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QUALITY OF LIFE



DEFINING AND IMPLEMENTING BEST PRACTICE THAT SUPPORTS THE WHOLE HEALTH OF THE HORSE TO ENSURE THE BEST POSSIBLE QUALITY OF LIFE



British racing strives to uphold the highest standards of care across every stage of a horse's life.

This must be informed and underpinned by robust evidence and the latest scientific research into what makes a good life for a horse. Insights from the field of animal welfare science have enhanced and refined our strategic priorities in ensuring horses bred for racing lead a "good life" by enhancing the positive physical and mental state of the horse.

The scope of this work and ambition extends across every area of the horse's life, with respect for each racehorse at its centre.

By embedding welfare-focused best practice into the core of the sport, the industry will demonstrate its commitment to, and advocacy for, ensuring the best possible lives for racehorses.

PROGRESS TO DATE

DATA
Welfare Data Unit established providing essential data to industry.

DIGITAL RECORDS
MediRecords pilot completed and adopted as business as usual for major jump festivals.

EUTHANASIA CODE
And euthanasia decision tree published.

WELLBEING
Work underway to support the health of the whole horse.

WHIP REVIEW
A comprehensive review assessing the whip delivers 20 recommendations and new rules to deter misuse.

WELFARE FUNDING
£7.5m secured to support welfare since 2019.

ON COURSE TRAINING
11 state-of-the-art mannequins purchased to support the welfare of horses through enhanced training of 500+ racecourse vets and medical personnel.

ETHICAL FRAMEWORK
'Commitment to the Racehorse' and 'Ethical justification for the use of horses in sport' in development.

EXPERT PARTNERS
Partnership established and collaboration with independent experts.

Nottingham Trent University · University of Exeter · Hartpury University · STRI · RVC Royal Veterinary College University of London · World Horse Welfare · Lancaster University · University of Surrey

INDUSTRY TRAINING
13 new welfare training modules developed and made freely available to industry in 2025.

SUITABILITY TO RACE
Latest evidence of the racing of two-year-olds reviewed and published.

PRIZE MONEY
Appearance money scheme reviewed and closed to reduce incentive to finish races.



INSIGHTS FROM THE FIELD OF ANIMAL WELFARE SCIENCE HAVE ENHANCED AND REFINED OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

PRIORITIES

DEFINING AND IMPLEMENTING BEST PRACTICE THAT SUPPORTS THE WHOLE HEALTH OF THE HORSE TO ENSURE THE BEST POSSIBLE QUALITY OF LIFE.

COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS OF ENHANCED DATA TO INFORM EVIDENCE-BASED DECISION-MAKING

→ Further embed and enhance the centralised Welfare Data Unit to provide clean, verified data to the industry to inform evidence-based decisions.

\+ Establish new sources of data off the racecourse to enhance what we know about the equine athlete in the training environment including early-years inputs.

\+ BHA Stable Inspectorate to create fully digitalised, data-driven inspections to improve welfare data and analysis.

\+ Standardise quality-of-life indicators for consistent benchmarking.

ENHANCE CROSS-INDUSTRY COLLABORATION TO CONTINUOUSLY IMPROVE WELFARE STANDARDS

→ Embed welfare in decisions from training yard to board room, supported by CPD and training.

\+ Support the Industry People Programme to develop welfare training and education to support a thriving world-class workforce putting best practice into action at every level across the industry.

\+ Undertake an evidence-led review of unregulated areas of the horse's lifecycle - including breeding and pre-training - to identify where clearer guidance, strengthened standards or improved collaboration may be needed, recognising the sensitivities, existing practices and diverse responsibilities across these parts of the industry.

DRIVING THE LONG-TERM PRIORITIES FOR EQUINE VETERINARY RESEARCH

→ Maintain and strengthen long-term partnerships with world-leading academic institutions to advance equine welfare research, drive evidence-based improvements and ensure British racing remains at the forefront of welfare innovation.

→ Supporting the design and delivery of world-class equine veterinary research and welfare science to contribute to advancements in scientific understanding and ensure bio-security and physical health amongst British racehorses, and the wider equine population.

→ Deepen racing's relationship with researchers to ensure veterinary research delivers the priorities identified by racing, and delivers usable and practical results to drive enhanced racehorse welfare standards, and supports what we need to know whilst informing evidence-based decision making in British racing.

→ Prioritise science that supports the genetic diversity, longevity and resilience of the Thoroughbred, individually, and for the breed.

KEY: → Ongoing workstream + New workstream

IMPLEMENT PROJECTS TO SUPPORT THE WHOLE HEALTH OF THE HORSE

→ Identify and analyse training-yard environment data (routine, social contact, facilities) to inform projects.

\+ Determine how nutrition, behavioural interactions, health, and environment contribute to quality of life, applying the work of subject experts in a practical and sustainable way for the sport.

\+ Facilitating natural equine behaviours and ethical training principles across the sport through enhanced training, embedding of best practice and research to understand impact on performance.

\+ Grow our understanding of how the early years contribute to improved quality of life, welfare and safety outcomes, during and after a horse's career in racing, and establish this as best practice.

\+ Understand and identify adaptation required to racing's structures and calendar to accommodate changes in early-years management.

SAFEGUARDING THE FUTURE OF THE THOROUGHBRED ATHLETE BY ENSURING A ROBUST AND RESILIENT BREED

→ Deepen analysis to support the future genetic diversity of the Thoroughbred and responsible breeding decisions.

→ Work collaboratively to support initiatives to support a sustainable foal crop.

\+ Undertake an expert-led review of emerging science on assisted reproductive technologies, including artificial insemination, to assess whether future consideration could support genetic diversity and sustainability within existing regulatory and international frameworks.

\+ Review breeding and pre-training practices against early-years welfare principles.