



British Riding Clubs

Volunteer Handbook

Volunteer Handbook



The
British
Horse
Society

- Ride Together
- Train Together
- Compete Together
- Have Fun Together



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For further information contact
www.britishridingclubs.co.uk

Part of the British Horse Society

Call: 02476 840 518

email: ridingclubs@bhs.org.uk

Introduction

British Riding Clubs hold seven National Championships every year. This covers a range of disciplines from Dressage to Show Jumping, and Arena Eventing to Cross-Country. Running these Championships would not be possible without the loyal support of our dedicated volunteers. Each event can easily need up to 150 volunteers a day to cover all of the necessary job roles.

Qualifiers are run for these championships in each area throughout the year which also require volunteers. This handbook contains some useful information on the different volunteering roles that are available, and details on the BRC Volunteers Club. Volunteers that are enrolled in the BRC Volunteers Club will receive a range of membership benefits, incentives and rewards. More details are in this handbook.



Why Volunteer?

Why Volunteer?

Volunteering can help you to:

- Learn new skills
- Make new friends
- Build your CV
- Develop your knowledge
- Stay active and be sociable
- Be part of a likeminded community
- Give something back
- Improve your physical and mental health

Have fun together – doesn't just mean riding – come along and see the other side to a competition and have fun with #TeamBRC





Code of Conduct

BRC Volunteers should:

- Be a positive role model to help build competitors confidence and encourage the correct behaviour.
- Always be approachable.
- Treat all competitors fairly and should never humiliate a competitor. Competing should be a fun experience for all.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Encourage all competitors to be responsible for their own behaviour.
- Listen to and respect the views and opinions of competitors.
- Promote high levels of loyalty to create strength of character, self-discipline and sportsmanship amongst riders and competitors.
- Be knowledgeable regarding rules.
- Promote fairness over competitiveness.
- Behave in an appropriate manner on social media as you would with someone face to face.
- Not accept any abuse by members, parents / guardians or other person.
- Not be left in vulnerable circumstances when volunteering for British Riding Clubs.

Please also see Section 1 of the BRC Handbook.

Code of Conduct

Social Media

We love you to post about BRC and to give your followers a taste of what it's like to be a volunteer. Please consider these following guidelines before posting to social media:

- Make sure posts are positive; it's not just your followers who see them.
- Please do not criticise competitors, officials, other volunteers or organisers.
- Do not use inappropriate language or swear words in anything you post about the event.
- Do not tag or name anyone under the age of 18, vulnerable adults, or other person without their permission in any social media.

Please also see section 1 of the BRC Handbook.

Send us your volunteering pictures using the hashtag #TeamBRC





Important Information

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Safeguarding

Each championship has a designated safeguarding officer. If you encounter a safeguarding concern with a child/adult at risk or someone makes a disclosure to you then please contact the secretary.

Until the Safeguarding officer gets there:

- Prioritise the child/adult at risk and if possible find a quieter area to ensure their wellbeing.
- Find another official or another adult to be with you until the Safeguarding officer arrives.
- Explain to the child/adult at risk what you are doing.

For BHS policy on safeguarding please see the website <https://www.bhs.org.uk/our-charity/about-us-and-our-work/corporate-information/working-with-the-law/safeguarding-children>.

Safety

Each championship has a designated health and safety officer. Should you spot a concern contact the health and safety officer directly if you have a radio or speak to your nearest official with a radio who will be able to help.

Parking

There is a designated parking team at each championship so please follow their guidance or the directional signage if available.

Alcohol and Smoking

Smoking is strictly not permitted in the stabling areas or in any buildings. Volunteers are reminded that they are in close proximity to horses and should not be under the influence of alcohol especially when operating machinery such as buggies.

Camping on site

Camping on site at all championships is permitted. Facilities such as showers, toilets and catering are available. Please speak to the parking team on arrival and they will be able to get you set up with a suitable space. When camping on site please be aware that whilst lunch is provided, you would need to provide your own evening meal.



BRC Volunteers' Club

BRC Volunteers Club

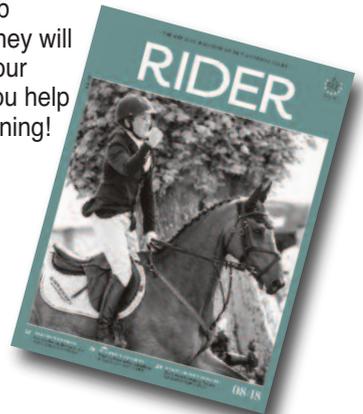
The BRC Volunteers Club has been set up to enable us to reward our regular volunteers. No equine event could run without the generous support of our dedicated volunteers. An event can easily need up to 150 volunteers a day to cover all of the necessary job roles, from car parkers to official stewards. Membership to the Volunteers Club is free.

