

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2022

ESTABLISHED 1977



NEWC
NATIONAL EQUINE
WELFARE COUNCIL

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NEWC UPDATE

Launch of the Human Equine Interaction Register (HEIR)

On the 31st March, the voluntary register will be opened to UK practitioners to bring together everyone involved in the field of human equine interaction ensuring high-quality service provision and creating greater awareness of this field of work.

NEWC is currently working with representatives from the HEIR working group on a Code of Practice to protect the welfare of equines involved in Equine Assisted Activities which will be incorporated into the NEWC accreditation process and the HEIR.

Read more about the launch here NEWC attends launch of the Human Equine Interaction Register (HEIR) - National Equine Welfare Council.

The register can be found [here](#)



Membership Accreditation process project

A working group comprised of representatives from across the NEWC membership has been formed to create a new NEWC member devised and agreed minimum standards framework and self-accreditation process.

The proposed changes will allow us to future proof our processes whilst creating opportunities for the membership to be engaged in the process.

It is proposed that NEWC will move to a member self-assessment system using a numerical minimum standards format, that can be completed online.

As the minimum standards will be clear and show expectations, Members can see how closely they meet the Minimum Standards and identify any areas in which they can make improvements.

Our members will therefore take ownership of their standards and if they fall below – create an improvement plan with the support of NEWC to meet the standards required.

It is also proposed that there will be a team of appointed members to peer assess in person re-accreditations, on a 3 – 5 years basis, giving an opportunity for more member input.

As Governments and devolved administrations move towards licensing sanctuaries, rescue and rehoming centres, it is hoped that compliance with the NEWC Minimum Standards will be very helpful in meeting licensing requirements for our members.

By our members maintaining or working towards full compliance with the Minimum Standards we have a basis for confidence that we are doing the best for the equines in our care as well as strengthening the reputation of the sector and NEWC.

Rehoming Network Update

It's hard to believe the NEWC Rehoming network is entering its 5th year. The group now has 50 regular members from 27 of our member charities.

The main aims of the NEWC Rehoming Network are to provide a networking opportunity for NEWC members who rehome equines, to forge better links between members, create contacts for others involved with rehoming as a means of support and advice, share knowledge, ideas and experiences with the ultimate goal of helping more horses and promote best practice in the rehoming of Equines.

This year we have 2 virtual workshops and hopefully will return to an in-person meeting in the summer. Over the three workshops, we will be focusing on:

- The difficult subject of how to decline offers of loan homes.
- The elderly horse: support measures, advice and management and relaying training principles to loan homes.

We will also have member highlight sessions where we shine the spotlight on the great achievements of our members.

Welcome to our new members!



The British Farriers and Blacksmiths Association (BFBA) exists to represent, and be the voice of, the professional farrier whilst supporting and enabling farriery and blacksmithing members throughout their career.

Horse Fairs/Markets

Horse prices remain high but there appears to still be hesitation from some auctioneers to resume sales at some locations across the country and concerns some venues may cease to hold equine sales.

Ruthin Auctions, Clitheroe Market and North West Auctions are resuming sales this spring – their first since Covid while a new venue, Darlington Market is holding its first-ever horse sale on Saturday 14th May. The thoroughbred sales remain unaffected.

Appleby Fair

Appleby Horse Fair has moved the 2022 Fair from its usual dates over the first weekend of June to ensure that the Fair does not fall on the same dates as the Queens Platinum Jubilee Bank Holiday weekend celebrations.

The mutually agreed start date for the Fair will be Thursday 9 June 2022, which falls in the week following the Jubilee celebrations so it is expected to be a busy fair this year.

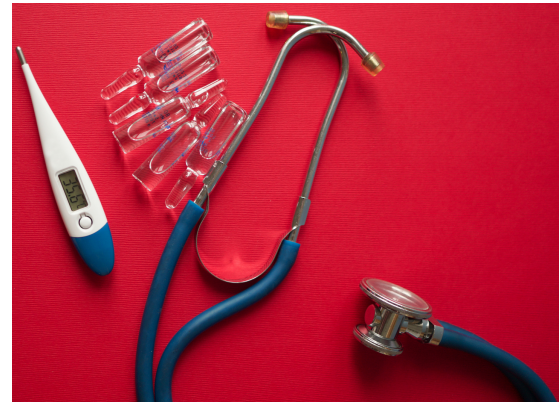


BHS Health Care Clinics

To date, these clinics have now seen over 1450 horses attend these days and have castrated an amazing 680 colts/stallions! The next dates are:

- Thursday 28th April at Holmfirth Cattle Market, West Yorkshire.
- Wednesday 4th May at Beechwood Equestrian Centre, Essex.

