

NEWSLETTER – AUTUMN 2019



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Horse Fairs/Markets

WICKHAM

2019 saw the introduction of a 'banning list' at Wickham Horse Fair. Horse owners who have been banned through the courts from keeping equines were reminded of the terms of their ban and advised that the Hampshire Police would observe and record any breaches which would then be dealt with by way of court. The reminders came in the form of a recorded delivery letter sent out to the homes of the offenders. The letters worked well with the positive reinforcement of police working with RSPCA & WHW officers to monitor and closely watch those involved.

One pony was seized this year due to poor condition and is now subject to an investigation. Welfare advice was issued on a number of other equines, but the general feeling was that attendees both human and equine, were down again from last year and numbers are dwindling year on year, so much so that some of the fair rides did not attend this year.

The most notable issue this year was a series of transit offences. The positive side to this though is we have reconnected with trading standards who enforce transit law and they have agreed to attend the fair next year.

APPLEBY

This year saw the introduction of a Pre Appleby-Operation at Kirkby Steven which was extremely successful. It resulted in three cases being detected, all of which progressed to court. The plan is for the Kirkby Steven Operation to continue next year with perhaps the addition of a late shift.

During the main fair, seven cases were detected, three of which are progressing to court. The fair has been deemed very successful from a welfare point of view and the interaction with the travellers seems to be improving each year. The improvement in the CCTV footage was extremely useful for the ops room and they were able to pick up horses and ponies of concern and radio through to the relevant team.

Wickham:

- Introduction of 'banning list'.
- Attendee numbers down.
- Clamp down on transit offences.

Appleby:

- Introduction of Pre-Appleby Operation.
- Interaction with travellers improving.
- Fewer vet checks needed.

Including the Kirkby Steven Op, ten ponies in total were removed permanently. Nine ponies were removed for treatment and returned to owners and one was PTS.

The vet pen was quieter than in previous years, with 29 equines being checked and/or treated during the course of the fair with a further fourteen equines checked and/or treated at the police station pens. Over the course of the fair, 131 advice updates were created, and 5 warnings were given.

The atmosphere at the Royal Oak was quite fractious this year, partly down to a road diversion created by the council/police and the change in access to the river. It was discussed that there needs to be an additional late team there until 10pm next year.

Green Yard Project Update

This project is progressing with best practice being shared nationally round the country between police forces. A template Green Yard Policy is in development and a map of forces using policies is being produced.

Grazing License Project Update

World Horse Welfare have produced higher welfare clauses for inclusion within a grazing licence. Plans to create a generic policy that landowners could use were scrapped when research revealed that it was impossible to draw up a one size fits all license that considered the legal matters for each area and owner. It was felt that asking landowners to consider including the 'higher welfare clauses' within their existing licences or to include them in new licenses was more achievable. These clauses are being used initially by Portsmouth City Council who have an appetite to get things right for animal welfare in their borough.

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BHS Health Care Clinics/NEWC Link Days Update

Spring clinics were held in Durham, Cardiff, Dorset and Ruthin (North Wales). Numbers for each clinic were as follows:

- Durham – 43 horses attended, 17 of those were castrated on the day
- Cardiff – 76 horses seen on the day, 17 of which were castrated
- Dorset – 38 horses in total, 16 castrated on the day
- Ruthin – 22 attended, and 14 of those were castrated.

This took the total figures to 547 horses castrated at the clinics and 1196 horses attended in total. The Autumn clinics are already underway in Newark, Nottinghamshire, 8th October at York Livestock Market.

NEWC Update

NEWC have recently appointed an Executive Secretary - Rachel Kay, who will be joining the team this autumn to help NEWC meet the objectives of the 5 year strategic plan.

It was decided to incorporate "Research" discussions into the Education group as many of the personnel from each organisation cover both areas - NEWC Education and Research Terms of Reference have been redrafted and sent to Directors for feedback/approval

NEWC attended Farrier Focus event on 21/22nd September to strengthen relationships with farriers and promote the work and materials available from NEWC.

BREXIT

Movement of Equines after BREXIT: If the UK leaves the EU without a deal in place there will be changes to the way that equines are moved between the UK and the EU. The guidance, which was shared in the previous NEWC update, remains the same as it did had the UK left in October.

"If the UK leaves the EU without a deal in place there will be changes to the way that equines are moved between the UK and the EU."

