

Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Member Q&A

Update: 12 March 2021



Coaching and training

Can I go for lessons or have my coach come to the yard?

Coaches may travel for work, so they can continue to offer lessons on a one-to-one basis provided all reasonable measures are taken and COVID protocols are observed at all times. The 'stay at home' order remains in place in England until 28 March, so you should still not be travelling your horse for anything other than veterinary or welfare reasons. Coaches can meet you for individual lessons either in your own private facilities or where the horse resides, with the yard owners' permission.

In Scotland, restrictions eased on 12 March to allow up to four people from two households to meet outdoors for social, recreational or exercise purposes (covered/indoor arenas count as outdoor space). Young people aged 12 – 17 can meet in groups of four without a limit on households. Adults aged 18 and over must remain in their local authority area, while those aged 12 – 17 can travel across local authority boundaries for activities. Training activity is therefore permitted within these numbers and travel restrictions.

In Wales, the 'stay at home' advice has changed to 'stay local', with effect from 13 March. As in Scotland, up to four people from two households can meet outdoors, including private gardens, to exercise or socialise. The guidance for local travel is within five miles of home, although those living in more remote rural areas can travel further for reasonable journeys. Equestrian centres and riding schools will be able to re-open for arena hire and training activity from this date, within the permitted numbers.

My coach is offering virtual training – is this acceptable?

Yes – please make sure your coach has the appropriate insurance cover in place and has satisfied any additional provisions that may be required by their insurers, including conducting a full risk assessment.

Can I take part in online dressage competitions?

Yes, it's an ideal way to get you and your horse fit and 'competition ready' for the resumption of competitions. Members in England are still restricted to using the facilities where their horse is kept until 28 March, while those in Scotland and Wales will need to adhere to the local travel restrictions in place.

Please note that remote or virtual training and competition activity using BD tests is permitted for authorised online providers only. There are currently four authorised online providers: [Dressage Anywhere](#), [E-Riders](#), [The Mane Show](#) and [Dressage Online](#).

Prior approval must be obtained by all online providers in order to be granted permission to use BD tests. Criteria sheet and application forms are available on request from our Sport Operations Manager, Lou Jones.

National competition and events

How long are BD competitions going to be suspended for?

Regular BD affiliated competitions will resume from 29 March and summer season qualification will commence from this date onwards. The advice for members in England and Wales is to 'stay local', while those in Scotland will need to remain within their local authority area for the time being.

Organisers are now able to schedule shows from Easter week onwards, but it will be for individual venues to determine whether or not competitions will be viable in their area, depending on the limits on numbers and travel restrictions that remain in place in each nation. A further update is expected for Scotland on 16 March, while the next review in Wales is due to take place on 1 April.

When organised activity resumes on 29 March, all BD members are encouraged to 'stay safe, stay local' in order to mitigate the risks of COVID and allow themselves, and their horses, the necessary time to return to action. No major fixtures will take place before 23 April to give everyone adequate opportunity to get back into training, prepare, improve fitness and practice ahead of any big competitions.

All shows and training activity will run under the protocols and guidance that were put in place for the second half of 2020, with social distancing, hygiene measures, restricted numbers (one additional person per combination) and an 'arrive, compete and leave' policy to minimise contact with others. As the government restrictions are relaxed, we will review these protocols to allow a phased return to activity over the coming weeks and months ahead.

How is BD planning ahead for the resumption of activity?

Our [Coronavirus Operational Plan](#), issued on 2 March, outlines our how we are intending to manage the resumption of competitions, including winter qualifications and championships, in order to provide opportunities for members at all levels and maintain a full calendar where possible. The 12-page plan is based on the UK government's roadmap, but it is important to stress that dates are indicative only at this stage and depending on the timescales for the relaxation of restrictions by the respective governments.

Competitions will be run to comply with any government restrictions and stakeholders will once again be given full guidance documents in [our toolkit hub](#). We're currently in the process of updating the protocols, in line with the latest government advice, and will reissue these before activity resumes on 29 March.

What BD events have been cancelled so far?

The following shows/series have been cancelled or rescheduled since the beginning of the year. We've managed to get 60% of fixtures back into the calendar for members as part of our resumption plans.