Any suggestions for areas of need for clinics can be sent to nicola.foster@bhs.org.uk for consideration.



UK's Relationship with the EU

Live animal physical checks at Border Control Posts were due to be introduced on 1 July 2022, however, these will now only commence at Sevington BCP in Kent and designated airport BCPs on this date.

For all other routes, checks will be maintained at the destination until BCP facilities have been completed.

The level of physical and identity checks from July 2022 onwards will be based on assessments of biosecurity and public health risks, although high-risk live animals imported from the EU will continue to be checked at 100%.

The UK Parliament's Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee published a Call for Evidence on 'import check readiness', which closed on the 17th February 2022.

British Horse Council responded highlighting the need for checks to be intelligence-led and risk-based, allowing ease of movement for compliant transporters while targeting those who aren't.

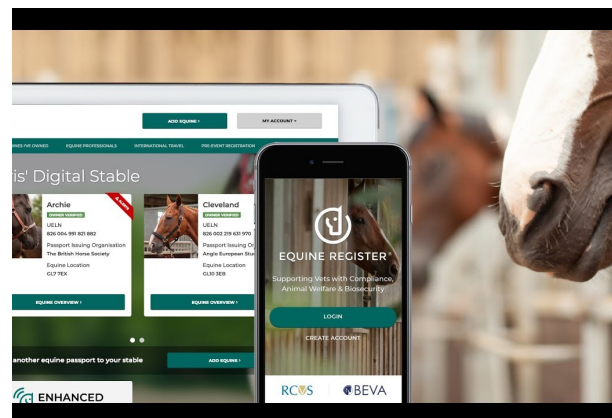
The Committee is now hearing oral evidence, transcripts and written evidence (including BHC's response) can be found **here**.

More information on the Border Operating Model can be found **here**

Legislation

Equine ID

Defra's consultation on Equine ID is expected to be published by the end of March and will run for 12 weeks. BHC aims to publish a simpler survey aimed at the one-horse owner to run alongside the consultation and help inform any sector response to the UK Government on changes to the system in England. The intent of the survey is to also understand public opinion - particularly those of horse owners - in Scotland, Northern Ireland on the current Equine ID system and support for any proposed changes.



The Scottish equine sector met the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, along with the Scottish Chief Veterinary Officer's team, for a second time to discuss the Equine ID system. A positive discussion was had on the benefits of the Weatherbys' digitised system, and the potential opportunities for a similar ScotEquine system. In Wales, Animal Welfare Network Wales' Equine Working Group has almost finalised its Welsh Equine ID report - setting out recommendations for the Welsh Government.

Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill

This Bill has progressed slowly through the House of Commons and is only at report stage, with all stages of the House of Lords still to go. Unless Parliamentary time is dedicated to pushing this Bill through or there is a carry-over to the next Parliamentary session (which is expected to start in May 2022), the Bill could fall.

It covers a wide variety of issues across multiple species, from an equine perspective it will ban the live export of equines for slaughter (in England, Wales and Scotland) and will give the police greater powers to investigate livestock worrying offences (England and Wales).

Kept Animals Bill

Welfare During Transport

The expected workshops to discuss and refine UK, Welsh & Scottish Government proposals on the following areas, have been delayed by around three months:

- 12-hour maximum journey times for equines.
- Setting an external temperature range within which equines can be transported, outside of this range equines must be transported in vehicles that have forced ventilation systems and can maintain the internal temperature within the accepted temperature range.
- Introducing minimum space allowance of 20cm above a horse's head

It is now anticipated that the first workshop (which will only invite only) will be held in June and the topic will be journey time.

Consultation on Welfare during Transport

Animal Welfare Plan for Wales 2021-2026

In November 2021, the Welsh Government published a 5-year plan for animal welfare, which introduces a broad range of policies intended to maintain the momentum of reform in animal welfare. From an equine perspective, the key points to note are:

- Animal welfare during transport
- The Kept Animals Bill (and transferring into Welsh law)
- Licensing of Animal Welfare Establishments (promise of a consultation)
- Improving the qualifications of Animal Welfare Inspectors

 [animal-welfare-plan-wales-2021-26](#)



Licensing of Rescue and Rehoming Centres in England

Defra has indicated that a consultation is expected in spring of this year. The welfare team has requested that any information that may be relevant to the development of the consultation be shared with them, such as number of horses cared for and rehomed yearly (average) and average yearly costs to run an animal welfare establishment.

The Association of Dogs and Cats Homes has launched a survey on licensing to help inform engagement on this issue and the intent is for NEWC to publish their own survey focusing on equines.

