

March 2007

Strategy for the Horse Industry in England and Wales - Action Plan

www.bhic.co.uk

The desired outcome column for this update table has been deleted to allow more space for progress reports

Action	Responsibility	Position at Launch of Strategy – Dec. 05	Current Position. Action in Progress and Next Steps :
Action 1 : To achieve and maintain a satisfactorily high standard of animal welfare throughout the Horse Industry, through successful implementation of the Health and Welfare Strategy for the Horse, Pony and Donkey, and through Industry support to dedicated equine welfare organisations	BEVA/BHIC to lead in partnership with Defra The whole Horse Industry has an interest in and responsibility for delivering this responsibility.	Generally high standard of equine welfare, but still some areas need to be addressed, and cases of poor welfare consistently visible.	The Equine Health and Welfare Strategy for Great Britain was launched at the National Equine Forum in March 2007. The Strategy sets out a vision for equine health and welfare in Britain. Eight Aims support the achievement of the vision, and key health and welfare issues are identified under the Aims. A dedicated website for the strategy is www.equinehealthandwelfarestrategy.co.uk And can also be accessed through the welfare pages of the BHIC website.
Action 2 : Develop a Horse Industry Communications Network - Initiate a programme of regular meetings between the Communications Directors of key Industry bodies	BHS (Oliver Wilson) and BEF (Clive Hetherington) to lead, in conjunction with all Industry associations	Historically, little communication between key organisations. Actions and announcements are not linked up.	Industry bodies launched an Equine Communications Network in August 2006, bringing together more than 12 organisations, to provide a forum for exchange of information and to improve communication. Defra funded a communications workshop in January 2006, which brought together communications heads from across the Industry for a facilitated discussion. A programme of future meetings has been agreed. Work now underway on identifying communication protocol.

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<p>Action 3 : Achieve effective two-way communications – Explore the development of an effective central Industry communications function to enhance the communication, public relations and information structure for the Industry and promote equestrian issues and participation</p>	<p>BHIC to lead, in conjunction with Industry associations – including above communications network</p> <p>(See Action 2)</p>	<p>No central Industry communications network or system for communicating with the Horse Industry as a whole</p>	<p>Defra provided start- up funding for BHIC/ strategy website (see www.bhic.co.uk) and an contribution towards running the site for its first year.</p> <p>The website, which hosts the strategy, the action plan and a range of other material, is now receiving good feedback both nationally and from as far afield as the USA and Japan – these countries are now studying how the BHIC model and strategy initiatives could apply to their countries.</p> <p>Through an email news sign-up service, the BHIC is now sending out direct regular email updates to hundreds of people who have signed up directly to this information service.</p>
<p>Action 4 : Develop the Horse Industry’s regional influence – Establish an effective regional structure for the Industry and develop a productive dialogue with regional bodies, including the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs), to promote the Industry’s interests and build its contribution to regional priorities</p>	<p>BHIC (Cathy McGlynn) to lead, in conjunction with BEF, Government, Local/Regional Government, RDAs and other stakeholders</p>	<p>Horse Industry has little regional influence or communication with regional authorities</p>	<p>Defra organised initial discussions between BHIC and three interested RDAs.</p> <p>These positive discussions revealed a number of possible areas of further development, including a place on the land-based business forum in one region, which BETA has accepted on behalf of the wider industry, and an invitation to address the RDA rural network.</p> <p>Defra has shared the Strategy with the eight Regional Rural Affairs Forums and has encouraged them to consider how they might contribute to the further development of the horse industry at a regional level.</p> <p>The East Midlands Forum has shown a particular interest in this issue, and was instrumental in the securing of the significant grant from the Learning and Skills Council mentioned under Action 10 below.</p>

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<p>Action 5 : Promote Local Horse Networks – Work with local authorities and the Local Government Association to develop a framework for the creation of local horse networks where sufficient demand exists</p>	<p>BHIC (Cathy McGlynn) to lead in conjunction with BEF, Government and LGA</p>	<p>There are some good examples of local horse groups, which could be built on, but these are often single issue (generally access-oriented) groups which limits their influence with local authorities</p>	<p>A pilot equestrian network is being developed in the East of England, and an outline plan to promote local horse networks is expected to be agreed by end of 2007</p>
<p>Action 6 : The Role of riding schools - Produce a costed and time limited plan for how riding schools can more effectively maximise their potential (perhaps exploring the possibility for developing riding schools into community riding centres which would act as local 'horse hubs') in both rural and urban locations</p>	<p>BHS (Margaret Linington-Payne) and ABRS (Julian Marczak, to lead in conjunction with BEF (Paul Frost),</p>	<p>Some very professional successful riding schools exist, but many are struggling and do not consider they are given the support they need</p>	<p>The BHS and ABRS are working together to develop a draft plan. Both organisations provide training for riding school proprietors in various aspects of business management.</p> <p>The BEF is also looking at ways of working with riding schools to increase participation in equestrian sports</p>

