

British Harness
Racing Club



The British Harness Racing Club

Protocols for Race Meetings behind closed doors in the context of COVID-19 Pandemic

June 2020

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SECTION A – General Guidance

1. Introduction

This document contains strict measures which must be undertaken by all attendees and racetracks during race meetings held behind closed doors, from 1 June 2020 and until further notice as COVID-19 remains fluid.

It is based on current understanding and interpretation of government guidance.

As government guidance changes, some of these procedures and requirements may change, or vary regionally, and this document may be subject to multiple updates at short notice.

These measures are to safeguard everyone's health and wellbeing during the current and continuing COVID-19 situation, to ensure that racing can continue in a safe environment.

This document uses UK Government guidance as its framework, as well as reflecting any variations in guidance from the Governments of Scotland and/or Wales and interprets and applies that guidance specifically to horseracing.

This document is aimed at all attendees at race meetings, who must follow new and revised protocols. While every effort will be made to ensure the wide distribution of updated versions of this document, it is the responsibility of all persons attending any race day to ensure they are up to date with current procedures.

Employers of anyone attending race meetings will need to ensure that any such employees/volunteers are fully aware and support all protocols.

All personnel should note that government guidance in Scotland and Wales may differ subtly or substantially from guidance in England at any time. Anyone working at a race meeting in Scotland or Wales should ensure they are suitably aware of any differences.

Overseas attendees (excluding Ireland, Channel Islands, and Isle of Man) should note UK government quarantine requirements (14-day self-isolation following arrival in the UK).

Full cooperation is essential to ensure we work together to maintain a COVID-19 working environment.

If an individual has any specific concerns about returning to racing under the guidance contained in this document they should contact the race track/racing manager in the first instance. If this is not appropriate for any reason, they should contact their BHRC council member.

2. General COVID-19 procedures for all permitted attendees at race meetings. Risk and Compliance

By attending a race fixture, attendees acknowledge and agree that notwithstanding the risk mitigation strategies employed by the BHRC and other industry bodies in accordance with Government guidance, it is impossible to eliminate all risk and there remains the potential for unintended transmission of COVID-19 between race fixture attendees. All race fixture attendees must play their part in minimising the risk to themselves and others by complying with these guidelines.

The BHRC and the racetrack management have the right to remove any attendee for any breach of the COVID-19 requirements. All breaches will be reported to the BHRC Stewards who will also be able to impose alternative sanctions including formal warnings.

Do not come racing if you have symptoms of COVID-19.

Do not touch your face, whether or not you are wearing a face covering and/or gloves

Wash or sanitise your hands as frequently as you can, following the handwashing guidance

Observe social distancing protocols

Observe the recommended cough/tissue etiquette at all times

Follow all racecourse signage and obey the instructions of staff and officials who are enforcing social distancing and other protocols

Avoid areas of the racecourse unrelated to your role

Leave immediately after your last race, or when you have completed your duties

If you become unwell while racing, go immediately to your vehicle, return home and follow government advice. ONLY if you do not have a vehicle, please go immediately to the isolation area.

If you are in an at-risk group, you should follow UK Government guidance

Attendance lists will need to be generated and provided as follows:

- Trainers and stable staff (Via email to BHRC office at close of entries or declaration time if this is at least 48 hours in advance of the race day)
- Drivers (Via email to BHRC office at close of entries or declaration time if this is at least 48 hours in advance of the race day)
- Racecourse staff and contractors (promoters to inform BHRC office via email)
- Medical, broadcasting staff and photographer (promoters to inform BHRC office via email)

BHRC office to then provide promoters with a collated list of attendees.

SECTION B – Medical guidance

3. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Face Coverings

The advice from Public Health England (PHE) is that the principal means to reduce transmission of COVID-19 are:

- Social distancing
- Hygiene, both personal (specifically hand hygiene) and appropriate cleaning of workplaces to avoid transmission from surface contamination

The use of PPE and/or face coverings is not a substitute for these two methods but is an adjunct, particularly in clinical areas or where Social Distancing cannot be maintained.

