

# British Horse Council June Meeting

## Summary Notes

All meeting notes and presentations at [www.britishhorsecouncil.org](http://www.britishhorsecouncil.org)

### British Horse Council: David Mountford

**Equine disease surveillance** – replacing the work done by the Animal Health Trust. Three requirements for a disease programme: testing, information gathering and interpretation and then industry guidance. Contracts being finalised for the testing with Rossdale Diagnostic Laboratories in Newmarket. Surveillance and guidance – Richard Newton and his team will hopefully soon be in a permanent position at Cambridge University with James Wood, continuing to provide the same excellent service. Contracts are currently underway. Interim and initial funded through Horserace Betting Levy Board (HBLB) and Defra continues to support. Once new system is in place the whole of the sector will be required to step up to the mark to contribute to the protection of the national herd. A longer term oversight committee will be formed. HBLB will continue to support financially and it is expected that a mechanism will be developed to gather wider contributions and as such the oversight committee will contain wider equestrian sector expertise.

**Equine ID Policy Review: Rebecca Joyce** – Rebecca reminded us about the structure of the equine ID environment, current regulations and processes for producing and updating equine ID documents. Certain changes can be made online through Digital Stable, as it stands, PIOs are currently required to complete the process by receiving the paper passport back for amending.

Much of the data on CED is inaccurate, and some figures were provided. Some PIOs are not meeting their statutory duties. If this continues, Defra will take appropriate action. Current system was generated under EU regulations, having left the EU there is now an opportunity for review so that the quality for data improves and supports Government aims of health, welfare and public health. Equine ID is a devolved area although a UK wide solution would be ideal.

Defra is speaking to key stakeholders in the sector to shape a consultation which will gather the views of the general public on possible policy changes at the latter end of 2021. Changes for the long term are sought and accurate ID and microchips are considered very important so as to assist with disease surveillance, horse movements and to protect the health of people.

Communications direct to owners to remind them to update their records is not deemed worthwhile as the name and address details held by PIOs, and therefore by the CED, are so incorrect. This will be carried out using general public reminder campaigns for the time being.

Still under consideration is the possibility of securing all livestock ID in one central system – Livestock Information, in due course.

Overall a better more user friendly process is needed to make it easier for owners to update their records, using both carrot and stick, because the current scenario is not delivering sufficiently accurate results and it is not likely to improve until the process is made easier.

Await publication of the wider industry consultation towards the end of 2021.

## Engagement and Consultations: Roly Owers

Efra Select Committee Call for Evidence – BHC supplied a written response and supplied evidence as well. Full details on EFRA Committee website. View:

<https://committees.parliament.uk/work/957/moving-animals-across-borders/>

# 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 18<sup>th</sup> May (EFRACom website)
- Committee’s report giving recommendations due later this year

**Welfare During Transport** – two consultations in England/Wales as well as Scotland. Responses were submitted by individual bodies with a good deal of alignment including on the ban on export for slaughter.

## 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

**Action Plan for Animal Welfare** has been published which contains key aspects like the review of ID, ban of exports for slaughter and licensing of welfare premises.

# 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)

View: <https://committees.parliament.uk/work/1274/animal-welfare-sentience-bill/>

Some elements of the Kept Animals Bill could apply to Wales and the Welsh Assembly is carefully scrutinising the detail.

## **EU Animal Health Law – John Briggs & Matt Wells**

General principles: [https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/animal-health/animal-health-law\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/animal-health/animal-health-law_en)

Impacts exports UK-EU in terms of Export Health Certificates (EHCs) for trade between third countries and the EU. Comes into effect on 21 August with the application of the new EHCs. These will be uploaded onto Form Finder next week. The remainder will be released in July and will be in use from 21 August for trade with EU & NI. Representatives from industry have assisted with the production of Notes for Guidance.

### **Key changes are:**

Changes in formatting and content on the different pages, more importantly there are changes to the conditions to be met pre export. Certificates are no longer different for temporary/permanent moves or registered/unregistered animals.

EVA testing removed entirely. Alterations to residency periods and pre export isolation requirements, all changes are positive and easier to comply with – full details view here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/export-horses-and-ponies-special-rules>

All equines will need to be moved from a registered holding and such premises will need to apply for CPH numbers. This is a new requirement, but only for horses that are being moved, not for all horse keeping premises, although there is an argument for all premises to be registered to facilitate disease surveillance.

