



# Dales Pony Society

## Covid - 19 Protocol for Dales Pony Breeders

17 April 2020

### Introduction

The Dales Pony Society fully recognises the extremely serious and unprecedented situation facing this country and the wider world, be in no doubt this is the most severe global health crisis we have all had to face in recent memory.

Through full and strict adherence to the protocols below, Dales Pony Breeders will be able to demonstrate that they can responsibly comply with the current Government advice.

All people involved in this protocol must be in good health (absence of clinical signs and with no temperature), not in-contact persons, or vulnerable people at risk.

At this time, if you cannot follow all of this protocol you should not be moving and transporting ponies for breeding purposes. Human health and NHS resources are the priority.

### Background

On Monday 23 March, the UK Government introduced restrictions requiring people to stay at home as far as possible to help reduce the spread of the coronavirus outbreak. These restrictions were in place initially for the three weeks following 23 March, but have now been extended for at least another 3 weeks. These introduced the following measures:

- Requiring people to stay at home, except for very limited purposes. These are:
  - shopping for basic necessities, for example food and medicine, which must be as infrequent as possible.
  - one form of exercise a day, for example a run, walk, or cycle - alone or with members of your household.
  - any medical need, or to provide care or to help a vulnerable person.
  - travelling to and from work, but only where this absolutely cannot be done from home.
- Closing non-essential shops and community spaces
- Stopping all gatherings of more than two people in public

Essential stud work cannot be carried out from home unless breeders have their own stallions and the Dales Pony Society, on the advice available, believes the protocols listed below will allow the absolutely necessary travel and activities for breeding activities. These breeding activities are of particular importance to the survival of the Dales Pony, which continues to be listed as a Category 1 Critically Endangered breed by the Rare Breeds Survival Trust.

They are based on latest Government guidance, and will be updated if this changes.

## **General**

1. Only people who are essential to the care of ponies, and who absolutely cannot work from home, should continue to travel to work during the period of these restrictions.
2. The standard of care should be focused primarily on upholding the welfare of the ponies in their care. Any non-essential activity beyond this must be carefully considered and, where possible, avoided.
3. Studs must close to any visitors, other than those that are essential for the welfare of the ponies in their care.
4. Breeders must follow all Government advice relating to good hygiene and virus transmission, and carry out proscribed hand washing and sanitising procedures including any surfaces/handles/ equipment.
5. Hygiene is vitally important when handling new equine arrivals. All associated people will use hand wipes, gels, disinfectants to clean any related equipment both before and after handling.
6. Breeders must follow all Government advice on social distancing at all times. People must remain at least two metres apart and avoid gatherings of more than two people, apart from members of their own household. Gatherings of more than two should be avoided except where absolutely essential for horse welfare. In these instances numbers should be limited and social distancing must still apply.
7. Contact between people at studs and any essential suppliers must also comply with the Government advice on social distancing, with no more than two people present unless they are of the same household.
8. Veterinary advice by phone and email should be sought on ensuring effective sanitisation and isolation.
9. Local procedures must be recorded and displayed as appropriate.

## **Transport**

1. Any appointments must be made in advance of travel.
2. Associated paperwork must be completed and sent electronically in advance, including passport information and completion of the COVID - 19 transport form.
3. The vehicle used for transport must be disinfected before and after every visit including any handles, the ramp or other areas where stud people may have had, or will have, contact.
4. People travelling in the horsebox must comply with Government advice on social distancing (as outlined in item 6 above).
5. Unless there is an emergency or human or animal welfare requirement related to the animal being transported or the driver, it is prohibited to stop on the journey.
6. At the destination, the unloading and re-loading of the horse must be conducted by the people at the destination with no contact with the transport people. Hygiene precautions must be followed at every stage of this loading process, using robust disinfection processes of the horsebox handles and any equipment, and hand washing.
7. People travelling in the horsebox should only exit the horsebox at the location they are visiting to use welfare facilities, using all sanitary precautions. There must be no direct contact with the people on the site.