There are two grades of membership; Silver and Gold. Silver membership is for those volunteers who help at one or more events in a year. Gold membership is for those volunteers who help at all of the events during a year.

Volunteers Club members will receive:

- A membership badge
- Subscription to Rider Magazine
- Exclusive gifts when volunteering at an event
- Discount code for BRC official clothing
- Officials car pass
- Eligibility for BRC Volunteer of the Year Award
- Prize draw entry for a pair of general admission tickets to an equestrian event of your choice i.e. Badminton, HOYS etc.

For every day that a Volunteers Club member helps at a championship, they will automatically be entered once into our annual prize draw. So the more you help the more chance you have of winning!



Volunteer Roles

There are many vital roles that contribute to the smooth running of a successful championship. Here are some of the key roles that are required for running a championship but there are also other opportunities to help, such as with a club or within your area. There are role descriptions for each role, so if you would like any further information then please get in touch.

Dressage Stewards

Dressage stewards keep the competitors running to their scheduled times. When a competitor arrives at the warm up area, they report to the steward who notes that they are present. It's the stewards' responsibility to advise competitors on how long they have before they are due in the arena. Some flexibility is often needed to accommodate any late changes that may occur. In the event of any changes, clear communication with the dressage judge is essential. Dressage stewards need good organisational skills and a confident voice to keep the competitors informed and in order.

Dressage Writers

Dressage writers sit with the judge in their car or judge's box and write down the comments and marks for each movement the horse does in the test. Writing for a dressage judge can be a really good way to learn what judges are looking for in a test. If you are a competitor, this can be a valuable aid to your own competition success! Dressage writers need a basic knowledge of riding and dressage and fairly neat handwriting.



Tack Stewards

Tack stewards inspect each competitor in the warm up areas before they are allowed to compete. They check that the horse is wearing the correct, permitted tack, and that the rider is wearing the correct dress. Tack stewards need an understanding of both horse tack and rider dress. An awareness of the tack and dress rules for competitions is also beneficial, but you will be given details to assist you in this role.

Show Jumping Scorers

Sit with the show jumping judges in their box and input the scores direct into a computer using the BRC database. This includes any faults and time taken. Good computer skills are required for this but horse knowledge although desirable is not necessary.

Style Jumping Writers

Sit with the style jumping judges in their box and and write down the judges comments and marks. This role is similar to dressage writing. Good computer skills are desired for this but horse knowledge is desirable but not necessary.



Collecting Ring Stewards

Collecting ring stewards keep the competitors running to their scheduled times. When a competitor arrives at the warm up area, they report to the steward who notes that they are present. It is the stewards' responsibility to advise competitors on how long they have before they are due in the arena. Some flexibility is often needed to accommodate changes that may occur.

Collecting ring stewards often have a blackboard where the competitor's numbers can be put down in a running order. Collecting ring stewards need good organisational skills and a confident voice to keep the competitors informed and in order.

Show Jumping Arena Party

The arena party help to set up and maintain the show jumping arenas during the competition. Any poles or jumps displaced by a competitor must be quickly replaced. Show jumping classes often run to a tight schedule and so the smooth running of the show jumping arenas is very important.

Arena party helpers need to be physically able to lift show jumping poles and move quickly in and out of the arena. It's a good idea to bring a picnic chair with you as you will be situated at the side of the arena.



Cross-Country Starters and Time Keepers

A cross-country starter is responsible for counting down the time to a competitor and sending them off on the course at the correct time.

The cross-country course needs a number of time keepers to track the competitors around the course. It is also important that radio contact is maintained with the Control team to advise of starters, finishers and provisional times. cross-country timekeepers should be confident in using the stopwatches and radios.



Cross-Country 10 Minute Box Stewards

Stewards are needed in the 10 minute box of the cross-country course for long format events, to ensure the competitors stick to their allocated running times. As competitors enter the 10 minute box the time is noted and they are then allocated 10 minutes before they continue onto the cross-country course. Stewards need good organisational skills and a confident voice, and this role involves using a stopwatches and radios.

Cross-Country Control and Commentators

At championships BRC use experienced volunteers for these roles; however if you would be interested in gaining some valuable knowledge then let us know.

A controller controls what happens on the cross-country course and communicates constantly with the fence judges, start and finishers, emergency services and the officials. In case of an emergency,

control stops the course, deploys the emergency services and communicates any actions needed to the relevant officials. A controller will also commentate on what is happening on the cross-country course so a clear, confident voice and cool head is required for this role. Commentators are used to welcome a competitor into a ring and introduce them to any spectators, the commentator will announce the horse and rider and then at the end of the round will provisionally announce their score.

Cross-Country Fence Judges

Fence judges are needed for each cross-country fence on a course. There is usually a minimum of two judges at each fence, and judges can drive their car to the fence to act as a base for the day. It is a fence judge's job to mark down any penalties for each competitor at that fence. Fence judges attend a briefing on the morning of the competition where the official steward explains the relevant rules and the use of the flags and radios etc.



