**Hoof: An equestrian Legacy**

**The Concept**

Hoof is the British Equestrian Federation’s (BEF) Olympic and Paralympic legacy programme which aims to encourage more people to take up horse riding, driving, vaulting and volunteering. By connecting people to riding centres, schools, clubs and equestrian sporting organisations, Hoof, supported by Sport England funding, is helping more people to discover horses, get fit and improve their wellbeing.

**The Products**

By understanding market insight the BEF, in partnership with member bodies such as the British Horse Society, Association of British Riding Schools, Riding for the Disabled Association and The Pony Club, Hoof is developing a number of customer led products to attract more people into horse riding. The first of these, Take Back the Reins, is being rolled out through approved riding centres.

**Take Back the Reins**

Aimed at adult riders who may have ridden in the past, Take Back the Reins is a seven week series of riding lessons that provides specifically designed coaching and a customer centred approach to support a rider’s first steps back into the saddle. [www.hoofride.co.uk/TakeBacktheReins](http://www.hoofride.co.uk/TakeBacktheReins)

**Accessibility Mark**

Accessibility Mark is a pilot project being launched in autumn 2013 by Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA) in partnership with the British Equestrian Federation (BEF) and Hoof. The aim is to provide training, assistance and accreditation to commercial riding centres, schools and clubs to enable more disabled people to participate in mainstream horse riding activities. [www.hoofride.co.uk/accessibilitymark](http://www.hoofride.co.uk/accessibilitymark)

**HOOF YOUNG PEOPLE PRODUCT (UNDER DEVELOPMENT)**

Hoof for young people is the strand of the hoof programme designed to **Retain** young people already taking part in riding. The Hoof product and programme for young people will aim to decrease drop off in participation in Equestrian sport, targeting young people across the broad category of 14-25 years and focusing on key life transition times for young people.

The programme centres upon adapting the Hoof Brand for a ‘young people’ market. It comprises of ‘four’ strands to have impact of measureable scale. The figure below illustrates the four areas working together as the hoof youth programme to ultimately keep young people engaged at this transitional period. A further opportunity around skill development, qualifications and employment for young people will be explored whilst encouraging them to continue to ride.

**Hoof Horse Match (ownership) is a** new concept designed to meet the needs of people searching for a horse they can ride in their local area. This virtual solution would match riders to horses that need riding. Where the potential rider has the desire, skillset and resource to own a horse, Hoof Horse Match can link horses in need of rehoming with potential owners in a regulated and safe way.

**Hoof Horse Match (share)** will also be developed to highlight horse share opportunities in the local area. Evidence shows that people may lose interest in the riding school environment and want something that is more flexible to provide further engagement. Where horse ownership is not an option the Horse Match share communication tool would aim to match riders to local horses and broker relationships for horse owners needing riders. Market research shows that this solution would assist young people and others who may move away to new areas to study or change their habits due to peer pressure/trends to keep riding where ever they are geographically and on life’s journey. This product would look to promote this type of horse match or time- share arrangement so that customers do not reach a ‘dead-end’ when they cannot commit or finance a horse full time but would like to take their riding to the next level beyond their local equestrian centre riding lessons. The BEF through hoof would explore possible links or collaboratively work with local Equestrian based virtual network forums in order to be effective in making connections, bringing horses and people together locally.

**The Rider Journey**

**Enriching Lives**

By targeting specific social groups - disabled people, underprivileged children and those who might not otherwise be able to access riding - the Hoof legacy project is quelling common perceptions of riding being inaccessible through its work with specialist projects such as the Ebony Horse Club, Brixton and the Emile Faurie Foundation and increasing the provision of ‘riding for all’, through inner city schools.

**The England Excel Talent Programme**

The Excel Talent Programme has been developed to extend equestrian’s athlete talent pathway beyond the BEF's UK Sport funded World Class Programme to identify and nurture a pool of up and coming riders across the England Regions who have the potential to go on and win medals in the future.

The Programme has been set up through funding from Sport England and is being co-ordinated by the BEF, in partnership with the three Olympic and one Paralympic disciplines of eventing, dressage, showjumping and para-equestrian dressage.

**Coaching**

The BEF has implemented and is endorsed as a priority sport to deliver UK Coaching Certificate (UKCC) qualifications in partnership with their eighteen member bodies. The aim is to ensure that new and existing horse riders can benefit from quality coaching, whatever their level, to maximise their sporting experience.