Legislation

EQUINE ID

There remains a need to educate horse owners/keepers as to their obligations under this legislation – including ensuring that horses that originate from outside the UK are registered with a Passport Issuing Organisation – who will then record their details on the CED or SED - and their passport is over stamped.

World Horse Welfare is conducting a small survey on Facebook to better understand current understanding of this legislation amongst their supporters and to help identify where further communication is needed.

EQUINE REGISTER:

The Digital Stable - which enables owners to report their horses as missing, set status updates to show whether the equine is on loan, with another keeper or not for sale and receive information and alerts on disease and criminal activities –was launched at National Equine Forum and is being rolled out incrementally.

A big launch is no longer expected to happen as Equine Register are cleansing the data as they are rolling the digital stable out, which is taking longer than had been anticipated.

ENGLISH EQUINE ID:

The British Horse Council remains engaged on this topic as Defra have yet to publish the Local Authority guidance and the Minimum Operating Procedures for PIOs which needs to be updated to reflect the Welsh and Northern Irish legislation.

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SCOTTISH EQUINE ID:

The minimum operating standards to PIOs in Scotland have been finalised and can be found [here](#).

NORTHERN IRISH EQUINE ID: The Equine Identification Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019 - <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2019/67/contents/made>

These require passport applications to be received by the PIO 6 months from the horse's date of birth. There is no requirement for retrospective microchipping – this is due to having no devolved government currently sitting so only the minimum standards could be implemented as set down by EU legislation.

LICENSING OF RESCUE AND REHOMING CENTRES IN SCOTLAND: The Scottish Government has published the summary report of the responses received to its consultation on licensing of rescue and rehoming centres in Scotland: The report is available [here](#).

The Scottish Government is currently drafting the legislation and accompanying guidance, which it is expected to consult on soon.

LICENSING OF RESCUE AND REHOMING CENTRES IN ENGLAND: Defra is currently collecting evidence on sanctuaries and rehoming centres to determine whether to legislate for licensing of these organisations. Currently, they are considering licensing only cat, dog and equine rescue and rehoming centres. DEFRA recently invited a cross section of equine charities from around the country to share their views at two roundtable consultations.

FIREWORKS (UK): The Scottish Government and the UK Parliament's petitions committee both consulted on the sale and use of fireworks. While the sale of fireworks is a reserved power (i.e. the devolved administrations cannot legislate on it), the Scottish Government wanted to better understand the feelings of the Scottish people on this issue. The British Horse Council responded to both consultations supporting the calls from the British Veterinary Association for the Government to consider the following:

- Reducing the maximum permitted noise level of fireworks for public sale (categories F2-F3) to 97 decibels at 15 metres – the equivalent of a door slamming.
- Associated with this is reviewing the classification of fireworks under the British Standard. Manufacturers should either be encouraged to modify current category F3 fireworks to reduce their noise to less than 97 decibels or they should be moved to category F4.
- Tighter restrictions on the sale of fireworks around Bonfire Night, like those for other traditional dates set out in fireworks legislation.

The BHC also suggested:

- Restricting the use of fireworks, without a licence, to the dates already set out in existing regulations. The intent is to give certainty to horse owners as to when they need to put in place management systems to help reduce anxiety in their equines while still allowing the public to enjoy private firework displays at key times of the year.

- All public and private (i.e. for a wedding) firework displays out with the proposed traditional dates, to be licensed by the relevant licensing authority. As part of the licensing process, the date and time of the proposed display should be centrally published on a searchable website along with confirmation that all efforts have been made to inform local residents. They should also be given the opportunity to appeal against the granting of a licence and/or raise concerns and propose mitigating measures.

In July, the RSPCA gave oral evidence to the petitions committee, a transcript of which can be found [here](#).

Based on the evidence gathered, the committee will write a report with recommendations which will be presented to the Government and debated in the House of Commons.

EU ANIMAL HEALTH LAW

The European Commission has consulted on several delegated acts to the Animal Health Law, including traceability, movements into the European Union and intra-union movement. Several organisations, including World Horse Welfare and The Horse Trust, responded to the consultations. The legislation on traceability has been finalised by the European Commission and is currently with the Council and European Parliament for consideration. Once the UK leaves the European Union, the legislation on movements into the European Union will be particularly significant, including setting out residency requirements – such as time an equine has to spend in the country of origin and on a particular establishment - before an equine can be moved into the Union.

ANIMAL SENTIENCE

The #BetterDealForAnimals campaign continues to call for the UK government to recognise animal sentience in law. Those organisations involved are currently organising another Parliamentary event to draw politicians' attention to this issue.

