

ORGANISING A WES EVENT



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INTRODUCTION

Firstly, on behalf of WES Council and the entire membership of WES, a huge thank you for stepping up and volunteering to organise events to enable western riders to enjoy their riding and training in a safe and fun environment.

Running events can be daunting, from choosing a venue, deciding on costs and the dreaded risk assessment! This guide should help you negotiate your way through the different types of events that WES holds from a simple Self-Help Day to a more stressful two-day show!

Best advice is start small and build on your success. Help and advice is always available from members of Council – just ask your Area Rep Coordinator or Show Coordinator.

This guide was first published in 1999. Since then, interest in Western Riding has grown and the number and type of events has increased. We have also seen the introduction of two-day events and affiliated classes at some of the other western associations' shows.

This is great for the sport of Western Riding and gives western riders a vast array of events to attend. However, these need staffing and as the number of events increase the need for volunteers also increases.

This is a guide and not the only way to organise an event. Please read alongside the current rule book. As long as everyone is safe and happy and has a good experience other systems can be used. There are a lot of computer-based show management schemes now for the tech savvy!

Horse events are not guaranteed to make money. Before you make that commitment, you need to be sure that you can cover all costs. Bad weather, lame horses, dates clashing can all have an impact on income and there is no firm guarantee that you will break even. If you have funds in the bank and are prepared to subsidise a clinic or show that is up to you as the Area Rep.



Finally, anyone wishing to hold a WES event should be familiar with the rules of the Society. An up to date version is available on the website [Rule Book](#).

We will start with the simplest event to organise and move on to some of the more involved two day shows and clinics.

SELF-HELP DAY

One of the most straightforward events is a self-help day. No clinician is needed as riders simply arrive and ride and share their own hints and tips. It's good to have somewhere you can make a cup of tea or coffee for post riding chat.

Find a venue with a decent arena surface (avoid wax if possible). Ideally there will be toilet facilities, somewhere for horseboxes and trailers to park and somewhere you can make a cup of tea etc. You will want to do a simple risk assessment of the venue [Example Risk Assessment](#). You may even have a member in your area who will allow you to use their arena but make sure they have the correct public liability insurance for the venue.

Advise members of the date and time of the Self-help Day and details of venue and directions. This can be put on as an event which will go onto the WES calendar. You will require a first aider to be in attendance.

The cost to the members will depend on the cost of hiring the venue and any extras you provide such as refreshments.

1. It is always a good idea to take payment upfront from members and decide on a refund policy.
2. You could maybe layout a trail course or put some cones and poles out for riders to practice over.
3. The aim of the day is for WES members to get together and enjoy their horses in a supportive and friendly environment.

TRAIL RIDE

Many WES members enjoy riding out on the trail with their horses and it all adds to the hours needed for the WES Trail Award. For a successful Trail Ride, you need to have the following in mind:

1. The Route: Provide a map of the route – this could be an online Google map or similar. Make sure the route is accessible and open to horse riders. Do a simple Risk Assessment ([Trail Ride Risk Assessment](#)).
2. Parking: Where are the riders going to park? This could be a suitable space arranged with a friendly farmer, a public car park (with agreement of the owner or manager) or a member in the area with suitable parking.
3. Groups: What level of experience are the participants? You might need to divide them into a walk only or walk/jog group and a more experienced group. Make sure the slower paced group goes last and cannot be overtaken by galloping horses!

4. Ride Leaders: Ideally, you will have a designated volunteer in each group who will know the way and can keep order. At least one person in the group should have a mobile phone. It is also recommended that the ride leader carries a small human and equine first aid kit, halter, lead rope and hoof pick for emergencies. It would be advantageous if the first and last rider also have Hi Viz on. It is good practice to ensure that riders are aware of any necessary road crossings. All riders should hold their own Public liability insurance.
5. Mobile Phone: Have a central mobile phone number that riders can call if they get in trouble. Check that the mobile signal is okay in the area. An emergency alternative might be one of the horse tracking apps available that usually have a 'safety tracking' mode which shows chosen friends where you are, Equilib is one but there are others out there. It helps if the ride leader has the "What 3 Words" app downloaded onto their mobile phone in case of an emergency.
6. First Aid: Someone with a First Aid qualification is useful to have on your team and it is a good idea to have a small 1st Aid kit in your car or lorry. Make sure everyone knows who the first aider is and where to find the First Aid kit!
7. Equipment: Ensure riders wear approved hard hats and hi-viz clothing.
8. Costs: It is up to you how much you charge members for a Trail Ride and bear in mind if you are providing additional refreshments, rosettes for all who take part etc. that needs to be paid for.

SOCIAL EVENTS/OFF-HORSE WORKSHOPS

Social events are a great way of engaging with members who may not have a horse at the moment or are nervous or hesitant about riding in front of others. It's also a great way to welcome new members to the WES family.

This could range from a meet up at a popular pub for a drink and a chat or more formal sit-down meal which is often popular around Christmas time. Off-horse workshops could be a simple video evening at a member's house or a talk by your local farrier, feed company, horse physio etc. A talk by a local WES Judge is often interesting for members to learn more about what the Judge is looking for or some first aid training. One of these could be combined with your AGM to attract as many members as possible.

If you are hiring a venue, then their public liability insurance should be available for you to see. If using someone's home then have a mind for health and safety issues such as the use of electrical equipment, trailing wires, etc. A simple risk assessment before the event is invaluable for reminding you of what might need attending to.

Cost of attendance really depends on if you need to hire a venue and pay a speaker. Feed companies will often send someone along free of charge and will bring samples for participants to take away with them.

With a bit of imagination, you can have a vibrant off-horse calendar of events through the winter months when everyone starts losing motivation and inclination to go out in the mud and rain to ride.