Despite the above, and despite the health screening procedures, individuals with COVID-19 infection may have no symptoms and it cannot be guaranteed that the racecourse will be entirely COVID-19 free. The measures outlined elsewhere in this document are designed to minimise risk, but they cannot eliminate it altogether.

Consequently, to protect participants, appropriate PPE and/or face coverings must be worn within the racecourse.

4. General hygiene

Track management must do the following:

- Bottles of antibacterial hand sanitiser/hand sanitising stations to be provided at various points throughout the racetrack –please note hand sanitiser must be at least 60% alcohol based.

- Ensure frequent cleaning of work areas and equipment between uses, using usual cleaning products. Therefore provide cleaning products that can be left permanently near each working area. (Start car, secretary's office, commentary box, etc.).
- Clear the site and remove waste and rubbish after each race day, bear in mind a 72 hour delay.
- Provide additional handwashing facilities or sanitizers, for instance, stewards' areas, commentary point, secretary's office.
- Put up signs to build awareness of good handwashing technique, the need to increase handwashing frequency, avoid touching your face and to cough or sneeze into a tissue which is binned safely, or into your arm if a tissue is not available.
- Set clear use and cleaning guidance for toilets to ensure they are kept clean and social distancing is achieved as much as possible. (Special care should be taken for cleaning of portable toilets).
- Provide hand drying facilities – either paper towels or electrical driers.

COVID-19 known or suspected Specific Guidance - This section is derived from COVID-19: cleaning in non-healthcare settings as at 15 May 2020 and deals with a situation whereby an individual has shown symptoms. Racetrack staff should be aware of the procedure and have appropriate cleaning equipment and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) available. Key points are *in italics*.

- The guidance notes that the infection risk from coronavirus (COVID-19) following contamination of the environment decreases over time. It is not yet clear at what point there is no risk. However, studies of other viruses in the same family suggest that, in most circumstances, the risk is likely to be reduced significantly after 72 hours. *Therefore the standard procedure should be to delay cleaning up operations by 72 hours after the event has finished to minimize risk to cleaning staff.*
- Minimum PPE to be worn for cleaning an area where a person with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) is disposable gloves and an apron. Hands should be washed with soap and water for 20 seconds after all PPE has been removed.
- If a risk assessment of the setting indicates that a higher level of virus may be present (for example, where unwell individuals have slept or there is visible contamination with body fluids), then the need for additional PPE to protect the cleaner's eyes, mouth and nose might be necessary. The local Public Health England (PHE) Health Protection Team (HPT) can advise on this.
- *Non-healthcare workers should be trained in the correct use of a surgical mask, to protect them against other people's potentially infectious respiratory droplets when within 2 meters, and the mask use and supply of masks would need to be equivalent to that in healthcare environments.*
- Public areas where a symptomatic individual has passed through and spent minimal time, such as corridors, but which are not visibly contaminated with body fluids can be cleaned thoroughly as normal.
- All surfaces that the symptomatic person has come into contact with must be cleaned and disinfected, including:
 - objects which are visibly contaminated with body fluids
 - all potentially contaminated high-contact areas such as bathrooms, door handles, telephones, grab-rails in corridors and stairwells.
- Use disposable cloths or paper roll and disposable mop heads, to clean all hard surfaces, floors, chairs, door handles and sanitary fittings, following one of the options

below:

- Use either a combined detergent disinfectant solution at a dilution of 1,000 parts per million available chlorine; or

A household detergent followed by disinfection (1000 ppm av.cl.). Follow manufacturer's instructions for dilution, application and contact times for all detergents and disinfectants; or,

If an alternative disinfectant is used within the organisation, this should be checked and ensure that it is effective against enveloped viruses