Animals (Penalty Notices) Bill

This Private Members' Bill, if passed, will create a system of financial penalties - which could include on-the-spot fines - of up to £5,000 for animal health and welfare offences in England.

The Bill allows for fixed penalty notices (FPNs) to be brought in for 81 pieces of secondary legislation and 900 offences (both animal health and welfare), however, secondary legislation is required to set out the detail and enable FPNs to be used.

Once the Bill passes, the next stage will be to identify what offences FPNs could and should be used for and develop the accompanying guidance.

The Bill is expected to pass before the end of the Parliamentary session, with its second reading in the House of Lords scheduled for the 18th of March.

 parliament.uk/bills/2914

Animal Sentience

The UK Government has also published the **Animal Welfare (Sentience) Bill** to make provision for an Animal Sentience Committee.

The intent of the Bill is to ensure that animal sentience is properly taken into account in both new and existing Government policy in England.

The Bill is expected to pass before the end of the Parliamentary session, but the final stages have been delayed due to pressure on Parliamentary time with the recent events in Ukraine.

Hiring of Horses

At the beginning of February Defra updated the guidance documents for the Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals)(England) Regulations 2018, including amendments to the guidance on Hiring out Horses.

The amendments included:

- clarifying the requirements for appointing veterinary inspectors
- how minor failings affect star ratings; the removal of the requirement that doors must be bolted top and bottom
- fire detection systems
- amending 'dung removal' to 'dung management' to allow for harrowing
- the removal of the higher standard that required horses 'not to be in reach of each other to bite...'
- amendment of the higher standard covering nutritional advice and body condition scoring.

Defra has committed to a full review of the regulation and guidance to start later this year and conclude in 2023.

Fireworks - Scotland

The Scottish Government introduced the Fireworks and Pyrotechnic Articles (Scotland) Bill to the Scottish Parliament in February 2022, after extensive consultations with stakeholders.

This Bill proposes to:

- Introduce a licensing system, whereby members of the public will be required to have a licence before they can buy, possess or use certain fireworks.
- Specifies that certain fireworks can only be supplied to, and used by, members of the public at certain times, including:
 - o Vaisakhi
 - o Guy Fawkes Day
 - o Hogmanay
 - o Chinese New Year
 - o Diwali
- Gives local authorities the powers to set up 'firework control zones'. Councils will be able to restrict the use of fireworks in these zones.

The Bill is currently at Stage 1 and is being considered by the Criminal Justice Committee, which published a call for views (closed on the 11th of March) and is also hearing oral evidence.

 [fireworks-and-pyrotechnic-articles-scotland](#)

Enforcement - England

The APPG for Animal Welfare (APGAW) is currently considering the effectiveness of animal welfare enforcement and has identified that a significant burden falls on local authorities.

APGAW held an enforcement roundtable on the 9th of March to outline some of the challenges that enforcement agencies face and discuss potential solutions.

A regional model was proposed, but further work is required to discuss the detail and ensure there are no unintended consequences.

Equine Welfare

Defra continues to meet with the equine welfare sector, including NEWC representatives, to understand any current or potential challenges to equine welfare. The next meeting is scheduled for 14th of June.

NEWC intends to launch a survey to gauge the resilience and sustainability of the equine welfare sector later in the year (late summer/autumn) when we expect to see pressures - such as increased cost of living - starting to have a significant impact.

Disease Alerts/Prevention Awareness

Equine anthelmintic resistance - a collective responsibility

The recent National Equine Forum debate highlighted the real and present risk of equine de-wormers no longer working if their use was continued in a non-targeted way with resistance now being seen to all classes of de-wormer.

Read a summary of this important debate below:

 [Threats to industry sustainability in the spotlight at 30th National Equine Forum](#)

Industry News



Ukraine Appeal

The Equine sector has united to launch an emergency appeal to help Ukrainian horses, their owners and carers. Leading organisations and individuals across Britain's equestrian community have united to form 'British Equestrians for Ukraine' which aims to help horses and their owners caught up in the crisis created by the Russian invasion.

The Ukrainian Equestrian Federation has put out an urgent call for supplies on the ground including feed, forage and shavings and with a groundswell of support from the equine industry, there was a clear need to help co-ordinate the offers of assistance from leading brands as well as raise money to fund aid directly where it's needed most.

You can donate to the emergency appeal [here](#)

The increasing cost of energy and how it will affect equines

Farming's biggest input costs are the 3F's- Fertiliser, Fuel, and Feed. Fertiliser is currently experiencing the biggest price increase with a standard blend of NPK for grass (hay, haylage, grazing grass) jumping from approx. £250 a ton in 2021 to £600 a ton pre-war in Ukraine to in excess of £800 a ton currently.

