



WorldHorseWelfare



2024-27 Strategy

Towards our centenary of
strengthening the horse-human relationship

www.worldhorsewelfare.org

Registered charity no. 206658 and SC038384



Our vision

A world where every horse is treated with respect, compassion and understanding.



Our mission

To work with horses, horse owners, communities, organisations and governments to improve equine welfare standards and stamp out suffering in the UK and worldwide.



Our values

In everything we do, we aim to be:

- Realistic in our approach, focusing on the practical to achieve what is possible now while mindful of the future
- Compassionate in our attitudes, behaviour and decision-making
- Forward-thinking in anticipating challenge and change, always seeking new ways of being more effective

Underpinning the way we work are three principles:

- Working collaboratively where it creates greater impact
- Promoting a positive environmental impact in our work
- Supporting human as well as animal wellbeing

Who we are

We are a charity whose values are grounded in pragmatism and compassion that promotes and protects welfare across the full spectrum of the equine world including leisure, sport, work and production.



Why we do it

The world's 125 million equids (horses, ponies, donkeys and mules) are humankind's 'other best friends' and our relationship has evolved over millennia. They are the most versatile of animals in the world, performing many roles in societies. Despite this, too often they suffer in this relationship because people do not understand or disregard their needs.



What we do

We strive to support and strengthen the horse-human relationship in all its guises.



How we do it

Our strategic framework is structured around four key activities: Care, Research, Education and Influence.



Care



Experience



Direct care provides relief to thousands of equids in immediate need through rescue and rehabilitation in Britain and through our local partners in Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America.

Research



Evidence



The care we provide informs the research we support, working from our own experience or with academia to gather evidence of the causes of welfare challenges and how to address them.

Education



Knowledge



Using evidence gained from research and our own experience, we share and promote knowledge of equine care, using behavioural change science, reaching hundreds of thousands of horses.

Influence



Networks



Our evidence-based knowledge and experience means we are trusted, helping us to achieve long-lasting change through shaping attitudes, policies and legislation to sustainably improve welfare for millions of equids.

CEO Message



World Horse Welfare was founded as a campaigning organisation in 1927 by Ada Cole, a pioneering woman with an indomitable spirit. Ada vowed to help Britain's old work horses exported for slaughter, after she saw them collapsed on the Antwerp docks and whipped for miles on their way to the abattoir. She did not oppose their slaughter or the eating of their meat, but believed that as horses were integral to society, we have a duty to treat them with respect until the end of their lives.

Today, World Horse Welfare still lives by this principle, and our unique brand of equine welfare has improved the lives of horses globally for nearly 100 years. As the only charity that seeks to improve the lives of all equines – whatever the nature of relationship with humankind – we know we have to work at scale and at depth if we are to stay true to our vision for every horse to be treated with respect, compassion and understanding.

Our evolving strategy is the result of many discussions – with the horse world, staff, our Trustees, our supporters and our partners. The world is changing so quickly but equines remain – often invisibly – woven into the fabric of society, essential to individuals, families, communities, industries and economies. But increasingly people have lost their connection with horses, and so lack understanding of the horse-human relationship, or believe that horses are now irrelevant. Then there are those who do have a close connection with horses but either cannot – or choose not to – care for them properly.

World Horse Welfare strives to be a progressive force in challenging ignorance and championing the relevance of the horse to humanity today – and by demonstrating their value, to encourage others to truly value them. The task remains enormous, but we have developed a framework that will help us focus our efforts where they are most needed.

We hope you are as enthusiastic as we are about our direction as we build towards our centenary. Together we can change the lives of so many horses, donkeys and mules across the world.

Rh Owen



Green: Care, Research, Education, Influence
Blue: Research, Education, Influence



1

Responsible ownership of all horses, donkeys and mules

Encouraging responsibility by helping owners and societies prevent welfare problems through providing education, encouraging systems of owner accountability and intervening when required.

a

The national welfare line, nationwide network of Field Officers and four Rescue and Rehoming centres in Britain will continue to innovate to provide an even more effective service

b

Rehoming services will be modernised, ensuring we continue to provide a market-leading experience

c

Informal educational initiatives for owners, riders, keepers and the general public will be rolled out, using the digital medium to maximum effect

d

Lack of appropriate legislation and enforcement of laws relating to equines will be highlighted to authorities in the UK, EU and internationally and proposals to resolve this promoted

e

Root causes of the rising incidence of welfare cases originating with communities we find hard-to-reach in the UK will be identified and a strategy to address them deployed, including working in collaboration with members of the National Equine Welfare Council

f

Legislation will be introduced in the UK and EU to require full traceability of equids

g

Guidelines on responsible ownership will be disseminated across EU Member States and internationally

2

Improved lives of working equids that support the livelihoods of their owners

Supporting working horses, donkeys and mules by developing core services (including veterinarians, farriers and saddlers), training community equine care experts and raising awareness among policy makers of the value of working equids to livelihoods and economies.

- a** The welfare of working equids will be improved through community programmes and partnerships in up to 20 different countries
- b** The importance of productive working equids to people's livelihoods will be embedded within in-country development approaches and regional and global institutions
- c** An evidence base identifying the role of working equids in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals will be developed and promoted through the International Coalition for Working Equids (ICWE)
- d** Policies of the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and other key international development bodies will recognise the value of working equids as a result of lobbying by ICWE
- e** Technical assistance to humanitarian development projects, government institutions and initiatives relating to working equid owning communities will be developed
- f** Funding will be sought from government and international development partners
- g** Ability to manage emergency interventions will be enhanced



3

Ethical involvement of equines in sport and entertainment

Supporting the responsible use of horses in sport through working with regulators and other stakeholders to help them truly put the horse first, inside competition and out of it.

- a** An ethical framework for the involvement of horses in sport will be established for individual disciplines to develop
- b** Gaps in understanding of better practice in horse sport management, training, equine behaviour, learning and wellbeing will be identified and sector investment in research funding will be promoted
- c** Equestrian sports will be supported to maintain their social license to operate, including how they communicate with the general public
- d** Responsible breeding, training, management, selling and rehoming of sport horses will be proactively encouraged through education and awareness
- e** Horse sport regulators and other organisation will see World Horse Welfare as partners in reviewing their welfare rules and guidance



4

End long-distance transport to slaughter and ensure availability of humane end of life options

Continuing to campaign for higher welfare standards during transport and slaughter, with a goal of ending the long-distance transport of horses across Europe for slaughter by 2027.

- a** Number of equines transported long-distance for slaughter globally will be reduced
- b** Guidelines to protect horse welfare during transport will be disseminated internationally
- c** Partnerships with transporters, governments and international organisations will be further developed to improve practices in equine transport
- d** Research will be undertaken to develop good practice guidelines for equine slaughter
- e** Humane practice standards for slaughter will be rolled-out across Europe and internationally
- f** Mandatory CCTV will be introduced in all slaughterhouses in Europe
- g** To influence consumer behaviours through the introduction of more informative labelling of horse meat and encouraging more humane choices



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