- Any cloths and mop heads used must be disposed of and should be put into waste bags as outlined below.
- When items cannot be cleaned using detergents or laundered, for example, upholstered furniture and mattresses, steam cleaning should be used.
- Any items that are heavily contaminated with body fluids and cannot be cleaned by washing should be disposed of.
- Wash items in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest water setting and dry items completely. Dirty laundry that has been in contact with an unwell person can be washed with other people's items. Do not shake dirty laundry, this minimizes the possibility of dispersing virus through the air. Clean and disinfect anything used for transporting laundry with your usual products, in line with the cleaning guidance above.
- Waste from possible cases and cleaning of areas where possible cases have been (including disposable cloths and tissues): Should be put in a plastic rubbish bag and tied when full. The plastic bag should then be placed in a second bin bag and tied. It should be put in a suitable and secure place and marked for storage until the individual's test results are known. Waste should be stored safely and kept away from children. You should not put your waste in communal waste areas until negative test results are known or the waste has been stored for at least 72 hours. If the individual tests negative, this can be put in with the normal waste. If the individual tests positive, then store it for at least 72 hours and put in with the normal waste.

5. Health Screening

Health screening must be carried out by racecourse COVID-19 dedicated official.

SECTION C – Advance preparation prior to race days

6. Attendance restrictions

Until further notice, access to the racetrack will be strictly limited to those key personnel essential to running the race meeting.

The following people only are permitted to attend race meetings:

- BHRC officials and stewards as required to facilitate the race meeting, (as per BHRC governance)
- Medical and ambulance personnel (as required to service the race meeting)
- Racecourse Veterinary Surgeons (as required to service the race meeting)
- Farrier (as required to service the race meeting)
- One racecourse photographer, to be determined by each racecourse
- One commentator, to be determined by each racecourse

- Camera Operator (as required to provide core broadcast and integrity services)
- One Trainer (or their representative) per yard represented
- One groom per stable or 2 grooms with stables that have 3 or more horses entered. Individuals fulfilling this role must be a BHRC license holder.
- Drivers competing at the race meeting
- NO PERSONS UNDER 15 YEARS OLD PERMITTED

These restrictions will be regularly reviewed and we will seek to increase the number of attendees aligned to COVID-19 government guidance.

In particular, we wish to reassure owners that they will be given priority to attend race meetings aligned to government restrictions.

7. Information required prior to Race Meeting

Attendance lists will be generated and provided as follows:

- Trainer, or representative and grooms (Via email to BHRC office at close of entries or declaration time if this is at least 48 hours in advance of the race day)
- Drivers (Via email to BHRC office at close of entries or declaration time if this is at least 48 hours in advance of the race day)
- Racecourse officials (promoters to inform BHRC office via email)
- Medical, broadcasting staff and photographer (promoters to inform BHRC office via email)

BHRC office to then provide promoters with a collated list of attendees.

8. Maintaining up-to-date staff records (Trainers and stable staff)

As the BHRC will need to communicate with all individuals who are registered to attend a race day, all trainers are asked to ensure that the stable employee records for any individual who is likely to attend a fixture are up to date. This includes any transportation staff who may be attending the fixture. The key details to check are:

- Full, correct name
- Date of birth
- Contact details (including mobile phone and email address for the individual.)
- Next of kin details
- Ensure that the Grooms have the appropriate License

9. Refusal of access

In some circumstances, individuals who were expecting to attend a race day might be denied access by the racecourse and/or the BHRC. In relation to the protocols contained in this document, it should be noted that the reasons why access may be denied include (but are not limited to):

- They are not in one of the permitted categories
- Advance documentation required has not been received
- The individual was not on the list to attend
- They did not pass the required racecourse entry screening

10. Personnel who are likely to breach social distancing

Medical staff should wear medical grade PPE.

Cleaning staff should wear PPE appropriate to the area that they are cleaning, as per UK Government advice.

Other people who will potentially need to breach social distancing include:

- Security staff
- Race Drivers
- Stable staff
- Race Starters
- Veterinary teams
- Trainers or representatives (e.g. when handing over horse to driver)
- Other personnel as identified by local risk assessment of operational practices.

