride regularly, as part of its legacy from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Between the inception of Advancing Equine Scientific Excellence's (AESE) Increasing Participation in Equestrianism (IPIE) project in April 2013, and 2017, the BEF aims to get at least 25,000 more people riding.

The IPIE collaborative project focused on identifying factors that contributed to reduced or lapsed horse riding; understanding potential remedies that might encourage more frequent riding; and exploring the possible evolution of potential or current products including: Hoof; the Hoof Young People's Product; and Take Back the Reins. The results will feed into the work the BEF is undertaking with equestrian centres and riding schools to overcome barriers to participation, and provide market intelligence to develop targeted products that encourage people to take up riding and continue riding as a regular sport.

Delivered by AESE, and sponsored by the BEF funded by Sport England, as well as Alltech, data for the project was gathered by 26 students from 13 institutions recruited in the late summer of 2013. Data were derived through a standardised, AESE-designed depth interview (DI) script, and focus groups (FG), using a purposive homogenous sampling strategy which targeted specific groups of current riders, lapsed riders, or potential new riders where new riders had not ridden before. An online survey (OS) was also utilised, based on the DI script, again to gather information from specific target groups. The OS was publicised through social media and email, with a paper version available. Participants for the OS were self-selecting and subsequently categorised into the appropriate target group during data analysis.

Key findings from the research include:

- More than half of current riders without a disability and more than a third of current riders with a disability ride more frequently than three times a week for 30 minutes;
- Livery yards were highlighted as being a key venue from which people ride;
- The largest proportion of riders ride because of their enjoyment of horses;
- A change in personal circumstances, making horse riding more financially viable as well as there being more places to ride nearby, were identified as being key factors that would encourage current riders to ride more frequently;
- Injury/accident was identified as the most likely reason for current riders to stop riding, whilst money/cost, time, lack of access to a horse, career and family were also mentioned;
- High costs, time and lack of awareness of riding facilities available or difficulty in accessing a horse were factors stopping lapsed and new riders from riding; with lack of confidence/fear, a medical condition, (including injury and disability), weight, and pregnancy also being mentioned;
- A large proportion of current riders and lapsed riders considered £15/hour to £20/hour to be an affordable cost for a riding activity;

- Sporting activities frequently undertaken by current and lapsed riders were reported as being: walking, including hiking and walking the dog; running; swimming; and cycling; with a sizable proportion of current riders not undertaking any other activity apart from equestrianism;
- Around half, or more, of all respondents in the 26 years old and over and 36-55 year old female groups were engaged in 31 or more hours of work a week; and
- Having been provided with a statement about the particular initiative, the majority of respondents were very supportive of Hoof, The Hoof Young People's Product and Take Back the Reins.

Project Team

British Equestrian Federation: Beth Maloney, Director of Participation; Maggie Still, Head of Participation (until June 2014)

Advancing Equine Scientific Excellence: Prof Pat Harris, Chair; Dr Georgina Crossman, Study Coordinator; Dr Tim Parkin, Committee Member

Institution: Lecturers; Researchers (students):

Bishop Burton College: Louise Roberts; Samantha Dexter, Kirsty Fisher

College of West Anglia / Anglia Ruskin University: Dr Charlotte Nevison, Alison Northrop; Jade Brown, Jessica Gregory

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Sparsholt College: Lorna Cameron; Sarah Nottingham, Hana Wilson

Warwickshire College: Lauren Birkbeck; Yasmin Farmer-Day, Holly Vince

Writtle College: Pennie Wallace, Dr Sue Judd; Martin Powell

Further information

Further information can be obtained from the British Equestrian Federation.

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