Online Shows

WES does organise online shows and some areas are also happy to do this. The event can go on via the event link from the website, and you organise a judge who is happy to judge for you. Give an end date for entries and for what format: i.e. WhatsApp/you tube etc. Think about what to charge bearing in mind any judge's fee. As people usually video on their own no first aid or event manager is required. However, if you are hiring an arena in which to film for people and they are paying a fee for the arena hire it is necessary to have a first aider present. No event manager is required.

Pivo based training clinics

This method of remote instruction is becoming more popular. It is run as a clinic, but the Professional will give instruction via earphones and a video link to the rider in real time. The video is then stored on the device for further use. A first aider should be in attendance as people are mounted and riding, but no Event Manager is required. Insurers are clear that if the clinician is remote and the attendees are at a venue (not their own). Then risk assessments are required just like any other of our events if the organisers and volunteers wish to be covered by our insurance. Attendees, like any of our other events, require their own insurance cover. The organiser should keep an eye on timings and arena fees as well as Professional fees. It would be advantageous if an event manager was present, however.

Clinic with Wes Professional

Clinics are usually very popular. Listen to your members to see who their favourite Instructors are. Instructors for all approved WES clinics must be selected from the WES Approved list as effective at the time of approval/affiliation. If a Professional is subsequently removed from the list before an event the Western Equestrian Society shall substitute an approved Professional at no additional cost to the organiser.

Guest instructors may be used at an approved clinic provided they meet all the criteria currently required for Approved WES Instructors and approval is given by WES Council via the Area Coordinator. Once approved they can be advertised via Wes Facebook groups for the Areas. If your guest Professional is not approved you would need to organise separate event insurance. This can be done online, and a copy should be kept.

The Society's insurance will cover the organiser, but the Professional must have their own liability insurance to teach. Any Wes approved Professional should insist that all participants wear hard hats whilst mounted at a clinic. This also includes the clinician.

If you are organising a group clinic then think about how many riders will be in a group and how long the groups will ride for. Small groups of say 4 could ride for an hour and get a lot from the session but if you have larger groups of 6 and upwards they will need more time to allow for the inevitable 'standing and watching' time as others ride. Think of clinics you have attended yourself and decide what worked best. Also speak with your members for their preferences.

You will need to complete an Event Approval Form ([Event Approval Form](#)) and submit this to the Show Coordinator. This must be accompanied by a Risk Assessment. A first aider should be in attendance. You will also need an event manager.

In general terms try to work on the basis that you will have 12 rider places and work your costs out from there. Below is a sample budget for a one-day clinic at current prices but be prepared to pay more or less depending on time of year, venue and clinician chosen etc. ([sample clinic booking form](#)).

SAMPLE BUDGET FOR WES CLINIC (as at 2024)	
Venue	£500 (indoor arena)/£250 (outdoor arena)
Clinician	£250 - £450 per day
Travel Costs	£50+ depending on how far away they are!
Lunch etc for clinician and helpers	£20+ some homemade cakes are always welcome!
Refreshments for riders	£20+
TOTAL	£600/£1000+

If you have 12 riders that's between £50 and £80 per rider. You can also charge for spectators which helps to cover some of the costs.

It's not always easy to get a full clinic, so make sure riders pay when they book and you have a clear refund policy (e.g. Vet or Medical Certificate provided if illness of horse or rider prevents attendance)! Lameness, failed transport and weather will all conspire to prevent attendance!

If this is a new venture, then financial assistance may be available from WES Central funds. It is important however that you contact the Area Coordinator in the early stages of preparation and that a business plan is approved. WES Council will then underwrite the clinic covering any reasonable losses. This must be agreed before any commitment is made to putting on the clinic, and on evidence that all reasonable steps have been made to cover costs.

Funding is not available to cover losses made on clinics/shows in areas where: -

- A) No accounts have been submitted to the WES Treasurer for the previous year – unless this is a new Area with no funds available during the previous year.
- B) The Area account shows a healthy balance.

SHOWS

There are four different types of WES shows. These fall into 2 main types.

- 1) Shows organised by WES Areas, Event Managers or Council which are covered by WES insurance
- 2) Shows organised by Outside bodies who will rely on their own event insurance.

All WES organised shows should have a First Aider and Event Manager in attendance.

Shows run by Outside bodies still need to be approved and provide the appropriate risk management evidence.

1. Practice Show

A practice show is a good place to start if you have never run a show before. It is run along the lines of a clinic, possibly with an approved judge or experienced member acting as a judge so that novice horses and riders can gain some experience in a show environment without the added pressure of an 'official' show. You might want to recruit a Show Team to help you run the event and give them a chance to learn the ropes before volunteering for a bigger event.

Once you have a venue and 'judge', you can draw up a schedule of classes and decide on the class entry fee or do a block entry for the whole show. Most people appreciate a rosette at the end of the class, and this could be 1st-3rd or 1st-6th. The cost of entry is usually around £10 per class but this may change depending on how many entries you anticipate. Refreshments and possibly some lunch for your 'judge' and scribe is something else to factor into the budget.

When you have all the details you will need to complete an Event Approval Form ([Event Approval Form](#)) for the Show Coordinator.

For a practice show organisers will be covered by WES insurance but you might want to check with your clinician or judge that their third-party insurance is in order.

2. Approved Show – Organised by WES

Approved shows are held for WES members only and organised by Areas, the organisers are covered by WES insurance, and the points accumulated at these shows go forward to the WES Annual Hi Points.

As with a Practice Show you need to find your venue, hire your WES Judge, order your rosettes and recruit your Show Team (*see page 9*).

