



# Coronavirus FAQ's for British Riding Club Committees and Members

V2 27.03.20



*Please note, while this guidance is current at the point of publication, it may quickly be superseded following further government updates, or changes to the situation.*

**Q. What should I do if my horse is due a vaccination in the next few months and will any lapse of vaccinations affect me entering BRC events later in the year?**

A. During this unprecedented time it is really important to follow the advice given by your vet. In respect of future BRC qualifiers and Championships, please rest assured that we will be understanding of any issues with regard to six monthly boosters not being given and 12 month boosters that may have been given later than they should have been due to vets cancelling routine appointments at this time. We will issue a further clarity as the situation develops.

**Q. Can my riding club organise training or other activities that are non-competitive and will we be covered by the BRC insurance policy?**

A. No. BRC have issued guidance stating that all BRC organised activities should cease with immediate effect until 30 June. If you were to run your BRC insurance could be compromised. The reason behind this is that in accordance with the government's advice, organised sports activities are non-essential. Therefore, we should be reducing travel and social interaction for non-essential activities and not adding extra pressure on the emergency services, should an accident occur.

**Q. We have a committee meeting or AGM coming up. How can we go ahead with these?**

If these can be managed virtually, then they could still go ahead. There are a number of online platforms that can be used for virtual meetings. These include:

- Microsoft Teams
- Zoom
- Go To Meeting
- Cisco Webex
- Google Hangouts
- House Party

If it is not possible to get enough participants to run these virtually, then the planned meeting / AGM should be postponed until later in the year. Remember to communicate this to all members, so that they are fully aware.

**Q. Our club owns premises. Can individuals still hire the arena and use the facilities, one at a time?**

A. No. Any type of sports ground falls under the government category of 'assembly and leisure premises', and so now must remain closed.

**Q. Can I continue to travel to care for my horse?**

Horse welfare is critical and grooms or the sole carer for a horse should travel to provide care for horses. Where horses are kept in livery, the BHS advises that horse owners respect the protocol put in place by the yard owner or manager and work as a team to agree a care plan for your horse(s).

**Q. Can I continue to ride my own horse?**

We are getting a lot of questions in relation to riding your horse, for which there are no specific government guidelines at present. We advise that it is not appropriate to put unnecessary pressure on the emergency services and everyone should make their own individual decision as to whether riding is necessary at this time.

**Q. Can I continue to visit my instructor or have an instructor visit my yard to continue with my lessons?**

The BHS advises that in line with government advice, no unnecessary travel takes place during this time. That would include travelling your horse for a lesson, or having an instructor come to you for this purpose.

**Q. Can my farrier still attend to my horse?**

A. The British Farriers and Blacksmiths Association have advised their members, "Farriers provide a vital role in maintaining the welfare of many equines. It is our understanding that you may travel to work but please carefully consider if this is essential. Please adhere to the highest levels of biosecurity and be seen to be adhering to them. We encourage you all to consider very carefully your movements and what you class as being essential."

**Q. Is my horse at risk from COVID-19?**

According to the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) the current spread of Covid-19 is a result of human-to-human transmission, and, to date, there is no evidence that companion animals can spread the disease. Therefore, there is no justification in taking measures against companion animals which may compromise their welfare.

**Q. Does my club have insurance for the events we have had to cancel where costs have already been incurred?**

A. You would only have insurance for your events if this is something that your club has arranged independently. Abandonment cover is costly, and BRC do insure some of the larger Championships, but this would not include your club activities. Also, abandonment cover is usually just for cancellation due to bad weather, and it does not cover cancelling because of disease.

**Q. We had a venue booked for an event and had paid the deposit. They are not willing to give the deposit back. Is there anything we can do?**

A. Do you have a contract with the venue which detailed cancellation costs? Sometimes, this would state a fee such as 50% to be paid if the event did not go ahead. It would certainly be a good idea to try to negotiate with the venue - perhaps they could keep a credit note for you to use in the future. We all need to try and work together to keep all our organisations going.

**Q. What can we do instead to keep the momentum of the club going?**

A. We would encourage committees to still meet virtually if possible. Keep planning for events after the 30 June as we would expect uptake to be high. Perhaps you could do a virtual quiz for members or judge some photo competitions or virtual awards. Take the time to write about your club and some recent activities and send that to us for publication in Rider. You could also think about taking some BHS Challenge Awards, members could use their time away from

competition to study for the awards. Encourage teams to set up WhatsApp groups, you can discuss training tips and generally cheer each other up!

**Q. I am struggling to continue to care for my horse due to the current situation. What can I do?**

The health and welfare of your horse is your priority. If you have any concerns please contact your vet, yard manager or the BHS and we will do our best to assist you. You can contact us via telephone on 02476 840517 (calls may be recorded for monitoring purposes) or email us at [welfare@bhs.org.uk](mailto:welfare@bhs.org.uk).

**Q. What can I be doing to help minimise risk of spreading the Coronavirus?**

Whilst use of antibacterial products on all equipment may help maintain cleanliness and support biosecurity, not all products will specifically combat spread of Coronavirus. Continue to follow recommended approaches such as below

- Wash your hands more often than usual. Wash for at least 20 seconds using soap and hot water. Use hand sanitiser if that's all you have access to
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue, or with your sleeve if you don't have a tissue, and throw the tissue away immediately. Immediately wash your hands or use a hand sanitising gel
- Be prepared to self-isolate – plan how it will impact on your day-to-day requirements
- Plan ahead for your situation, which might include alternative care for your horse if you need to self-isolate
- Use health services wisely
- Stay up-to-date with trusted sources of information such as

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

**Q. Where can I find further information and support?**

A. The BHS has further guidelines available here: <https://www.bhs.org.uk/advice-and-information/coronavirus-covid-19>

You will find advice for the following groups:

- Horse owners
- Yards, centres and schools
- Business owners

There is also a useful article on commonly asked questions on Horse & Hound here:

<https://www.horseandhound.co.uk/news/coronavirus-horse-riding-equestrian-businesses-grooms-riders-710146>

**END OF DOCUMENT**