Series/Show	Dates	Status
Vale View High Profile	8 – 10 January	Cancelled
Petplan Winter Area Festivals x 12	January – February	Postponed and rescheduled
Winter Regionals x 8	February – March	Postponed and rescheduled
Myerscough Premier League	02 – 07 March	Postponed and rescheduled
Keysoe CDI 3*, CDI U25/Y/J/P	19 – 21 March	Cancelled
Equissage Para Winter Championships at Myerscough	25 – 28 March	Postponed and rescheduled
NAF Winter and Petplan Area Festival Championships	14 – 18 April	Postponed, alternative dates to be confirmed

Para Home International, Keysoe	30 April – 02 May	Cancelled
Senior Inter Regional, Keysoe	01 – 02 May	Cancelled
BD Youth Inter Regional, Keysoe	26 – 27 June	Cancelled
Shearwater Young Horse, BD 7YO, BD Young Pony qualifiers, Myerscough	03 March	Postponed and rescheduled
Ideal Saddles Combined Training Championship Series	January – April	Postponed, dates under review

What are the new dates for the Winter Regionals?

We have confirmed dates and venues for the eight Winter Regionals, with schedules now available online for all.

Venue	County	Revised dates
Wellington Riding	Hampshire	1 – 4 May
Morris Equestrian Centre *	East Ayrshire	12 – 16 May
Myerscough College	Lancashire	18 – 22 May
Vale View Equestrian	Leicestershire	20 – 23 May
Codham Park	Essex	22 – 25 May
Prestige Equestrian	Gloucestershire	27 – 29 May
Merrist Wood College	Surrey	29 May – 4 June
Bishop Burton College	East Yorkshire	01 – 04 June

Further information [is available here](#).

Have the Petplan Equine Winter Area Festivals been rescheduled?

Yes, existing qualifications will be valid for the following rescheduled dates:

Venue	County	Revised dates
Keysoe	Bedfordshire	30 April – 02 May
Beacons Equestrian	Carmarthenshire	01 – 04 May
Parwood Equestrian Centre	Surrey	06 – 09 May
Vale View Equestrian	Leicestershire	06 – 09 May
Northallerton Equestrian Centre	North Yorkshire	07 – 10 May
Morris Equestrian Centre *	East Ayrshire	12 – 16 May
Speedgate Events	Kent	13 – 16 May
Prestige Equestrian	Gloucestershire	13 – 15 May
Solihull	West Midlands	14 – 18 May
Aintree International Equestrian Centre	Merseyside	27 – 30 May
Gordon Dressage Group at The Cabin *	Aberdeenshire	29 – 30 May
Kingston Maurward College	Dorset	1 – 3 June

Further information is [available here](#).

Will the Winter Championships be rescheduled?

The revised dates for the Winter Regionals and Petplan Equine Winter Area Festivals mean that there is now a very narrow window to host the NAF Five Star Championships in late June or early July, as we want to minimise any impact on the winter qualification period which commences on 1 July 2021, as well as the Summer Regional and Summer Area Festival fixtures.

We're working with the organisers, Show Direct, in consultation with Hartpury College, to secure an alternative date, subject to availability and other existing fixtures in the calendar. The format and timetable of the show will also be dependent on all restrictions being lifted by this date. Members will be updated before competition gets underway.

What's happening with Quest?

The 2021 Quest season will get underway on 29 March under the new sponsorship by Saracen Horse Feeds. There has been a number of positive changes to the series to cover both My Quest and Team Quest:

- The qualification requirement for a member/team to obtain a minimum of two Quest scores to earn a place on the regional leader boards remains unchanged.
- Members and teams will be able to nominate their chosen regional leader board at the start of the season. This must be done with head office within two months of the rider/team first competing in the 2021 Quest season.
- Six regional leader boards will run and extra Quest Regional Finals will be added to the existing eight shows, geographically mapped throughout the regions to ensure that there is good coverage across the country. Members will be free to choose their nearest regional final.
- The Saracen Horse Feeds Quest Regional Finals 2021 will be split, with venues hosting either the open sections or U21 sections for Team Quest and My Quest.
- With an increase in the number of Regional Finals, we're able to increase the numbers taking part in each class from 15 to 25 in Team Quest and from 20 to 30 in My Quest for each section.

Qualification period	Regional Finals	Championships
29 March – 31 August 2021	Mid-Sept – early October	Bury Farm, Buckinghamshire 28 – 31 October

We'll be releasing an update to cover all the changes and news for the 2021 Saracen Horse Feeds Quest season on the website before the resumption of competition.

Will the Shearwater Young Horse, BD 7yo and the BD Young Pony Championships happen in 2021?