View: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/export-or-move-equines-apply-for-a-county-parish-holding-cph-number>

### **Zootechnical update – Rachel Davis**

Third Country Listing of EU studbooks, will allow continued equivalent trade and capacity to mutually recognise zootechnical status of horses. Many countries have not yet applied although they have been encouraged to do so. For continued updates view here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/lists-of-recognised-eu-breed-societies-and-breeding-operations/recognised-eu-breeding-societies-for-equine-species>

Extended Breeding Territories. Will allow EU studbooks to register horses in the UK where there is no equivalent in the UK. View here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/list-of-approved-eu-extended-breeding-programmes/list-of-uk-approved-eu-extended-breeding-programmes>

There have been a limited number of appeals when extensions have been declined by UK Gov.

Comms will be circulated with links as updates occur.

### **Animal (Equine) Health & Welfare Pathway – David Mountford**

The Pathway process is for all kept animals and is fairly well advanced for certain species.

Aiming towards a world leading future for the UK's horse industry.

We will come back to this group with a skeleton framework and then go out to wider consultation to ensure that we get this right for the future.

It's an opportunity for us to collaborate with Government, such that they can enable the sector to progress its own initiatives with support, either financial or legislative, following further discussion.

### **Environment Bill – Claire Sheppard and Victoria Murrell**

TBA's environmental sustainability working group set up to collaborate with industry professionals on grassland management practices to reduce carbon footprint of thoroughbred studs.

View presentation: <https://www.britishhorsecouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/BHC-June-21-The-Environment-Bill.pdf>

Note: rewilding is an initiative that isn't simply about releasing horses into the wild and the welfare concerns arising from such practices will be raised with APPG at the next meeting.

TBA will establish criteria for studs to enable self assessment and practical advice to enable access to subsidies

NI would like to understand carbon sequestration of permanent (and slightly wet) heathland or grassland and if any information is forthcoming, please share with this group.

### **Equality and Diversity in the Equine Sector: Ross Hamilton**

Unified industry commitment to diversity and inclusion – details are available on the BHA website.

Five points: Leadership and accountability (in line with UK Sport good governance principles), data collection to better understand the people who take part in racing, education and awareness raising (learning and development), celebrating and supporting diversity and building on best practice, engaging new audiences to explain that racing is a sport for everyone now and into the future. This subject was also covered at the 2021 National Equine Forum.

View: <https://www.britishhorseracing.com/regulation/participant-welfare/diversity-in-racing/>

View: <https://www.britishhorseracing.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Diversity-and-Inclusion-Action-Plan.pdf>

Both equality and diversity and sustainability will form part of the Pathway mentioned earlier, and thoughts from the non racing sector as to what we feel should be included are welcomed. British Equestrian has this as a vital key theme of its current work.

View: <https://www.britishequestrian.org.uk/getInvolved/equality-diversity>

### **Equestrian Sport: The Olympic and Paralympic Games: Jim Eyre & Dickie Waygood**

Brexit, Covid-19 and EHV have had a big impact in terms of ability to get to qualifying venues.

Cancellation of Badminton, Bramham and Burghley have resulted in big challenges for Eventing and an alternative pathway has been created using Aston le Walls and Bicton.

Royal Windsor was postponed creating a big challenge, Wellington stepped in with a CDI although getting judges in with Covid-19 quarantine and isolation rules was difficult.

The Sunshine Tour would normally have 800 entries from UK, but this year was 250. Minimal competitions to select from as St Gallen also was so wet that only one round was jumped.

Horses now go into quarantine before being Tokyo bound.

Owner accreditation was reduced from 2 to 1 which is very difficult given that owners are sponsors for whom attendance is key.

Arrival isolation is now 3 days which creates logistics issues enabling the timing of grooms and teams in order to be able to take care of horses on arrival.

Selection ongoing. No longer have drop score, three person team with one travelling reserve. Reserve can be substituted but with a penalty which would remove a team from the medal race.

### **British Horse Foundation: Jane Nixon**

View here: <https://www.britishhorsecouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/BHC-June-2021-British-Horse-Foundation-Jane-Nixon.pdf>

### **Scottish Government Update: Scott McDowell**

Animal Sanctuaries: Does not include breeding controls or rehoming situations, must obtain a license from local authority and this number and name of LA must be included on adverts, along with photo of animal, providing details of basic animal care.

