

NEWS RELEASE

Embargoed till 10.30am, Wednesday 23rd May 2007

Major equine strategy successfully launched by school kids and VIPs

A 10 year strategy to improve horse health and welfare in Great Britain has been publicly launched by VIPs in London today (Wednesday 23rd May).

They joined more than 150 local school children at a free interactive event to celebrate the **Equine Health and Welfare Strategy**.

The strategy is a unique document jointly put together by more than 20 key organisations, including the ILPH, British Equine Veterinary Association and key government departments. They are aiming to achieve a single vision for horse health and welfare in Great Britain.

Legendary jockey **Frankie Dettori** sent a message of support.

He said: "Unfortunately I am unexpectedly unable to attend the launch, but I am delighted to support and endorse this strategy. It is a major step forward to see so many organisations work together for the good of horses in the UK.

"The health and welfare of horses should be a main priority for every part of the industry that relies on them. This strategy is going to be key to that in the next decade."

During the launch at Lee Valley riding centre in Leyton, London, local children and hundreds of other visitors took part in exciting interactive events, teaching them about correctly caring for horses. The emphasis was on the importance of correct nutrition and exercise for horses – valuable skills they can use to improve their own lives.

Frankie added: "I'm delighted to know so many children learned so much about horses. It's great to know the next generation of youngsters are being introduced to horses and given opportunities to learn and ride at such a young age. Who knows, maybe one child will be inspired by the event and go on to be a famous jockey in the future".

Desi Dillingham, the founder chairman of British Dressage and a director of the British Horse Foundation, was one of the VIPs at the launch.

She said: "The horse industry is vibrant and exciting, and gives work and pleasure to thousands of people across the country. This strategy gives me huge confidence that it will develop and grow in the right way over the next decade. I cannot emphasise strongly enough how important it is that so many organisations are willing to work together, for the good of the horse."

Lesley Barwise-Munro, past president of the British Equine Veterinary Association and honorary vice president of the National Equine Welfare Council, said at the launch: "The strategy, which does not form part of the new Animal Welfare Act 2006, aims to achieve high standards of health and welfare for all horses in Britain, whatever their breed, type or usage. I would like to thank all the people and organisations that have enabled this event to take place and I look forward to seeing this strategy unfold over the coming years.

"It will make a real difference to the health and welfare of Great Britain's horse population, from children's riding ponies through to top level competition horses. To see so many children at the launch is right, as they will be the next generation of horse owners."

The strategy can be seen at www.equinehealthandwelfarestrategy.co.uk



**- raising equine
welfare standards for
over 30 years -**

President: Dr Harry Greenway

Vice Presidents:
Dr Elisabeth Svendsen MBE
Mrs Lesley Barwise-Munro BSc,
BVM&S, CertEP, MRCVS

Chairman: Martin Taggart

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ABOUT NEWC:

The National Equine Welfare Council is made up of 58 equine welfare organisations including Animal Health Trust, British Horse Society, Blue Cross, Donkey Sanctuary, The Horse Trust, International League for the Protection of Horses, National Pony Society, Redwings Horse Sanctuary & RSPCA.

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ENDS

NOTES TO EDITORS

- For further information, call press liaison Paul Green on 07936 712007, or email press@publicityheaven.com
- Photos are available for download from <http://www.equinehealthandwelfarestrategy.co.uk/media> You are welcome to publish these images in relation to this story
- More information is online at www.equinehealthandwelfarestrategy.co.uk and www.leevalleypark.org.uk



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