- WES members only
- Organised by WES Areas and Organisers are covered by WES insurance
- Approved WES judge only
- No charge made by WES to the Area

- Can only include WES events as listed within the Society rule book
- To be approved the show should “offer” a minimum of 1 class from 2 of the following four (new) Class discipline groups collated from the list of Performance class categories set out section 6.4 of the rule book. The specific Competitor Category classes offered, e.g., Novice, Intermediate, Amateur, Open etc. is at the discretion of the organizer.

1) In-hand:

- a. Showmanship
- b. In-Hand Trail

2) Rail

- a. Western Pleasure
- b. Working Western Rail

3) Pattern class (no obstacles – markers / cones only)

- a. Horsemanship
- b. Reining

4) Pattern Class – with obstacles

- a. Trail
- b. Ranch Trail
- c. Ranch Riding
- d. Western Riding

- Points accumulated during show season count towards Hi Points.
- Championship qualification in accordance with details given in the WES rule book for the Championship classes at the National Show. Please refer to the rule book as this may change from year to year

3. Affiliated Show – Organised by an outside body

Affiliated shows are organised by outside bodies. The shows are not covered by WES insurance; only WES members' points go forward to the Hi points.

- Open to non-WES Members and WES members.
- Organised by other Societies/groups and Organisers not covered by WES insurance.
- Approved WES judge only (but other Judges may be used subject to confirmation by the WES Judges Committee e.g. a qualified AQHA judge)
- No affiliation fee.
- Specific classes which are affiliated to WES, usually Amateur and Open Classes. Only members points from those classes go forward to the Hi points
- Affiliated Shows do not normally provide for Championship qualification. Please refer to the rule book as this may change from year to year.

4. Appendix Show – Organised by an outside body

Appendix shows are organised by outside bodies. The shows are not covered by WES insurance.

They will include WES specific classes which are only open WES members. However, other classes offered by the organiser, can be run concurrently, with the WES classes and the placing at the end of the concurrent class will be announced separately. WES members can choose to also enter the non-WES classes, but those results will not count towards Hi Points. Only WES class placings will count

- Only WES classes are open to WES Members. WES members, can if they wish, also enter other classes offered by the organiser
- Approved WES judge only (or an alternative judge if approved by the WES Judges Committee).
- To be approved the show should “offer” a minimum of 1 class from 2 of the following four (new) Class discipline groups collated from the list of Performance class categories set out section 6.4 of the rule book. The specific Competitor Category classes offered, e.g., Novice, Intermediate, Amateur, Open etc. is at the discretion of the organizer.

1) In-hand:

- a. Showmanship
- b. In-Hand Trail

2) Rail

- a. Western Pleasure

b. Working Western Rail

3) Pattern class (no obstacles – markers / cones only)

a. Horsemanship

b. Reining

4) Pattern Class – with obstacles

a. Trail

b. Ranch Trail

c. Ranch Riding

d. Western Riding

- No affiliation fee.
- Only members points from WES classes go forward to the Hi points
- Championship qualification via the Specific WES classes is in accordance with details given in the WES rule book for the Championship classes at the National Show. Please refer to the rule book as this may change from year to year

ORGANISING A SHOW

If you can get a good team behind you, it can make organising even a small show a lot easier. Here are the various roles and responsibilities of each member of the team. For a small show you obviously will not need a host of volunteers, but many hands make light work!

Show Team

prepared and correctly attired for their activities. The Show Management and Arena Stewards should be smartly dressed in a manner similar to the Judge whilst the arena crew should dress appropriately.

Show Manager

The Show Manager is the person officially in charge of the show. This means coordinating all pre-show preparations, the show itself and the post-show work. This does not necessarily mean that the manager must do all the tasks but is certainly responsible for seeing they are done. In an ideal situation the show manager would ensure all duties are delegated which would then enable the manager to be available to assist the rest of the team whenever necessary. They need to be a current event manager.

The main duties are as follows: -

- Overall responsibility for the show
- Show costings
- Hire of arena
- Purchasing rosettes
- Obtaining Judge
- Produce Schedule with Secretary
- Stabling
- Main Link
- Arrange catering
- Parking
- Arrange accommodation for Judge
- Ensure Health & Safety guidelines are adhered to
- Brief Judge on the standard of competition and equipment available
- Deal with any queries in respect of Show Patterns with the Judge prior to the show

Show Secretary

The Show Secretary is the person most people will deal with in the show office. From accepting entries, processing entry sheets, detailing show points, sending results and general show administration including: -

- Submit application form to WES Show Coordinator
- Produce show schedule with Show Manager
- Update class entry sheets
- Record results
- Receive entries
- Check membership & horses' identification
- Submit results to Show Coordinator, along with the Judge's Agreement (essential if claiming any judging fees from Wes council)
- Allocate competitor back numbers
- Obtain sponsorship
- Pay expenses
- Post patterns
- Can include items listed under Show Manager if one and the same

As competitors arrive ensure correct numbers are allocated and that the horses entered are correct. Check correct registered names have been used for horses not stable or pet names as this can cause havoc with the show points database.

If competitors join WES on the day, then ensure the details are correct and monies for the membership fee are kept separate from the entry fees so that the membership can be passed to the Membership Secretary.

There is no requirement at present for Show Secretaries to check horses' passports, but you should be aware that each horse should have a passport whilst travelling.

Check that the Judge's cards have been signed and dated (in pen and any alterations are initialled) and with class numbers entered – it helps if cards are prepared prior to the show with the show name, class, and date so the Judge only needs to enter the results date and number in class. Also ensure Judges have entered a Q besides those competitors qualified in accordance with WES rule book categories for the National Show.

After the show the Secretary is responsible for forwarding the results to the Show Coordinator. This involves submitting the show entry sheets and the results cards, as well as the Judge's score sheets.

The Show Secretary must also establish if any of the competitors have a disability that the Judge

and Ring Steward need to know about and for which 'reasonable adjustments' need to be made under the Equalities Act 2010 (formerly known as the Disability Discrimination Act 1995).

