

Everyone Welcome

A DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND
INCLUSION STRATEGY

July 2024

The
British
Horse
Society



An introduction from James

We've been thinking long and hard about how we can make the Society diverse with an inclusive and equitable culture.

I'm really pleased, therefore, to be announcing the launch of **Everyone Welcome** – which is an exciting new initiative that will be embedded in everything we do.

We've set ourselves some ambitious targets over the next five years, but we're determined to deliver on these commitments. It will make us a better organisation in every way and this shift will, I believe, be critical to us achieving all that we want to do in terms of recruiting more individuals to work in equestrianism and attracting more people to experience the horse/human bond – essentially, to Keep Britain Riding for generations to come.

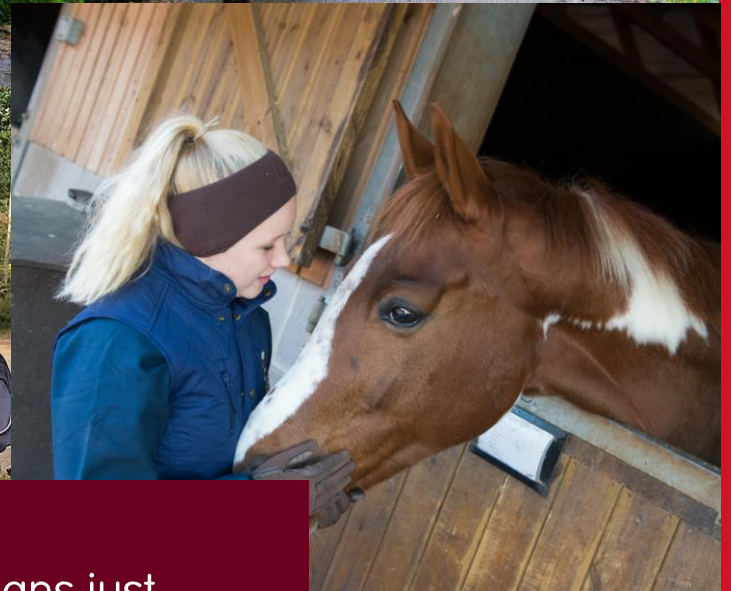
In this leaflet, we outline our overall plans. One of our first actions will be the introduction of Everyone Welcome Centres. These will be our eyes and ears on the ground to listen to thoughts and ideas from our friends and associates in our communities. But this is just the start!

Thanks to everyone who is already playing a part and I am really looking forward to introducing Everyone Welcome to all our stakeholders – starting now!

You can find more information at bhs.org.uk/everyonewelcome or by contacting dei@bhs.org.uk.

I am also really interested to hear your thoughts on this important topic – you are always welcome to email me at ceo@bhs.org.uk.

James Hick
Chief Executive Officer



Everyone Welcome means just that. Whatever an individual's ability, background, culture and identity, they are welcome to be part of our equestrian community.

We will be all the better for being more diverse, more equitable and more inclusive – hopefully, as individuals, as a Society and as a sector.





Horses have made me who I am today and my main objective working with The British Horse Society is to encourage more people to get into riding, their mission to create an inclusive environment is going to benefit the industry, and those who may never have had the opportunity or even thought about getting into riding. I know first-hand how much horses give us, and I am looking forward to seeing many more people have the opportunity to experience them too.

Natasha Baker OBE – Paralympic dressage rider and BHS Ambassador

An overview of activities

The Everyone Welcome programme will cover every aspect of our world – and some of it will take time.

The Society is focusing on six key areas:

1. Employment and volunteering
2. Participation
3. Membership
4. How we communicate
5. Knowledge and confidence
6. Governance, ways of working, funding, resources and digital enablement.

We need to make sure that Everyone Welcome is introduced appropriately and authentically, so we will be starting off with a number of test schemes to get as much input and feedback as possible before we roll initiatives out on a national basis.

These pilot projects will happen in the form of BHS Everyone Welcome Centres which will be located in large, more diverse geographical areas across the nations and regions of the UK.

This will allow us to start implementing the many principles and initiatives that have been identified as vital to make Everyone Welcome a reality. We will test them all, assess their impact and learn – all the while looking at how we can make sure that Everyone Welcome truly delivers.

To be successful, Everyone Welcome needs to :

- **Involve everyone** from across the entire BHS, working collaboratively with all our partners and stakeholders, including our Approved Centres, British Riding Clubs and Accredited Professionals. This will involve being increasingly proactive with organisations representing key groups. We already have some amazing ambassadors like Natasha Baker, for example, and we want to build on this so that more and more people who would never have considered riding or working with horses can see people they can identify with and be assured that everyone really is welcome.
- **Be sustainable** in financial terms i.e. it needs to be affordable for both the BHS and centres to deliver so we will be looking at new ways of

fundraising and at how we can be as supportive as possible by providing financial support where it is most needed.

