State of the Nation Report 2023

"Horses have been an integral part of human society for thousands of years. While our day-to-day reliance on equines has been largely replaced in the UK through mechanisation and other technological advances, horses retain a unique place in our leisure pursuits, culture and affections."
Cost of Living Report, National Equine Welfare Council 2023

Introduction

- An overview of the equestrian industry
- The latest data and research to develop our understanding of the scale of our industry and the challenges it faces

The sources for this report are:

- Context on current economic challenges and cost of living crisis
- Member Body membership data
- BETA's National Equestrian Survey
- BEF's Health of Riding Establishments Survey
- Sport England's Active Lives surveys for adults and children
- Other industry data/trends (e.g. BHS/Youth Sport Trust)

- We hope to refresh this report annually to highlight where our Federation's actions are affecting positive change

British Equestrian

Why is this important

- Raise awareness of industry insights and build our knowledge base
- Develop a narrative of what's happening in the equestrian industry in 2023
- Influence decision-making across our federation
- Identify knowledge gaps to inform future insight programme

- It is also relevant to our Sport England funding:
  - Embed a culture of intelligent data capture, and effective use of insight
- Growing our knowledge base will help us influence and lead the sector when responding to the government's new sport and physical activity strategy: Get Active

Cost-of-living crisis affects our sector in various ways…

Pressure on yard owners[1]

- Anxiety of increasing livery fees amid surging fuel, maintenance, staffing costs
- Despite this, 77% of yard owners *have* increased fees, including 29% at least £20/month
- Inflation & cost-of living crises take a toll on work-life balance & mental health of yard owners
- Half of yard owners have reduced staff hours and taken on more tasks themselves to cope financially

Pressure on yard customers[2,3]

- Costs rising mean 44% of customers make personal sacrifices rather than reduce horse expense
- Others are having to reduce horse costs, which can involve less frequent:
  - ➢Competing; physio / equine dentist appointments; shoeing / trimming; saddle-fitting
- Many have exhausted cost-cutting avenues and taking steps involving personal sacrifice, including (sometimes) compromising their own wellbeing

Pressure on equine welfare[3]

- Not being able to provide fully for their equines further increases the stress placed on owners
- Some have already reached a point where they are no longer able to fully meet their horses' basic needs
- Clear risk of more situations emerging where equine welfare falls below acceptable standards if economic conditions persist, particularly during the winter months

British Equestrian

Sources: 1: SEIB Livery Yard Survey 2023; 2: SEIB Livery Yard Customer Survey 2023; 3: Care of Equines & Cost of Living, World Horse Welfare & Redwings 2023

Equestrian Activity trends

Sport England: Adult

- 88% regular riders are female, 81% of occasional riders are female
- 16–24-year-olds have the highest rate of participation, but rates remain consistent by age up to 65+
- Covid-19 had a bigger impact on
- The highest participation rates are seen amongst those with mental health challenges
- Black and Asian adults are significantly less likely to engage in equestrian activity

Sport England: Children and young people

- 85% of participants are girls
- Black and Asian children are significantly less likely to participate than their white peers
- Children with disabilities are more likely to participate than those without
- There are significant differences by household income deprivation

BETA's National Equestrian Survey

- Estimates 1.82 million regular riders and 3.2 million occasional riders
- Around 850,000 horses in the UK
- 6m households with ex-riders with 51% wanting to return
- Reasons for stopping was cost, age and lack of access
- Reasons for returning were missed the pleasure, change in personal circumstances and acquired access to horses
- Estimated 631K privately owned horses and 95K professionally owned (down 33% since 2019)
- Value of horses leapt up 18% to £2,800 and estimated £1.8bn
- Industry value of £5bn

Riding Establishments

BHS Local Authority Riding Establishment analysis

- 250 fewer riding schools = 1,497 schools left
- Estimates 1.5m fewer riding lessons
- Reasons for closures are centres around owners retiring and staffing issues
- Growth in horse-related licences – pony parties and assisted learning

BEF Urban Equestrian Centres

- Unique operational models but most focus on under-represented communities
- No centre opened for purely financial reasons
- All operational models are reliant upon funding/grants, but the extent varies
- Success evolves around the owner/manager/director and their ability to form partnerships
- Experiencing similar challenges as 'traditional' centres, and particular challenges due to their location

BEF Health of Riding Establishments 2023

- Centres continue to face a capacity issue – On average they are running at 75% of capacity
- 73% of centres have capacity issues preventing delivery
- Lack of workforce, volunteers and horsepower continue to be limitations
- Capacity issues seem worse in Southeast and Southwest
- Some centres are shifting to off-the-horse activities
- Priorities for support include fundraising, business development, financial stability, facilities maintenance, marketing and staff management
- Significant shortfalls of coaches, volunteers and horses but more data is needed for accurate understanding