ANIMAL WELFARE (SERVICE ANIMALS) BILL (ENGLAND)

The Animal Welfare (Service Animals) Act 2019 received Royal Assent on 8th April 2019, coming into law on that date. This amends the Animal Welfare Act 2006 to address concerns on an existing section where a defendant accused of causing unnecessary suffering to an animal can claim they were protecting themselves and justified in using physical force against a service animal.

SENTENCING (ENGLAND)

The Animal Welfare Animal Sentencing Bill was introduced to Parliament in June 2019 - which will increase maximum sentences for animal cruelty offences from 6 months to 5 years - and is currently progressing through the legislative process. It is at the report stage in the House of Commons and has yet to go through the House of Lords.

CONTROLLING LIVE EXPORTS FOR SLAUGHTER AND IMPROVING TRANSPORT: The UK Government is currently considering the Farm Animal Welfare Council's (FAWC) review of the consultation.

Disease Alerts/Prevention Awareness

The Animal Health Trust provides an international equine disease surveillance report on their website which can be found [here](#).

STRANGLES SYMPOSIUM

The organising committee which hosted the strangles Symposium earlier this year in Edinburgh have agreed to form a Strangles Working Group to see actions being taken forward following the symposium. A terms of reference is in development and the report can be found on the BHS and Redwings websites <https://www.redwings.org.uk/news-and-views/strangles-symposium-report>

EQUINE VIRAL ARTERITIS

In August, Defra published an Epidemiology report detailing the investigation of an outbreak of EVA virus on two connected premises in Dorset and Devon in March/April 2019:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/epidemiology-report-eva-virus-2019>.

They also sought, and were provided, feedback from the Equine Disease Coalition on lessons learned, including what changes could be made to current legislation to improve effectiveness in responding to a future outbreak.

EQUINE DISEASE COALITION

Biosecurity Project previously reported on has now concluded Phase 2 which was structured interviews of livery yard owners/managers and their liveries on their biosecurity practice. The interviews were carried out in England, Scotland and Wales.

Key themes from the interviews were collated and results shared throughout the project team of World Horse Welfare, Redwings, Blue Cross and BHS.

The next Phase involves the Behavioural Insights Team leading a workshop with the project team on developing a measurable behavioural change intervention – a more complete update will be provided after this stage

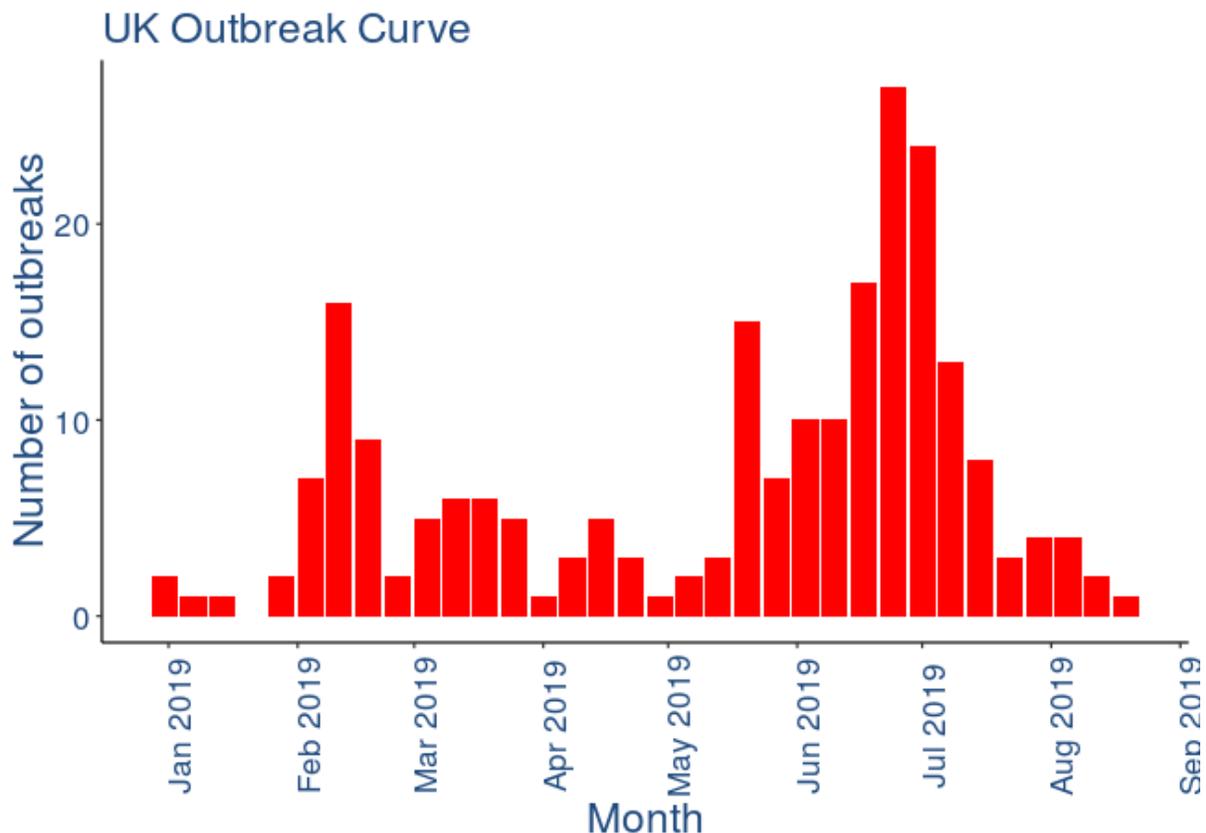
The EDC group are further identifying evidence gaps and coordinating research as well as taking forward a Strangles Action Week in 2020 which all NEWC members are invited to get involved with.

