



NEWSLETTER

SPRING | MARCH 2025

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WHY YOU SHOULD ALWAYS HAVE A PRE-PURCHASE EXAMINATION BEFORE BUYING A HORSE

A pre-purchase examination (PPE) performed by a qualified equine vet is an essential step to ensure you're making an informed decision.



Our Quarterly Update

As the winter comes to an end, we're all looking forward to supporting our wonderful clients as they get their horses ready to get back to working and competing, as well as enjoying the better weather the spring and summer brings with it.

We would like to thank all of our clients for their ongoing support, we are truly blessed to be trusted by you all to look after your horses.

Also, a big thank you to the wonderful people at Here4Horses, Pony Club and The British Horse Society who continue to trust our team to deliver high quality education to horse owners and professionals across the North East on your behalf.

READY... SET... VACCINATE

We're here to help get your horses protected from Flu and Tetanus which can cause serious disease. To help get unvaccinated horses and those who's vaccinations have lapsed back on track, if your horse gets a first vaccination through March and April 2025, your horse will be eligible to get the third vaccination free of charge*. Combine that with our payment at the time pricing and your horse will be protected in no time.



*During March and April 2025, all horses, ponies and donkeys starting their equine influenza vaccination course will receive the 3rd vaccination FREE OF CHARGE!. This offer applies to equines over 9 months old that have not been vaccinated against equine influenza or are overdue for an annual booster. The first vaccination must occur in March or April 2025, with only the cost of the vaccine applying—visit fees will still be charged. Please note, the free vaccination only covers the third dose of the course.

PONY CLUB FUN

Katherine, our amazing RCVS Recognised Advanced Practitioner has been spending her time helping to educate local Pony Clubs getting them ready for their lameness quiz and helping them to complete their equine first aid training.

Katherine grew up enjoying every moment of pony club and so is always delighted to give up her time to help the next generation get just as much out of pony club as she did.

Katherine said that all of the kids were just fantastic and were a credit to their respective clubs.





Raising Money for Horses in Need

Last December together we raised £1,587 to help horses and ponies in need.

With the help of your generosity we raised the money for Here4Horses, which rescues and rehabilitates horses across the North East. Of the total amount raised, £296 was donated by VetPartners through its charity fund.

Here4Horses is a volunteer-run organisation that comes to the rescue of neglected and abandoned horses and cares for 30 equines at its centre in Hunwick, County Durham. It also has 40 more horses and ponies living with foster or loan homes around the North East. Clevedale Vets Equine vet and clinical director Alistair Love organised the fundraising and said his team is delighted with how much was donated. Alistair said: “We would like to say a big thank you to our clients for being so generous and helping us support Here4Horses. The charity works tirelessly to improve the quality of life of neglected horses and find them new, loving homes, and we’re proud to work alongside them to provide treatment to many of the horses in its care.

“At Clevedale Vets Equine we’re committed to promoting horse welfare and we’ve been working alongside equine charities for more than 15 years, including supporting local education initiatives to help prevent horses suffering.”

Accepting the donation on behalf of Here4Horses, volunteer and member of the board of Trustees Wendy Suddes, said: “We are extremely grateful to Alistair, the Clevedale Vets Equine team and their clients for supporting us. We wouldn’t be able to do the important work we do without donations like this, and it will enable us to secure a better life for more horses and ponies.”

HERE4HORSES EQUINE WELLNESS DAY

From the 23rd March 2025 at 09:00 AM,
until the 23rd March 2025 at 04:00 PM.

Learn to assess and enhance horse wellbeing through observation, bodywork, and groundwork.

Join four 90-minute small-group sessions led by Advanced Equine Vet Alistair Love and Vet Physio Kirsty Rawden.

Spaces are limited—book early!

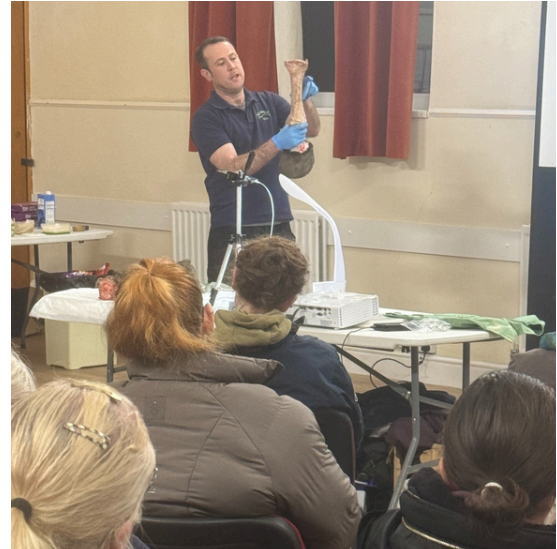
peoplesfundraising.com/event/equine-wellness-day

Back in the Spotlight Helping the BHS with Owner Education

Alistair Love our Clinical Director and RCVS Recognised Advanced Practitioner was back out doing what he loves most in February, educating horse owners on behalf of the British Horse Society.