Driver face coverings - During the initial stages of resumption drivers are required to wear a face mask.

11. Declaration process and information requirements

For qualifiers, workouts and races from 1 June 2020 and until further notice, the BHRC will operate a revised declarations procedure, involving 24-hour declarations for ALL races.

This will allow sufficient time for a number of key procedures, e.g. registration and health screening, to be completed prior to race day by the BHRC and racecourses. We recognise this presents an additional challenge for trainers and will review this timescale regularly.

Trainers will be asked to supply additional information after declarations have closed including;

- The name(s) of the grooms attending. This information must be provided in advance. No emergency stable passes will be granted on race day.
- A confirmation email will be sent, including the names of staff and other details as submitted by the trainer. This email will ask trainers to submit information relating to the horse, and requirements of the horse on race day (the information that would normally be reported at the declaration desk, as there will NOT be a declaration desk at the racecourse).

Estimated time of arrival for the horsebox(es).

- Trainers should allow more time than usual when planning departure and arrival times, to accommodate additional medical checks as per required.
- Please note that racecourses will review arrival times and liaise direct with trainers as necessary, to minimise any potential congestion in the arrival area.

12. Payments

During this time all entries and payments for horses and personnel will be taken by the BHRC office in advance.

All prize money will be distributed by the BHRC office within 14 days of the event.

No cash or cheque payments will be accepted or distributed on race days.

13. Selection of horses by trainers (Trainers)

Trainers are also asked to assist with the smooth running of race days by avoiding sending any difficult or “fractious” horses. Further information as below. ALL declared horses should be well schooled, to minimise time taken to run the races and to help maintain appropriate social distancing.

Note that NO companion animals or horses not declared to race will be permitted into the racecourse.

Trainers are therefore asked to consider not entering horses during initial resumption should they fall into any of the categories set out below;

- Can't be tied up
- Unruly in pre-race
- Unruly at start
- Difficult loaders (horsebox)
- Horses requiring a traveler/companion

14. Preparing the horsebox (Trainers, stable staff and/or transporters)

The horsebox must be disinfected before and after each transport to a racecourse, or prior to loading any horse(s) and equipment:

Areas to concentrate on for disinfecting include, but are not limited to, all handles, clips, latches, ramps or any other areas where staff may have had, or will have contact.

15. Preparing the racing equipment (Trainers and/or stable staff)

Trainers are encouraged to supply individual pieces of equipment per horse.

UK Government provides guidance for cleaning in a non-healthcare setting. These guidelines are subject to change and trainers, stable staff, or any others required to clean the racing equipment should review the most current guidance

All equipment must be cleaned and disinfected prior to arrival on course. All equipment must be in a clean, single (where possible) bag, clearly labelled with the name of the trainer, the horse's name where possible.

As racing equipment can be from a variety of different materials, please make sure that all equipment is thoroughly inspected to ensure it is in good working order after cleaning.

It is important that prior to and after handling or transferring any equipment, that hands are washed and/or sanitised to prevent any viral spread

16. Checklist

All personnel attending race days should ensure they have brought the following:

- Food/refreshments, in a cool bag if appropriate, noting that most racecourses will not be providing catering or refrigeration also microwaves, fridges and facilities for making hot drinks will also not be available.
- Disinfectant/cleaning materials for wiping down vehicles and equipment
- Battery-operated phone charger (optional)
- Hand sanitiser – while hand sanitiser points will be available on course, all attendees should bring a personal supply. Drivers and stable staff may also wish to bring their own liquid soap and flannel or single use cleansing wipes.

- Face covering, as directed

Staff accompanying horses should also bring:

- Racing equipment - prepared, bagged and labelled as per the protocol.
- Buckets, sponges and scrapers for washing down

Please note no race cards will be produced during behind closed doors racing, therefore all staff must be aware of the order of racing before arrival.