Wearing of Western Hats

Everyone including competitors, helpers or grooms when mounted at a WES activity must wear a hard hat conforming to the current BHS Assessments Hat Rules ([2024 Approved hard hats](#)). However, competitors at a WES approved show can continue to wear a Stetson in both competition and warm up areas subject to providing the Show Management with a signed disclaimer, youth riders aged 14-18 disclaimers must be counter signed by a parent/guardian, which is to be handed to the Show Secretary on arrival at the showground.

For Youth members under the age of 14 it is mandatory when riding or handling a horse that they wear a hard hat conforming to the current BHS Assessments Hat Rules. It is recommended that approved hard hats are always worn whilst schooling and hacking out. Competitors in freestyle or themed Charity classes must sign a separate disclaimer if they wish to participate in costumes which do not incorporate either Stetson or Hard Hat.

Ring Steward (or Judge's Scribe)

The person officially in charge of all activity within the arena, acting as mediator between Judge and exhibitors.

- Scribe for judge unless the Judge brings their own.
- Call paces in rail classes (or pass instructions to commentator)
- Co-ordinate everything in ring
- Generally, look after Judge
- Liaise between Show Secretary & Judge

Probably one of the most important jobs on the showground during showing. A good Ring Steward can move the show on quickly and smoothly. The Steward should liaise with the Judge and ensure all equipment is available when required. This not only covers such things as bridge and gate but also clipboards, pens and rule book. At a larger show the Show Manager will typically assist with availability of equipment etc.

- The Ring Steward is responsible for ensuring everything and everyone is safe within the arena ensuring competitors are in the correct locations and nothing dangerous is happening particularly in Novice classes.
- Check all numbers are displayed, there should be two for ridden competitors (one each side of the saddle pad visible to the Judge) and one for Showmanship (attached securely to the back of the competitor's outfit at chest height). Double check prior to ring entry if people are swapping horses as often the same pad is used but numbers are not changed!
- Ensure signals for the various gaits are agreed with the commentator/announcer.

- Good communication between the Ring Steward, Collecting Ring Steward, and Announcer is essential so the use of two-way radios is recommended.
- Ensuring the results are passed to the commentator either by hand or by radio
- Ensure the Judge's cards and score sheets are completed correctly before being passed to the Show Secretary.
- Notify Show Management and Commentator when the Judge needs to take a break
- Ensure lines of communication are in place – radios work – with the Announcer and management team. Agree who will use which radio channel at the beginning of the show.

Collecting Ring steward – gate personnel

As with the Ring steward a good Collecting Ring Steward can add considerably to the smooth running of a show and their contribution must not be underestimated.

- Ensure entrants are ready at the start of class.
- Control collecting ring activities.
- Assist competitors, checking appropriate tack etc.
- Ensure the area is safe i.e. no spectators in the collecting ring.
- Notify Commentator and Ring Steward when all competitors have entered the arena.
- Check numbers are displayed (see above also)

Some shows are now run by computer, so class entry lists are printed off and passed to the Collecting Ring Steward. This can result in Stewards being constantly bombarded by queries from competitors as to running orders, numbers to go etc. this can be overcome by the provision of either a blackboard or whiteboard upon which the running order can be displayed; these are also very useful if a computer is not being used. At larger shows a secondary P.A. system for the collecting ring is most useful.

Announcer/Commentator

An Announcer can keep the show moving and help keep competitors and spectators informed of what is going on. As one class is complete i.e. lining up for results to be given/rosettes awarded, start to call for the next class to be ready. When passed results if any numbers are unclear ask do not guess. If horses have difficult names, try to find out how to pronounce them before the show starts and write them down phonetically

- Call gaits – ensure correct terminology is used – Walk, Jog & Lope. When reverse is asked for, request the reverse at the gait: 'Reverse at the walk, etc.'. If you think a gait has been missed, advise the Ring Steward.
- Give out results – always use the exhibitor number, horse's name, owner and exhibitor.
- Keep the show progressing
- Thank staff and competitors

- Thank sponsors
- Thank trade stands and advise of their location.
- Be aware of emergency procedures

Don't forget to switch the microphone off as soon as announcements are complete. Overheard comments can be embarrassing. The announcer must retain their cool throughout the day and must not indicate frustration or annoyance through the tone of voice.

Rosettes Steward

Total responsibility for rosettes at show - including presenting them in the ring or arranging for sponsors to present them along with any trophies and prize money. Role may be combined with that of Collecting Ring Steward at smaller shows

Course builders/Ring Crew

- Ensure equipment is at hand.
- To set up and dismantle trail classes or other classes requiring equipment.
- On hand to reset course during class

Stable Manager

For large shows with stabling a person responsible for supervising the stable allocation and ensuring stables are left clean at the end of the show

Before embarking on any project, it is important to establish who is likely to attend:

- Are there enough riders in your area to make a show viable?
- Are there riders from other areas who are likely to attend?

The cost of a show can vary considerably and depend upon a variety of factors; not least is the cost of a venue. As the standard of shows has increased so has the expectation of competitors and it is important therefore to be aware of what these are: -

1. Fair competition
2. Good facilities which allow the competition to be held without unnecessary inconvenience or risk to either horses or riders
3. Accurate information within the schedule and on the patterns
4. Timely operation of the classes
5. Entry fees kept to a minimum – particularly applicable to Western as competitors tend to enter multiple classes and will have a budget for the show.
6. Sympathetic Judging to meet the criteria of competition
7. Sensible and realistic show patterns

8. Refreshments available at sensible prices
9. Helpful show staff to assist competitors
10. Awards to reasonable levels in each class and High Point awards for Novice, Youth, Open and Amateur categories
11. Adequate working-in areas.

