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UNDERSTANDING BEST PRACTICE FOR LIVERY YARDS

LAUNCHED IN 2011, LIVERYLIST IS THE UK'S LEADING LIVERY YARD DIRECTORY AND RESOURCE FOR LIVERY YARD OWNERS, AND IN RECENT YEARS HAS BEEN WORKING TIRELESSLY TO DEVELOP AND IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIVERY YARDS FOR BOTH YARD OWNERS AND HORSE OWNERS

The past twelve months have been incredibly hard for the equestrian industry: still reeling from the effects of Covid, and now facing spiralling costs to cover horse care, and the recent droughts. This has resulted in grass shortages and increased costs for yard owners, subsequently passed on to liveryyards, which has given many no option but to seek pastures new.

If you're looking to change yard, it is important to make sure that you're choosing a yard that is right for both you and your horse in the long term, as well as offering you the level of service and experience you would expect of a business you are entrusting to look after your equine.

Many horse owners are unaware that there are no restrictions on

who can open a livery yard. There is no need to have any experience - in business or equine management - nor any formal registration or licensing process. Whilst all livery yards should be aware of welfare and business legislation, as well as basic common sense when it comes to equine care and yard management, this lack of regulation can lead to unpleasant and costly experiences for horse owners who unwittingly find themselves at poorly run yards. With work from LiveryList, Redwings, ABRS+ and other equestrian bodies in recent years, there is becoming an industry expected, albeit not obligatory, level of best practice that should make horse owners understand the questions to ask when considering their next yard, and should help yard



owners understand how they can provide a safe and well-run setting for clients, and their equines.

When you view a yard, most importantly you should check that the yard and their staff have the experience and competence to provide not only day-to-day equine care, but a high level of health and welfare consideration, such as a biosecurity policy or vaccination requirements, as well as a knowledge of common ailments

and a good level of equine first aid. If exercise is included in their livery package, then you also need to feel confident that this can be provided in the manner you'd expect. You can tell a lot by viewing a yard, looking at the level of cleanliness and maintenance, the health and condition of horses on the yard, and speaking to existing liveryyards. Client care is also a hugely important aspect. Yards should be requesting details of equines, verifying service providers, retaining passports (now a legal obligation for all but pure DIY yards), ensuring all equines are insured, and being insured themselves. Livery contracts should be commonplace to offer clarity as to the livery arrangements between yard owners and their clients. These days there should be a substantial amount of paperwork exchanged between horse owner and yard owner to complete what is, after all, a professional business arrangement.

This is just a very basic guide, and it's also important to be honest with the needs of your own horse so that equally a yard owner can decide if you are the right fit. It is important that both yard owner and horse owner feel the yard is mutually suitable to ensure that a well-chosen livery yard can provide a safe and happy home for your horse for the long term!

You can find a detailed guide to finding livery co-produced by LiveryList and the ABRS+ here: <https://bit.ly/findinglivery>