

# Welfare Adviser Role Description

## Role Summary

The British Horse Society Welfare Team strives to make a difference for horses throughout the UK by providing advice and support for their owners and guardians. As a BHS Welfare Adviser, you will be joining that team, working with the staff at BHS Headquarters (HQ) and fellow volunteers. We are not a rescue or rehoming charity but we work with people to improve horse welfare through increased knowledge and awareness of their needs. Being an advocate for the horse within the remit of equine law can provide rewarding results.

If you are passionate about horse welfare and enjoy working with people to make a difference this could be the role for you. Our Welfare Advisers respond to welfare concerns providing information to the Welfare team at HQ and if required partner charities and statutory organisations. You can also make a difference by raising awareness of current welfare campaigns and providing information and guidance to horse owners in your area.

## What's in it for you

As a Welfare Adviser you will be helping to improve horse welfare through support and advice. You will also have the opportunity to expand your skills and experience and be part of a motivated and proactive team of like-minded people. Your training and experiences will increase your equestrian knowledge and confidence in working with and supporting people.

## Main duties and responsibilities

To help the BHS Welfare team to support our charitable objectives, your role will include:

- Attending and assessing welfare concerns received from: BHS HQ, direct from a member of the public or your National or Regional Manager
- Reporting your findings to the Welfare team at HQ, through the submission of welfare report forms within 48 hours of each welfare concern visit and telephone reports which support a concern
- Providing feedback to the complainant in a professional and confidential manner
- Working with and sharing best practice with your fellow Welfare Advisers
- Successfully complete your annual CPD requirements (the amount will be dependent on your level of Welfare Adviser experience and will be communicated to you on completion of your training)
- Supporting the delivery of BHS advice and guidance to horse owners and enthusiasts in your area in relation to welfare
- The BHS Welfare Advisers do not have any legal standing and therefore, it is integral to your role to develop relationships with local authorities and other organisations (Police, Trading Standards or other welfare charities) to enhance our proactive approach to horse welfare
- Establish effective relationships with your fellow committee volunteers and local riding clubs
- If requested, act as a buddy or mentor to a fellow Welfare Adviser/prospective Welfare Adviser

**NB This role does not involve rescuing or rehoming horses nor does it involve assessments of the welfare of horses residing at BHS approved centres or Local Authority Riding Establishments/centres**

## Skills and Knowledge

Essential

- Passionate about horse welfare
- Equestrian knowledge - equivalent to BHS Stage 3 Care
- Good communication skills - essential in your role advising and supporting people to improve the welfare of their horse(s)
- Diplomacy and professional approach - especially when dealing with threatening behaviour
- An ability to act in a confidential, discrete and sensitive manner
- Keep accurate and professional records, have excellent attention to detail and be able to complete clear and comprehensive reports
- Good communication and organisational skills
- Have use of a telephone and computer
- Be computer literate and have a personal email address accessible only by you

Desirable

- Experience of working with the public
- Experience of volunteering

## Training and Support

Regional Welfare Advisers (RWA) and County Lead Welfare Advisers (CL) will assist you throughout your role along with your fellow Welfare Advisers and your Regional Manager. The Welfare team at HQ are available to advise you and will provide you with specialised support, guidance and training.

You will have a full induction into the role which will include being assigned a mentor and attending a training day. Maintaining your annual CPD is essential to this role as this will keep you up to date with recent research and best practice within the industry. The BHS host a variety of opportunities for CPD as well as other valuable and informative training.

You will also receive quarterly newsletter updates directly from the Welfare Team at HQ, which will include any changes to legislation regarding Welfare, updates on our Welfare campaigns and other news. You will also be invited to join the BHS Welfare Adviser Facebook Group which will provide you with access to timely and useful information, space to share your ideas and experiences, and ask for advice from your fellow Advisers where appropriate.

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## Resources

You will need access to your own computer and a private email address. You must be willing to receive email, telephone and written correspondence from BHS HQ and fellow BHS volunteers.

**NB All correspondence and information relating to welfare concerns must be treated with utmost confidentiality and therefore we require this to be received by you personally. In order to maintain confidentiality we regret that it is not possible to have BHS correspondence sent to a business or family member.**

This role requires regular travel throughout your region. It is therefore essential to be able to travel and have access to a vehicle that you can use in your role.

We will provide you with all necessary reference documents. You will be provided with an identification card which must be kept securely and on your person at all times whilst attending welfare concerns as you may be asked to produce your identification. Identification cards are only valid for one year. Providing you have met the minimum training and CPD needs of this position, your identification card will be renewed annually.

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## Your Commitment

We ask all our Welfare Advisers to commit to the role for a minimum of two years.

Due to the nature of this role, commitment will vary and involve some evening and weekend meetings and visits.

The geographical location of where you live can have a significant impact on the number of welfare concerns you may be asked to assess.

You are encouraged to attend at least one local Committee Meeting per year and/or an event to meet the wider committee and where possible support committee activities.

Due to the geographical spread of our Welfare Advisers and the remoteness of some of the locations that the BHS supports, it may not always be possible to provide training events local to you. Where it is necessary for you to travel a significant distance to attend training, the BHS may be able to support you with travel costs. Please speak with your role coordinator prior to organising any travel.

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## How do I get involved?

Complete an enquiry form and submit your references to the BHS Volunteer team. Your application will be checked for suitability and forwarded to the Welfare team who will be in touch to discuss your application. All Welfare Advisers must successfully complete a probationary period prior to undertaking the full Welfare Adviser role.

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## Notes

To avoid conflict of interest we are unable to accept applications for Welfare Adviser positions from anyone who is currently employed as or volunteering in the capacity of a Welfare Adviser with another welfare organisation. In some instances it may be possible to accept such an application if the individual's role does not include investigating or agreeing the provision of support services for animal welfare concerns. If you are concerned that a conflict of interest could apply to your application please note this on your application form and ensure this is discussed fully as a part of your application for the role.