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<p>Action 7 : Research participation in riding – Research number and location of riders, and public perceptions of equestrianism</p>	<p>BETA (Claire Williams) to lead in conjunction with Defra</p>	<p>Limited current source of information or data on the size, nature and perception of the Industry</p>	<p>BETA commissioned research through independent resource to update the National Equestrian Survey 1999, and for an Omnibus Survey.</p> <p>Defra has provided part-funding for the first stage of the research. The Omnibus Survey was published in February 2006. The full report is obtainable from BETA at www.beta-uk.org</p> <p>Full research updating the 1999 BETA National Equestrian Survey was published at the 2006 National Equine Forum and a final version of the structural report was available at the end of July 2006, followed by detailed reports on both the feed and bedding, and footwear and clothing markets.</p>
<p>Action 8 : Contribution to Government Public Service Agreements – Initiate discussions with relevant Government Departments and agencies on how the Horse Industry could help contribute to fulfilling their Public Service Agreements and other social policy targets using evidence from case studies, and further research</p>	<p>BHIC (Graham Cory), in conjunction with BEF (Paul Frost) Defra, Local Government</p>	<p>The Horse Industry is capable of making a significant contribution to social policy objectives, in areas such as education, health, criminal justice and social inclusion, but examples are currently isolated and there is little hard evidence or widespread recognition of this potential</p>	<p>Following publication of the strategy, Defra wrote to relevant Government Departments to draw their attention to the real and potential contributions that the Horse Industry can make to their areas of responsibility. Discussions are continuing.</p> <p>Meanwhile, evidence of the beneficial social effects of riding is being gathered and placed on the BHIC website which is serving as a repository of evidence of Industry's contribution.</p> <p>In addition, the BEF has now agreed and put in place a Plan for Participation to increase grass roots participation, while the Riding for the Disabled Association is continuing to develop volunteering communities</p>

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<p>Action 9 : Business benchmarking - Introduce a benchmarking system, to raise standards and performance across all types of equestrian business</p>	<p>BETA (Claire Williams) to lead</p>	<p>Many small businesses unaware of how they are performing relative to others and therefore lacking benchmarking information to assess where there is potential for improvement</p>	<p>BETA has started the process by surveying members on several business indicators in order to show how benchmarking can be utilized to benefit businesses. BETA's survey on turnover and staffing levels was completed in late 2006, and a retail sales index has started. It is hoped that this can then be used to better raise awareness of the benefits of benchmarking to the wider industry.</p>
<p>Action 10 : Business professionalism - Encourage targeted continuing professional development in the workplace for equestrian managers, and make access to training easier; establish a business networking system on a local or regional basis to share information, experiences and best practice</p>	<p>BHS (Chris Doran), BETA (Claire Williams), ABRS (Julian Marczak) to lead in conjunction with other Industry bodies and Lantra</p>	<p>Managers often lack necessary skills and knowledge to manage their businesses effectively, nor do they know where to go to find sources of information</p>	<p>BHIC is bringing together interested parties for initial discussions on how to establish a business networking system on a regional or local basis in order to share information and best practice. Networking meetings held in 2006 in Hampshire, Shropshire and Staffordshire. East Midlands region, through the University of Lincoln are delivering a project called EM Ride where they are offering Business Management training to East Midlands proprietors through LSC funding.</p> <p>BETA has launched a 3 module, 3 day management training programme aimed at the small equestrian business manager with little or no direct training in business. Already run for the ABRS and BETA the modules offer training in managing people, financial management and relationship management</p>
<p>Action 11: Fiscal and regulatory constraints – Horse Industry to identify fiscal and regulatory constraints on equestrian businesses, and make a cogent case for change where appropriate</p>	<p>BHIC (Graham Cory) to lead in conjunction with Horse and Pony Taxation Committee</p>	<p>Many claims are made about the effects of fiscal and regulatory constraints on horse businesses, but these are not always substantiated or accepted by national and local authorities</p>	<p>Defra has been in touch with the Valuation Office Agency and the Department for Communities and Local Government on rating issues, and the VOA have agreed to meet with the horse industry to discuss these issues if the Horse and Pony Taxation Committee indicate that this is necessary.</p>

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<p>Action 12: The Status of the Horse - Set up a working group representative of all parts of the Industry to determine whether the status of the horse is a significant issue, and if so to establish an Industry-wide position and make a convincing case for change, with consideration being given to the situation in other Member States</p>	<p>BETA (Claire Williams) to lead on behalf of the BHIC. Defra to support the working group on request by providing factual advice and guidance</p>	<p>Views on the optimum designation vary widely. No detailed work has been done by the Industry as a whole to identify the implications</p>	<p>BETA established in 2006 a working group representative of all parts of the Industry to determine whether the status of the horse is a significant issue.</p> <p>A date being set for first meeting of the working party in the first half of 2007.</p> <p>Defra will pursue this issue, in light of this group's findings</p>
<p>Action 13 Insurance - Pursue all three strands of the insurance issue i.e:</p> <p>A. Continue to discuss with Government ways of ensuring that the risks associated with riding are recognised and accepted</p> <p>B. Make rider, horse and instructor record forms freely available, and devise an educational programme to help riding establishment proprietors improve the quality of their records</p>	<p>A.BHS (Graham Cory) to lead</p> <p>B. BHS (Graham Cory) and ABRS, (Julian Marczak), to lead, in conjunction with representatives of the insurance Industry</p>	<p>Significant insurance premium hikes have contributed to severe difficulties for some equestrian establishments</p> <p>The Industry and insurance working group has already identified that better record keeping is one way to keep down premiums and devised new forms to assist riding schools in maintaining better records</p>	<p>A. Defra is representing the interests of the horse industry in a cross Government project to look at issues such as risk management and attaining insurance. It has drawn a number of developments to the BHIC's attention, such as the Heath and Safety Executive's web-based electronic self-assessment tool for farmers, which may well be relevant to many equestrian businesses as many risks will be the same.</p> <p>Discussions continue as to whether the risk inherent in riding can be reflected explicitly in law, however, section 1 of the Compensation Act 2006, which received Royal Assent on 25 July, confirms that when considering a claim for negligence or breach of statutory duty, the courts can take into account whether requiring particular precautions to be taken against a risk might prevent or impede a desirable activity from taking place or deter people from providing it. This provides helpful recognition that desirable activities, such as riding, may include a degree of risk, and should help to ensure that activities are not prevented because of the fear of litigation and excessively risk-averse behaviour.</p>

