News Release: Hard Hat Policy for Under-18s.

The Shire Horse Society Hard Hat Policy

The Shire Horse Society (Society) is introducing, effective immediately, new safety rules relating to hard hats in competition and other Society sponsored events. The policy will apply to all competitors in ridden classes and to under 18s when competing in the in-hand classes at our National Shows and other Society sponsored events. Other shows will be subject to the rules of that show, but it is recommended to our affiliated shows that they follow this policy for under 18s.

In hand competitions

Safely compliant hard hats, with chin straps must be worn by competitors under the age of 18 whenever they compete in any in-hand class, including the upcoming National Summer Show on 27th of August 2026. To be compliant with this rule headgear must meet the current approved safety standard of PAS 015 (2011+), VGO1.04 2014-12, BS EN1484:2023 and show a BSI Kitemark or Inspec IC Mark, as may be amended from time to time, and be worn with a fastened chinstrap.

Although hard hats are mandatory for all under 18 aged competitors showing in hand it is very strongly advised that anyone competing any horse in-hand also complies with this rule.

Parents, guardians and other responsible adults must ensure that under 18 competitors comply with this rule. If a competitor refuses to wear compliant headgear, they will not be permitted to compete or participate in the relevant class or activity.

This rule reflects the Society's duty to promote best practice in safety and brings the Society into line with other equestrian disciplines. For the avoidance of doubt, this rule is mandatory and is not subject to any waiver, disclaimer, or parental opt out.

Anyone uncertain of the rules should ask a steward or other show official for assistance or, prior to the show, telephone the Shire Horse Society office for advice.

The Society recognises that this new rule may require an additional expense for under 18 age competitors in buying a compliant hat and it will therefore be offering, for the National Summer Show only, a bursary towards the purchase of a compliant hat to the sum of £40. Such sum to be reimbursed at or after the show on proof of entry to the relevant class.

Disclaimer

The Shire Horse Society has taken all reasonable steps to ensure that the guidance within this hat policy reflects current safety recommendations and recognised industry standards. However,

handlers, riders, parents, trainers, and guardians remain responsible for ensuring that any protective headgear worn is correctly fitted, in good condition and compliant with the latest approved safety standards.

The Society accepts no liability for injury, loss or damage of any type arising from the breach of this rule or the use, misuse, or failure of any hat or skull cap, whether or not it meets the standards referenced in this policy. Other show venues may impose additional requirements and it is the responsibility of competitors to check and comply with any such rules.

For the avoidance of doubt this rule applies to all mounted persons, regardless of age, when on site at a Shire Horse Society National Show.

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