

BEF COVID update: 05 January 2021

All home nations are now under lockdown restrictions across the United Kingdom, with the exception of some offshore islands. Across the four countries, the message is to 'stay at home' and only go out for essential reasons such as work that cannot be done from home, healthcare, education and exercise. This will once again have an impact on the equestrian community, with some businesses unable to operate under the restrictions and activity limited largely to meeting care and exercise needs only.

Key points

England

- Minimise time spent outside the home – it is unlawful to meet socially with family or friends unless they are part of your household or support bubble.
- Permitted reasons for leaving home include:
 - work which cannot be done from home
 - accessing education
 - caring responsibilities
 - health and medical requirements
 - buying essential goods or services
 - outdoor exercise
 - attending to care and exercise of an animal or to seek veterinary help/advice.
- You may leave your home for exercise, but not for the purpose of recreation or leisure activities. This should be once a day and you should not travel outside your local area.
- You may exercise alone, with one other person, or with your household or support bubble.
- While the guidance states that you can travel to work where you cannot work from home, the overarching message of the lockdown is to stay at home. Coaches should read the guidance and assess whether there is a necessity to continue coaching face to face. We would advise 1:2:1 instruction at a coach's 'home' facilities with clients who keep their horses on site would be acceptable provided COVID practices are observed. Coaches should also check with their insurance provider before undertaking any activities.
- Non-essential retail businesses and venues, including leisure and sports facilities, have been ordered to close, and equestrian arenas and riding centres are included in the list. Private facilities, such as those at your yard, can be used in order to exercise horses for their welfare where necessary. No hire of facilities is permitted and travelling horses should only be on welfare or veterinary grounds.
- Only elite training and competition may continue.

These restrictions are currently set to be reviewed on 15 February.

Further information

For further information about how these restrictions impact equestrian activity in England, please visit the [Guidance for England](#) page on our Coronavirus Hub.

Helpful websites:

GOV.UK – National lockdown: Stay at home - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-lockdown-stay-at-home>

GOV.UK – National lockdown guidance document -

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/949536/NationalLockdownGuidance.pdf

Sport England advice - <https://www.sportengland.org/news/what-new-national-lockdown-means-sport-and-physical-activity-england>

Scotland – as per England, but with the following additional points:

- A maximum of two people from two separate households or a single household group can meet outdoors for the purpose of sport or exercise. Children under 12 from these households do not count towards the number. There should be no indoor mixing of households.
- You may take part in local outdoor recreation, sport or exercise that starts and finishes in the same place, up to five miles from the boundary of your local authority area, provided that you abide by the rules on meeting other households.
- Organised sport and exercise for under-12s can continue in line with workplace and socialising guidance and sport-specific guidance agreed.
- Coaches may continue to operate within the travel restrictions and should not deliver a session to more than one person aged 12 or over at a time.

These restrictions are currently set to be reviewed on 31 January.

Further information

For further information about how these restrictions impact equestrian activity in Scotland, please visit the [Guidance for Scotland](#) page on our Coronavirus Hub.

Helpful websites:

GOV.SCOT – Stay at home guidance - <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/>

sportscotland - <https://sportscotland.org.uk/covid-19/>

horsescotland - <https://www.horsescotland.org/covid-19support>

Wales – as per England, but with the following additional points:

- You may only meet with members of your household or support bubble in all settings.
- You may leave the house to tend to and exercise a horse in your ownership or care, but journeys should be kept to a minimum. The advice is not to travel horses off a premises for the purposes of exercise – all activity should ‘start and finish at home’.
- Organised equine sport is suspended and facilities closed.

These restrictions are currently set to be reviewed on 18 January.

Further information

For further information about how these restrictions impact equestrian activity in Wales, please visit the [Guidance for Wales](#) page on our Coronavirus Hub.

Helpful websites:

GOV.WALES - <https://gov.wales/alert-level-4>

Sport Wales - <https://www.sport.wales/media-centre/latest-news/taking-part-in-sport-and-exercise-in-wales-the-guidance/>

Northern Ireland – as per England, but with the following additional points:

- Households should not mix indoors in private homes. Up to six people from no more than two households can meet in an outdoor setting (including a private garden), but with social distancing in place. Children under 12 are not included in these numbers.
- Unique household bubbles can form up of up to 10 people
- Up to 15 people can meet outdoors, with social distancing and hand and respiratory hygiene practices in place.
- Equestrian activity (care and exercise) should be for equine welfare purposes only.
- Sports and leisure facilities should close.
- No one-to-one or group training sessions may run.
- Only elite training and competition may continue.

These restrictions are currently set to be reviewed on or around 23 January.

Further information

For further information about how these restrictions impact equestrian activity in Northern Ireland, please visit the [Guidance for Northern Ireland](#) page on our Coronavirus Hub.

Helpful websites:

NIDIRECT.GOV.UK – guidance <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-regulations-guidance-what-restrictions-mean-you>

Financial support

Businesses that are financially impacted by the lockdown restrictions should visit their respective government's COVID-19 information pages for details of the assistance available.

Chancellor Rishi Sunak today announcing additional one-off cash grants for businesses in England that operate in the retail, hospitality and leisure industry. The amount received will be linked to business rates, and provided on a per-property basis:

- £4,000 for businesses with a rateable value of £15,000 or less
- £6,000 for businesses with a rateable value of between £15,000 and £51,000
- £9,000 for businesses with a rateable value of more than £51,000

In addition, a £594 million discretionary fund has been made available to local authorities and the devolved administrations of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to support other businesses that are affected by the restrictions but not eligible for the grants. Businesses should apply to their local authority for the support.

The government has also provided:

- 100% business rates relief for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses
- £1.1 billion existing discretionary funding for Local Authorities

- An extension to the furlough scheme, which will now run until April
- An extension to 100% government-backed loans, which have been extended until March

For those who are self-employed, the Self Employment Income Support Scheme was previously extended to offer a third grant for the period of 1 November 2020 to 29 January 2021. This offers a taxable grant worth 80% of your average monthly trading profits, paid as a three-month lump sum to the maximum value of £7,500. However, this is only available to those who were eligible for the first and second SEISS grants. Further information is available [here](#).

Further information is available on the British Equestrian COVID hub [here](#).

<https://www.britishequestrian.org.uk/coronavirus/grants-and-funding>

CEO Comment

British Equestrian Chief Executive Iain Graham commented; “While tightened restrictions aren’t the way we wanted to start the New Year, the nationwide lockdown is clearly needed to get the virus under control and protect our medical services. I call on everyone in our equestrian community to once again to play their part, adhere to the guidance and follow the message to ‘stay at home’ where possible, but of course without compromising your own or your horse’s welfare.

“We should all be vigilant, stick closely to social distancing and hand and respiratory hygiene guidance, and minimise contact where we can as we continue to act responsibly. There is light at the end of the tunnel and hopefully it won’t be long before we can get back to some sense of normality with businesses and livelihoods able to get back on track, and all of us enjoying our horses to the full, but we have a few more sacrifices to make on our way there. Thank you to all of you for your continued support, patience and determination, and please stay safe.”

Further information

For further information and support, please visit our [Coronavirus Hub](#).