Fence judging is a great way to spend the day with a friend and have some fun. But don't worry if you're on your own or haven't ever fence judged before as we can easily team you up with someone experienced. Being a fence judge is a great opportunity to experience the competition up close and enjoy spending the day out in the countryside.



Fence judges will need to be confident in using a radio, and calling upon the medics and other officials through a control base if required. Full training will be given in the morning briefing and the cross-country Steward will always be in contact with you via radio, and will also travel round to check on you throughout the day.

Help is always at hand

Every job role carried out by our volunteers is closely overseen by one of our chief stewards. There is always experienced back-up close at hand for any problems or queries you may have. We brief all of our volunteers to make sure they are happy with the job they will be doing, and if specialised equipment is needed, i.e. radios, then training on this will also be given when requested. At every event we have a strong back up network of officials, medic and veterinary staff, all of whom are experienced and capable to deal with unexpected situations.

Each role has a more detailed role description which can be requested once your role has been allocated.

Should you be unsure about a certain role but would like to know more, we can offer a buddy system where you can buddy up with an experienced volunteer and learn the role with their help at a championship.





Frequently Asked Questions

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Who can volunteer?

Anyone who has some spare time can volunteer to help. Volunteers must be over 18 if volunteering on their own. Volunteers between the ages of 16 - 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian on site. Volunteers under 16 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian at all times.

How much time does it take?

Volunteers can help for either a half day or a whole day. Some job roles require a full days commitment i.e. fence judging, whereas other roles like dressage writing, can be for a shorter amount of time. Volunteers can be required to arrive from 0800 onwards, and the days usually finish at around 1800. But this does vary for each specific competition and job role.

Do I need to have any previous experience?

No! You may have existing skills which you would like to share with us, however even if you've never helped out before, there are many roles with which you can assist. Upon arrival you will be fully briefed and any relevant training will be given. Some roles require knowledge of horses but other roles such as timekeeping or scoring do not.

Can I bring my dog?

Well behaved dogs are welcome on site but they must be kept on a short lead and wear an ID tag on their collar. Some roles such as fence judging allow you to tie your dog next to your car for the day. Please ensure that you bring water and a means to provide shade or shelter for your dog. For some roles it may not be possible to accommodate dogs so please liaise with the organiser.

How do I get involved?

For more information on volunteering contact Jennie Pallett on: 02476 840593 or email: jennie.pallett@bhs.org.uk



Frequently Asked Questions

Will I be on my own?

Different roles have different requirements. It's great if you are able to bring along a friend, but don't worry if you're on your own. If you are not very experienced or confident, we will pair you up with someone else. Volunteering is a very social activity and is a great way to meet new likeminded people.

Will I get lunch?

Yes! Our volunteers are provided with refreshments throughout the day and depending on the role.

How will I know what I'm scheduled to do?

You will receive an email confirmation before the event which will confirm venue, role and times and instructions for your arrival.

What do I need to bring?

You do not require any special equipment for any of the roles at an event. You will be provided with everything you need to carry out the role. However, it's worth remembering that events are usually all held outdoors and we are subject to the unpredictable British weather. Please ensure you dress appropriately for the time of year and do bring an extra layer or two as it can often be chilly spending the day in the great outdoors. Warm waterproof clothing, hats and sun cream are all recommended.

Am I insured to be helping?

All volunteers helping at a BRC championship are covered by our third party liability insurance.

What is the difference between a volunteer and a team volunteer?

A team volunteer is a requirement of a team entry to a championship and is required to help for half a day. Team volunteers are not provided with lunch although there are a couple of exceptions depending on the role allocated.



Privacy Statement

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Personal information that you supply to us may be used in a number of ways to facilitate volunteering. Your personal information may be shared with associates for the purpose of fulfilling your volunteering duty i.e. insurance providers.

BRC will contact you about regarding volunteering. This includes sending you updates on training and further events which may be of interest, along with details on the event.

To see our full privacy policy, or if you need further information, please write to us at; British Riding Clubs, BHS, Abbey Park, Stareton, Kenilworth, CV8 2XZ or go to: <https://bhs.org.uk/privacy>.

Photography / Filming

Please be advised that filming and/or photography takes place at all BRC Championships – this could be in competition and presentation areas, trade stand and seating areas, stabling and lorry park during competition hours.

If you do not wish to appear in any images captured please inform the secretary so that we can take appropriate steps to ensure you are not included.

The photographs/film could potentially be included in British Riding Clubs publications or in BRC promotional materials in the future and may also be published on the BRC section of the BHS website. They could also be passed onto the sponsor of the event and the press.



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For more information please call: Tel: 02476 840518

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