

# Riding by your side

What we  
achieved  
in 2024 –  
Annual  
Report



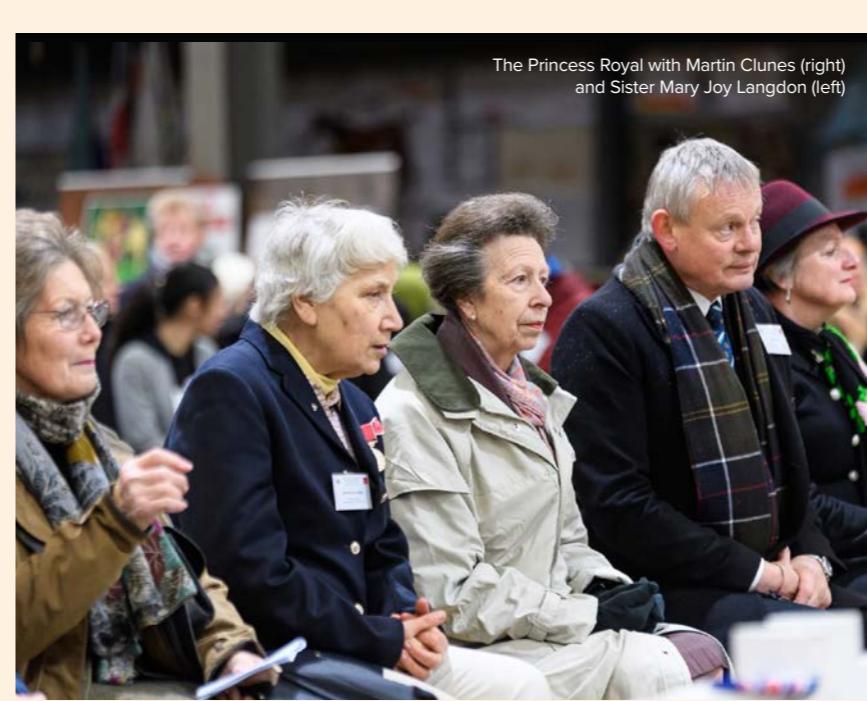


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# Vice-Patron's introduction



**A**s Vice-Patron of British Horse Society, I was delighted to attend three events during 2024 that demonstrated the work of the Society and the positive impact it's had on the equestrian industry and the public.

In February, I visited the Wormwood Scrubs Pony Centre as they approached their 35th anniversary. This centre provides riding and equine therapy for children, specialising in those with special needs and physical disabilities, regularly enrolling their participants on the Society's Changing Lives Through Horses (CLTH) programme. The centre has gone from strength to strength over the past 35 years, which is a testament to Sister Mary Joy Langdon, Founder and Chief Executive, and her outstanding leadership. With the support of the Society, Sister Mary Joy has helped to improve the lives of thousands of children by enabling the remarkable transformation that can happen when communication between horses and people takes place.

In October, I attended the Society's CLTH Showcase, which recognised those who contributed to the programme's success, including Society Approved Centres, coaches and volunteers, as well as legacy pledgers and trusts. The Showcase also included many interesting presentations from practitioners, CLTH centres and participants.

In November, I attended the Society's Annual Awards and Charity Race Day at Newbury Racecourse. The Annual Awards recognise the considerable achievements and valuable contributions of the Society's volunteers, supporters and partners. I was pleased to present the President's Award to Sister Mary Joy Langdon and a BHS Fellowship Certificate to Liz Eaton, FBHS, and to have the opportunity to meet the Society's award winners and BHS Fellows.

These visits show the broad impact that the Society continues to have, as well as the hard work and dedication of all involved to achieve the charity's aims. I send my congratulations to the Society's Trustees, executive team, volunteers and supporters for all the achievements outlined in this year's Annual Report.

# Chair's Statement

Everyone at BHS is working incredibly hard to continue delivering our charitable objectives, while also looking ahead to our next three-year strategy

**W**e're constantly working to make sure we make a real impact where it's needed most, and I hope that as you read this report you'll be impressed by the range and scope of activity. Our Access team had an incredible year. They registered 460 Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMOs), meaning 447km of off-road routes and rights of way have been identified and preserved for riders to enjoy for years to come. It demonstrates our determination to identify and preserve ancient routes and rights of way. Additionally, the Government announced on Boxing Day that it would be repealing the 2031 cut-off date for DMMOs.

