

National Equine Forum Bulletin

We hope you enjoy the 2022 National Equine Forum – this year’s programme looks to be as engaging and thought-provoking as ever. While Covid has put a number of our projects on hold in recent times, we have a full plan of activity in place for this year and would like to take the opportunity to outline our key objectives and areas of focus in 2022.



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy for the sector

Our aim is to *'harness a culture of everyday inclusion and accessibility'* to enable us to make real headway towards tackling inequalities within our sector. We'll be looking at ourselves internally as an organisation and then research the perception of our sport to the general public. This research will then help us to grow participation by opening up opportunities and making riding more accessible to people from non-traditional backgrounds in particular for people from ethnically diverse communities and for those from lower socio-economic groups / areas of higher deprivation.

Working with urban riding centres on the barriers and challenges they face

Research will be done to find out more about how urban centres operate, their offering, funding models, staffing/volunteer skill levels and the barriers to participation in urban areas. The aim is to find operational models that can be replicated across urban landscapes to facilitate participation.

Riding centre health check

In a bid to help safeguard the long-term sustainability of our sport, we'll be launching an ambitious survey this spring, which will be sent to all riding centres across the UK. In conjunction with the BHS, RDA, PC and ABRS, we aim to gain insight into their current operations in a post-Covid, economically challenging industry. We'll be looking at capacity, current challenges and what support would help. The resulting insight will be vital in the promotion of the sport going forward, but also help us in our work with DCMS and Defra around viability, participation, facilities and getting people active.

Funding opportunities

The new Together Fund from Sport England, with money from the National Lottery, has recently launched and we're awaiting our funding award news but we're anticipating around £195K. This pot of funding is aimed at four key audiences: lower socio-economic groups, culturally diverse communities, disabled people and people with long-term health conditions. It's a follow-on from the Tackling Inequalities Fund, which was introduced during Covid to help ensure the viability of a number of activities and centres, and will distribute £300k to over 50 centres across England by the end of 2022.

Safeguarding

Managing the safety and welfare of both human and equine participants continues to be a priority, and a 'safe to play' campaign is in the planning stages with Sport England. This would have a focus on people to start and an equine element developed in tandem.

Government liaison

We continue to work with both DCMS and Defra, with and on behalf of our member bodies, on a number of topics, but current 'hot topics' include Brexit, safeguarding the use of indoor facilities for any future pandemic lockdowns and equine welfare during transport.

Biosecurity

Our Equine Infectious Diseases Action Group will continue to champion biosecurity to keep our equine herd and gatherings safe. The group delivered their '[Advice notes for equine gatherings](#)' last year and will keep providing updates as well as working in a number of other areas.

Coaching

Our Equi-Youth Coaching Programme continues, and the nine candidates have been through a series of practical coach development workshops with an option to take their Pony Club Level 1 assessment in Equestrian Coaching (General Riding). We'll be shortly launching a Equi-Youth Rider Development Programme and will work with urban centres to break down participation barriers.

Concussion

As part the sport-wide DCMS initiative, a working group has been formed, headed by our Athlete Health Lead Ash Wallace and new Chief Medical Officer. Our aim is to have coherent concussion policies across the Federation, utilising our industry knowledge as well as that of other sports. A programme of education and communication will help improve understanding, culture and processes.

World Class Programme

We received an uplift in our UK Sport funding following a successful review, which has given us an additional seven funded athlete places on the programmes, making 42 across the Olympic disciplines and 13 para athlete places.

This year our teams will compete in World Championships and it's the first opportunity to qualify for Paris 2024, which is the primary aim. The dressage, jumping and para dressage are in Herning, Denmark (6–14 August), while the eventers will defend their title in Pratoni del Vivaro, Italy (15–18 September). To attain qualification for Paris, teams will need to finish:

- Dressage – top six
- Eventing – top seven
- Jumping – top five
- Para dressage – top seven