

Background of the BHS Approvals Scheme

In 1961, The British Horse Society started a system of approving riding schools.

Although riding schools had to be licensed by their local councils, it was felt that this licensing only covered basic standards.

The BHS developed a scheme whereby other issues, such as welfare, instruction and safety standards, were taken into account.

By visiting a BHS-Approved riding school, you can be sure that it complies with the latest health and safety guidelines, is insured against public liability, and that its horses and ponies are well looked after. Yearly unannounced inspections ensure standards are kept high.

In recent years, the number of livery yards in the UK has grown dramatically. At present, livery yards do not need to be licensed. This means that even basic standards are not always met.

However, this is likely to change in the future as it is currently being considered as part of the new Animal Welfare Bill. In July 2002 the BHS - with the support of the British Equine Veterinary Association, the International League for the Protection of Horses, the RSPCA, the SSPCA, the Home of Rest for Horses and South Essex Insurance Brokers Ltd - launched the new Livery Yard Approval Scheme.

The scheme aims to encourage improved standards and provide some kind of 'regulation' of livery yards. All cat and dog boarding kennels have to be inspected and licensed by law and, although the livery yard scheme is voluntary, it will provide a means for livery yards to prove a certain level of competence and standard of facilities and care, thus helping to improve welfare requirements for horses all over Britain.

There are now more than 900 BHS Approved Establishments across the UK, Ireland, Belgium, Hong Kong, Singapore, Spain, Italy, Dubai, Malaysia and the USA.

BHS - Working for every Horse & Rider