The BEF’s member bodies are responsible for delivering coaching courses from Level 1-3 to ensure the courses are tailored to the requirements of that particular member body. The newest and highest level of coaching accreditation (UKCC Level 4) is delivered by the BEF and is aimed at high performing coaches in all equestrian pursuits whether that be in an Olympic discipline or top level beginner coach . The continual work with the member bodies is focused on developing opportunities for coaches to ensure the needs of participants and met and exceeded.

**The Business Support**

**Sharing good business practice**

A national Hoof Business Network has been set up England wide to offer advice, guidance and support to help equestrian businesses thrive. Workshops, webinars and regular communications aim to address industry challenges, raise standards and share good practice as well as providing direction to equestrian businesses on available funding streams. The networks are an important part of the BEF’s plan to achieve increased participation by helping proprietors to build their businesses and attract new people into riding. [www.hoofride.co.uk/networks](http://www.hoofride.co.uk/networks)

**Facilities & Funding**

The BEF helps to identify and develop facilities in line with the strategic objective to increase capacity within riding establishments, so ensuring they are able to meet an increased demand. In addition, the BEF works with other funders of capital developments, such as Sport England and Local Authorities to demonstrate and prioritise equestrian requirements.

The BEF provides regular opportunities for centres and clubs in England to apply for £1 for £1 match funding through their capital funding grants scheme run in partnership with Sport England. Grants are awarded to those projects that can most clearly demonstrate they will deliver increased participation in equestrianism and will have a positive and sustainable impact in their local community.

**The Message**

**Media Platforms**

The Hoofride website is a signposting tool for those keen to get in the saddle. It not only provides prospective riders with a unique mapping facility directing them to local riding centres but also provides a jargon buster, an overview of each equestrian sport and gives ideas of ways to get involved via volunteering, career paths and business support

Facebook and Twitter are mechanisms by which the Hoof project can reach vast and untouched audiences. Through these social media outlets good news stories, events and opportunities to get involved are spread wide and far.

[www.facebook.com/hoofride](http://www.facebook.com/hoofride)

[www.twitter.com/hoofride](http://www.twitter.com/hoofride)

**Ambassadors**

Ambassadors such as Deborah Meaden, Jules Hudson and Angie Best are on board to help the Hoof programme engage new participants and share Hoof messages. The roles of ambassadors vary depending on their skill set, for example Deborah Meaden’s business skills are being put to use to help encourage equestrian businesses to flourish, whereas Jules Hudson’s wholesome persona helps to entice families to join the ride. Hoof has recently reached out to elite level equestrian athletes to inspire budding riders through media interviews, presence at Hoof aligned high profile events and visits to TBTR centre events.

**Events**

To raise the profile of the sport as well as the Hoof programme, Hoof representatives attend both regional and national high profile events to help drive participants back into the saddle. Hoof’s presence at events is highlighted via branding in photo calls, the mechanical horse (Henry) and Hoof Ambassadors.

The mechanical horse’s stationary attitude to life provides new or lapsed riders a chance to experience life in the saddle in a highly safe and controlled environment and proves to be a highly popular attraction anywhere he appears. High profile events that Henry attended in 2013 include Sports Fest, Longines Global Champions Tour in London, Longines Royal International Horse Show at Hickstead and Fidelity Blenheim International Horse Trials, as well as regional events such as the CSW Sport event in Coventry and the Blackpool RDA fundraising event.

**Campaigns**

A fitness campaign, Trot to be Trim, is spreading the health and wellbeing benefits of the sport with Hoof and some of the many case studies featured on Sky Sports’ Get Involved Series. The campaign was re-launched in the autumn of 2013 to target mums wanting to ride post summer holidays.

[www.hoofride.co.uk/trottobetrim](http://www.hoofride.co.uk/trottobetrim)

**The Future**

**Initiatives**

The Hoof project is continually evolving, looking for new ways and means to develop. Future initiatives aim to target retention of riders that proposes a horse sharing programme, as well as a youth offering which will target young riders and work to maintain enthusiasm for the industry and sport to prevent drop off between the ages 14-16.

**Research**

Furthering research to maintain a thorough understanding of the requirements of the various target markets that Hoof products and campaigns are directed is high on the agenda. The BEF is combining forces with various research channels such as the Sportwise, AESE, BETA and Sport England to ensure that this is achieved.