Only one fixture hosting qualifiers for Young Horse and Young Pony sections has had to be cancelled due to the lockdown, at Myerscough College on 3 March. We can confirm that these classes will be added to the rescheduled Premier League fixture, from 1 – 5 May.

We anticipate that some of the qualifiers scheduled for early April may also need to move to allow more time to prepare young horses for competition. Further updates will be issued in due course on the [dedicated website page](#).

Is there a rescheduled date for the Equissage Pulse Para Winter Championships?

The Equissage Pulse Para Winter Championships, covering Bronze, Silver and Gold sections, was due to take place from 25 – 28 March but will now run 23 – 25 May at the same venue, Myerscough College. An important consideration in rescheduling these championships was the requirement for overnight accommodation for Para riders. With hotels only able to re-open after 17 May, this provided a limited window for alternative dates. Information on qualification for the Equissage Pulse Summer Championships in Bronze, Silver and Gold is in the [BD Operational Plan](#).

Can I still be classified for Para competition?

Currently, all Para classification evaluations have been suspended until further notice. Applications will continue to be accepted to start the process as and when future classification sessions can be scheduled. Further details are available on the [BEF website](#).

What are the plans for the summer season?

With the qualification window shortened to three months, Summer Regionals and Summer Area Festivals will now operate under 'island points' rules. This means that the total points required by the end of the qualification period (up to and including 30 June 2021) has been reduced by half for most classes.

We anticipate that the resumption dates indicated by the governments for England, Scotland and Wales should give members in all three nations ample opportunity to achieve these revised requirements; however, we will again review and adjust the timescales and/or points criteria if necessary.

The calendar remains largely unchanged but we will obviously continue to monitor the impact of COVID and contingency plans made should any dates be impacted. Full details can be found in our [Operational Plan](#) or [summary](#).

International Competition

Are international competitions running?

Currently, all FEI competition in Europe is suspended until 11 April due to the EHV-1 outbreak impacting a number of countries on the continent.

The government has confirmed that the current restrictions on international travel will remain in place until at least 17 May, which rules out competing overseas for all bar those riders classified as elite athletes under the criteria issued by DCMS and UK Sport. Elite athletes are currently defined only as those riders campaigning for selection for the Olympic and Paralympic Games in Tokyo. These athletes may still travel to international competition, subject to any local restrictions, and are eligible for exemptions as per the [government guidance](#).

We appreciate there are many other members with international ambitions, including our U21 riders campaigning for age specific FEI European Championships later this summer. However, based on the current government requirements, these groups are not eligible for exemptions and therefore unable to travel abroad prior to 17 May. Our international team is working closely with our colleagues in World Class and a number of venues to provide alternative competition opportunities to gain experience and qualify for selection, as well as supporting the combinations in contention for Tokyo.

Domestic FEI competitions:

Dates	Venue	Classes
07 – 11 July 2021	Hartpury	CDI3*/CPEDI3*
09 – 13 August	Bishop Burton	CPEDI1/2/3*
05 – 07 October	Keysoe	CPEDI1/2/3*
08 – 10 October	Keysoe	CDI3*/U25/Y/J/P

How will riders aiming for selection for international championships be selected/qualify?

We anticipate that the Premier League season will run largely as planned, including a revised date for Myerscough, which will provide qualification opportunities, alongside any new fixtures and test riding days that we can be scheduled. Further details on these extra dates will be communicated to these riders directly as soon as plans have been finalised. The relevant selection policies will also be updated and reissued before competitions restart, to reflect restrictions on international travel and limited opportunities to compete.

Will I still be able to get an FEI passport?

We are working remotely but our International Officer can still process FEI documentation. Please allow extra time for passports to be processed and [email Lianne Martin](#) to make the arrangements.

Membership and horse registration

What are the benefits of having a membership when I can't compete?

During this period of restricted activity, your continued support for British Dressage is valued and welcome, as it helps to safeguard our organisation and ensure we all have a healthy sport to return to. Even though you might not be able to compete, there are still plenty of other benefits you will continue to enjoy.

Most importantly, as a member you have public liability insurance that covers you and all horses you own, as well as personal accident cover for a variety of equestrian pursuits from Shearwater. The insurance cover alone is worth £80-£100, so it's a great benefit to have. If you have questions on the cover you automatically receive as a member, contact the team at Shearwater on 01992 707316. See the insurance section below for further detail.

