

# Equine Assisted Services (EAS) An Introduction



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# Introduction

Thank you...

We are going to cover:-

- What EAS is
- What types of EAS there are
- Who is doing it and who is it helping?
- Where EAS sits in the wider world
- What the EAS Partnership is
- The coming of standardisation



# What is EAS?

EAS stands for Equine Assisted Services

EAS is the Umbrella term for the whole sector which is large and complex: EAT, EAL, EAP .....

And within which people can be very protective of their own method of practice

EAS is when horses and humans work together to improve the physical , mental , emotional, behavioural or social state of the person.

EAS usually has a coach, therapist or facilitator leading the sessions

EAS requires understanding of humans and horses and how they interact

EAS can be provided for one of the above areas, or for more than one. It is also used as alternative education rather than mainstream school for some

# EAS starts with the need of people

Equine Assisted Services can cover a huge range of needs

It could be working with a donkey, a mule, a horse or a pony.

Breed characteristics play a part in suitability as does the personality of the equine and its training



# What Types of EAS are there?

Ridden

Ground  
based

Driving

Physical

Mental

Emotional

Behavioural

# Where are EAS in the world?

Equine Assisted Services are in about 45 countries in the world

UK is a little behind some countries, slow to start but now catching up fast.

Horses in Education and Therapy International (HETI) has a worldwide membership and ethical guidelines for practicing

EAS is not widely understood or known about in UK, and its not uniformly accepted.

Described as “quirky and eccentric” by one Sec of State for Health and Care

# Where is EAS in education or health and care?

In terms of health, it is within Green care or Nature based care, some counties have it within their social prescribing programmes

It can range from the wellbeing end of the service spectrum to the equine assisted, trauma focussed, psychotherapy end

In terms of education, it sits in the world of Alternative Provision of Education, used for children and young people as part of their education provision particularly for those who struggle with mainstream education. eg SEND and those with an EHCP

# Is it magic?

Well no, it has its base in science, with different scientific approaches for different applications

Equine assisted differs from other types of animal assisted....

As you know.....

- Horses don't seek to please
- Horses have an aura
- Horses are herd animals
- Horses communicate non-verbally, using their emotions from their limbic system
- Horses are individuals and have personalities!





# How it works

For example, the movement of the equine produces in a bareback rider the same movement as unaided walking would give. This is the basis of physiotherapy working with the horses in ridden work

Being outside, physically active and helping another being is the basis for working with emotionally

Equines call us back to the present, very helpful for PTSD or ADHD



# Horsemanship skills used in EAS

Grooming

Hoof care

Feeding

Leading

Stable care

Field management

The study of the herd

Agility

Long lining

Understanding equine behaviour and communication

The 5 Domains of welfare

Lunge work

At liberty work

Matching the horses' paces in walk and trot

Knowing horse personalities as well as human

Management of common, minor injury or illness

Bareback work

Ridden work

Competition

# Who is doing it?

- Riding coaches in schools , Psychotherapists, physios, OTs, people with other bespoke training
- Numbers are estimated at 50,000pa
- Training Providers
- Country wide differences,
  - NI has provision paid for centrally by Government
  - Some counties eg Dorset have NHS funding for certain provisions
  - Most counties use EAS for Alternative Provision of Education but not all

# Who is it helping?

- People of all ages, cultures and backgrounds
- Families
- Firms
- The criminal justice system
- The NHS
- Education
- Society



# The Equine Assisted Services Partnership

- A relatively new organisation, initially formed from a pilot with HETI, to become the home of the UK Human Equine Interaction Register (HEIR)
- It is a membership organisation which hosts the Register, approves practitioners to a set of standards and awards the *kitemark*
- It is not the only register open to EAS providers but at present it is the register that accepts all types of EAS, individuals and organisations, as well as across all levels of training so that folk can be encouraged to join, learn and grow with like minded members
- EASP offers additional members benefits to the kitemark including access to training, CPD, supervision and shared resources

# The coming of standardisation

- This is how all things grow and develop...
- And standards are now needed to keep everyone safe whether practitioner, commissioner of services, service user or equine.
- The standards need to be accessible and to encourage people to practice safely, ethically and to keep learning and developing

# EAS Partnership Strategy 2024-2027

Why

**Our Purpose:** To be the Membership body for the UK Equine Assisted Services sector

**Our Mission:** To support and represent a high quality Equine Assisted Services sector in the UK and ensure a good life for equid partners

Outcomes

Grow membership through a robust and inclusive value proposition

Lead and embed high welfare standards for equid partners, service providers and participants

Raise awareness of EAS sector, its value and its impact, to influence decision-makers

Our Objectives

1. Signpost training, education, CPD and supervision to meet our members' needs

2. Generate, support and disseminate sound research and evidence

3. Identify new funding and resources

4. Develop standards for EAS practice that ensure the greatest impact of the EAS sector:

- Professionalism
- Equine Welfare
- Service User Engagement
- Benefits and Impact
- Governance

5. Work in partnership (or consultation) with members and other stakeholders in the EAS sector

6. Build key external stakeholder relationships

7. Establish and deliver an effective communications strategy

How

# Thank you for Listening

## Do you have any questions?

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