These high prices at the start of 2022 meant approx. 40% of farmers held back on ordering fertiliser supplies and waited to see a decrease in prices which never came. The invasion of Ukraine which saw an overnight price rise of over £200 a ton led to panic buying - Russia being the 4th biggest producer of Artificial fertiliser in the world, now under sanctions has led to a now insecure supply chain forcing prices up even further.

Cereal, hay and straw prices are steady at the moment but that is due to a good harvest last year and the southern hemisphere look like they are going to have a successful harvest because this year's crop was already in the ground before the price increase.

The biggest impact will be the fertiliser price on the 2022 grass and cereal harvest for us all.

The current situation in Ukraine is not helping as Ukraine account for 12% and with Russia combined they account for 30% of the world's wheat for human and animal consumption.

Whilst crops are established in Ukraine, will there be the manpower to maintain and harvest the crops going forward? Almost worldwide sanctions against Russia will prevent fertiliser and wheat exports.

The wheat price in the UK has jumped from £150 a ton to £300 a ton in the last few weeks which going forward will impact everything from feed prices to a loaf of bread.

Fuel prices too are at an all-time high with red diesel prices doubling and being priced daily which has also had a massive impact on Farming and everyone else.

So, what does this all mean for horse owners - the best guess is we will see a bag of feed increasing by 40 to 50% and a sharp rise in the cost of hay/haylage prices by the end of 2022.

To some extent, it will depend on how early spring comes, what rainfall we have and what forage is leftover from last year. If farmers reduce their fertiliser purchases this will result in reduced yields and less hay and straw on the market, resulting in higher prices.

HMRC - New Task Force Set Up to look at Dog/Cat/Equine Sector

Suspected tax evasion and tax fraud have always been reportable to the HMRC, but there is now a task force looking specifically at the dog/cat/equine sector to which reports of fraud will be sent directly if it involves animals.

As with any sector/industry, there is the potential for tax evasion and if you suspect any entity involved in the equine sector - whether it be breeding, selling, stud activity, livery etc - is not paying the appropriate taxes to HMRC, then you can search 'Report Fraud to HMRC' on gov.uk and complete an **online form**.

The form is easy to complete and in the white notes/other information sections, please mark your information for the attention of the dog/cat/equine task force.

Please note, it is not HMRC policy to respond to or comment on any Information it may receive.





Register of Animal Musculoskeletal Practitioners (RAMP) is a register of qualified Physiotherapists, Chiropractors and Osteopaths (MSK Practitioners) who treat animals. In response to concerns from DEFRA and senior MSK Allied Professionals regarding the lack of regulation, RAMP provides an industry-led solution.

The RAMP Gold Standard of Practice requires degree-level entry equivalent to those who treat humans and professional codes of practice based on the robust human healthcare regulation.

Search their website for more information and a list of registered practitioners.

rampregister.org

Education/Research/CPD Opportunities

World Horse Welfare fortnightly free webinars continue on the 13th April at 7pm with veterinarian Suzanne Green covering '*Making an end of life decision for your horse – how to know when it's time*'.



All previous welfare webinars are free to access via this link:

WorldHorseWelfare

[Welfare Wednesdays - World Horse Welfare](#)



The Donkey Sanctuary have recently started a five year project to look at all aspects of donkey ownership in the United Kingdom and Ireland, with the ultimate goal of keeping more donkeys in a stable, welfare friendly, loving home for life.

This survey aims to understand the scale and distribution of, and drivers for, donkey relinquishment and the need for rehoming.

Information from other welfare organisations will help to further understand where support is needed and to identify messaging or education needed for donkey owners or guardian homes to provide an appropriate lifelong home.

Your response to this survey will be invaluable to them, and all data collected will be anonymised. They will share their findings with you with your contact permissions.

Access the survey here: [RehomingSurvey](#)

The Horse Trust's Talk Equine Clinical Animal Behaviour webinars are continuing with Gemma Pearson discussing a case involving a mare that was highly aversive to loading on the 5th of April.

As well as the clinical animal behaviour webinars, other webinars are being planned including 'where does equine welfare fit into the complex world of livery yard management' and 'Being alternative: what is it that makes some yards change their management to become "horsecentric"'

Building on the impactful funded research on 'improving the management of obesity', a workshop is being arranged with The Showing Council to discuss and debate the appropriate language to be used in the show ring to help land the message about normalised obesity and the change that is needed.



NEWC Virtual AGM

Thursday 28th April



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