There's also the free legal helpline available to members via Harrison Clark Rickerbys, which will be extremely beneficial during these times of uncertainty. Members are entitled to 30 minutes of free advice on any matter and there are special fixed fee packages and discounts for BD members with HCR.

The BD magazine continues to be published every six weeks, with training content and tips, expert advice and informative articles. Members also have the [BD at home hub](#) to enjoy on our website, which has just about everything you'd want to occupy your time – entertaining interviews, training advice, health & wellness sessions and opinion from some of the industry's leading experts.

Communication is key to us and we've made sure our members have been kept informed throughout the crisis and guided by regular website updates and newsletters – a vital part of being a BD member.

Continued membership also ensures that any qualifications you've gained to date are maintained and remain valid. Once the sport is able to resume, these qualifications will still count towards any future or rescheduled competitions.

Supporting BD costs a Full member 25p per day, a Premier Club member 16p per day and Club member just 10p per day. During this winter months we have continued to work on a number of important projects, including our new judge education system, virtual training initiatives and online content for youth and coach education, to ensure your sport is in great shape to come back to.

Can membership and/or horse registrations be extended?

We have experienced financial pressures during this pandemic, like many of our stakeholders. We've worked tirelessly to protect the financial security of the sport over last 12 months, while continuing to provide value for membership fees as much as possible. As a charity, British Dressage is heavily reliant on income from membership and horse registration fees – they account for over 45% of our annual income.

While we continue to make use of any financial help provided by the government like the job retention scheme, our costs rise in many areas which is compounded by a significant reduction in our other revenue streams like competitions, training, events, starter levies and sponsorship, so we have had to manage the finances carefully.

Throughout 2020 we extended horse registrations for those who kept the membership current and we announced on 2 March that members would receive a further three month extension to cover the lockdown period during January, February and March 2021. By the end of this current suspension, everyone who has retained an active membership during the pandemic will have had up to seven months added to their horse registrations over a 12 month period, equating to a total value of £375,000 back to members.

In addition, membership fees were frozen for 2021, maintaining the same prices for three years running, to help ease the financial burden and recognise members' loyal support to BD throughout this difficult time. This valuable contribution is never taken for granted and we will continue to provide value for money in return.

I've let my membership and/or horse registration lapse, how do I renew?

You can do both online at www.britishdressage.co.uk – click on the member login at the top right of the screen on a desktop or via the menu on the top right on a mobile device. If you've visited the website and logged on before, you'll need your email and password. If you've forgotten your password during lockdown, use the grey 'forgot password' button to reset. If it's your first time, use the green button to set your password.

Head to 'My Profile' and you can renew, upgrade or register a horse there. We have some helpful ['how to' videos on the website](#) to walk you through the common membership tasks. Alternatively, you can call the membership team on 02476 698832 or 836 and they'll get any subscriptions up to date for you.

I'm not clear on my eligibility for some classes and sections, what's the easiest way to find out?

In the [BD Members' Handbook](#) there are easy to follow flow charts which ask a number of questions – if you answer yes to any one, you're ineligible and need to consult the next section/level.

I haven't had a paper copy of the Members' Handbook this year, why?

For 2021, we made the decision to go green – by not printing copies we're saving on transport miles, supporting our commitment to reducing our paper use and helping the environment. The [BD Members' Handbook is now online](#) and easy to access. It's hosted on a platform which you can search the content fully and bookmark key sections – plus you can download to your digital devices so you'll always have the rules to hand.

What happens if I compete without a valid membership and/or horse registration?

If you compete without a valid membership and/or horse registration your results may be excluded from any shows you attend while your status is lapsed. However, most importantly you're not covered under the BD Members' insurance to compete at a venue with your horse or undertaking any other equestrian activity. Please ensure that you're all up to date to save any disappointment and lost points towards those all-important qualifications.

I'm not sure of my current membership or horse registration status, how can I check?

If you're not sure on the membership status of you or any of your horses, a quick check can be done on your [member portal online](#).

Member insurance

What insurance do I get with my membership?

Full (including Life, Trial and Winter memberships), Premier Club and Club members receive two forms of cover from our insurance providers Shearwater. Public Personal Liability, up to £30 million in any one occurrence, as well as Personal Accident Insurance, which covers accidental death, loss of limb or sight and permanent disablement as a consequence of any horse related accident.

What's covered under the Public Personal Liability insurance?