Alistair was delighted when he was asked to perform a live dissection of the equine distal limb for the benefit of horse owners, physios and BHS licensed professionals. The evening provided an excellent and unique opportunity to learn, and it was fully booked with over 60 delegates. The feedback was amazing.

Alistair said, 'This is the second live dissection educational event I have done for the benefit of horse owners and professionals on behalf of the BHS. They're incredibly popular and it's always a pleasure to talk to people who are so engaged in the subject matter and are so keen to learn. The questions that were asked on the evening showed just how much people had engaged with the content of the evening.'



Thank you to the amazing BHS committee and education officers who make interesting and engaging events like this possible.



Clevedale Vets Equine Horse of the Month

CONGRATULATIONS to our very first Clevedale Vets Equine Horse of the Month Award Winner George! I'm sure you'll all agree that George looks stunning showing off his new rosette. George's owner chose Here4Horses as her charity donation and a credit has also been applied to their practice account.

George has always been a big character (both in terms of his physical size and his personality) and George and his owner have been through a hell of a lot in the last 12 months. Despite these significant challenges, after a lot of hard work and determination from everyone involved, especially his dedicated owner, George turned a corner this January, much to the delight of his owner and everyone here at Clevedale Vets. Despite some strong competition from a number of other nominees, we decided on George as our winner!

Well done George and his fabulous owner Maria.

Vaccinations

We jab our horses for pony club
or so they can go on the track,
But surely there is more to this,
it can't be just for that?
Sometimes we must remember
the rules are there for a reason,
To protect our horses from disease
in any given season!
Tetanus is a nasty bug
that's picked up from the soil.
It gets in through a cut or hole
and causes huge turmoil!
Once you have infection
it can cause pain and death!
So vaccination can prevent,
an untimely, last breath.
Strangles can be serious
contagious when it's hit!
When it is rife all through your yard,
you wish you'd jabbed for it!
Flu makes horses awfully sick
it does for me and you!
But of course we could prevent it,
if we really wanted to!
A little jab is all it takes
to avoid such nasty illness.
So vaccines aren't for following rules,
they're for saving lives and wellness!

Created in collaboration with a local artist, we're excited to share the first in a series of illustrated educational poems designed to promote equine health in a unique and engaging way.

This first poem focuses on vaccinations, a crucial aspect of horse care—Keep an eye on our social media as we roll out more poems, each aimed at improving equine education and reinforcing our commitment to horse care.



Christie
© 2018



Ready...Set Vaccinate!

Protect your horse
from equine influenza

Equine influenza is a highly contagious respiratory disease that spreads quickly among horses, ponies, and donkeys, especially in close-contact environments. Regular vaccination and biosecurity measures are essential to prevent outbreaks and protect your horse's health.

What is Equine Influenza?

Equine influenza specifically targets the respiratory system and spreads through:

- Airborne particles: From coughing or sneezing horses
- Direct contact: Nose-to-nose interactions
- Contaminated surfaces: Grooming tools, feed buckets, or clothing
- Human transmission: Via hands, clothes, or equipment

While rarely fatal, it significantly impacts health and performance.

Clinical Signs

- High temperature (102-106°F or 38.9-41.1°C)
- Persistent cough and nasal discharge
- Lethargy and loss of appetite
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Increased respiratory rate and muscle soreness

Recovery takes 2-3 weeks, with early detection and care being crucial.

Vaccination: The Best Defence

Vaccination is the cornerstone of prevention, offering:

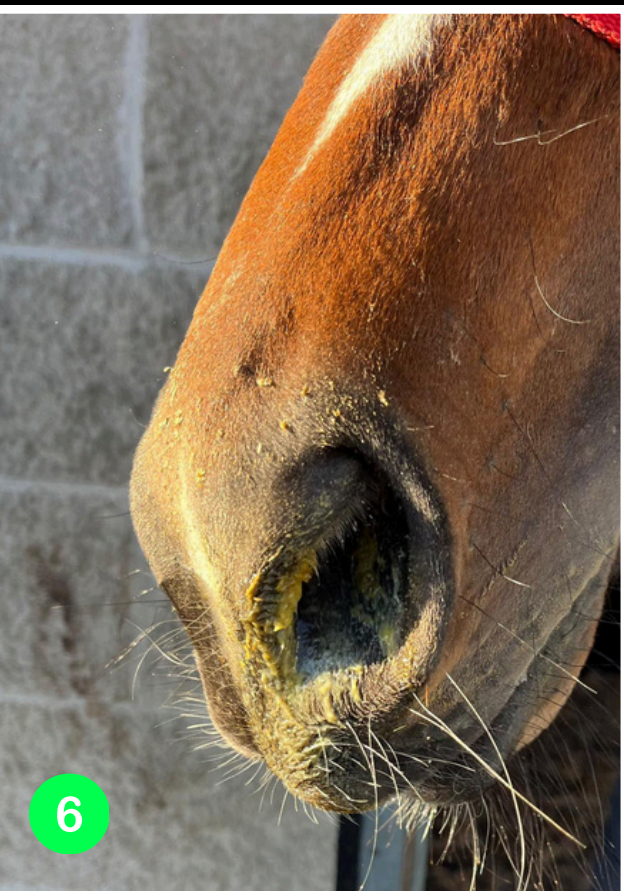
- Reduced risk of infection and severity
- Herd immunity to limit outbreaks
- Compliance with event and competition requirements

Why vaccinate every six months?

- Immunity wanes over time
- Protects against evolving strains
- Ensures peak health and performance year-round

Why retired horses still need to be vaccinated:

- Even horses that don't travel can contract influenza through indirect exposure
- Vaccination keeps them healthy and reduces the risk of severe illness



Prevention Tips

- Vaccinate regularly as advised by your vet
- Quarantine new arrivals and isolate sick horses
- Maintain strict hygiene and biosecurity
- Ensure well-ventilated stables and monitor for signs of illness

Contact us today to book your horse's flu vaccination appointment.

Protecting your horse has never been more straightforward!



Spring Grazing Guide

Essential tips
for keeping your
horse healthy

As the winter frost fades and the first signs of spring emerge, lush green pastures begin to flourish. While spring grass is a welcome sight, it also presents unique challenges and considerations for horse owners. Here's what you need to know to keep your horse healthy and happy as they transition to spring grazing.

Why Is spring grass a concern?

Spring grass is rich in non-structural carbohydrates (NSCs), particularly fructans. These sugars are essential for plant growth but can pose health risks for horses, especially those prone to metabolic issues. The rapid growth of spring grass can lead to sudden dietary changes, potentially causing digestive disturbances and other health problems.

Key risks associated with spring grass

- **Laminitis:** High levels of NSCs can trigger laminitis, a painful and potentially debilitating condition affecting the hooves. Horses with insulin resistance or equine metabolic syndrome are particularly vulnerable
- **Colic:** A sudden change in diet, such as increased access to rich spring grass, can upset the balance of the gut microbiome, leading to colic
- **Weight Gain:** For horses that are easy keepers, unrestricted grazing on nutrient-dense spring grass can lead to rapid weight gain, increasing the risk of obesity and associated health problems

Tips for Managing Spring Grazing:

Gradual introduction

To avoid digestive upset, introduce your horse to spring grass gradually and increase the duration over two to three weeks.

Use grazing muzzles

For horses that are prone to overindulging or have a history of metabolic issues, grazing muzzles can help limit their intake while still allowing them to enjoy pasture time.

Monitor pasture conditions

Spring grass is most concentrated in sugars during cool, sunny mornings and less so in the late evening. Adjust grazing times accordingly to reduce the risk of overload.

Regular exercise

Maintaining a consistent exercise routine can help manage weight and reduce the risk of metabolic problems.



Signs Your Horse May Be Struggling

Keep a close eye on your horse for warning signs, such as:

- Increased hoof sensitivity or lameness
- Changes in weight or body condition
- Behavioural changes, such as lethargy or agitation
- Digestive upset, including loose stools or signs of colic

If you notice any of these signs, consult your vet immediately.

Regular monitoring, blood work and dietary adjustments under veterinary guidance can help keep these horses safe during the spring grazing season.

Always consult your vet if you're unsure how to manage your horse's transition to spring grass.

Did you know?

Horses prone to conditions such as laminitis, PPID or insulin resistance require extra vigilance.

Spring

The perfect time for a soundness check-up for your horse

Now spring is here you're sure to be early anticipating more time in the saddle. However, before you dive into spring training or leisurely hacks, it's crucial to ensure your horse is fit and ready for the season ahead. Scheduling a soundness check-up with your vet is one of the best steps you can take to safeguard your horse's health and performance.