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<p>C. Explore with Government ways in which the adverse implications of the Mirvahedy judgement can be ameliorated for horse owners</p>	<p>C.BHIC (Graham Cory) to lead, in conjunction with other stakeholders such as the CLA</p>	<p>C. Both Horse Industry and CLA have raised the issues of Mirvahedy judgement with DEFRA</p>	<p>B. BHS and ABRS disseminated rider, horse and instructor record forms to their member riding schools, and encouraged them and other non-affiliated schools to use them as these have been established as the most effective action to take to constrain rises in premiums. This form, together with the BHS Horse Assessment form and the BHS Instructor/Escort Details form can be downloaded free from www.bhs.org.uk/content/Ods-More.asp?id=2014&pg=Approvals&spg=Publications&area=6 The BHS has also run a number of one-day courses for proprietors in which the issues of record keeping and risk management have been addressed. There remains work to be done in encouraging some proprietors to conduct proper risk assessments.</p> <p>C: The BHIC has been working with Defra to identify how the Act might be amended to address the problems caused by the Mirvahedy judgement, and supported Laurence Robertson's Ten Minute Bill which fell through lack of parliamentary time. Defra wrote to interested stakeholders in Autumn 2006 to invite views on possible amendment to the Animals Act, and the overwhelming majority of responses were in favour of a change. Defra Ministers have offered to provide appropriate support if a suitable vehicle to amend the Act, such as a Private Member's Bill, can be found. That offer remains on the table.</p>
<p>Action 14 : Statistical classifications - Facilitate the gathering of statistics that will better allow the value of the Industry to be assessed, through a revision and redefinition of the Standard industrial Classification and Standard Occupational Codes at a five digit level</p>	<p>BETA Claire Williams), to lead in conjunction with the BHIC, Lantra and the Office of National Statistics</p>	<p>Official statistics are often unhelpful with equestrian equipment being classified for data purposes (in the official statistics) for example together with luggage. Therefore there is no data to help identify the growth or otherwise of saddlery and other exports</p>	<p>An initial meeting with LANTRA was held in 2006 to discuss potential for change. It was found that any reclassification of data was much more difficult than first envisage as this would involve changes needed at EU level. Therefore this action has been put on hold pending further investigation as to the likelihood of success</p>

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<p>Action 15 : Promotional material - Promote the UK as a source of quality goods and services through preparation of a promotional paper and digital (DVD) guide to British excellence in the equestrian Industry</p>	<p>BETA (Claire Williams) to lead for Industry, in conjunction with UK Trade and Investment</p>	<p>The reputation of British products could be more fully promoted and exploited to better develop existing and emerging markets</p>	<p>A DVD Guide to UK Equestrian Industry was prepared by UKTI in conjunction with BETA and launched in February 2006.</p> <p>An update of the printed guide is currently being prepared and will be published during 2007.</p>
<p>Action 16: Trade fairs and promotions – Encourage greater participation in overseas and domestic equestrian trade fairs and travel promotions, in order to highlight British expertise, products and tourism opportunities</p>	<p>BETA (Claire Williams) to lead for Industry, in conjunction with Visit Britain and UK Trade and Investment</p>	<p>In an expanding equestrian worldwide marketplace, the UK needs to be able to promote its equestrian products as widely and effectively as possible</p>	<p>BETA will continue to discuss with UK Trade and Investment and other bodies how to effectively utilize funding and resources for international marketing</p> <p>UK inc had a presence at the World Games and has increasing participation in additional international Trade Fairs.</p>
<p>Action 17: New technologies and research and development - Encourage use of new and developing technologies and research and development in business, to improve productivity and efficiency</p>	<p>BETA (Claire Williams) to lead for Industry, in conjunction with the Department of Trade & Industry</p>	<p>Although this is being done in some instances, more could be done to improve access to Information Communication Technology (ICT) and build closer links between the Industry and business support and advice in this field</p>	<p>BETA to continue to explore with governmental and regional bodies how closer cooperation can be achieved; and identify and exploit opportunities to make greater use of ICT in the development of horse-related products and services</p> <p>This action is ongoing. BETA is continuing at present to develop the standard for safe saddle manufacture, and measuring techniques for horse bedding standards.</p>