To help make BHS qualifications accessible to as many people as possible, the Education team were able to increase the availability of BHS assessment by approving 10 new or returning assessment centres and upgrading 11 more centres to hold new levels of assessments. There's also been a big focus on financial support for individuals to

take qualifications and help fill the skills gaps, including supporting around 2,000 people through the Career Transition Fund. Our Horse Care and Welfare team continue to provide advice, guidance and support to thousands of horses and owners across the country, including direct support through clinics, health days and Friends at the End. Awareness weeks are always an important part of our calendar and in 2024 we again supported Colic and Strangles campaigns. The team are constantly updating our information and guidance following the latest research, and the breadth of their work and knowledge is staggering.

In terms of Participation, British Riding Clubs (BRC) launched a new online membership tool for 2024, allowing clubs to manage their affiliation online and members to join directly and manage their own personal information. This, alongside a whole host of other benefits around the Championships, reduced administration for BRC and club committees, and gave members more control.

Our Approved Centre Scheme is constantly working to help and support centres across the country, offering advice through our network of dedicated managers. In 2024, we were able to add 29 new centres to the scheme while increasing the retention of existing centres. We were able to help 16 centres through the Ride by Your Side fund, with each receiving a share of £107,000.

**“**  
Our wonderful volunteer community remains incredibly strong and is essential to the delivery of all our work

I'm also thrilled to see that 17 Second Chance ponies were successfully rehomed into centres, giving them a new start in life.

Our Changing Lives Through Horses (CLTH) programme continues to grow and evolve, literally changing the lives of the children and young people involved. Any time I get to hear the stories of those who've overcome such challenges thanks to the scheme, I'm overwhelmed. By the end of 2024, we'd welcomed 3,800 children and young people to the programme since its inception in 2016 – a fantastic achievement! We now have 135 centres trained to deliver CLTH, meaning we can help even more people.

2024 saw the launch of our Everyone Welcome strategy, designed to support the equestrian sector in becoming more diverse, inclusive and equitable. Our aim is to open the world of horses to people of all abilities, backgrounds, cultures and identities. In the last quarter of the year, we set up 15 Everyone Welcome Pilot Centres across the UK, where a range of projects will run throughout 2025 to help even more people experience the unique benefits of simply being around horses.

The Safety team had another fantastic year and continued to build on the many partnerships that have been fostered over recent years. The Dead Slow campaign is always a highlight of the year and won two road safety awards in 2024. Our highly-regarded Henry the Horse initiative continued in 2024, teaching a new generation of nine- and 10-year-olds how to walk or cycle safely past horses. The constant campaigning and education work we do across safety, talking with both equestrians and non-equestrians,

helps create a better and safer future for horses and those of us who love them.

Our Regional and National Managers were, as always, hard at work during the year, working closely with local committees to hold events across the UK, engaging over 11,000 members and supporters. The regional team created a full programme of virtual, in-person and hybrid events, all aimed at furthering our charitable objectives. The 36 Ride Out UK pleasure rides were a highlight, raising significant funds as well as promoting Participation and Access. In all, our national, regional and county committees generated £250,000.

Our wonderful volunteer community remains incredibly strong and is essential to the delivery of all our work. We're so grateful to these amazing people and thank them all for their invaluable contribution.

It's great to be in the position, once again, to report so positively on our financial situation. In each of the last six years, we've been able to earmark funds out of in-year surplus and create designated funds that support projects to really increase our impact and also to improve our infrastructure.

While our membership numbers continue to grow, and revenue from membership and the associated Gift Aid remains the current bedrock of our finances, we're always looking at how we can diversify and increase other sources of revenue.

I hope you enjoy reading this year's Ride By Your Side report and join me in thanking our Trustees, volunteers, members, supporters, sponsors, partners and the whole executive team for all their hard work delivering another successful year.



**Sally McCarthy**  
Chair of Trustees

The Board of Trustees, which also acts as the Board of Directors for the purposes of the Companies Act, presents British Horse Society's Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2024. In doing so, the Trustees have adopted the provisions and guidance of all relevant legislation and standards.

