



Equine welfare

British Horse Council

12 December 2025

Kim Ayling

Updating Scottish Code of Practice

Sector-led update

Creation of 6 working group -
~40 individuals from over 25
organisations involved

Co-design with Scottish Government

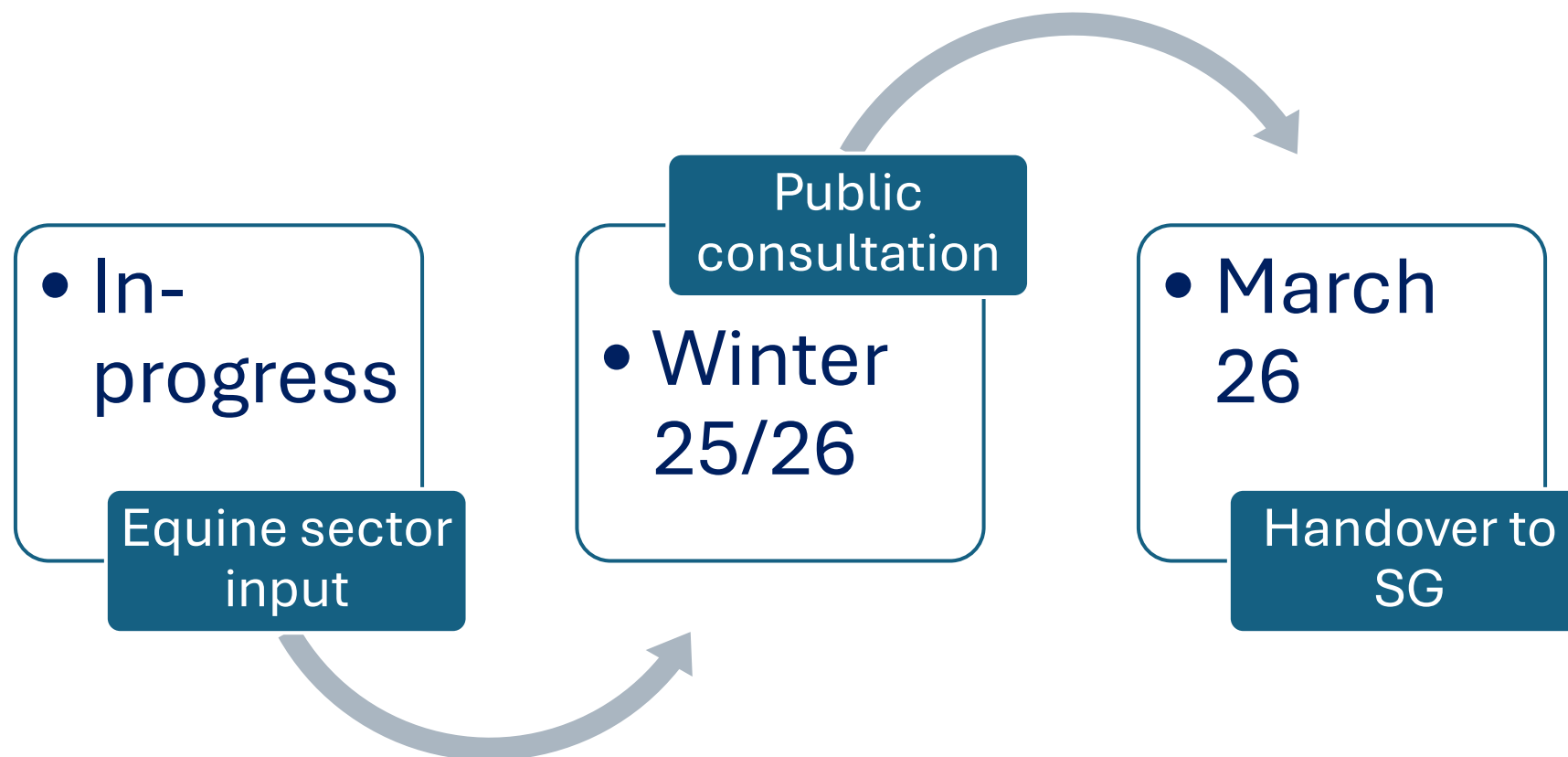
Harmonised approach

On-going opportunities to collaborate

Goal is to disseminate key
messages from within the
code in an accessible and
shareable format



Timeline, consultation and hand-over



Welfare situation



- Financially challenging times for all charities:
 - Redundancies
 - Closed to new intakes
 - Reduced stocking levels
- Some seeing an increase in rehomed horses returned BUT numbers being rehomed remain strong
- Uptick in requests to help with horses
- Multi-agency jobs – overbreeding & lack of succession planning
- Changing weather patterns – warmer, wetter winters
- Cost of living – impact on routine care given by horse owners
- NEWC sanctuary & rescue centre survey
 - Jan - February 2026
 - Better understand impact to whole sector & help identify solutions

Recently completed research

Completed

- Equid welfare at slaughter
- Retrospective analysis of TRACES
- Working equid welfare assessment tool



Italian Journal of Animal Science



ISSN: 1828-051X (Online) Journal homepage: www.tandfonline.com/journals/tjas20

Retrospective analysis of compliance with Reg. EC 1/2005: examination of Trade Control and Expert System for the transport of horses to and from Southern Italy

Barbara Padalino, Martina Felici, Beatrice Benedetti, Daniele Tullio, Martina Zappaterra & Laura Menchetti

Ongoing and future research

On-going

- Ethical framework tool

Awarded (to commence 2026)

- Narrative review of the welfare implications of headgear on equine welfare
- Equid welfare during transport - behaviour