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<p>Action 18: Equestrian Tourism - Encourage a cohesive approach to promoting equestrian tourism through local authorities, regional tourism councils and national bodies; publish a national register of riding holidays and equestrian tourism opportunities on the internet; and establish a national descriptive grading system for equestrian tourism</p>	<p>BHS (Margaret Linington-Payne) to lead with BETA, BHB, ABRS and BEF working with holiday providers and regional and national tourism bodies</p>	<p>Many exciting and innovative individual equestrian tourism offerings are already available in England and Wales, but they are not always promoted as effectively as possible at regional and national level</p>	<p>Progress is being made – for example BETA is linking up with commercial tourism businesses to promote equine tourism in the UK as well as abroad. BETA also arranged an equestrian tourism stand at the Equitana International show in Germany in March 2007.</p> <p>BETA also published a guide to Riding Holidays in the UK, mid 2006</p> <p>The BHS has expanded “Horses Welcome” a quality assured B&B scheme for horses from its Scottish origin to include England and Wales</p> <p>In 2006 Exmoor and the Quantocks riding guide was published and a new Radnor Forest Ride opened.</p> <p>Industry representatives to meet to discuss how to approach holiday providers and regional and national tourism bodies</p>
<p>Action 19: Recruitment and retention strategy - Devise and implement a strategy for attracting and retaining staff in all sectors of the Industry</p>	<p>BHS (Margaret Linington-Payne) to lead in conjunction with the BHB, Industry communications heads and Lantra</p>	<p>Industry currently facing major challenges in attracting and retaining sufficient levels of staff. There is no clear career structure, and often working conditions are poor and career progression limited</p>	<p>BHB has a recruitment and retention strategy in place for employees in the racing industry.</p> <p>BHS already produces careers literature, attends exhibitions and answers numerous queries from schools. They are currently drafting simple material for schools careers advisors; and also have a jobs register on the website</p> <p>Lantra has career-based literature relating to employment in the Horse Industry http://www.lantra.co.uk/Equine/</p> <p>The BHIC will explore sources of funding for marketing of this material more widely; and consider options for developing a central jobs register</p>

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<p>Action 20: Vocational training -Introduce a coordinated Industry strategy to work with schools so as to provide work experience opportunities and vocational training across the Horse Industry</p>	<p>BHS (Margaret Linington-Payne) to lead, in conjunction with BHEST</p>	<p>Equestrian training is only very occasionally included in sports teaching in schools, limiting opportunities for young people to develop an interest in leisure riding and potential equestrian careers</p>	<p>BHB and BHS are meeting to share good practice.</p> <p>Consultation ongoing to ensure new 14-9 diploma is relevant to industry requirements.</p> <p>BHS is utilising Sport England funding distributed through BEF to give school children the opportunity to experience riding and caring for horses.</p>
<p>Action 21: Staff management training - Encourage equestrian business proprietors to further their own skills in human resource management, health and safety and physical resource management</p>	<p>BHS (Chris Doran) and ABRS (Julian Marczak) to lead, in conjunction with Lantra</p>	<p>The BHB promotes Investors in People and encourages affiliated businesses to adopt it as a management development tool</p> <p>The rest of the Industry is characterised by a fragmented pattern of staff management practices</p>	<p>Contact to be made with Business Link to investigate regional training availability. Ongoing discussions with Lantra and contact to be made with Regional Partnership managers.</p>
<p>Action 22: Skill levels and training needs - Undertake research to establish skill levels and training needs with the aim of defining current and future skills requirements</p>	<p>BHS (Chris Doran) ABRS (Julian Marczak) to lead, in conjunction with Lantra</p>	<p>The true level of skills needs within the Horse Industry is not currently known, although anecdotal evidence exists of skills gaps and areas of shortage within the component sectors</p>	<p>BHS and ABRS are producing a questionnaire for all riding schools to identify particular training needs and skill gaps. BHS research is being utilised.</p> <p>Data is also available from the Sector Skills Agreement for the Equine Industry.</p>

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<p>Action 23: Practical training good practice - Industry-based training providers and colleges to work together for better communication, to disseminate and share good practice for the practical training elements of education programmes, through optimising the use of human and physical resources</p>	<p>BHS (Chris Doran) to lead, in conjunction with College/ Industry liaison and advisory groups</p>	<p>Some within the Industry consider that College courses do not fulfill Industry requirements, especially regarding the practical content of equine qualifications, although this is disputed by Colleges</p>	<p>BHIC to encourage Industry organisations to work with Colleges through their liaison and advisory groups, to improve relationships and to ensure that both College courses and other training provision fully address the agreed needs of the Industry</p> <p>This is progressing. Wiltshire College for example has now worked BHS qualifications into all their students' timetables and qualifications.</p> <p>BHS organises meetings with College representatives and proprietors to identify areas of concern.</p>
<p>Action 24: Funding policy and age restrictions - Work with the Learning and Skills Council regarding the current policy of funding mainly large providers, the range of qualifications accepted, and barriers created by current age restrictions</p>	<p>BHS, (Margaret Linington-Payne) to lead, in conjunction with BHEST</p>	<p>It is almost impossible for those providing training for small numbers who are studying Industry recognised non NVQ qualifications to access funding</p>	<p>BHIC and partners agreed to approach Learning and Skills Council in mid 2006 to explore ways of addressing the problem over small training providers</p> <p>Research has also been undertaken to establish riding school industry requirements – engaging with Lantra to ensure their consultations reflect the results. However, reorganisation of Learning and Skills Councils has meant it has been difficult to engage the necessary people. Response to a consultation document following the Leitch Review has stressed the needs of smaller providers.</p>
<p>Action 25: Training and skills coordination - Industry organisations to work together to achieve more co-ordination</p>	<p>BHIC (Margaret Linington-Payne) to lead, in conjunction with Lantra</p>	<p>A confusing overall picture. Several suites of qualifications exist across the Industry with varying degrees of credibility</p>	<p>BHIC members to work together to locate resources needed to produce a matrix of all equestrian qualifications</p> <p>BHIC and Lantra are in discussion regarding the development of this matrix.</p>