# 2024

# at a glance

Summary and highlights



## Financial highlights

**£15,996,000**

**Total income** decreased very slightly from £16,106,000 in 2023 to £15,996,000; this was mainly because of a reduction in the Gift Aid income received in 2024

**£16,904,000**

**Expenditure** grew from £16,209,000 to £16,904,000. A significant proportion of that growth is due to increased activity within designated funds to support investments in technology and engaging wider audiences

**£5,437,000**

**Undesignated reserves** at the year-end

## Society key highlights



**£250,000**

Raised by **our committees**



**124,555 members** at end of 2024 – a growth of **2,332 members**



**17**

**Second Chance ponies** were successfully rehomed

We responded to **1,014 new welfare concerns** involving over **3,593 horses**

**3,800** young people helped via the **Changing Lives Through Horses (CLTH) programme** since 2016



Helped **284 at-risk horses** at our **Healthcare and Education clinics**

## Access

**256km** of equestrian access was improved by the intervention of the Society

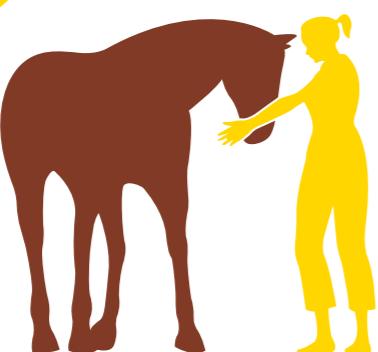


**460** DMMO Project 2026 applications submitted

## Education

**19%**

more Stage 2 and 3 coaching units taken in 2024 thanks to the Career Transition Fund (CTF)



**10** new or returning assessment centres approved



**2,000** people supported through the Career Transition Fund

## Safety



**126** participants took part in a trial of free, basic road safety training for riders

The Horse i app was downloaded **4,211** times



**3,798** incidents recorded via the Horse i app in 2024

## Fundraising



Charity partner at the **Blenheim Palace International Horse Trials** in 2024

**£45,556**

raised towards the **Ride Out Fund** through **Rideathon and Ride Out UK** events



**£65,000**

was raised at our **Charity Race days**

## Horse care and welfare

**86** owners supported by our **Friends at the End** staff and volunteers



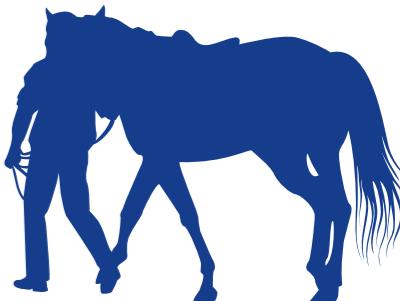
**9 NEW** Veterinary React Colic Champions



**6,011** horses and **16,202** people helped directly by our **Horse Care and Welfare** team



**2,414** horse passports processed



## Participation



**9** face-to-face proprietor conferences attended by **200** people



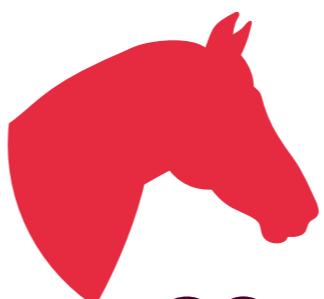
**15** Everyone Welcome pilot centres set up



**16 CENTRES** received a share of **£107,000** from the **Ride By Your Side** fund



**11** You're a Gem Awards awarded to recognise exceptional contributions by our volunteers



**35** new CLTH centres trained



**29** NEW centres on our Approved Centres scheme

# Strategic report

2024 was another successful year. Thanks to the growth in members and qualifications being taken, we've been able to do even more and make an even greater impact

**T**his strategic report outlines last year's achievements, all of which reflect our dedication and commitment to supporting horses and those who care for them.

As always, horses are at the centre of everything we do. Through our education and training programmes, our safety campaigns and our horse care and welfare advice, our aim is to make the UK a better place for horses and for all those who care for them.

We continue to make an impact in each area of our work and across the UK. This report showcases that impact across each of our charitable objectives and areas of work.

We're hugely grateful for the support of our members, volunteers and staff – we wouldn't be able to do any of this without you.

**“**  
Horses are everything to me – they are my life, my world

**Eleanor Wellesley, winner of BHS Charity Race 2024**



# Enabling access



## Ride Out Fund success

After surface erosion due to rain and running water had made the route unusable, a section of the Jack Mytton Way, a 150km route through Shropshire Hills National Landscape, has been restored and reopened to riders. This means riders and carriage drivers can now access Wenlock Edge and the wider public rights of way network without going on the roads. One local rider said: "Your work is genuinely life-changing for riders."

The funding for this project included £12,000 from the BHS Ride Out Fund, contributions from BHS Shropshire, BHS West Midlands and Long Mynd & District Bridleways Association, plus a grant from the Farming in Protected Landscapes scheme. The restoration was coordinated with support from Shropshire Council's Outdoor Partnerships team.