Why spring is the ideal time for a check-up

- **Post-winter assessment:** Winter can be a challenging season for horses. Reduced exercise, icy or uneven footing, and changes in turnout routines can lead to stiffness, loss of condition, or unnoticed injuries. A spring soundness exam provides a comprehensive assessment to detect and address any lingering issues
- **Preparation for increased activity:** As spring arrives, many horses transition to a more active schedule. Whether your plans include competitions or pleasure riding, ensuring your horse is physically prepared reduces the risk of injury and improves performance
- **Monitoring chronic conditions:** For horses with existing conditions like arthritis or past injuries, spring is a pivotal time to evaluate their status. Your vet can recommend adjustments to their management, such as tailored exercise routines or supportive therapies, to keep them comfortable and active



What to expect during a soundness check-up

A soundness check-up is a thorough evaluation of your horse's overall movement. Your vet may include the following:

- **Physical examination:** Checking for signs of pain, heat, or swelling in the limbs and joints
- **Movement evaluation:** Observing your horse at walk and trot, in hand or on the lunge, to detect any lameness or irregularities
- **Flexion tests:** To assess joint flexibility and identify areas of discomfort
- **Hoof health check:** Examining the hooves for signs of imbalance, cracks, or underlying issues that could compromise soundness
- **Additional diagnostics:** If needed, imaging techniques like X-rays or ultrasound can provide further insight into potential problems

Benefits of a spring soundness check-up

- **Injury prevention:** Catching minor issues early can prevent them from escalating into more serious problems
- **Customised care plans:** Your vet can recommend a tailored exercise programme, or therapeutic interventions to support your horse's needs
- **Peace of mind:** Knowing your horse is sound and healthy allows you to move forward with confidence as you plan your spring and summer activities

Partnering with your vet for a healthy spring

Your vet is an invaluable partner in keeping your horse at their best. A spring soundness check-up not only helps identify and address potential issues but also sets the stage for a successful and enjoyable season ahead. Be proactive and schedule your horse's exam today—because a sound horse is a happy horse!



Why You Should Always Have a Pre-Purchase Examination

Before buying a horse

Purchasing a horse is an exciting journey, whether you're acquiring your first equine partner or adding to your stable. However, this significant investment comes with responsibilities and potential risks. A pre-purchase examination (PPE) performed by a qualified equine vet is an essential step to ensure you're making an informed decision. Here's why a PPE is invaluable:

Assessing the horse's health and soundness

Horses are remarkable athletes, but their performance and longevity depend heavily on their physical health.

A PPE provides a thorough evaluation of the horse's:

- **General health:** The vet will examine the horse's respiratory system, cardiovascular health, eyes, skin and more to identify any underlying issues
- **Soundness:** The vet will assess the horse's movement in hand, on a lunge line and under saddle (if applicable) to look for subtle signs of discomfort or lameness
- **Orthopaedic health:** Flexion tests and diagnostic imaging (e.g., X-rays or ultrasound scans) can help uncover potential joint or bone issues

Uncovering hidden problems

Not all health issues are visible to the untrained eye. A PPE can reveal:

- **Chronic conditions:** Issues like arthritis or previous injuries that could impact the horse's performance
- **Dental problems:** These may affect the horse's ability to eat comfortably or work in a bit
- **Heart or lung abnormalities:** Subtle changes that might not affect the horse currently but could be problematic in the future

Determining suitability for your needs

Every horse is unique and a PPE helps determine if the horse is suitable for your intended use. The vet's findings will help you understand the horse's capabilities and limitations, ensuring it aligns with your goals.

Providing peace of mind

Buying a horse can be emotionally driven, but a PPE helps ensure your decision is based on facts. The examination gives you a clear picture of the horse's current state and potential future needs.

Supporting negotiations

The findings from a PPE can inform price discussions. For instance, if the horse has a manageable condition that requires ongoing care, this could be factored into the purchase price. Similarly, a clean bill of health can reinforce your confidence in the investment.



What's involved in a PPE?

A standard PPE typically includes:

- A thorough physical examination
- Assessment of movement and lameness testing
- Flexion tests to evaluate joint health
- Diagnostic imaging (if required)
- Blood is taken to be stored and tested for medications if necessary

The scope of the examination can be tailored to your specific needs and budget. Discussing your intentions with the vet beforehand ensures the PPE is aligned with your goals.

Final Thoughts

While no examination can guarantee a horse will remain problem-free, a pre-purchase examination significantly reduces the risk of unexpected surprises. It equips you with the knowledge to make a confident, informed decision and fosters a positive start to your relationship with your new equine partner.

If you're considering purchasing a horse, don't skip this crucial step.

Reach out to our equine veterinary team to schedule a pre-purchase examination and ensure your equine investment is a sound one.