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<p>Action 26: Achieve greater cooperation amongst existing access organisations - Develop an agreed structure within the Industry in order to coordinate access interests, achieve greater cooperation amongst access bodies and ensure that knowledge and skills are marshalled to best effect</p>	<p>Equestrian Access Forum (Mark Weston as convener) to lead, in conjunction with other access interests within the Industry</p>	<p>Many disparate organisations all working towards increasing access but with little communication or coordinated working</p>	<p>Equestrian Access Forum was created to increase engagement between existing access groups. This Forum will work together to secure sufficient resources and support to promote access issues on behalf of all riders and drivers It consists of The British Horse Society, British Driving Association, Endurance Great Britain, Mendip Cross Trails Trust, The National Federation of Bridleways Association and The South Pennine Packhorse Trails Trust,</p> <p>The vision for England will be issued in the summer 2007, and for Wales in the winter. Defra officials have been invited and attend Forum meetings.</p>
<p>Action 27: Engage with lead bodies in other fields - The Industry must engage with the lead bodies in other fields, such as the Ramblers Association and Sustrans, to learn from their successes, and identify common causes to improve access for riders and drivers.</p>	<p>Equestrian Access Forum (Mark Weston as convener)</p>	<p>A rather fragmented situation with liaison between some user groups but not others. No significant interaction between Horse Industry and leading organisations representing other access interests</p>	<p>Horse Industry is intending to engage with and extend relationships with all user groups, and to develop a national access strategy to improve access for riders and drivers agreed by the parties to the rights of way consortium by end 2008</p> <p>The Equestrian Access Forum, The Ramblers Association, Cyclists Touring Club, British Canoe Union, Central Council of Physical Recreation, Open Spaces Society, Youth Hostels Association, British Mountaineering Council, International Mountain Biking Association and British Caving Association have been working together and have issued a joint statement urging the government to ensure that its proposals for access to the English coast include proposals for access for all non motorised users.</p> <p>Defra will consider the outcomes of the EAF and any proposals put forward by the Forum in their proposed access strategy.</p>

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<p>Action 28: Local equestrian rights of way and public access - Local Authorities (LAs) to consider the Industry's needs and to advertise and promote successful initiatives. Horse Industry to contribute more effectively to local rights of way and planning processes and resulting Local Transport Plans</p>	<p>Equestrian Access Forum (Mark Weston as convener) and Local Access Forums (LAFs)</p>	<p>Fragmented situation with some LAs providing excellent liaison and some providing none. Riders interests are generally represented on LAFs, but this is not universal, and not all LAFs are operating at the same level of effectiveness</p>	<p>Horse Industry to engage with and extend relationships with Local Authorities on access issues, through national level discussions with Local Government Association (LGA), and more local level action through Local Access Forums as they work on the development of Rights of Way Improvement Plans which need to be in place by 2007</p> <p>Members of the EAF will be meeting with the LGA to discuss how local authorities can adopt a multi user policy in respect of all paths, integrate their transport policies with neighbouring authorities and ensure equal provision of safe routes for all vulnerable users.</p> <p>Defra, undertook further discussions with Natural England and the LGA, and identified best practice in the work of LAFs. As a result Defra then issued Guidance on the work of LAFs, to support and develop their advisory role in terms of improving access to land for the purposes of open-air recreation and enjoyment of the area, in February 2007.</p>
<p>Action 29: Coordinated Plan for improving Statutory Equestrian Access – To produce a definitive report outlining the true picture of equestrian access in England and Wales, and presenting a coordinated plan for protecting existing rights and improving these where possible</p>	<p>Equestrian Access Forum (Mark Weston as convener)</p>	<p>There is no current definitive picture of the true state of equestrian access in England and Wales – only anecdotal and often very localised evidence of access problems</p>	<p>The British Horse Society is implementing a GIS system that will assist in giving a definitive report on the true state of equestrian access. The Equestrian Access Forum has also been working with Defra to identify S15 CROW land so that it can be correctly recorded.</p> <p>Defra and its NDPBs are carrying out a number of access activities which may yield benefits for the Horse Industry. These include :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Natural England has completed research into coastal access, which includes the density of bridleways and byways. Natural England estimate that 7% of coastal rights of way have higher rights. - Defra approaching Forestry Commission to identify any further opportunities for increasing access for horse riders forward more effectively in the future

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<p>Action 30: Publish a Good Practice Guide for those interested in expanding local access for riding - Organisations interested in expanding non-statutory access for riding would benefit from a Good Practice Guide incorporating the advice from those who have already learned their lessons the hard way</p>	<p>Equestrian Access Forum (Mark Weston as convener)</p>	<p>Local access groups have to work on their own, without the benefit of any up to date guidance material advising on good practice</p>	<p>BHS/EAF to work together to secure sufficient resources and support to develop the good practice guide, which should be completed by 2008</p>
<p>Action 31: Equestrian routes on farmland, woodland and coastal areas - Discuss and negotiate with Defra, the Rural Development Service () and other bodies to see how new land payments will affect existing and potential access on farmland; and also address other issues which concern landowners, to designing attractive 'packages' that will allow local authorities and local riders to negotiate with local landowners</p>	<p>Equestrian Access Forum (Mark Weston as convener)</p>	<p>Some concern exists amongst riders and landowners about the implications of various land payment schemes on the provision of non-statutory access routes</p>	<p>Discussions already underway between the Horse Industry and Defra and other bodies about how the schemes may affect existing and potential access. The EAF will be discussing with Defra the possibility of providing access options within Agri-environment scheme at the lowest level.</p> <p>EAF to explore the development of 'packages' to allow effective negotiation over access issues between riders, landowners and local authorities</p> <p>See Action 29 – which will also contribute towards this Action</p>