Registration and licensing of equestrian establishments: Working with BHS and World Horse Welfare looking at options for registration and licensing

Equine ID: ScotEquine centrally records horses using data provided by Scottish PIOs and data feed from CED of horses resident in Scotland. ScotEquine issues QR code cards which can be used within Scotland, instead of carrying the paper document. Around 2k have been issued. Some issues concerning the interrelationship between databases, especially regarding over stamping.

Scottish Government has concerns regarding manpower with reference to implementation of EU Animal Health Law (AHL) although there is a will to align, some deviation will be required, although position is still being formed.

## **Wales: Christianne Gossop**

Senedd selections in Wales with labour Administration. Minister Lesley Griffiths deals with Animal Health & Welfare although her wider portfolio has now changed. Wales would like to develop a national model including registration of establishments, including sanctuaries. Also looking to raise professional status and improve qualifications for animal welfare, the extent of which is as yet to be understood. A five year plan for animal welfare in Wales will seek to make best use of the work already underway, deliver on Gov commitments and work as closely with Scotland, NI and Defra – joining up where relevant is seen as key. The Animal Health & Welfare Delivery Plan for Wales will also be implemented despite operational and legal resource availability.

Equine biosecurity is of great importance to Wales, improving protocols around biosecurity around the Royal Welsh Show is on the radar. A good deal of work in Wales has been carried out on antimicrobial resistance (AMR), a project has been funded by the final years of the Rural Development Plan (Arwain Vet Cymru) led by Gwen Rees at University of Aberystwyth in the School of Veterinary Science, to look at purchase and use of medicines and record keeping. Also introduced concept of AMR champion in each vet practice. Currently reviewing project proposal to apply qualitative and quantitative research to the pattern of AMR useage in Welsh equine owners and how to better inform these behaviours.

## **Northern Ireland – Robert Huey and Shane Collins**

Current Minister will remain.

Equine Strategy was paused due to Covid-19 and pressure across government. This was relaunched yesterday with a cross government stakeholder group. A report was commissioned from Deloitte which highlighted areas for growth to enable an economic strategy for the sector. Deloitte identified a need for a cross government collaboration, DAERA is leading.

Identified:

- Need for effective stakeholder forum to meet 3 or 4 times per year to improve communications
- Need for accurate industry wide and equine/premises data
- Vision for NI & Ulster bridleway – local authority and private land
- Need to review rating structure to better enable riding schools to flourish
- Need for knowledge – currently have a knowledge poor sector, owners tend to copy others, rather than highlighting best practice. Many equestrians relocate across the globe because opportunities don't exist in NI, would like to readdress this balance to create new careers opportunities
- Need for regulation for farriers
- Equine Assisted Therapy and Learning – opportunity to take this forward with courses, training and qualifications set up. NI are not planning to regulate, but create a supply of people who are qualified and creating a pathway for clients and patients. There will be a private sector oversight body with government facilitation

## **ID and premises**

NI Protocol requires EHCs for live animal entry and is working with Defra on the introduction of the new AHL certificates. Boarding pass to be introduced on satisfactory documentary checks on GB side. Comms are improving. Monitoring volumes of portal traffic.

NI will fully implement AHL (as it is within Art II of NI Protocol), within which is a dedicated work stream on equine ID within the DAERA implementation project on AHL implementation. There will be a consult on premises registration and equine ID, with legislative amendments in 2022.

### **England – Simon Waterfield**

Updates and relevant items covered earlier within Rebecca's section

### **Veterinary Update – David Mountford**

Shortage of Regumate – supply to be reinstated 7 July. Vets can offer alternative

EHV – commend Richard Newton's team and BEF for effective and timely comms and risk management following the outbreak on the continent early in the year

Case of CEM in UK at the moment. Reinforces need for testing, especially for breeding animals. Post Brexit there's an opportunity for pre export testing for these diseases

Collaborating with RCVS Knowledge on AMR

David Rendle spoke at NEF highlighting that anthelmintic resistance is not to be underestimated

Much effort underway to assist with EHC challenges for export

UK vets no longer permitted to go to EU to carry out pre purchase examinations for clients

### **Trade Update – Claire Williams**

View: <https://www.britishhorsecouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/BHC-June-21-Trade-Claire-Williams.pdf>