SECTION D – Travelling to the racecourse

17. Considerations for travelling

Unless there is an emergency or it is unavoidable, cars and horseboxes should travel directly from home/stable yard to racecourse.

Where possible, individuals should travel to the racecourse separately. Where individuals travel together, they must remain in the vehicle together and must wear appropriate face coverings (unless they are from the same household). If one does not pass the required checks, everyone in the vehicle (and the horse, where applicable) will be instructed to leave the site.

No overnight accommodation will be available for horses before or after race meetings until further notice. All trainers and transporters must be aware of this and have appropriate arrangements in place.

SECTION E – Arrival at the racecourse

18. Arrival times

Arrival times for anyone NOT accompanying a horse may vary by racecourse. In most cases, arrival times will be as usual but attendees should allow an additional 15-30 minutes to pass through the checkpoints. If you do arrive early, please avoid congregating with other attendees.

For horses, trainers will be asked to indicate an estimated arrival time by email, which is completed when the horse is declared. Racecourses will review arrival times and liaise direct with trainers/horse transporters to minimise any potential congestion in the arrival area.

Trainers are encouraged to allow more time upon arrival than usual in order to clear the checkpoints.

19. Car parking

Car parking arrangements will vary by race courses. Please obey any signage or instructions and follow social distancing protocols when using the car parks.

20. Withdrawals and non-runners (Trainers, officials)

Information will be provided to trainers or their representatives on the protocols for notifying officials of any non-runners or withdrawals. In most cases, track management should be informed, who will then inform the Stewards and commentators.

SECTION F – Specific areas of the racecourse

21. Horse box areas

- Parking will be monitored to ensure adequate social distancing and parking bays will be partitioned with cones.
- Grooms and drivers arriving by car must use the public parking area to reduce

congestion in the horse box area. When walking between each area social distancing rules must be adhered to.

- Signage on social distancing must be put up around the parking area.
- Trainers to bring their own water as shared water supplies will not be in use at the track.
- No horses to enter the track until participants in the previous race have all left the track.

22. Rails, secretary's office and around

- For trainers and grooms watching their horses social distancing must be adhered to (e.g. those not from the same household/stable must remain two meters apart). Tape/paint will be used to show 2 meter distances along the rail
- Secretary's office will not be in use for participants as all payments and declarations must be done in advance.
- Number cloths will be laid out in advance for each trainer. After use they should be returned and disinfected using methods supplied by the track. Social distancing measures must be adhered to.
- Toilets must be regularly cleaned
- Hand sanitizer and spray sanitizer must be provided in communal areas.
- Signage on social distancing must be put up around all communal areas.

23. Stewards' Room (Officials, trainers, Drivers)

Access to the Stewards' Room will be strictly limited to relevant BHRC officials and individuals involved in enquiries.

- All furniture and workstations will be arranged so that 2m social distancing can be maintained.

Where this is not possible, an alternative Stewards' Room will be provided. This will:

- Have suitable access
- Have 60% alcohol-based hand sanitiser and/or hand washing station.

Stewards/staff briefings will be conducted remotely.

24. Stewards' Enquiries

Provided social distancing can be maintained in the Stewards' Room, enquiries will be conducted on the racecourse in the usual manner wherever possible.

Stewards' enquiries may be considered by telephone.

On rare occasions when enquiries are required and social distancing cannot be maintained, the Stewards will have agreed beforehand how to proceed, finding a solution which maintains the requirement that all parties should be able to hear all the evidence given by all the witnesses. This may require the use of an additional room, using video conferencing facilities and racecourses, which will need to have such a room available. A BHRC Official will be present in this room throughout the enquiry. Other matters may be referred to the BHRC for further consideration at a further date.

SECTION G – Racecourse setup and facilities

25. Catering

Before consuming any food, hands must be washed or sanitised

Unless otherwise advised by the racecourse in advance, attendees should note that there will be NO catering facilities available on the racecourse. Attendees should therefore be prepared to bring their own refreshments with them on race day.