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<p>Action 32: Toll rides – In conjunction with Action 31, incorporate toll rides, if viable, in the packages that local riding groups can discuss with local landowners as an addition to an adequate basic public provision</p>	<p>Equestrian Access Forum (Mark Weston as convener) – including Toll ride organisations</p>	<p>Toll rides are very well supported and appreciated by users, but some groups do not believe they are beneficial to the improvement of the overall network</p>	<p>EAF is intending to engage with Toll rides organisations and users to ensure that their interests are taken into account in developing overall access provision Members of the EAF will be working with toll ride organisations to provide access where it has not been possible to provide safe off-road access by other means.</p> <p>Defra looked into the adverse effect of the Single Payment Scheme (in England) on toll rides, and alleviated some of the concerns raised by Toll rides groups and clarified the Scheme's rules.</p>
<p>Action 33: On-and off-road safety campaign –Further discussion with Department for Transport on the development and delivery of a campaign to educate riders, carriage drivers, cyclists and motorists both on and off-road routes</p>	<p>Equestrian Access Forum (Mark Weston as convener)</p>	<p>Increasing traffic on roads leading to greater incidence of problems between riders and cars, ranging from minor incidents to fatalities of both equines and humans</p>	<p>BHS/EAF to engage in further consultation with Government departments , including Department for Transport and the Highways Agency in order to develop, by end of 2006, an ongoing strategy to encourage all road users to act in a responsible way to each other.</p> <p>The Equestrian Access Forum is working with other user groups to continue to press for lower speed limits on rural and minor roads.</p> <p>Highways Agency currently pursuing Road Safety education programmes for vulnerable users.</p> <p>Defra continue to engage with DfT on equestrian access issues,</p>

Action	Responsibility	Position at Launch of Strategy – Dec. 05	Current Position. Action in Progress and Next Steps :
<p>Action 34: Urban and suburban riding and driving – Mount a high profile campaign to alert people, local authorities and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to the benefits of equestrianism, the availability of urban riding and driving and the need to provide equestrian facilities to serve areas of major new housing development</p>	<p>Equestrian Access Forum (Mark Weston as convener), with BEF(Paul Frost)</p>	<p>Riding and driving are currently poorly reflected in urban and suburban recreational route provision. Poor statistics on the positive health benefits of equestrian exercise, preventing holistic approach to future planning policies</p>	<p>The BEF National Facilities Strategy refers to the potential for increasing urban riding and equestrian facilities.</p> <p>Sport England has recently allocated funding to the BHS for a number of inner city schemes linking schools to local riding establishments thus introducing children to riding through the National Curriculum.</p> <p>The EAF is collating information that illustrates the benefits of equestrianism.</p> <p>By 2010, the Horse Industry to have adopted a strategy setting out the benefits of equestrianism and the need to increase the availability of urban riding and driving and to provide equestrian facilities near urban development.</p> <p>To be carried out in conjunction with Action 28.</p>
<p>Action 35: Encourage Local Authorities and others with land management responsibilities, to work with the Horse Industry, to develop pasture management projects in order to promote good land management and provide 'best practice' advice</p>	<p>Defra, Horse Industry Team to lead, in conjunction with BHIC, LGA and LAs</p>	<p>Some very good examples exist of high quality pasture management guidance – such as material produced by Surrey County Council and Kent Downs AONB. But the overall picture is patchy, with too few local authorities and land owners giving sufficient consideration to good pasture management</p>	<p>Joint Defra/BHIC letter sent in 2006 outlining current successful projects, both in pasture management and waste, giving information on where to access information, and asking relevant council officials for any feedback on relevant initiatives they are undertaking so that BHIC can keep an up to date accessible database on their website.</p> <p>BHIC currently compiling information on further waste management information (in addition to manure) such as disposal of plastics and twine etc, with a view to promoting this information amongst horse owners through the website.</p>

Action	Responsibility	Position at Launch of Strategy – Dec. 05	Current Position. Action in Progress and Next Steps :
<p>Action 36: Code of practice for good land management – Explore the possibility of developing a joint Industry / Government code of best practice for all land owners / managers in the Horse Industry, to encourage better land management (taking into account equine welfare as well as biodiversity and wildlife conservation), building on the good work of Surrey County Council and others</p>	<p>BHIC (Graham Cory), to lead in conjunction with Surrey County Council and Defra</p>	<p>Local authority approaches to equine planning issues and land management varies across the country. Information on good practice not always easily available</p>	<p>BHIC to look at developing a draft Code of Practice and communications programme to enable effective delivery of information to both horse owners and Local Authorities</p>
<p>Action 37: Produce a clear map of where horses are grazed - Evaluate the available spatial information about where horses are grazed, and the quality of land horses are kept on, and explore the development of a means to fill any subsequent gaps</p>	<p>BHIC (Graham Cory) to lead, in conjunction with Defra/Welsh Assembly</p>	<p>Very little spatial information currently exists on where horses are grazed and the quality of the land on which they are kept</p>	<p>The BHS is developing a GS satellite mapping service which it hopes to offer online on the BHS website. All bridleways, members, horse accident blackspots are currently being mapped and they are looking at ways in which to use this new facility to map out where horses are actually grazed.</p>