- **Be scalable.** Everyone Welcome needs to work across all nations and regions.
- **Attract people from all backgrounds** to want to learn to ride, experience horses first hand and to think about volunteering and/or working in the world of equestrianism. This will involve a whole raft of initiatives, starting with Everyone Welcome training programmes to make sure we are being genuinely inclusive.
- **Show the BHS to be a diverse, equitable and inclusive community** across participation, volunteering, employment and education. We want to work with all our partners and stakeholders to make this happen. For example, our programmes and activities need to be as accessible as possible for people with a disability, we will be looking at participation/taster events and new types of outreach to schools and community groups. Our Changing Lives through Horses programme has shown what is possible and this scheme will be a key element of the Everyone Welcome participation stream.
- Have **marketing and communications guidelines** around language and images to make sure we are being inclusive in everything we produce. Our communications content will be truly accessible, we will celebrate diversity, we will be gender neutral and we will be much more digital going forward with digital membership cards and replacing paper with email where possible.



If we can embed our Everyone Welcome strategy into the DNA of every aspect of the BHS operation, we will have a truly profound impact on our mission - meeting the needs of a greater and more diverse number of horse lovers. Creating a more visibly inclusive environment across the equestrian landscape.

Beverley Simms – BHS Board Trustee

Our five-year objectives

Employment and volunteering

By 2029, BHS employment and volunteering pathways will all be visible, accessible and inclusive. This will create a truly diverse and welcoming One Team that recognises, respects and values difference, allowing everyone to be their true self and maximise their contribution to our causes.

Participation

We will have created more accessible education and participation opportunities (including significant digital content) that have enabled more people from more diverse backgrounds to participate in our recreational awards, professional qualifications, Changing Lives through Horses, local events, and access, welfare and safety activities. Everyone will feel as though they belong and are welcome by BHS staff and fellow equestrians.

Membership

The BHS will have developed a range of membership products that are meeting the needs of a more diverse range of horse lovers.

How we communicate

All BHS marketing and communications - including our tone of voice and imagery - will make everyone feel welcome and included by the BHS – and this will be measured through independent market research.

DEI knowledge and confidence

Our One Team will all be DEI knowledgeable and confident. Everyone will understand how they can contribute to creating an inclusive culture and can describe the difference they have made to the BHS's growth and development by creating positive experiences for a more diverse range of horse lovers.

Governance, ways of working, funding, resources and digital enablement

We will have dedicated resources, budget funding, technology and programme management to enable the successful delivery of the Everyone Welcome strategy. We will have significantly increased the range and quantity of diversity data we capture which will allow us to track our progress and inform our decision making and prioritisation for maximum impact.

We will have processes in place to monitor and evaluate all aspects of our Everyone Welcome programme.

Useful information

We thought it might be helpful to include a bit of detail and background around some of the terminology used in our DEI communications. If you have any questions, please get in touch at DEI@bhs.org.uk.

What is the difference between equity and equality – and why are we focusing on equity?

We use the term **equity**, as opposed to equality in our strategy. Equality means providing everyone with the same resources and opportunities. Equity means recognising that individuals have different circumstances which means they require varying resources and opportunities to reach the same outcome as their peers based on the level of advantage or disadvantage they have within the context.

Protected Characteristics

As listed under the Equality Act 2010, there are **nine Protected Characteristics** – age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

This project is focused on **age, disability, ethnicity, gender and low-opportunity communities** to deliver maximum impact in the next five years.

Although not a protected characteristic, low-opportunity communities are an important area given the significance of affordability and exclusivity as barriers to equestrianism which is perceived to be a space reserved for wealthy, white people.

We must also consider intersectionality, which refers to the impact of belonging to multiple social groups on someone's experience. The combination of barriers that come from different aspects of who people are, their gender, age, ethnicity, disability or socioeconomic position, will create a unique challenge for every individual which we must seek to address through creating truly inclusive solutions.

Everyone Welcome will use the term ethnicity, instead of race. Although in the Equality Act 2010, race is used as an umbrella term that covers colour, nationality and ethnic origin, it's more widely used to group people based on physical characteristics. Ethnicity considers non-physical factors that someone might identify with such as culture, customs and heritage and is more widely used across the UK for data collection, including the Census, which makes it easier to compare across sources.

Everyone Welcome will refer to gender, rather than the protected characteristic of sex, because gender is a more inclusive term. Sex is fundamentally based on biological characteristics which constitute a male or female. However, gender is a social construct focused on the attributes that society deems to be masculine or feminine. Where Everyone Welcome references

gender it will refer to how people identify and present themselves; this will ensure we include the trans community in our terminology as well as those who identify as the sex they were born.

The use of the word disability refers to both physical and mental disabilities which may impair someone's experience; these may be visible or invisible. All forms of disability must be considered when developing inclusive practices. These include blindness or visual impairment; deafness or hearing impairment; speech or communication disability; learning disability; mental health disability; mobility or physical disability; emotional disability; cognitive disability; and health conditions.

Resources

If you would like to read more about some of these key areas, you can find our inclusive language guide at bhs.org.uk/dei-documents.

