



The Pembroke Centre

Guidance for all Extreme Weather Conditions

This guidance applies to hot and cold weather conditions, High winds, Thunder and Lightning.

The information in this guidance will be considered by the Centre manager, coach or volunteer co-ordinator prior to riding with clients when an **Amber or Red weather warning** has been issued by the Met Office.

Weather warnings are given a colour (yellow, amber and red). A weather warning depends on a combination of both impact the weather may have and the likelihood of those impacts occurring.

Definition of Amber warning: (Scottish met office)

Increased likelihood of impact from severe weather which could potentially disrupt plans. This means there is a possibility of travel delays, road and rail closures and potential risk to life.

Definition of red warning: (Scottish met office)

Dangerous weather expected and action should be taken to keep yourself safe and others safe from the impact of the severe weather. Likely there will be a risk to life, with substantial disruption, you should avoid travelling where possible and follow advice of local emergency services.

Hot Weather

During the hot weather we will monitor conditions and make adjustments to our activities as required to ensure the welfare of our equines, participants and volunteers. Everyone responds to heat in a different way It is the responsibility of each person to assess conditions, how well you are acclimatised to high temperatures, and whether it is right for **YOU** to continue with riding/ volunteering.



There isn't a single, universally defined temperature at which equine activities are not advised. Instead, the decision to halt or modify activities due to heat and cold is based on a combination of factors, including temperature, humidity, and how well acclimatised the horses are to the conditions. We will be monitoring throughout each day and making adjustments to activities as required to ensure the welfare of our equines, participants and volunteers.

Monitoring Method: Combined with the common sense approach outlined above we will use the RSPCA endorsed method of combining the temperature in Fahrenheit combined with the % Humidity which advises no activities when the combined number is more than 150. For Example:

85F + 30% Humidity = **115 Riding** 85F + 70% Humidity = **155 Riding Not Advised**

Horses and Ponies:

- Horses, as humans, acclimatise to the heat. Our team live out and when it is hot they do adjust. Although RDA do not have a specific hot weather advisory for groups their advice heading into the National Championships this year is to continue working horses with reasonable adjustments to help them acclimatise. **This means reduced/ no trotting and shorter rides, keeping to the shade - coaches to decide on the day.**
- The horses do enjoy coming in for a few hours to be bathed, have some hay and attention and have some time away from the flies.
- Please be vigilant and top up water buckets, we all need to be keeping these topped up.
- Remove tack quickly when a horse is between rides.
- Sponge down, specifically in the rump and shoulder areas as well as girth, bridle and saddle patches. Best practice is not to scrape off excess water.
- We absolutely will be resting any members of the team that we know might struggle more than others due to breathing problems, cushings or any other factor so this may mean some pony switches.



- There are several reliable indicators that a horse is very hot which we all should be on the look out for:
 - Excessive sweating – horse completely covered in sweat and/or sweat running. OR No Sweating – particularly if others are!
 - Horse feels very hot to touch.
 - Ataxia (unsteadiness) – especially when stopping after exercise.
 - Blowing very hard (deep and laboured breathing)
 - Panting (fast and shallow breathing)
 - Prominent blood vessels in the skin

Cold weather

There is no definitive temperature at which it is deemed that riding should not occur, except in countries where there is regularly snow in the winter, it is recommended that riding should not occur under -20 F.

Whilst that will not be an issue in the UK, it is recommended that horses with respiratory issues should not be ridden under zero degree Celsius. There are also recommendations that trotting should be avoided under zero degree Celsius.

Risks that will be considered when deciding to ride:

- The state of the ground. Can the horses be brought in safely? Can people walk across the car park safely?
- Is there significant ice on the track and concrete?
- The majority of the horses are elderly and will be assessed to ensure they are not suffering from cold
- Horses with respiratory issues may not be used in cold weather due to the effect cold weather has on them
- the wind chill factor and the level of moisture in the air will also be considered and how that is affecting everyone including the horses.



Horses and Ponies

Horses as well as humans also acclimatise to cold, however particularly as the horses are older once again reasonable adjustments should be made to help them acclimatise.

This means that riding is likely to be in the indoor school, there may be a longer slower warm up, no trotting and the ride may be shorter

Support for the horses:

- Give the horses a good groom to increase circulation, pay attention to legs and hindquarters. (large circular motions to improve circulation)
- Give the horses a longer warm up
- All riding likely to take part in in the indoor school
- All the horses will be indoors between rides, if outside on the rail their rugs should be on
- Access to plenty of water and hay as food provides the energy needed to generate internal body heat and maintain body temperature

Some organisations recommend that zero Celsius or below horses should only walk.

As with extreme heat there are some reliable indicators that a horse is very cold:

Shivering

Lethargy Depression- animal appears sluggish, reluctant to move and less responsive than usual

As hypothermia progresses:

Cyanosis, bluish discolouration of gums and mucus membranes

Increased heart rate

Cold extremities- legs, hooves and ears cold to touch



People:

Volunteers and participants - Be prepared –

Heat:

- bring and apply sun cream, water and a hat!
- Wear loose light coloured clothing, where possible covering arms and legs
- Ensure you drink plenty while you are at the centre
- Watch for signs of heat exhaustion, including heavy sweating, nausea or faintness, stop at the first signs of trouble and let someone know you are feeling unwell!

Cold:

- Wear plenty of thin layers of clothing under a suitable coat,
- gloves
- Ensure that you are wearing sturdy shoes and warm long socks
- Ensure you drink plenty of warm drinks
- Watch for signs of hypothermia, including shivering, pale, cold dry skin, slurred speech or shallow breathing, confusion, fatigue and a weakening pulse

PLEASE “DO YOU!” We all react differently to heat and cold, please, please make sure that you don’t overdo it, we would never want anyone to feel bad about saying no to a volunteering activity or task because they feel uncomfortable or unwell. We can always adapt to manage with fewer people, look after yourself first!

Rider Communication

All riders will be advised on either on the day or the day before depending on when the decision is made.

Volunteers will be advised by whats app

Riders will be advised by email. Advice will include:



- What will they be doing on the ride: e.g. shorter walk in the wood or in the indoor school
- What they should wear and bring for hot or cold weather
- To make their own assessment as to whether to ride
- That monitoring will continue throughout the day and that if rides are cancelled a decision will be made at least half an hour before the ride to try to ensure people are not disappointed on arrival.

High winds

An amber wind warning from the met office is triggered by expected wind gusts of 50 to 70 mph and gusts of 80-90mph in higher and coastal areas. Whilst the warning is primarily driven by gusts, sustained winds could also be significant enough to cause damage.

If there is an amber or red warning with regards to high winds consideration will be given as to whether it is safe to ride, the key issue for the horses and riders is the noise in the indoor school as riding in the wood is unlikely to be an option due to the trees and potential flying debris. The coaches may close the sliding doors and the side door to the yard to reduce the noise.

Electrical storms

These are likely to be part of a dual weather warning from the met office which means that thunderstorms are likely to be combined with one of the eight weather types: e.g.: rain, wind or very high temperatures.

The Centre manager/ Coach will consider if it safe to ride when an electrical storm is occurring in the immediate vicinity. If they continue it is likely the horses will all be in either the stalls or stables and not on the rail in the yard.

It is the responsibility of the rider, carer or parent to decide whether to withdraw from riding. It may be necessary to cancel at short notice on the day, if that occurs the Pembroke Centre will:

- **Not charge for the ride**
- **Endeavour to ensure that an hours' notice is given as a minimum.**