Without competitors there is no show. If competitors go away disappointed due to problems with any of the above, they are unlikely to return and indeed they will put off new competitors.

How much will a show cost?

The cost of a show varies considerably from several hundred pounds for a small show to several thousand pounds for a major two-day event. Typical costs for a one-day show are as follows (2024 rates).

Venue	£250 - £1500 a day
Judge	£250 minimum charge plus expenses so say – £300
Catering	for Judge and helpers £60
Rosettes	Allow £2.00 - £3.50 for each rosette and you'll need around 6 rosettes for each class – most shows will run around 20 classes so total cost between £300 & £350. After your first show you'll never buy a full set again as you'll always have some left over!

So, for a basic show you are looking at costs in the order of £1000. That's not as daunting as it may seem. To cover this cost if you set entry fees at £10.00, you'll need 100 class entries. As most people tend to enter on average three classes you are going to need around 25 horses to make the show pay or have the event subsidised by sponsorship.

For the more ambitious, a large two-day show can cost around £6,000 and that is without expensive trophies, prize money or international Judges, so start small and progress!

If this is a new venture, then financial assistance may be available from WES Central funds. It is important however that you contact the Show Coordinator at the early stages of preparation and that a business plan is approved. WES Council will then underwrite the show covering any reasonable losses. This must be agreed before any commitment is made to putting on the show, and evidence that all reasonable steps have been made to cover costs.

Funding is not available to cover losses made on shows in areas where: -

- A) No accounts have been submitted to the WES Treasurer for the previous year – unless this is a new Area with no funds available during the previous year
- B) The Area account shows a healthy balance.

THE NEXT STEP

So, you've decided to proceed, what is the next step?

Date: The date is very important. Check with other Areas and the Society Show Coordinator to ensure you are not going to clash. There is now a central calendar for western events around the country. The link is [Central Western Event Calendar](#). There are now several well-established shows that have a good following so try to avoid them. Sundays are usually the most popular for a one-day show and be careful about choosing a date that is popular with family's holidays etc.

Procedure: Apply to Show Coordinator for approval. This is now done online [Submit an Event](#) (Figure 1). Applications should include a draft copy of a schedule, and a WES approved judge must have been booked by the organiser. Approval will not be given unless details of the Judge have been confirmed. Non-WES Carded Judges from other approved organisations must be approved by the WES Show Coordinator/WES Judges Committee.

Figure 1 Website Page

The image shows a screenshot of a web form for submitting an event. The form is divided into several sections:

- Event Category:** A heading followed by the instruction: "What type of event are you organising? Please note that there are different requirements for each type of event (risk assessment, first aider etc)." Below this are nine radio button options: A Approved Show, B Affiliated Show (selected), C Practice Show, D Camp, E Clinic, F Trail Ride, G WES Meeting, H AGM, and I Social / Non Horse Event.
- About You:** A heading followed by the instruction: "Please provide information about yourself (please note you will be listed as the organiser of the event and point of contact for enquiries from members)". Below this are three input fields: "Your Name" (with a sub-label "Name"), "Your Role" (with a sub-label "Role"), and "Your Email".
- Tell Us About The Event:** A heading followed by three dropdown menus: "Event Name" (with a sub-label "What is the name of the ..."), "Event Location" (with a sub-label "Where will the event be ..."), and "Event Area" (with a sub-label "Please Select an Area").
- Below the dropdowns are two more input fields: "Area Rep Approved" (with a sub-label "A Yes") and "What type of riding surface is available?" (with a sub-label "Riding Surface").

Applications must be submitted at least 30 days before the show; failure to do this could result in the show not being approved. Once the show has been approved, an email of acceptance will be dispatched to the Show Secretary or person who has submitted the application, listing the classes which have been approved. Please check this to ensure you the classes you wish to approve are correct. After approval your show date will be published on the WES web site [WES Website](#) in the next edition of WES News & added onto the Show database.

For Affiliated and Appendix shows, 30 days prior to the show date the Show Coordinator will dispatch a show pack out to the Show Secretary. Areas will be responsible for keeping their own stationery for shows e.g. - Class entry sheets for each class, Judge's Evaluation sheet, Risk Assessment form, and an Accident Report Form. The rule book can be downloaded from the WES website. Judges should bring their own result cards with them but have some spare just in case!!

Please note we now send out e-versions of Judges Cards with the Show Packs to reduce costs. For larger shows it may be possible to provide hard copy (cardboard) cards, but these must be requested specifically from the Show Coordinator and there may be an additional cost.

Following your show, it is the Secretary's responsibility to ensure the results are returned to the Show Coordinator within 14 days of the show date. This will ensure that the points are input regularly and the results can be broadcast, via the website, WES eNews, and any other interested magazines. Results will be submitted electronically by the Show Coordinator onto the Points Calculator database.

Checklist

To run a successful show, you will need the following: -

Venue: Ensure that the hire cost quoted includes all the facilities you need including lights, use of poles, PA system and such like.

Opening Times: Competitors travelling long distances may be arriving late at night or early in the morning. Ensure that access is available for the period of the hire and if necessary, overnight.

Type of Arena: Most shows try to use an indoor arena. With the vagaries of the British weather and the fact that some competitors travel long distances and competing in an indoor school is more attractive than an outdoor event. This should not however exclude using an outdoor venue. What is important is having a warm up area. It is important this has a suitable surface.

Secretary's facilities: Is there an area which can be used by the show secretary that is under cover and if entries are computerised electric power? If not, then either a horsebox or trailer may have to be put into service.

Stables: Are stables available for anyone wishing to stay overnight? Are day stalls available? What bedding is available - is both straw and shavings possible? If restricted stabling, ensure this is made clear in the schedule. If stables are in an American Barn, please check they will be open overnight. We have had an example of horses being locked in for 12 hours!