The continued dedication of our Access team to protecting and preserving off-road access in the UK is unwavering

During 2024, our team of Access Field Officers responded to over 300 consultations and helped improve 256km of equestrian access. Through Project 2026, we helped register 460 Definitive Map Modification Order applications for historical equestrian routes, protecting and preserving these routes for the future. We were delighted on Boxing Day, when the Government announced that the 2031 cut-off date will be repealed.

Partnerships continue to be at the core of our access work. The Outdoors for All manifesto, which we endorsed, was launched at Westminster in March and we signed our first memorandum of understanding with Sustrans, the charity making it easier for everyone to walk, wheel and cycle.

Working alongside the Ministry of Defence (MOD), we created information on how to stay safe while riding or carriage driving on MOD routes, any oncoming hazards and how to report any incidents that may occur.

We also worked in partnership with Ordnance Survey (OS) to upload over 600 routes to their OS app, and we're now a Recommended Route Partner.

Our National Managers in Scotland, Ireland and Wales worked closely with devolved governments to represent the interests of horse riders and owners on issues such as access, licensing of equestrian businesses and equine ID.

The team continue to support both partners and the general public through training, including our rights of way and commons training course which was attended by 174 people during the year. We also held our second Access and Safety virtual conference in November, which saw 115 delegates attend.

# Education pathways

We're constantly looking at how we can improve our training and qualifications as well as make them more accessible

**T**hanks to the Career Transition Fund, which supported 2,000 people in 2024, and increased visibility, our qualification numbers continue to grow. We approved 10 new or returning assessment centres and upgraded 11 centres to hold new assessment levels. The Education team was recognised by British Horse Society Qualifications Limited for its excellent work in complying with and demonstrating good practice in qualification delivery.

Following a review of BHS Stage 1 Care and Ride qualifications, we simplified the syllabus wording and updated some content, while a review of the BHSI syllabus has led to it now having four available routes – the same as Fellowship level.

A project to review and update education content on our website has begun. We've also started actioning the findings of the Accredited Professional Coach team's survey to determine what additional support coaches require.

We're always looking at new ways to offer training and help more people enter equestrian careers. One area we've been looking at is apprenticeships. As part of this work, Skills Development Scotland has authorised us to review the Scottish Modern Apprenticeship – the first apprenticeship review led by industry.

We've also collaborated with apprenticeship providers Haddon Training and Keits to offer direct entry and assessment discounts to encourage learners to add our qualifications to their apprenticeship.

Through the Career Transition Fund, training vouchers were provided to those taking our Stage 2 and 3 qualifications, while



college vouchers providing discounted assessment fees were offered to students from equine colleges. We promoted our assessment discounts for Riding Centre staff and offered part-funded training to remove potential barriers. As part of our ongoing work to make our qualifications as good as possible,

we launched new theory courses for Stage 2, 3 and 4 Care and Stage 2 Coach, and we successfully delivered a pilot Stage 2 Coach course. Our Regional and National Managers attended 35 career-focused events to promote our educational opportunities and reach new audiences.



**“**  
BHS qualifications have given me the pathway for what to do, starting from Stage 1 and working my way up to the Fellowship.

My advice to aspiring coaches is to never forget the love of horses. It's a privilege to be able to work with an animal, and if you maintain that always, you'll do well

**David Sheerin, FBHS**



ACCREDITED  
PROFESSIONAL  
COACH

# Promoting safety

The safety of horses and equestrians is always at the forefront of our work



**T**he Dead Slow road safety campaign occupied most of the team's time and resources and continues to have a significant impact on this critical issue. In 2024, the campaign won two awards for its significant contribution to road safety. Throughout the campaign, we've held Road and Rider Awareness events and training for commercial driving companies and worked closely with local authorities to place Dead Slow posters at dangerous locations.

We've continued to work with local authorities, the police and road safety partnerships to increase awareness among drivers of the Highway Code rule changes for vulnerable road users as the changes specific to equestrians are still widely unknown.

The Horse Incident Reporting System and the Horse i app have provided useful data to supply to road safety partnerships and local authorities, highlighting hot spots for local action. We've then worked with local police forces on safety operations in many of these areas.

We're constantly looking for ways to get our safety awareness messages out to new audiences and reach as much of the population as possible. Following funding from the Road Safety Trust, we worked with Nottingham Trent University to produce four films for drivers, which are available to watch on the Road Safety Trust website. These films promote the safe overtaking of horses and cyclists with mindfulness techniques.