The member, any horses owned by the member when ridden with the member's permission, and a groom engaged in working for the insured member, are all covered for payment of sums awarded under civil law due to accidental death or injury to third parties or damage to third party property. Some exclusions apply, please refer to the BD Members' Handbook for details.

Am I only covered for BD activities?

No, both insurances cover a member while engaged in any horse related activity while your membership is valid. There are a few specific provisions in each of the insurance policies, but essentially you're covered for most equine activities – even when not competing or training.

Am I still covered to ride when in lockdown?

Provided riding is not prohibited by government or there is strong guidance not to, you are.

Do I get this type of cover with my other insurances – like horse or home?

Possibly, but you'd need to check carefully with the terms and conditions applied by your insurance providers. It is unlikely that the same provisions would be available under general home insurance. The insurances you get as a member have been developed in line with member needs by experienced insurance professionals to provide specialist cover.

Equine vaccinations

What is BD doing about the six month booster requirement?

In recognition of some veterinary practices offering a reduced service during lockdown, the requirement for horses to have had a booster vaccination within six months and 21 days of a competition will be waived for the remainder of the summer season, up to 30 June 2021. Please note that the 12-month rule remains in place for all BD registered horses, regardless of whether or not you are competing – it is vitally important that your horse still has its annual vaccination.

We strongly recommend that owners get up to date with the six monthly booster at the earliest opportunity to minimise the risk of equine influenza spreading once horses begin mixing again. We would also advise you to check with your competition venue before making an entry, as some may still stipulate six-month vaccinations due to their own restrictions.

Will there be a vaccination amnesty if my horse goes over the 12 month booster?

No amnesty period will be provided in these circumstances and your horse will need to restart its vaccination programme from the beginning. This is due to the efficacy of the vaccine, which has a maximum period of 12 months.

If my horse has exceeded the six month booster requirement, do I need to start again?

No. Rule 11 states that horses must have had a booster injection within six calendar months +21 days of a competition. While there are no competitions, the rule does not apply, but the 12 month requirement remains in place. However, when competition returns, there will be a three month amnesty on the six monthly boosters only to allow for a transition period.

Not all vets have been carrying out vaccinations. What if my horse goes over the 12 month requirement?

You will need to restart your vaccination process from the beginning, as per rule 11 in the 2021 Members' Handbook, before you are able to compete. The initial course of two injections, not less than 21 days and no more than 92 days apart, must be completed again before competing. Please allow seven days before arriving at the competition from your last injection.

What if I'm in the process of completing the initial course of three injections and I've missed one?

Vets are advised to complete these injections where possible to give a horse some immunity, but if you're unable to get them completed you'll need to start the process again when vets are able to resume normal practice.

Which date is my 12 month booster due?

Once you've completed the initial course, each time you have a booster vaccination the 12 month period starts over again, including six month boosters. So whatever the last vaccination date shows in your horse's passport, the next injection will be due within 12 months. Please note that 12 months refers to calendar months as per usual, rather than 365 days.

What happens if my horse isn't competing – can he go over one year without having to re-start?

No, if your horse goes over a year without a vaccination then it would need to restart a programme from the beginning, whether it's currently competing or not.

It's not my fault my horse can't be vaccinated – why should I have to pay to re-start the vaccinations?

It's an unfortunate situation, but if the vaccination exceeds 12 months your horse will not have the necessary levels of immunity to Equine Influenza. In order to compete with us, your horse must be compliant with BD rules, which are in place to protect the horse population in the UK. This is based on independent expert veterinary advice.

It is important to emphasise that while horses are not currently mixing or in competition, a 12 month vaccination is necessary in order to protect against EI. Beyond this point the efficacy of the vaccine is no longer guaranteed. We need to ensure that this requirement remains in place to prevent a resurgence in the number of cases again.

I'm concerned about the EHV-1 outbreak in Europe, should I start vaccinating my horse against it?

Generally veterinarians are advising against vaccination to prevent neurological EHV-1 at present in competition horses. The vaccine is not licensed for neurological herpes and there's no proof that it helps to prevent this form of the disease. Unless you can guarantee that any horse who is vaccinated for the first time does not come into contact with the virus for at least five weeks, vaccination could actually make any case worse. In-foal mares are still recommended for vaccination.

Maintaining the [highest levels of biosecurity](#) at all times, particularly where new horses are arriving on to the yard is the best control of any outbreak. Everyone should familiarise themselves with the symptoms of a number of [equine diseases](#) such as EHV, equine influenza and strangles and consult their vet immediately if they have any concerns about horses in their care.