Seasonal Veterinary News

EQUINE FLU UPDATE

The number of confirmed outbreaks of equine influenza in 2019 is 226; this is compared to just two outbreaks reported in 2018. However, with only 9 laboratory confirmed outbreaks in August – the lowest confirmed recorded outbreaks since January, the AHT is hopeful we have seen the worst but also states that it is difficult to predict what flu will do next.

The advice remains the same to vaccinate your horses (it is estimated that only 30 -40 % of UK horses are vaccinated) and to practice good biosecurity. All the latest news can be found on the AHT Equiflunet [here](#).



SMALL REDWORM TEST

The laboratory behind the EquiSal tapeworm test has brought a new diagnostic service to detect small redworm, including encysted larvae to the market. It will be available as a blood test from September 2019. The test has been developed at the Moredun Research Institute and primarily funded through The Horse Trust.

This new test enables accurate detection of all life cycle stages, including the encysted larval phase which means we can now rely on evidence-based testing which will help to slow the development of drug resistance. Until now it has not been possible to test for encysted small redworm as faecal egg counts only detect the presence of egg laying adult worms. This has meant that a routine winter treatment to target this life cycle phase has become the recommended practice. Now we will be able to test before we consider using moxidectin.

The new service is offered as a blood test which means it will need to be conducted through a vet.

A saliva version is in development, but it is not expected to be commercially available for several years

Austin Davies Biologics – the lab behind developing the test will now be undertaking (alongside another project) a herd wide blood testing for encysted small redworm and tapeworm at The Horse Trust in the Autumn.

ATYPICAL MYOPATHY toxin and biochemical tests and tree sample testing

Following research supported by The Horse Trust and the RVC's Animal Care Trust, the RVC is now offering testing of seeds, seedlings and leaves for the hypoglycin A toxin known to cause EAM.

Samples can be sent directly to the lab where they will be tested at a subsidised cost of £60 (£50 + VAT). In addition, the Comparative Neuromuscular Diseases Laboratory is also offering testing of horse blood and urine samples, submitted by your vet, if they suspect atypical myopathy or in field companions. This should help to establish a much more rapid and accurate diagnosis, and subsequent treatment, than with previous tests.

Industry News

WORLD HORSE WELFARE

Have been training their field officers in a technique called Motivational Interviewing (MI) which supports people to make self-determined behaviour changes that last. MI has been cited in research as a technique that might be successful in reaching those people displaying hoarding behavior tendencies. The training is part of a research study funded by the charity to see if MI can work for animal welfare. Early results are very positive.

BRITISH HORSE SOCIETY

A reminder that they offer registered charities reduced price horse passports – reduced to £10 per passport (normally £25). They also have a new full-time welfare advisor join the team covering Wales – Vickie John. The partnership working between the BHS welfare volunteers and the RSPCA in the north east group has ceased for now as the RSPCA have switched to a new tasking model.

THE DONKEY SANCTUARY – Has identified dental disease as the second most common veterinary problem encountered in the donkey, after disorders of the feet. Clinical signs are not always seen in the early stages and as a result a high number of donkeys suffer from asymptomatic dental and oral disorders due to their stoic nature.