We also trialled delivery of free road safety training to 126 riders and their horses in the South West. As well as raising standards of riding on the road, these sessions allowed us to promote our wider safety agenda.



**“**I couldn't thank Alan and his team enough. They helped turn something so tragic into something a bit more positive by raising awareness, putting up extra Dead Slow signs on the road where we were hit and organising interviews and articles. I'm grateful for all the work BHS does to keep us safe

**Member of the public supported by the Dead Slow campaign**

The Henry the Horse initiative continues to teach nine and 10-year-olds how to walk or cycle safely past horses. As well as reaching a new generation, it's also an opportunity to share our Dead Slow messages with parents – people we might not otherwise have reached.

We've continued to work with both national and local government throughout the year and were instrumental in forums,

PACTS (Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety), the RoSPA Road Safety Committee and the police's Operation Gallop. We were consulted by the Government's Office of Product Safety and Standards regarding firework safety and equestrians. We were also a major partner in lobbying MPs to review firework legislation and presented a petition to the Government advocating for stricter fireworks regulations.



# Promoting horse care and welfare

Horses and their wellbeing are at the heart of everything that we do at BHS. Nowhere is that more self-evident than in the work done by our Horse Care and Welfare team



**“**  
Friends at the End was an invaluable support on the day I had to euthanise my beloved horse. Even though the representative came from quite a distance, she arrived on time and offered any support needed. Afterwards, she and I had a hot drink together, and I wasn't left on my own until I felt it okay to do so. Her support was kind, intuitive and non-judgemental: a perfect companion at a heartbreakin time when my emotions were everywhere

**Joanne, owner of 36-year-old Walter Raleigh**

**O**ur team helped 6,011 horses and 16,202 people in 2024. We provided advice and support, handled welfare concerns (including 16 multi-agency operations) and offered training to our volunteer advisers.

We held seven Healthcare and Education clinics, which helped at-risk horses in welfare hotspot areas, and hosted 130 proactive events and activities – an increase of 20% on 2023 – through our Horse Health and Stable Mates days.

Our Friends at the End scheme helped 86 owners through the hardest decision a horse owner has to make. We also trained new volunteers for the scheme so we can reach more people and raised awareness of the initiative during our Focus Fortnight.

We took the weighbridge to yards, schools and events with a focus on revisiting previous locations to record fat scores in horses we'd previously seen. Encouragingly, there was an overall decrease in fat scores for those horses.

As an ID Only Passport Issuing Organisation, we answered passport-related queries and processed over

2,000 new passports and several change of ownership requests.

As part of the Suitably Mounted Group, we're working to tackle the issue of incompatible horse-rider combinations.

As part of this, we've helped create a new training programme including fat scoring, social licence to operate and motivational interviewing techniques. This course was delivered to external volunteer show stewards, and we also provided hands-on support at several large shows.

We continue to provide horse health and welfare information advice through our website, magazine and other channels including awareness campaigns. We supported #StranglesAwarenessWeek and held #ColicAwarenessWeek, which focused on our presence at Your Horse Live. We signed up nine Veterinary REACT Colic Champions, and 88 vet practices now support this campaign.

The journal *Anthrozoos* published a collaborative study between us, the University of Bristol and David Marlin titled: 'Unwanted feeding and other interactions between passers-by and horses: owners' views during the Covid-19 pandemic'.

This will help us work towards improving our education and raise more awareness around the harm of unwanted feeding.



# Participation: engaging and supporting our community

We want everyone – whatever their ability, background, culture or identity – to feel welcome

## British Riding Clubs (BRC)

We finished 2024 with a BRC total membership number of 26,409; this was static on 2023. A new online membership tool was introduced for 2024, allowing clubs to oversee their affiliation and members to join directly and manage their own personal information. The system also issues championship invitations and manages championship entries.

We've moved to a rolling membership from a calendar year membership, offering improved value for money for our members, reducing administration for us and club committees and providing a more secure way of managing data.

By tweaking our competition calendar – moving the Dressage to Music Championships to March from October, the Arena Eventing Championships to June from March and the Combined Championships from June to October – we've made sure qualifiers can run at better times of the year and allowed the Arena Eventing Championships to take place without concern about disruptive weather.

Teaming up with E-Riders for our Christmas Cracker online dressage competition allowed us to increase capacity and consequently accept more entries.

