

# NEWS RELEASE

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2007 – for immediate release

## Can horses help tackle the youth obesity crisis?

150+ schoolkids to learn about the importance of good nutrition and exercise for horses at unique interactive event

More than 150 schoolchildren will be learning how important good nutrition and exercise is for horses, at a major interactive event in London next week.

They'll be joining hundreds of other visitors at the **Lee Valley riding centre in Leyton**, London, from 10am to 4pm on **Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2007**.

Youngsters will be taking part in exciting interactive events, teaching them about correctly caring for horses.

They will learn about the importance of correct nutrition and exercise for horses – valuable skills they can use to improve their own lives.

The riding centre's manager Irena Grint said: "It's widely acknowledged there is a problem with youth obesity. When children get involved in caring for horses, they learn a huge amount about how to keep the animal well fed and fit. That education process should help the child look at their own lifestyle, and make changes to be healthier."

She added: "Caring for horses is a fun activity enjoyed by thousands of people across the UK. It's also clear it's now becoming an educational activity for children too."

The event is also being used to launch a key national 10 year Equine Health and Welfare Strategy.

The strategy is a unique document jointly put together by more than 20 organisations from the equine industry and key government departments. They are aiming to achieve a single vision for horse health and welfare in Great Britain.

Lee Valley riding centre was chosen as the launch venue because of its commitment to quality, and making horses accessible to the entire community.

ENDS

### NOTES TO EDITORS

#### Media attendance

All media are welcome to attend the event, at Lee Valley Riding Centre, Lea Bridge Road, Leyton, London E10 7QL on Wednesday May 23<sup>rd</sup> 2007, from 10am to 4pm.

Please confirm your attendance to our press liaison Paul Green on 07936 712007, or by email [press@publicityheaven.com](mailto:press@publicityheaven.com).

#### Further information

Additional information will be available during and after the event.

Also see

- [www.equinehealthandwelfarestrategy.co.uk](http://www.equinehealthandwelfarestrategy.co.uk)
- [www.leevalleypark.org.uk](http://www.leevalleypark.org.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**

### EVENT PRESS CONTACT:

Paul Green  
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07936 712007  
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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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## About the strategy – organisations involved

The organisations who worked on the strategy include:

- DEFRA
- Scottish Executive SEERAD
- National Assembly for Wales
- British Equine Veterinary Association
- RSPCA
- National Equine Welfare Council
- ILPH
- British Horse Industry Confederation
- British Equestrian Trade Association
- Horseracing Regulatory Authority
- The Horse Trust
- The British Horse Society
- National Equine Database
- Redwings Horse Sanctuary
- The Donkey Sanctuary
- British Equestrian Federation
- Brooke Hospital for Animals
- British Dressage
- The British Horseracing Board
- British Eventing
- British Show Jumping
- Horserace Betting Levy Board

## About the strategy – the vision

The vision for horse health and welfare is:

1. All horses are healthy and are treated humanely.
2. Everyone responsible for horse health and welfare fulfils their duty of care.  
*To enable this:*
3. Owners, keepers, users and others concerned with horse health and welfare must understand their responsibilities, know how to meet them and take steps to do so.
4. Everybody involved with horses, including Government, must collectively ensure that:
  - a. Health and welfare standards, and other information necessary to support each individual's duty of care, are appropriate, up to date and accessible.
  - b. The risks of infectious diseases, including those entering Britain from abroad, are prevented or managed effectively.
  - c. The health and welfare status of the horse population is adequately monitored.
  - d. Significant health and welfare problems are identified and addressed.

## About the strategy – key aims

Eight key aims have been identified. These are:

AIM 1: To Review Equine Health Standards & Welfare Standards – Collate available information and identify potential gaps to improve these standards.



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AIM 2: Health Surveillance Arrangements – Investigate procedures, contingency plans and control measures. Assess emerging threats. Non infectious disease, such as lameness, to be included.

AIM 3: Equine Welfare Observation Arrangements – Review methods of identifying welfare concerns and consolidate reporting procedures.

AIM 4: Methods of Equine Identification – Examine preferred techniques and encourage industry-wide take-up and Government support.

AIM 5: Medicine Needs and Availability – Determine current and future medicine needs and recommend how best to meet them.

AIM 6: Education, Skills and Training – Assess current quality and availability of educational material and qualifications. Address omissions and accessibility.

AIM 7: Review Research Requirements – Co-ordinate current and future research to enable best use of available funds.

AIM 8: Oversee and Review the Strategy – Ensure strategy is implemented, monitor effectiveness and review content over next 10 years.

## **About Lee Valley Riding Centre**

This urban riding centre in the heart of east London is the first equestrian centre in the UK to have been awarded the prestigious QUEST award for quality. It is also a 'green' riding centre, with solar panels, recycled bedding and a waste compactor to name a few environmentally friendly initiatives.

In addition to Riding for the Disabled sessions, Lee Valley Pony Club enables youngsters to 'own' a pony for a day and compete at shows. The Riding Centre's 17 horses and 15 ponies have been carefully selected to be safe and sensible and its show jumps, cross country courses and indoor and outdoor floodlit arenas cater for any standard of rider.



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