Action	Responsibility	Position at Launch of Strategy – Dec. 05	Current Position. Action in Progress and Next Steps :
<p>Action 38 : Secure a more consistent performance by Local Authorities on equine planning issues Develop a closer relationship with local authorities, and explore the possibility of providing them with training and education relating to equine planning issues, and to discuss how the differing approaches which local authorities have to horses can be harmonised.</p>	<p>BHS (Chris Doran) to lead</p>	<p>Very different approach by different local authorities to planning applications, especially concerning horses</p>	<p>Industry to meet with local authority representatives to develop a plan for greater information sharing and foster a more positive approach to equine developments.</p> <p>This is progressing and a local authority planning note has been identified as offering clear and comprehensive planning advice to equine enterprises. Ongoing discussions between Government and the horse industry are moving forward to producing a generic guidance note on planning issues effecting horse owners.</p>
<p>Action 39: Promotion of waste management information - Ensure all horse owners have access to information regarding safe, correct, waste disposal; and Horse Industry bodies and Government to continue to liaise on pragmatic solutions to equine manure waste storage, composting, spreading and disposal</p>	<p>BHIC, (Cathy McGlynn) to lead in conjunction with Defra and the Environment Agency</p>	<p>Horse waste is legally classified as a controlled waste, although it is handled by the Environment Agency under their low risk initiative. However, some confusion exists amongst the Industry regarding correct and appropriate manure storage and disposal practices</p>	<p>Extensive information including the Surrey County Council guidance notes added to the BHIC website to enable horse owners to access easily understandable and pragmatic information.</p> <p>Joint Defra/BHIC letter promoting waste management information sent to county councils in 2006.</p> <p>Defra have developed a specific equine waste management page on their website to aid horse owners in accessing the appropriate information. The BHIC website also contains detailed advice on manure issues.</p> <p>BHIC, Defra and the Environment Agency to continue to work together and maintain a pragmatic approach to manure storage and disposal</p>

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<p>Action 40: Information on conservation grazing - Review existing information, guidelines and codes of practice covering conservation grazing and, if necessary, produce a national code to support and encourage this practice</p>	<p>Defra to lead, in conjunction with the Rare Breeds Survival Trust and native breed groups</p>	<p>Many successful projects currently exist, but the use of native ponies in such conservation projects could be developed further</p>	<p>Defra and the Horse Industry to look at ways of raising awareness of usefulness of native horses and ponies to biodiversity and conservation grazing.</p>
<p>Action 41: Coaching Development Programme - Extend tBEF's coaching programme to others wishing to enhance their own coaching standards</p>	<p>BEF (Colin Wilson) to lead</p>	<p>There are varying levels of coaching developments across the equestrian sports</p>	<p>Organisations representing Horseball, Polocrosse and Mounted Games are now BEF Associate Members and have joined BEF's Coaching Development Action Team and have accepted . UKCC in process of implementation.</p>
<p>Action 42: Facilities Strategy - Share BEF's Facilities Strategy with other riding bodies</p>	<p>BEF (Tim Hadaway) to lead</p>	<p>Many organisations do not have such facilities strategies even though they would be</p>	<p>Facilities Strategy published and launched in May 2006. Document distributed across all BEF Member Bodies, to all BHS/ABRS approved riding establishments, RDAs, Sport England Regions and Local Authorities</p>
<p>Action 43: Long-term Athlete and Equine Development Programmes - Extend BEF's long-term athlete and equine development programmes to other organisations</p>	<p>BEF (Colin Wilson and Jan Rogers) to lead</p>	<p>No common knowledge of action across Industry regarding athlete and equine development programmes</p>	<p>Programme published in March 07. A hard copy of the Proqramme will also be sent to key non-BEF equestrian organisations. The plan will be available, promoted and updated on the BEF website.</p> <p>BEF to put a plan in place to develop communication and information sharing with other equestrian organisations.</p>

Action	Responsibility	Position at Launch of Strategy – Dec. 05	Current Position. Action in Progress and Next Steps :
<p>Action 44: Affiliation - Market to unaffiliated groups the benefits of affiliation</p>	<p>BEF (Andrew Finding) to lead</p>	<p>Affiliation often seen as too costly and too high a level for 'ordinary' riders</p>	<p>BEF Plan for Participation is in place including actions to encourage greater affiliation with BEF Member Bodies. Implementation ongoing. BEF continues to seek to represent all aspect of the horse sport and leisure industry.</p>
<p>Action 45: Establish lead bodies to assist in the improvement of our horses and ponies</p>	<p>BEF(Andrew Finding) to lead</p>	<p>A lead body exists for the thoroughbred horse but not for others</p>	<p>Following the publication of the proposed Lead Bodies, <i>British Breeding</i> has been accepted as the Lead Body for the sport horse and pony sector at a meeting on 24 January 2007. Following this, British Breeding will report on its progress within this sector and consult with other Lead Bodies regarding developments in their sectors. A steering group has been formed and will meet again on 15 March 2007.</p> <p>BHS remains the nominee for the recreational horse and pony sector. Native Ponies GB will contact the BHS with regard to their willingness to become Lead Body for the native and indigenous horses and ponies sector.</p>
<p>Action 46 : Capitalise upon the data contained in NED - Use information available from the National Equine Database to: better select animals for breeding, develop a simple system for comparing the breeding values of mares and stallions; collate and market pedigree and performance data; provide data to support the marketing of horses and ponies and</p>	<p>The new lead bodies (refer Action 45 desired outcome), acting in concert</p>	<p>All the necessary elements are in place. All that is required is leadership and a willingness to co-operate</p> <p>Organisations will be required to 'give a little of their empires whilst retaining full sovereignty'</p>	<p>NED is scheduled for public launch this year and the team is working hard to develop the public face of NED system, NED Online, maximise the quality and quantity of data therein to fulfil this Action, and implement an informed marketing plan so that the target market is aware of the facilities NED will offer.</p> <p>BEF has funded the development and rebranding of <i>British Breeding's</i> (Graham Suggett's) World Undergraduate Equine Research Database (WUERD) to make freely available online abstracts of research at all levels from many academic establishments. The new web based database is called the British Equestrian Federation Researching Equines Database (BEFRED) and will be launched at the National Equine Forum on 22 March</p> <p><i>British Breeding</i> continues to develop its Breeders' Quality Mark (BQM) awarded to studs demonstrating best practice. Extensive marketing activity is</p>