“

Our annual Riding School National Championships gave 100 riders who don't own their own horse the unique opportunity to compete on horseback



“

I love it – I sleep better when I've been here. It clears my mind so I don't have to overthink everything

CLTH participant

### Approved Centres

We welcomed 29 new centres to our Approved Centres scheme, of which 15% were in the new category of Equine Activity Centres. We saw an increase of 15% in retention of centres; business closure was the biggest reason centres left the scheme. The Business Support team performed 250 centre visits and 220 centre inspections.

Sixteen centres received a share of £107,000 from the Ride By Your Side grant. Funded projects included specialist equipment, accessible toilets and classrooms.

Two hundred centre managers attended nine face-to-face proprietor conferences, at which topics including diversification, social licence and education were discussed. Our 27 online coffee mornings attracted 300 participants to explore subjects such as mental health, VAT and pricing strategies.

We successfully rehomed 17 Second Chance ponies into centres, giving them a new lease of life.

Our annual Riding School National Championships gave 100 riders who don't own their own horse the unique opportunity to compete on horseback. This year, riders came from nine centres – three of which hadn't been involved before.

### Changing Lives Through Horses (CLTH)

CLTH continues to thrive, with growing interest and demand from both riding centres and participants. We've welcomed 3,800 young people to the CLTH programme since 2016 – an increase of

44% on 2023 – and 135 centres. A survey revealed that 76% of centres have increased their staffing levels to deliver CLTH.

Employing a second Programme Manager has allowed us to visit more centres and train 35 new ones. We've delivered strong Continuing Professional Development (CPD) content – 50 coaches from 27 centres attended our CLTH conference.

Other CLTH highlights included:

- Planning and delivering two BHS Stage 1 pilots for CLTH participants
- 80 candidates from 13 centres achieving Personal Development Qualifications
- Releasing the findings of our research with the University of Buckingham, which gave scientific evidence that the CLTH programme has many benefits to participants
- Hosting a CLTH showcase event at the Worshipful Company of Saddlers with HRH The Princess Royal and Martin Clunes, OBE.



Chris Coldham at the Riding School Championships

### Everyone Welcome

In 2024, we launched our Everyone Welcome strategy, which focuses on how we can support the equestrian sector to become more diverse, inclusive and fair. We want everyone – whatever their ability, background, culture or identity – to feel welcome in the world of horses.

Our aim is to embed our Everyone Welcome strategy into every aspect of our work so we can meet the needs of a greater and more diverse number of horse lovers and create a more visibly inclusive environment across the equestrian landscape. No one should feel excluded from riding, carriage driving or even just being with horses.

In the last quarter of 2024, we set up 15 Everyone Welcome Pilot Centres, which are spread geographically throughout the UK. During 2025, we'll be running several projects at these centres, aimed at increasing and/or promoting diversity and inclusion within the equestrian sector.

