

Facility Centre Horse Welfare Policy v1

Lochside Arena
Lochs Road
HS2 9JN
SC352223

Facility Centre Horse Welfare Policy

The purpose of this document is to provide statement upon the policy adhered to by this venue with regards to promotion and maintenance of welfare standards.

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Under the Animal Welfare Act (2006), the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006 and Welfare of Animals Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, (hereafter referred to as *The Welfare Acts*) every horse owner or those responsible for a horse have a duty of care to ensure the animal's well-being.
- 1.2 Within this policy, the term 'horse/pony' refers to all equines and should, where the context allows, be taken to mean 'horse or horses, pony or ponies, donkeys or other Equidae'
- 1.3 In addition to the cause of suffering and ill treatment being grounds for prosecution under animal welfare law, it is an offence to fail to take adequate steps to ensure a horse's welfare, even if it is not yet at the point of suffering.
- 1.4 Information provided in this policy has been supplied as guidance to support and all participants undertaking activities at the venue, such as exhibitors, competitors, spectators, stewards, judges and all connected with welfare of horse/pony in connection with the venue.
- 1.5 All Horse/Pony being transported should be accompanied by their up-to-date passport in accordance with Equine Identification regulations.

2.0 Horse/Pony Welfare

- 2.1 **Biosecurity**
We recognise the risk of spread of equine disease and below identifies the precautionary measures that we request all attending the centre adhere to

- a. Please do not attend if there is outbreak of a contagious disease at the venue where your horse resides. In such situations, veterinary advice should be followed and their guidance upon differing incubation periods be followed
- b. It is the responsibility of those hiring the venue to ensure those attending their event are compliant with any discipline specific requirements in connection with the event they are facilitating
- c. Failure to meet our requirements for vaccinations may result in you being asked to leave the venue, with no recourse for compensation of hire fees or other
- d. We require all horse/pony attending the Centre to be, as a minimum, up to date with the below vaccinations;
 - Equine Influenza
 - Tetanus

Quarantine;

- A 14-day quarantine period must be followed for horses arriving onto the Island. Horses must not attend the Arena in this period. Any horses that come into contact with horses within a 14-quarantine period must also not attend the Arena for 14 days.
 - Any user breaching the quarantine period will be liable for the subsequent deep clean costs
- e. Avoid use of shared water supplies, for example accessing water from troughs, with best practice being to bring your own
 - f. Avoid in-hand grazing in areas where other visiting horses may have recently grazed
 - g. To reduce risk of disease when stabling horses away from home, best practice would be to remove any pre-existing bedding/supply fresh bedding

2.2 Conduct

Overall responsibility for the duty of care for each horse/pony lies with the individual who has charge of the horse/pony on the day of the show.

- a. Parents/guardians of those under 18-years-old are responsible for the welfare of their children's horses/ponies, therefore a nominated adult should be present at all times to undertake this responsibility.
- b. Horse/pony and participants should be fit, competent and in good health and condition before they are allowed to participate in activities
- c. All participants should follow instructions from the relevant Organiser(s)

2.3 Supervision

- a. For safety reasons horses should not be left unattended tied to a horsebox/trailer nor should they be left unattended unless inside a stable, horsebox/trailer and known to behave sensibly when left for short periods of time.

- b. Those handling the horse/pony must be competent and not cause the animal fear or distress
- c. Where available, horses/ponies must be ridden/exercised in designated 'horse walks' or areas and grooms and spectators should use the designated pedestrian walkways.
- d. No horse/pony should be exercised for an extended period without sufficient breaks for rest, watering and feeding. Children or those less experienced should be supervised by a responsible adult to ensure that the horse receives adequate rest.
- e. Riders, including coaches or those working in horse/ponies for other participants should be a suitable size for the horse/pony.
- f. No horse/pony can be kept overnight in a trailer or horsebox. It is the responsibility of the person caring for the horse to ensure overnight provisions and stabling are met to enable freedom of movement and availability of water and feed are in place.
- g. It is recommended that horses should not have whiskers trimmed or removed (other than for veterinary purposes or with a vet's certificate)

2.4 Environment

The weather conditions will affect the welfare requirements of the horse/pony. Those responsible for horses should make the necessary adjustments to safeguard welfare in adverse weather conditions. For example:

- a. limiting the horse's time in direct sunlight in very high temperatures and using rugs in very cold temperatures.
- b. where horse/pony is kept in the horsebox/trailer ventilation should be enhanced, such as windows and roof vents open, ramps left down to maximise air flow

2.5 Status

- a. Horse/pony under four years of age should not be ridden, unless backing a young horse
- b. No mare should be ridden under any circumstances after six months of gestation.
- c. Stallions should display a stallion disc which must be worn on the bridle, and handled and ridden by competent people only. *The temperament of the stallion must be taken into consideration, and he should not be bought to this venue if he is likely to be a danger to anyone present*

2.6 Spectators

- a. All should remain within designated areas and children must be fully supervised.
- b. Dogs must be kept on a lead, away from horses and appropriately controlled

2.7 Equipment Use

- a. All equipment (tack) should be fitted and used in a way that protects and safeguards welfare and safety of both horse/pony and rider/handler in both 'working in' and during participation in activities. Failure to do so could result in legal action under the Welfare Act should misuse occur.
- b. A rider/handler may carry a whip for safety and guidance purposes and use is limited to the backhand position only
- c. A rider should only wear spurs for safety and guidance purposes where sufficiently experienced to do so and when applicable within event rules.
- d. Where a horse/pony exhibits any bleeding, the horse should be checked as soon as possible prior to any required treatment and where necessary the person responsible for the horse should seek veterinary advice to ascertain that the horse/pony can continue or not with planned activities, to include allowances for return travel to home.

2.8 Veterinary Provision

Details of local veterinary practice (s) are displayed
Old Mill Veterinary Practice
Sandwick Road,
Stornoway
HS1 2SL
01851 705900

- a. Where the venue is hired for facilitating an event, the relevant hirer carries out a risk assessment with specific regard to the provision of veterinary care, for example consideration to access to horse ambulance for transportation to a referral facility if necessary, and where and how euthanasia would be carried out if required
- b. Under the provisions of the Welfare Acts there is a degree of joint responsibility with organisers, but the owner or keeper of a horse/pony has prime responsibility for its welfare. It is recommended that the owner or keeper of a horse/pony:
 - Should be clearly identified on the entry form.
 - Should provide details of how they may be easily contacted in an emergency on the day of the event and if being stabled overnight.
 - Should provide information on who has responsibility for making decisions about that horse/pony with regard to provision of emergency treatment, removal to a surgical facility and euthanasia.

2.9 Farriery Provision

It expected of owners to maintain correct equine hoofs to an adequate standard. Owing to location we do not have a local farrier as they visit the island from the mainland. In an emergency we would recommend a vet to be called.

3.0 Reporting

Concerns raised should be timely.

- a. Where an organisation is facilitating an event at the centre, any concerns should be reported to the event officials/organiser

- b. All concerns should be reported to the Lochside Directors.

lochsidearena@gmail.com

4.0 Welfare Organisations

- a. The British Horse Society
<https://www.bhs.org.uk/horse-care-and-welfare/report-a-welfare-concern/>
• Telephone: 02476 840517*
• Email: welfare@bhs.org.uk.
The office is open from:
• Monday-Thursday from 8.35am-5pm
• Fridays from 8.35am-3pm.

If you would like to report an urgent horse welfare concern outside of our office hours:

- In England and Wales, contact the RSPCA on 0300 1234 999.
- In Scotland contact the Scottish SPCA on 03000 999 999.
- In Northern Ireland contact the USPCA on 028 3025 1000.

- b. World Horse Welfare
<https://www.worldhorsewelfare.org/what-we-do/in-the-uk/worried-about-a-horse>
0300 333 6000 (lines open 8am – 5pm)

Further sources of information:

The Charter for the Horse

https://www.britishequestrian.org.uk/assets/WELFARE/Printable_CftH_v2.pdf

Defra Code of Practice for the welfare of Horses, Ponies, Donkeys and their Hybrids

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5ad4b5f5e5274a76c13dfb33/horses-welfare-codes-of-practice-april2018.pdf>

Scotland - Welfare of equidae: code of practice

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/code-practice-welfare-equidae/#:~:text=This%20Code%20provides%20a%20practical,animals%20are%20kept%20in%20Scotland.>

Ireland - Horse Welfare Trust

<https://ihwt.ie/>

Wales - Code of Practice for the Welfare of Horses

<https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-11/code-of-practice-for-the-welfare-of-horses.pdf>