

## **Event and activity Biosecurity**

All Pony Club activities are to be carried out with the welfare and wellbeing of those involved considered, this includes ensuring relevant provisions are in place to support continued health.

As part of the event planning process a wide range of factors play a part in the selection of a venue. Part of this should include the surface, equipment, frequency of competitions and other risk factors to ensure welfare is paramount whilst taking part in activity. These should be monitored throughout the duration of the activity and tended to as necessary.

When and where appropriate expert advice and skills should be sought to maintain and monitor in the best interests of those taking part.

Part of the considerations for undertaking a Pony Club activity is the veterinary provision for the event, guidance is available as part of the Health and Safety Rule book and Matrix.

In the event of an injury or equine exhaustion sustained at a Pony Club activity, the member should dismount and a veterinarian must check the equine over followed by close supervision. Equines should be provided with full supportive treatment prior to being transported.

Where the equine may have sustained serious injury and needs immobilising, the horse should be collected in suitable transport and taken to the closest referral centre.

Euthanasia may be required on humane grounds. If sufficient injuries and/or conditions are severe enough this should be discussed with the owner or responsible person by a Vet. In the event of this decision, it should be carried out to minimise suffering, by the Vet as soon as possible.

Due to injuries and/or conditions, horses and ponies may need to retire from Pony Club life, every effort should be made to ensure this is a smooth and healthy transition for the equine. Special considerations given to see them treated humanely and with recognition of the joy they have provided in their life with the Pony Club.

Biosecurity is an important factor of event planning to all involved in the Pony Club, this is paramount to ensure equine health

Horses/Ponies can suffer from a variety of health problems which can be from viral, bacterial, or fungal infections. We want all Pony Club horses/ponies to be fit and healthy as they will have a higher chance of fighting off those infections. If any Horse/Pony is showing signs of infection, veterinary advice is needed.

Following strict bio-security guidelines at Pony Club events is encouraged as it will prevent the spread/outbreak of disease.

- Pony Club owners should avoid other horses, have direct contact with other horses at events or from different yards.
- Pony Club members should not let different horses drink from a shared water source.
- Letting your horse have a hay net rather than grazing is encouraged as you don't know the grazing history on the field.

- When stabling overnight, check if the stables are pre-disinfected between horses, if not we encourage you to disinfect them before putting your horse in the stable.
- Avoid sharing equipment between your horse and someone else's horse as some infections can live a long time on equipment.
- Disinfect equipment between events.
- If using a hire trailer/lorry, disinfect it before and after using it.
- Carrying a spray bottle of disinfectant on you at events is encouraged.
- If a horse is showing signs of illness at an event, it should be isolated immediately, and if it's classed as fit to travel from a vet it must leave the event soon as possible.

Strangles is an extremely contagious infection which affects the respiratory system, this is caused from a bacterium *Streptococcus Equi*. This infection can be passed on from horse to horse via direct contact with an infection OR an indirect contact with an infected horse such as environment or equipment used on the infected horse. Biosecurity is extremely important to prevent the spread of this infection and any infected horses/ponies **MUST NOT LEAVE** their yard/home till they have had the all clear from the vet.

Signs for strangles are thick nasal discharge, cough, high fever, dull? and swelling of the lymph glands (this can turn into abscesses).

If a horse starts to show signs strangles, a vet must be contracted straight away as early diagnosis and treatment are essential. This is to prevent spread of the disease and to ensure the horse/pony will have a greater chance of recovery. An infected horses should go into isolation with strict rules and barrier nursing. Any horses which have been in contact with the infected horse/pony should be monitored and temperatures taken twice daily for signs of fever. More information and resources can be found:

<https://www.redwings.org.uk/strangles/help-and-advice/what-is-strangles>

Stabling of equines at Pony Club events may be a necessary requirement, should this be the case please take into careful consideration the biosecurity measures set out above and provided in guidance available on the website: <https://pcuk.org/officials/health-and-safety/general-equine-welfare-care-guidance/>

The use of other persons horses or ponies, items of tack, grooming equipment and clothing is considered cross contamination. Cross contamination leaves the equine and human using the item open to infection or disease. This is to be prohibited wherever possible to support reducing risk of illness being spread. Please take into consideration biosecurity measures and guidance as highlighted above