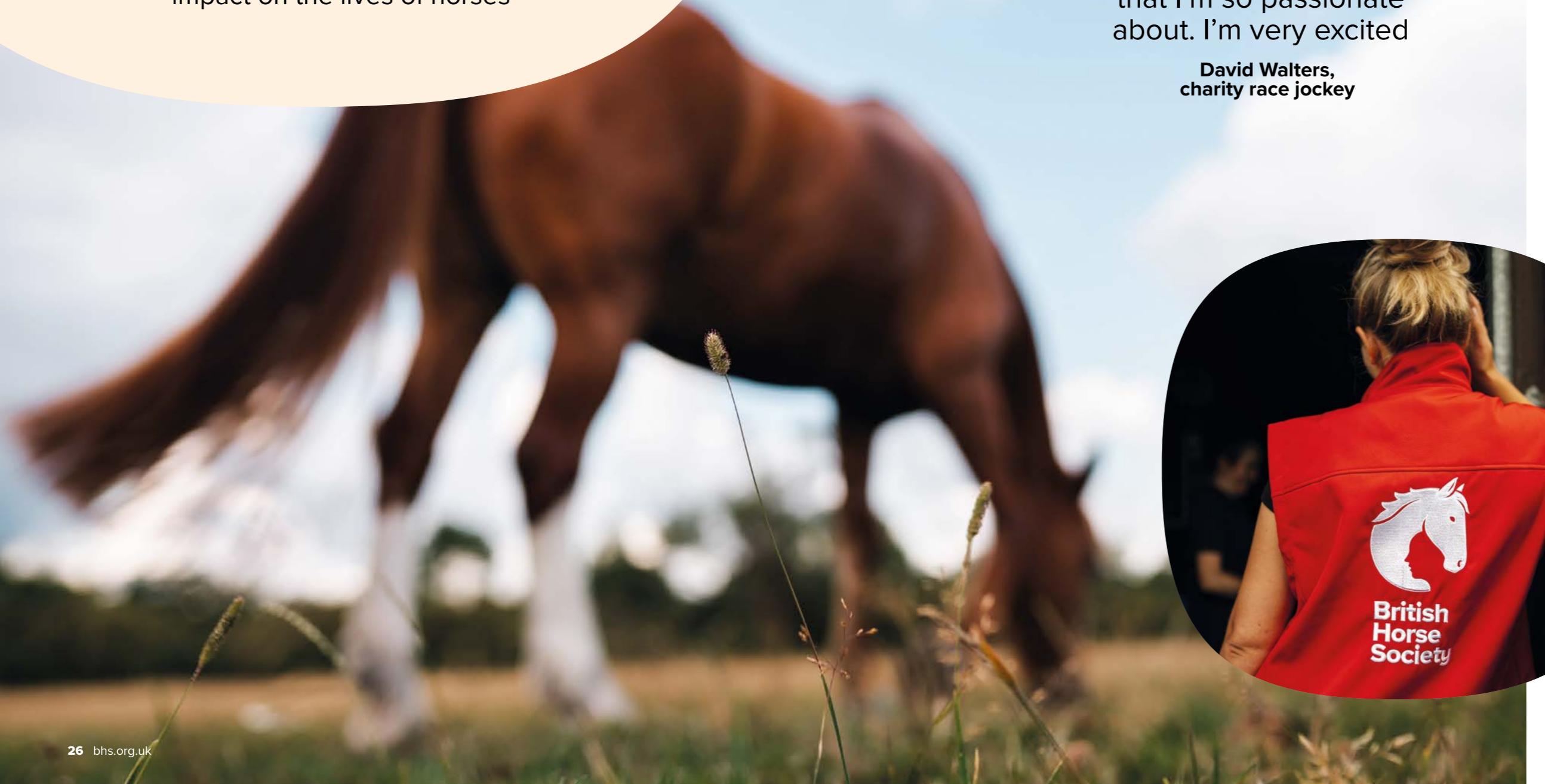
**Chris Coldham, a nurse from the West Midlands, who rides with Holly Riding School**

Chris decided he was ready for a new challenge and started working towards the Riding School Championships, with the support of his riding school.

*“This is the first time I've ever been to a competition like this. I was quite nervous beforehand. I wasn't sure what to expect but as soon as I got into the warm-up arena for the dressage that disappeared. It's been great seeing all the riders here of different ages, from young riders to riders closer to my age.”*

# Raising funds

Fundraising is one of the many important ways in which we engage members and partners in order to make a real impact on the lives of horses



“ I’m thrilled to be playing a part in helping more young people experience the magical feeling both my son and I have experienced with horses. Riding in this race not only gives me a chance to raise money for such a life-changing cause, but allowed me to take on an opportunity that I’m so passionate about. I’m very excited

**David Walters,  
charity race jockey**



We continued to engage charitable trusts, granting bodies and individual donors to raise crucial funds for our work. We held charity races at Newbury and Wetherby, which raised £65,000, and we were delighted to be a charity partner at the Blenheim Palace International Horse Trials. Contributions from member ticket sales and donation opportunities raised funds as well as awareness of our work.

Our Ride Out and Rideathon campaigns raised £45,556, which helped complete eight access schemes. The 36 Ride Out UK pleasure rides continued to be popular, raising significant funds while promoting participation and access.

In total, our national, regional and county committees generated £250,000 – with every penny either being reinvested into local events, devoted to delivering our charitable activities or directed to headquarters to support national campaigns and initiatives.

We've continued to support and fund the Equine Grass Sickness research project being conducted by the Moredun Foundation in Midlothian and we're proud of their pioneering efforts to alleviate the effects of this devastating disease.

We're registered with the Fundraising Regulator and we monitor our fundraising activities to make sure we follow the Code of Fundraising Practice and Fundraising

Promise. There was one complaint in 2024 regarding our fundraising activities, which was followed up and resolved with no further action necessary.

Our volunteers continue to be a vital part of the mission and impact of BHS, and on average we attract 150 new volunteers each year.

During 2024, we focused on delivering our five-year volunteer strategy with the aim that "we're recognised for making our volunteers feel valued as an integral part of our diverse team. Their contribution to delivering our charitable objectives is celebrated and rewarded." A key element of the strategy is to test new ways of working to modernise our volunteer offer. We ran five projects throughout the year, and we'll be analysing the output of those projects to define our future volunteering structure.