Toilets and Showers: Toilets are a must. If there are no toilet facilities, then temporary WCs must be provided under Health & Safety requirements. Showers would be a luxury but if they are available make this known in the schedule.

Water should be available for horses.

Parking: Adequate parking is essential. Nothing puts off competitors more than if they have problems accessing the venue and parking. It does pay to keep an eye on the parking so that routes are not obstructed or restricted either for general access or for emergency vehicles.

Trade Stands: Ensure if trade stands are being invited that the venue is prepared to have them on site and will not be making their own charges for their attendance. A number of venues have recently started to charge for trade stands being on site and this could make it unviable for the trader. Check beforehand. Note Trade Stands must provide evidence of their own Public Liability Insurance to a minimum value of £5 Million. This is not as onerous as it seems as most sole traders will be covered under their normal house insurance.

P.A. System/Music Licence: Smaller shows can operate without a P.A. system, but it does result in show staff having to chase competitors. A suitable system not only aids the smooth running of the show but also informs spectators and generally adds to the atmosphere of the event. Larger venues often have a P.A. system installed – check if that is included within the hire costs. Smaller venues may not and a system will have to be provided. Several WES areas have invested in systems. Area 6 has a professional standard system whilst other areas have purchased Karaoke machines which are suitable for smaller venues. WES no longer has a PPL (Music License) covering all its events so you will need to ensure that the venue has a suitable license for music.

Layout Plan: For larger venues a layout plan posted in various areas showing the location of the various facilities would be useful – it saves the Secretary constantly being asked where the toilets are!

Local Accommodation: If competitors are likely to stay over try to provide a list of local Hotels & B&B. Larger venues will have already compiled such a list but for smaller venues it may be necessary to do some research. The Judge may also need accommodation and this needs to be convenient to the venue. Check if the venue is happy for lorries and competitors to be on site overnight and if caravans and tents are allowed. Some venues may not have adequate facilities particularly if it has only been hired for a day show. If that is the case, then it may be necessary to find facilities for these competitors locally

Vet cover: Vet cover on site is not a requirement but the details of a local vet should be on hand (and have been contacted to agree beforehand) to provide cover in an emergency. Horses can become ill or injured during travelling or get kicked or injured on the showground.

Horse welfare: Be aware of any rule book changes that may affect your entries such as age of ridden horses, how many classes can be entered in one day. This may affect your entry monies but also affect your entrants. So double check and make clear on any schedule.

Farrier: Perhaps the most difficult to arrange cover for but if possible, try to get agreement from a local farrier to see if they would attend if there was a problem

Emergency Services: WES does not yet have a requirement for trained paramedics to be on site during a show as the risk to riders in Western competitions is relatively low. However, accidents do happen and WES does require that a competent First Aider is available on site with a First Aid at Work certificate. Be aware that WES has used the Air Ambulance at the Championship Show twice and numerous Area shows have had an emergency.

Arena equipment: Cones, poles gate, bridge – see equipment schedule for each class later in this guide

Arena Maintenance: Arenas should be harrowed prior to the competition. Check if the arena can be harrowed during the day and before any reining competition. Also check general maintenance issues particularly for a two-day show – will waste bins be emptied, spectator areas swept.

Two Way Radios: Communication between the show team is considerably enhanced by the provision of two-way radios. These can now be purchased from most electrical stores quite reasonably or hired for the event.

The Schedule: Your schedule is in effect your sales brochure and should contain as much information as possible to encourage competitors to come to your show.

Classes to provide: Only classes from the WES approved list can be provided within a WES show. Sometimes the most difficult issue for a show is scheduling the classes. Try to avoid lumping classes of the same type together.

i.e. all the Pleasure, then all the Horsemanship. This can make it boring for spectators and frustrating for competitors particularly those in Open categories who have to wait for ages to compete. In some cases, putting classes together makes sense – e.g. Trail in order to reduce the amount of work necessary setting up and removing the courses. There is no formula for this, it just comes with experience and to be honest it's something that will never suit everyone.

Withdrawals: Consider adding a further disclaimer that any scratched entries must be paid for unless accompanied by either a vet's certificate or doctors note

Directions: Try to provide reasonable direction to the venue and include a postcode. Many competitors use the internet to get directions, so a post code is useful as well as What3Words.

Times: Try to give an indication of times for breaks, details of who is judging etc.

Conditions of entry/Disclaimers: The schedule should include conditions of entry and the procedure for any complaints. A sample of conditions is given below: -

1. *Neither the Western Equestrian Society nor X Arena, nor the show management shall be held responsible for any loss, damage or expense incurred to any person or horse at the show from whatever cause arising. All entries shall be at the sole risk of the competitor.*
2. *All objections must be made in writing to the show manager and must be received on the day of the show, accompanied by a deposit of £10 which will be returned if the objection is sustained.*
3. *The organisers, at their own discretion, may at any time, before, or during the show, reject any entry whether the same has been accepted or not, and their decision in this respect, without giving any reason, shall be final. The organisers shall have the power to eject from the showground any person whose behaviour they consider to be objectionable.*
4. *No unauthorised person may enter the ring.*
5. *All competitors must be conversant with the rules of the Western Equestrian Society. Neither the Society, nor the organisers will be held responsible for the failure of any competitor in understanding the rules.*

6. *All competitors must have third party liability insurance and by entering are stating that they have such insurance in force.*

Passport details: A request for details of the horse's passport could be included within the schedule and on the entry form but be aware that only Trading Standards Officers are allowed by law to insist on seeing a horse's passport

Entry Fees: What to charge for entry fees is another difficult area but the show must cover its costs. Fees around £10.00/£12.00 are acceptable and do bear in mind that competitors do enter several classes, so they generally have a budget for entries.