Drinks must NOT be shared.

People are advised to eat and drink, where possible in their vehicles.

Extra rubbish bins will be provided and must be used by attendees, to maintain site hygiene.

26. Betting facilities

There will be no betting facilities or on-course bookmakers in attendance until further notice.

27. Sponsorship materials

Sponsorship considerations on the gates and/or winners' blankets/rugs will be reviewed by the racecourse. Racecourses must not distribute sponsorship jackets, rugs rosettes until further notice.

28. Technology

Attendees should note that, for reasons of hygiene, power sockets and cables will not be available for general use (i.e. for any purpose not integral to the operation of the race day).

Attendees will not, for example, be permitted to use racecourse power sockets and/or cables to charge personal mobile phones or other devices and are advised to bring battery operated chargers, and/or to charge in vehicles when travelling, if this is likely to be required.

29. Other equipment

All equipment being brought on to site to be used by multiple individuals must be disinfected prior to arrival. All contractors will be responsible for disinfection of their own equipment in line with their procedures.

Where an individual brings equipment for their own use (e.g. BHRC officials' laptops, blood gas analyzers), they will be responsible for the disinfection of these to their own satisfaction. Individuals must not use another person's equipment without first ensuring that this has been disinfected.

SECTION H – Post race procedures

30. Post-race checks (Drivers, stable staff and officials)

On completion of the race, the drivers should proceed to the horsebox area (or Winners' Enclosure, where applicable, noting that this is only likely to be in use for selected races) and await pick-up by stable staff.

Procedures for the Winners' Enclosure and area(s) for other runners will vary by racecourse.

Access to the Winners' Enclosure will be limited to one member of stable staff per horse and/or the trainer/representative and Driver. The grounds team, vets and drivers, will be on hand in equine areas post-race to assist with cooling/any other issues.

Once the horse is secured, Drivers will get off the horse while stable staff will maintain as much distance as safely possible, including standing on the offside, if safe.

Stable staff should then proceed to the horsebox, or to the sampling unit if directed.

31. Equine testing/sampling procedures (Trainers, stable staff, officials)

The usual race day requirements for equine sampling will remain in place.

Social distancing must be observed where possible when samples are taken.

The sampling process will be as follows:

- Identifies horse using microchip protocol with stable staff on the offside of the horse.
- Stable staff should ideally remain a safe distance away during the sampling process.
- Witnessing should be done from a safe distance
- Stable staff must wash or disinfect their hands as soon as possible after collecting the horse, which in most cases will be when washing down the horse after the race. Tap/bucket handles should be wiped down before and after use.
- The trainer or representative can retrieve any equipment at the designated transfer area, being sure to follow the transfer protocols.

32. Trainer and media debriefs (Trainers, drivers, media)

Ideally, the post-race debrief between the trainer and drivers should take place quickly after the race observing social distancing.

If a media debrief is required, this will take place in a designated area with appropriate equipment to allow remote interviews to take place.

SECTION I – Broadcast, media and photographer protocols

33. Broadcast, media & photography protocols (ALL)

Any member of the media wishing to attend must contact the BHRC/Track management to be placed on the official list of attendees.

SECTION J – Leaving the racecourse

34. Departure process (All personnel)

- On completion of their role, each individual should leave the racecourse as soon as practically possible.
- A one-way system should be considered, so individuals can return to their vehicle without crossing paths with others.
- Individuals who finish at the same time should return to their cars either separately or observing social distancing.
- All personnel should ensure that their departure has been logged by racecourse staff.
- Any individual who has left the site must complete the arrival procedures again prior to remittance.

WHILE EVERY EFFORT WILL BE MADE TO PROVIDE A SAFE AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT, ALL ATTENDEES ENTER A RACECOURSE AT THEIR OWN RISK, THE VENUE AND BHRC WILL NOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE SHOULD ANY INDIVIDUAL FEEL UNWELL AFTER ATTENDING A FIXTURE.