We introduced You're a Gem Awards to recognise exceptional contributions by our volunteers and awarded 11 of those during the year.

We've continued to prioritise the introduction of volunteer email addresses to meet GDPR requirements. Of our high- and medium-priority volunteer roles, 99% are now using their BHS email address.

# Our amazing volunteers

Volunteers are essential to the delivery of our work across access, welfare, safety, education and participation



*"It's great to get involved... everyone is really friendly"*

**Liam Skia, Young Volunteer of the Year 2024**



**Volunteer of the Year**

We also recognised our volunteers at the 2024 Annual Awards. BHS Volunteer of the Year Andrea Durham said, "From taking BHS exams at the age of 17, to present day, volunteering over 40 years on, being recognised by a society you've always held in such high esteem, and for doing something for the horses you simply love, makes this award all the more special. Thank you."

# Increasing and supporting membership



“ My 13-year-old son Harry was diagnosed with autism, global development delay and sensory processing disorder. Last summer, Harry was watching Alan Titchmarsh driving a horse and carriage on TV. He said, ‘Mum, I like horses’ – within minutes, I’d found a riding school

Nicola Rodriguez,  
BHS member

**N**one of our work would be possible without the continued support of our members. Despite the cost-of-living crisis, our membership community continued to grow in 2024. We started the year with 122,223 members and ended the year with 124,555 – an encouraging net growth of 2,332 members,

which equates to a 1.9% increase. We’re constantly looking to give the best possible membership offer and experience, reviewing and benchmarking our range of benefits. As our membership attracts Gift Aid, we encourage every UK tax-paying member to sign up for Gift Aid, and this continues to be a focus.

Alongside our email newsletters and *British Horse* magazine, our regional team created a full programme of virtual,

in-person and hybrid events, all aimed at furthering our charitable objectives. BHS Regional and National Managers, working closely with local committees, held 533 Education, Fundraising, Safety and Participation events across the UK, engaging over 11,000 members and supporters. In addition to this, we engaged with many more through both major and local shows. Camps, clinics, talks and CPD events continue to be well received.

**D**uring 2024, we used the research into our potential audiences and the equestrian landscape to help us develop our new three-year strategy, as well as working on our new look and feel, launched in 2025. Both these projects will allow us to engage wider audiences and have even greater impact.

Our digital transformation continues following the investment over the last few years. Most recently, we’ve rolled out new features of our HR system, improving our recruitment and onboarding processes. We’ve also improved how we manage images and templates with a new database.

## Future plans

Our 2025–2027 strategic plan focuses on five key outcomes, which are underpinned by five core commitments. Together, these efforts aim to make sure that horses are respected, protected and enjoyed by knowledgeable, caring people across the UK.

Our five key outcomes:

- Protecting the future of horses in society
- We’re here to help
- Safer roads and better off-road routes
- Everyone is welcome
- One team working together.

You can read our full strategic plan at [bhs.org.uk/about-us](https://bhs.org.uk/about-us)



# Looking after our team and central services

We’ve continued to work on major projects and infrastructure investments that will help us to deliver our charitable goals

# About British Horse Society

**B**ritish Horse Society is a charitable company incorporated in England. It doesn't have a share capital and is limited by guarantee. The company is registered as a charity with the Charity Commission, the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator and the Isle of Man Charity Regulator.

## Who we are

We're the largest equestrian charity in the UK, and we know the amazing feeling that horses and people share. BHS helps horses and everyone who cares for them enjoy the best possible life together. For horses. For people. For life.

## Our values

- We put horses at the heart
- We take the lead
- We give our heart and soul
- We muck in.

## Our purpose

We want every horse to be respected, protected and enjoyed by knowledgeable, caring people.

Article 2 within the Society's Articles of Association outlines the following charitable objectives:

- To promote and advance the education, training and safety of the public in all matters relating to horses
- To promote the use, breeding, wellbeing, safety, environment, health and management of horses for the public benefit
- To promote community participation in healthy recreation involving horses

- To promote and facilitate the prevention of cruelty, neglect or harm to horses and to promote the relief, safety, sanctuary, rescue and welfare of horses in need of care, attention and assistance
- To promote and secure the provision, protection and preservation of rights of way and of access for ridden and driven horses over public roads, highways, footpaths, bridleways, carriage ways, public paths and other land.

For the full annual report, please visit [bhs.org.uk/about-us/annual-report](http://bhs.org.uk/about-us/annual-report)