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<p>work being undertaken to eliminate genetic defects; and make evaluation scores widely known</p>			<p>underway for 2007</p> <p><i>British Breeding's</i> Futurity and Young Horse Evaluations schemes have been rolled into one continuous evaluation sequence for young horses from foals to six years. This now forms a comprehensive set of first steps on the Long Term Equine Development (LTED) pathway. Discussions are planned to work more closely with BD, BE and BSJA. A system of continuous professional development is proposed for <i>British Breeding's</i> evaluators as part of the LTED process. A system of young horse trainer identification has been started by <i>British Breeding's</i> Young Horse Training Group</p> <p>Defra is already making a significant financial contribution to the development of NED, and will use its place on the NED board to encourage the Horse Industry to make the best use of its extensive capabilities</p>
<p>Action 47: Recognition of quality mares - Determine agreed criteria as to what qualifies a mare (other than racing thoroughbred mares) to be rated 'Premium'. Initiate a Premium Mare Designation. Establish Premium Mare evaluation programmes</p>	<p>The lead bodies</p>	<p>All the necessary elements are in place. All that is required is leadership and a willingness to co-operate. Organisations will be required to 'give a little of their empires whilst retaining full sovereignty'</p>	<p><i>British Breeding</i> recognises Elite Mares as those scoring over 80% in its Futurity Young Horse Evaluations. Other definitions are almost certainly in place with other studbooks and grading organisations and these should be considered through the Lead Body mechanism</p> <p>Premium mare status to be established as above</p> <p>A Premium mare evaluation programme is to be arranged.</p> <p><i>British Breeding</i> continues to direct research to develop EBVs to determine heritability of performance traits in breeding stock to further this objective</p>

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<p>Action 48: Premiums for quality mares –A. Generate sufficient income from British Breeding initiatives and sponsorship to be able to offer premiums to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. British-bred mares and stallions achieving given grading standards; b. British breeders achieving outstanding success; and c. success by British-bred horses and ponies in selected competitions <p>B. Investigate the possibility of national and local tax concessions</p>	<p><i>British Breeding</i> (Graham Suggett) to lead</p> <p>Horse and Pony Taxation Committee to lead (See Action 11)</p>	<p>There is currently little incentive to remain competitive</p>	<p>Definitions have yet to be formally established (see above). The Lead Body will determine how a Premium Mare and a Premium Stallion are defined. <i>British Breeding's</i> Futurity Young Horse Evaluations recognise and financially reward the stallions with the most successful progeny performance record in this scheme. <i>British Breeding</i> does not generate sufficient revenue to offer meaningful premia at present.</p> <p><i>British Breeding</i> has standardised evaluations for all young sport horses and ponies. Consultation with the Lead Body members will determine whether this can be refined.</p> <p>British Breeding uses all of the revenue it generates from its schemes (after running costs) to pay premia Which competitions are to feature still remains to be arranged</p>
<p>Action 49 : Support for native and indigenous breeds - Enter into discussion with Defra, English and Welsh Nature, the Countryside Council for Wales and the English and Wales Tourist Boards regarding their recognising native and indigenous ponies and horses as being</p>	<p>Lead Bodies</p>	<p>A National Steering Committee has been established to inform Government policy and assist in monitoring and managing farm animal genetic resources</p>	<p>This is being taken forward by the BHS and Native Ponies GB which have been proposed/proposed themselves as the Lead Body for the native and indigenous horse and pony sector</p> <p>To be arranged by that Lead Body when it is formally decided</p>

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an essential part of the process of conserving natural habitats and a valuable asset to the tourist industry			
<p>Action 50: Monitoring of the Strategy – Publish an Action Plan in spring 2006. Produce subsequent reports on progress at suitable stages to monitor the success of the strategy and the development of the Horse Industry</p>	<p>BHIC and Defra's Horse Industry Team</p>	<p>Strategy implementation being taken forward through this Action plan. Monitoring of the Action points is underway and a report will be produced in due course</p>	<p>Defra and the BHIC will continue to meet regularly to discuss progress of all the issues, and to maintain the constructive dialogue they have built up.</p> <p>Defra and BHIC to continue work together to keep the Action Plan up to date on the BHIC website and will produce regular progress reports.</p>