It has been shown that regular dental examinations and treatment have a positive effect on long-term dental health and therefore on the general health and welfare of the donkey. Therefore, lack of regular examination and preventative treatment in the donkey is therefore a welfare issue, given that even minor problems can in time cause pain and discomfort.

The Clinical Companion of Donkey Dentistry is intended as a guide to the anatomical features of the head and oral cavity of the donkey, to offer a greater understanding of the oral and dental disorders that may affect these animals throughout their life, and how to correctly examine, diagnose, prevent and/or treat pathological situations. The contents of this book and additional information are available to download [here](#).

The Donkey Sanctuary have provided a new map of the areas covered by their field officers too for distribution.

THE HORSE TRUST

Improving the management of obesity in horses through qualitative research - this project has identified over 50 weight management strategies used by owners, and categorised them alongside a decision-making tool in order to help owners plan weight management more effectively. The results show owners reported feeling empowered to make effective decisions about their horse's management in relation to weight. The importance of equine welfare and enrichment was highlighted in the guide (When the Grass is Greener) meaning that owners felt that they could manage their horses' weight without negatively impacting its quality of life; which made the process more appealing, and also improves equine welfare during weight management.

This work led onto testing several initiatives in terms of public impact, leading to: a UK wide pilot - awarding best body condition rosettes judged by vets at a variety of shows at all levels, editorials in a wide range of national and specialist equestrian titles and a number of presentations at vet practice client evenings and human behaviour change for animals sessions. Crucially they are also working with the Showing Council in developing their new judges' code of conduct to include shifting perceptions on weight in the showing environment as well as participating in BEVA's behavioural insights led equine weight management interventions development. The Grass is Greener guide was included in each delegate pack at BEVA Congress.

The Horse Trust **intake policy** – every horse must have a 'negative' Elisa test for Strangles. Following the finding of chondroids in a guttural pouch of one of our ponies earlier in the year, we set the goal to become a "Strangles free" herd. The whole herd will undergo guttural pouch scoping and testing shortly, as part of this testing process we are working with BEVA to run a Strangles course on the 30 September/1st October which will include lectures and guttural pouch scoping elements.

BRANSBY HORSES

Achieved becoming an official BHS recognised facility. The hope is that as an approved centre they can attract a variety of skill sets for welfare posts, access some fantastic training and information and demonstrate how they ensure they are providing the most suitable care and training for their equines.

The new farm is progressing with over 100 acres now fenced. The priority is to use the new land to help recover the damage caused to the original site. The handling facilities are currently under review with the help of Redwings vet Roxanne and the Blue cross team to better meet the needs of the ever-increasing numbers of feral and unhandled equines coming to Bransby.

Bransby Horses continues to manage the accounts for NEWC and are proud to be able to support all the Directors whilst the positive changes are put in place.

BLUE CROSS – have welcomed the news that both their equine centres are now clear of strangles and ringworm. The closure of the centres however allowed them to focus on agile rehoming which as a result has increased over the summer. Agile rehoming means those horses which are rehomed not through the centres like the home2home and home direct schemes as well as those rehomed out of support yards. The Blue Cross are also thrilled to welcome Mary King as their first ever Blue Cross Equine Ambassador to help raise awareness of the horse crisis.

Campaigns

REDWINGS - are releasing another participatory film made at Appleby Horse Fair this year, this time on Tethering good practice. Made in collaboration with Horse Drawn Travellers from the North East. Please look out for the film and feel free to use in educational activities aimed at improving the welfare of tethered horses.

THE HORSE TRUST - *biosecurity awareness* - The Horse Trust has developed a joint branded initiative which was launched at the Farrier Focus conference on 21/22 September. In partnership with Farriery supply company, Stromsholm, they created a peer to peer three-minute video filmed at the Home of Rest, where their farrier leads on a number of biosecurity recommendations to minimise the risk of disease spread by equine professionals. The video was launched with veterinary support and Q&A and a branded “bio bag” for each farrier.

ESTABLISHED 1977

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Education/CPD Opportunities

REDWINGS and the **HORSE TRUST** are collaborating on Equine Welfare CPD for Farriers using the online Moodle platform hosted by Horse Trust and the materials developed for Redwings' Forging Welfare Partnerships CPD which Dean Bland (Wellequine) presented to the NEWC AGM back in 2017. The online CPD will be piloted in October and the course is expected to go live in January 2020.

NEWC AGM

April 2020 - date and venue to be confirmed