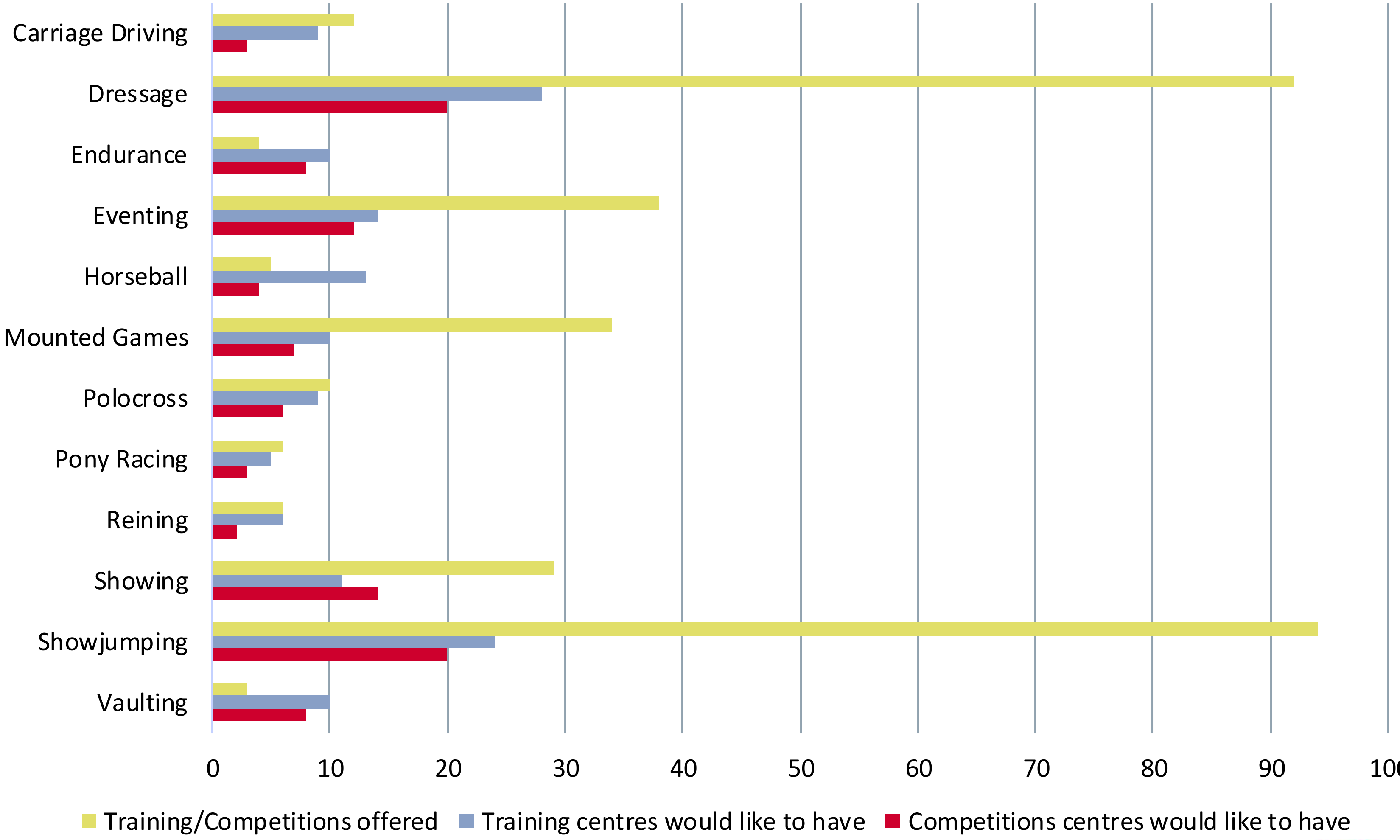
The British Horse Society

British Equestrian

Training/Competitions based on discipline

- In the Health of Riding Establishments 2023 Survey, we asked what disciplines centres offered and what they would like to offer.

- 37 of the centres responding to this question agreed to be recontacted.
  - We could use this information to help develop and grow the reach of different disciplines



British Equestrian

Federation data

246, 868 participant memberships (not people)

5,178 coach memberships

4,179 official memberships (incl. stewards/judges)

5,480 Riding establishment owners and staff

13,851 volunteer memberships (mainly across 2 MB's)

1,276 Riding groups/clubs

1,014 Affiliations between centres and Member Bodies

1.73m followers/ subscribers across our federation on social media

Please note: for many of these statistics, there are duplicate members, groups and centres between Member Bodies

Until we can review this data from a single source across <u>all</u> member bodies, it will be impossible to know the exact overlap between organisations

British Equestrian

What do we know?

PEOPLE & HORSES

- Approximately 1.82m equestrian riders in GB, 850k horses and 230k workforce

VALUE

- The equestrian sector is valued at £5bn (excludes social value)

CENTRES

- We have approximately 1,000 centres in our memberships out of a total of 1,497 (approx. 66%)
- On average these centres are at 75% capacity and 56% say they have a ‘capacity issue’
- Centres need help with finance/fundraising, business skills, digital skills, staff recruitment/management and governance

DIVERSIFYING OUR INDUSTRY

- Equestrian activity is well represented across age groups, by gender and for those with disabilities (vs UK census data)
- BUT, less affluent households and ethnically diverse communities are under-represented

COVID-19

- The pandemic affected occasional equestrian activity more than regular riders’ habits, but both have now recovered well

COST-OF-LIVING

- Pressure on consumers’ disposable income and centres passing on rising costs to customers

OFF-THE-HORSE ACTIVITIES

- 20% of delivery is for off-the-horse activities, as centres look to diversify and overcome restrictions to growth, which include staff (quality and availability) and horse availability/ suitability

British Equestrian

What don't we know?

PEOPLE & HORSES

- Will the decline in horses and lack of workforce for centres will lead to a longer-term decline in participation?
- Is the cost-of-living crisis the main threat to us growing our industry?

Value

- What is the social value of our industry?
- What are the implications of this for the social licence and future investment into our sector?

CENTRES

- How do we encourage all riding establishments to be part of our federation?
- Are centres starting to overcome horse and workforce challenges through innovation or closing due to sustained operating challenges?
- Which types of support for centres will have the biggest impact?

DIVERSIFYING OUR INDUSTRY

- When do we expect to see stronger representation because of our #HorsesForAll action plan?
- How do we collect consistent, detailed demographic information on memberships to fully understand who we influence and impact?

COST-OF-LIVING

- Can we predict the impact of financial pressure on future equestrian activity?

OFF-THE-HORSE ACTIVITIES

- How do we encourage more off-the-horse activity to grow our industry to (new) audiences?

British Equestrian