### **Racing and TB Breeding – Ross Hamilton & Claire Sheppard**

Racing: Highlighted the support and funding racing has received £21.5k sport survival package. £7.5m supporting international competitiveness, including support for black type and maiden races and integrity costs at those fixtures. £5-6m retained for future reserves Covid-19 depending, hope to see sustainable numbers back at racecourses, working with other sports on scientific justifications for open stadia and Covid certification to enable sport to reopen in a controlled manner. A 5 day pilot at Royal Ascot was held with managed numbers at the meeting and post event testing, initial report positive regarding opening of mass events. Launching a consult on the use of the whip in racing, overseen by political and media expertise. Actively encouraging any people with a view to participate over the summer. View:

[https://www.britishhorseracing.com/press\\_releases/consultation-opens-regarding-british-racings-whip-rules-and-penalties/](https://www.britishhorseracing.com/press_releases/consultation-opens-regarding-british-racings-whip-rules-and-penalties/)

TB breeding: View: <https://www.britishhorsecouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/BHC-June-21-Racing-TB-Breeding.pdf>

Significant challenges to movements across borders, down two thirds in terms of movements to mainland EU. Main barrier is VAT security needing to be lodged pre movement and the value of TBs makes this largely prohibitive. Digital passports for 2021 foal crop and equine premises numbers across stud farms in the UK, also to facilitate traceability.

TBA e-learning portal has been launched, some courses may have wider sector appeal. View: <https://tb-ed.co.uk/>

## **Research – Jeanette Allen & Jan Rogers**

View: <https://www.britishhorsecouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/BHC-June-21-Research.pdf>

**Horserace Betting Levy Board - Annie Dodd** reports delays due to availability of samples and lab access. HBLB just closed 2021 applications, with 21 submitted. Broad range of subjects. Today grants closed for educational applications 12-14 likely to be submitted for PhD and clinical scholarships.

There is likely to be a gap in the supply of anthelmintic research, given that a number of experts in this area have retired or moved on, and David's report indicates that this could mean a compromise.

## **Leisure and Recreational – James Hick**

Riding schools have bounced back after Covid-19 lockdowns. Oversubscribed for lessons and participatory activities. But they are short of suitable ponies (about 200 short) so considerable activities underway under Second Chance programme placing rescued horses and ponies from charities into riding school second careers.

Many competitions running again safely, and BRCs fully operational again under Covid safety guidance.

Difficulties experienced by riding schools with indoor schools/covered arenas not being permitted to be used, when in reality they are outdoor or agricultural facilities. BHS working with Cabinet Office to head off the effects of any potential future lockdown over the winter, to enable therapy and riding activities to be able to continue safely in these arenas.

Equine Grass Sickness – call out to equestrian community where suspected cases occur to send samples to Moredun, a pack is available from BHS so as to enable the development of a biobank  
View: <https://www.grasssickness.org.uk/>

## **Equine Welfare – Roly Owers**

View: <https://www.britishhorsecouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Welfare-report-Roly-Owers-Dec-2020.pdf>

## **Equestrian Sport – Jim Eyre**

Reopening of sport progressing, hope to extend extent of elite sport to allow other FEI approved sports to be included. Recovery is steady

## **National Equine Forum – Georgina Crossman**

View: <https://www.britishhorsecouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/BHC-June-21-NEF22-Presentation-for-BHC-2021-06-25.pdf>

View: [www.nationalequineforum.com](http://www.nationalequineforum.com)

Next NEF: Thursday 3 March 2022 – plans still under consideration for a face to face live event for its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary

## **AoB**

Philip Napier – Voluntary Regulatory Framework for Saddlery Fitting



Generally agreed that inclusive voluntary regulation was desirable/essential as a result of a wide consult. Wide engagement in and support for working up the proposals

Query is how to implement this and accepting that 100% engagement would not be achieved

Now have draft Articles of Association, Frameworks and Codes of Conduct etc in place, so the infrastructure is in place. Next steps to consult with wider sector. View: [www.thesaddlers.org](http://www.thesaddlers.org)

#### Claire Brown – Farrier Injuries

BFBA conducted a survey into horse related injuries sustained by farriers at work. 349 responses (10%) response rate. 32% had to visit hospital 3 or more times, 43% fractures. Significant impact on the farrier sector which needs to be addressed

View: <https://www.forgeandfarrier.co.uk/bfba-news/1108/the-farriery-injury-survey.htm> and <https://www.forgeandfarrier.co.uk/bfba-news/1116/bfba-farrier-injury-results.htm>

#### Julie Miles – BHC members contributing to consultations

BHC will respond offline in the interests of time

**Date of next meeting: Friday 10 December 2021 on Zoom**