Awards: Details of placings for rosettes – i.e. Rosettes to 6th place, and any high point awards.

WES rosettes can be obtained from: -

Direct Rosettes, Glenruthven Mill, Auchterarder Perth PH3 1DP Tel: 07793604384
Email: sales@directrosettes.co.uk website: Directrosettes.co.uk

Rosettes direct, Star works, Newark Street, Accrington, Lancashire BB5 0BP.
Tel 01254 3937880. Email www.rosettesdirect.com

WES Logo no P3303. RE2 Gold edged rosettes
1st Blue/Saxe; 2nd Red/Shocking pink; 3rd Yellow/Lemon; 4th White/Saxe;
5th Cherry/Shocking pink, 6th Emerald/ Green.

Entry Forms should include:

Name of Rider: The name of the person competing. In WES we do not need the name of the owner but if you are going to produce a programme this may be of interest.

Name of Horse: This needs to be the registered name of the horse not the pet or stable name.

Membership Number: Only applicable to WES approved shows where all participants must be members. We would suggest that competitors are asked to provide their membership cards when they collect their numbers. If it is found the competitor was subsequently not a member it not only affects the placings at the show but High points and end of year high points.

Expiry date: Please ask for the membership expiry date so you can check if the membership will be valid on the day of the show and carry out checks as above.

Address: Contact details so you can send information both for this show and perhaps future shows. These days an email address is more beneficial and keeps down costs.

Telephone Number: Probably more useful than an address so if there are queries with the entry you can contact the competitor before the day.

Specifics Under the Equality Act (formerly the Disability Discrimination Act) Requirements: As an organiser you are responsible for making 'Reasonable Adjustments' for competitors and spectators who have specific requirements. It can be useful to know this beforehand. Hearing and visual impairments are not unusual with competitors within WES.

Stabling: If you have a show with stabling then this needs to be on the form together with a note of the type of bedding required. Also be aware of stabling a stud away from mares etc. Always put a disclaimer that you cannot guarantee the type of bedding available.

Booking a Judge

Judges List: Details of WES Judges are contained within WES News and are also shown on the WES website with the Judge's Agreement

When contacting the Judge, provide details of the classes you are expecting them to judge, likely number of competitors and whether you are going to provide patterns for the classes or ask the judge to provide them.

WES has a minimum fee for an Approved Judge but ensure you have checked travelling expenses etc.

Guest Judges may be approved for selection at an approved or affiliated show provided they hold one of the following Judges' Cards: -

- A) AQHA, APHA, ApHC, AHSA, or any other recognised breed association that administers annual tests or reviews across the whole Western Riding Discipline (i.e. specialist cards are excluded).
- B) European carded judges of any breed western Associations of similar standing to WES.

Guest Judges are not automatically approved, and details must be submitted to the Show Coordinator prior to engagement

A Judge should: Confirm the booking. Please ensure that there is no ambiguity in respect of bookings. Try to confirm in writing and if necessary, add that you will hold the date for a period of time subject to written confirmation. Both Judges and Managers have been caught out but initial enquiries which were assumed to be booking which were not, or vice versa.

Judges Agreement: A copy of a draft agreement is included within the guide. Either party may choose to use this – or not but please be clear as to the arrangements. Remember once a show booking is confirmed it is the Judges responsibility to find a replacement if that booking cannot be honoured.

Fee: Confirm the fee together with any expenses you will charge together with how you are to be paid. It can be embarrassing at the end of the show if this wasn't clear.

Specific Requirements: This covers such things as Dietary requirements – are you a vegetarian or do you have any specific food requirements. Most shows only have a café or burger van so advance notice is important, unless you take your own food!

Accommodation: Who is booking – is it adequate – are you bringing a steward has the booking been confirmed and have you had a copy of the booking reference.

Please note – it is now common for patterns to be posted on the internet prior to the show. This may raise issues with the competitors. If there are concerns with the patterns, they must be

raised by the Show Manager with the Judge prior to the show date and if necessary revised patterns provided.

Ensure that refreshments will be available for the Judge. If there will not be a catering facility on site then arrange for someone to have the facility to make hot drinks. Food should be provided and check any dietary requirements the Judge may have.

Miscellaneous Requirements

Competitor numbers: Remember two sets of numbers are required, one for each side of the saddle.

Accident Report Form: Accident report forms should be available in case there is a reportable injury.

Entry forms: Class entry forms either handwritten or computer-generated

Office equipment: Adhesive tape, staples, drawing pins, safety pins, pens etc.

Show Pack Approved, Affiliated and Appendix shows: Ensure you receive your show pack, which will be sent to the Show Secretary approx. 30 days before your show date.

The Show Pack will comprise:

- The rule book (electronic copy)
- The Show Roster (and an example Roster)
- Judge's cards (electronic copy)
- Score Sheets for your WES classes
- Judge's Evaluation of Show form
- WES Hard Hat declaration form
- WES Incident/Accident report form

The Show Roster, Judge's cards and Score Sheets are to be returned to the Show Coordinator after the show. Other documents are to be returned as otherwise indicated e.g. any Incident/Accident forms are to be returned to the WES Health & Safety Officer

Publicity

Publicity is always an unknown quantity. A great deal of money can be spent on pre- publicity for any event without any real impact on attendance. It is important therefore to keep any costs to a minimum and so there are a number of ways you can promote your show without incurring major costs.

Local Press: If it's your first show you'll stand a good chance of getting local coverage but be warned they'll try to 'Cowboy' it up so just grin and bear it – no number of objections will stop them.

Free Press: Always looking for fillers so you may get lucky

Local Radio: As with the Local Press you may get lucky if there is a slow news week but be careful of send ups.

