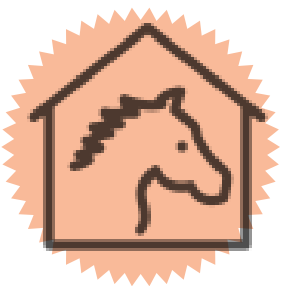


back to basics #9

Business Best Practice

If you're looking to open a yard, or are restructuring your existing yard, these are the key considerations to make to get you on the right track



Equine Welfare

Your key responsibility

The level of care provided to equines should be of prime importance in the management and planning of your yard. There are expectations related to animal welfare laws and legislation. The responsibility of providing a safe and secure environment, and considerate management and care falls with the yard owner if they are responsible for the day to day care and, even in some cases, for DIY liveries as well. There is industry guidance available outlining expectations and codes for equine welfare.



Health and Safety

Protect everyone on the yard

Health and safety considerations are a legal obligation to protect everyone on the yard-yourself, clients, staff and visitors. This should include risk assessments, workplace safety, health and safety policies and clear emergency procedures. Good health and safety practices can help prevent unnecessary accidents, injuries, damage or losses and show that you take due diligence in protecting those on your premises. There is a large amount of legislation that applies to health and safety for farms, stables, businesses and employment.



Client Management

Maintaining organisation and clarity

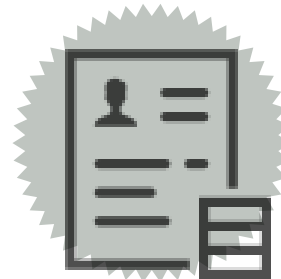
Having organised client management makes yard management easier. Having livery contracts to define arrangements and expectations are key. You should have defined processes for obtaining and storing client details and records, following good GDPR practices. Pricing, invoicing and payment terms should be clear. Communication should remain professional at all times, and any issues with clients should be dealt with swiftly and appropriately.



Insurance

Getting the right insurance for your yard

Understanding your insurance needs means you will be appropriately covered for the equines, services and facilities you offer. Public Liability, and Care, Custody and Control Insurances should be a must for all yards to ensure they are protected against claims. You should also ensure that equines, visitors and professionals providing services on the yard are appropriately insured.



Employment

Employing legally and correctly

If you intend to use employees or freelance staff you will need to hold Employers Liability Insurance, and should have work contracts even if they are self-employed. You must pay employees NMW and meet other employment obligations such as safe working practices, working hours and working conditions.



Business Management

Business best practices

Costings should be understood and your charges calculated accordingly. Book keeping and accounting should be done correctly, and it is recommended to seek the guidance of an experienced professional. The yard premises should hold the appropriate planning for the activities and facilities on site, and where applicable business rates should be paid.



Business Records

Showing professional duty of care

You should hold adequate business records and documents in relation to your costs and finances, yard policies and procedures, insurance, clients, equines and suchlike. Having organised records shows good business competence and allows you to provide documents as required, for example in the event of an insurance claim or contract dispute.