



Engagement and consultations

British Horse Council

25th June 2021

Roly Owers



WorldHorseWelfare

www.worldhorsewelfare.org
Registered charity no. 206658 and SC038384

1

EFRA Select Committee call for evidence: Moving animals across borders



- Written call for evidence ran from January-March 2021
- BHC submitted written evidence – key points included:
 - Delays at ports
 - Increased costs of moving a horse to the EU (by up to 300%)
 - Traceability of equines and digitisation of systems and processes
 - Need for sufficient number of BCPs in GB, with appropriate resources
 - Consideration of a Common Veterinary Area
 - Introduction of “High Health” equine definition
- Jan Rogers, Ross Hamilton and Roly Owers gave oral evidence on 18th May (available on EFRACom website)
- Committee’s report giving recommendations due later this year



WorldHorseWelfare

www.worldhorsewelfare.org
Registered charity no. 206658 and SC038384

2

Welfare During Transport

- BHC wrote to the Minister outlining concerns with Defra consultation:
 - Limited scope
 - Unintended consequences to sector, with limited welfare benefits
- BHC members submitted individual responses to Defra and Scottish consultations
- Largely alignment on following points:
 - Support for ban on export of horses to slaughter
 - Introduction of 12 hour maximum journey times
 - 48 hour rest time too long – proposed 9 hours
 - Removal of distinction between unregistered and registered equines



3

Action Plan for Animal Welfare

1. **Considering changes to equine identification and traceability** – dialogue with sector ongoing
2. **Ban on export of animals to slaughter** – legislation introduced (Kept Animals Bill)
3. **Pursuing the licensing of animal welfare establishments** – awaiting next steps from Defra
4. **Enforcement** – new system of penalty notices – legislation introduced (Penalty Notices Bill)
5. **Effective powers to tackle livestock worrying** – legislation introduced (Kept Animals Bill)
6. **Creation of an Animal Sentience Committee** – legislation introduced (Sentience Bill)



4



Animal Welfare (Sentience) Bill

- Legislation introduced to Parliament by UK Government – currently at Committee Stage in House of Lords
- Will enshrine recognition of vertebrate animals as sentient and establish an Animal Sentience Committee (ASC)
- As currently written, the ASC may report on any UK Government policy that has potential adverse effects on sentient animals
- EFRA Select Committee launched an inquiry on the proposed Bill looking at its scope and the powers and independence of the ASC
 - EFRA Committee seeking written evidence by 5th July 2021
 - BHC considering whether to send a joint sector response



WorldHorseWelfare

www.worldhorsetwelfare.org
Registered charity no. 206658 and SC038384

5



Equine welfare update

1. **Covid-19 Equine Rescues Emergency Fund** – fund now closed – 28 grants awarded to 23 NGOs totalling £105k. The balance of £35k returned to donor organisations
2. **Pandemic impact** – anticipated equine welfare surge last winter did not materialise – but still very wary about the future. Welfare gauge is busy but similar to last two years. Rehoming remains strong across the sector
3. **RSPCA led Green Paper ‘Act Now for Animals’** – proposals that are not addressed in Defra action plan include a review of existing fireworks legislation and ensuring enforcement is a statutory obligation in any animal welfare legislation.
4. **Formation of Animal Welfare Network Wales working group for equines** (BVA, Redwings, BHS, World Horse Welfare, Horse Trust (Chair), RSPCA and Communities for Horses) – initial focus will be on Equine ID



WorldHorseWelfare

www.worldhorsetwelfare.org
Registered charity no. 206658 and SC038384

6