Equestrian 'free' papers: There are a large number of trade papers and magazines produced at a local level promoting local events. Some will include your dates free; others will make a small charge.

WES Website: Don't forget to ensure full details are passed to the Show Coordinator and then your event will feature on the Website

Social media: You should have your own Facebook page for the Area so it makes sense to post an event on there and don't forget to ask neighbouring areas if they will post the event on their page to pick up members who may be on the edges of the Area.

Other Horse Mags: Liaise with the WES Press and Publicity officer to incorporate your events on publicity being forwarded as part of the WES publicity in magazines such as Horse & Hound, Your Horse etc.

Local Riding Clubs and the Local BHS: Local Riding Clubs and the Local Branch of the BHS are always looking for space fillers for their magazines and Newsletters so find out who your local Secretary is and contact them. This can pay dividends in other ways as they may well look to having a demo sometime in the future

Posters: Finally, the good old standby – produce some posters and then get members to put them in local tack shops, feed merchants work notice boards, local libraries wherever you think they'll be noticed.

HEALTH & SAFETY

You need to ensure that the following statement is included on the schedule.

“Horse riding can be a dangerous sport”

The Western Equestrian Society has taken all reasonable steps to ensure the Health & Safety of spectators, competitors and everyone else present. For these measures to be effective, everyone must take all possible precautions to avoid and prevent accidents occurring and must obey the instructions of the organisers and stewards.

There appears to be a lot of legislation to comply with regarding Health and Safety and we have all heard horror stories of litigation and therefore it may seem to be a daunting responsibility when running a show. In reality it's basically common sense. If all potential risks are evaluated then it will help the show run smoothly and the likelihood of an accident happening will be reduced.

Wearing of Western Hats: Everyone including competitors, owners, helpers or grooms riding at a WES activity must wear an approved hard hat. However, except for youths under the age of 14, competitors at a WES approved show can continue to wear a Stetson in both competition and

warm up areas subject to providing the Society with a signed disclaimer which is to be handed to the show secretary on arrival at the showground [Hard Hat Disclaimer](#). Check the BHS website [2024-bhs-event-hat-guide-v3.pdf](#) for current guidelines. Baseball caps are not permitted at any time whilst mounted. It is recommended that approved hard hats are worn at all times whilst schooling and hacking out. Competitors in Freestyle or themed Charity classes must sign a separate disclaimer if they wish to participate in costumes which do not incorporate either a Stetson or Hard Hat

If they do not they should not ride – If they do you will be personally responsible if they are injured and subsequently take action for negligence because you did not enforce the rules.

Risk assessment – what you need to do

WES has produced a risk assessment form for you to use [Show Risk Assessment](#). Although this may seem lengthy it has been designed to cover all possible situations and there may be many areas that are not applicable to your show.

The Show Manager or the Health and Safety Steward should complete the risk assessment before the event opens. There are some sections that should be considered when developing your show layout plan and therefore it is recommended that you read the risk assessment form when planning the show.

The first step is to have information available for the Show Secretary, this should include a telephone number for the nearest on-call doctor (local GP Surgery if they are agreeable), the address of the nearest accident and emergency unit, and when in a rural location it is particularly important to have a grid reference for your location to assist emergency services, including What Three Words.

The risk assessment form is divided into areas such as car parks, arenas, stabling and toilets etc. Potential hazards to be aware of are listed with recommended control measures (solutions). For example, in the tacking up and warm up areas the potential hazard is the close proximity of people and horses with the possibility of accidents such as kicking, being stepped on etc. happening, the solution is obvious and easily achieved – signage warning pedestrians/spectators and also the provision of a steward in this area. You could also post some simple arena rules such as pass left to left, if stationary, stand in the middle of the arena, faster pace takes priority. Simple and effective.

As you work through the risk assessment you will need to tick that you have considered the potential hazard and put control measures in place or mark them as not applicable if the area does not exist at your show – for example if your show is in July, it is unlikely that you will have ice in the car park and therefore this should be marked N/A. There is space for you to add any comments that you want to make others aware of.

Most of the potential hazards are obvious and you will have considered them subconsciously when planning the show, if you haven't then the risk assessment is there to jog your memory.

Once complete the form should be returned to the Show Secretary who should then post it to the Health and Safety Officer after the event closes, hopefully accident free.

Be aware you will need to submit your Risk Assessment when submitting your on-line event booking; the Show Coordinator will not approve any events unless a suitable Risk Assessment has been provided.

Accidents

We cannot remove all risks otherwise we would not have shows and would not be riding at all. It is probable that there will be an accident at one show during the season and therefore we all need to be aware of the process for responding and reporting.

For larger shows it would be of benefit to notify the local Ambulance Service control centre giving the exact location and grid reference, this will speed up ambulance response time if it is necessary to call them.

FIRST AID PROVISION

WES does not yet have a requirement for trained paramedics to be on site during a show as the risk to riders in Western competitions is relatively low. However, accidents do happen and WES does require that a competent First Aider is available on site with a First Aid at Work certificate. This person should be identified on the risk assessment form.

The first aider should be equipped with a first aid kit, mobile phone and if possible, a two-way radio. The first aider also needs to be given full address and grid reference location details before the event so that they can give this information to the emergency services.

It is the responsibility of the Stewards to inform the Show Secretary of the need for the first aider to attend a specific location. The Show Secretary should then contact the first aider. The first aider will decide whether an ambulance is required and will call them whilst staying with the injured person. If needed the call can be delegated to a Steward under the direction of the first aider.

To ensure that delays are limited Stewards at the entrance to the show should direct the emergency services to the location of the accident.

Accident reporting: It is a legal requirement that all accidents are recorded; this includes minor injuries such as cuts. WES has produced an accident report form, which should be used, [Accident Report Form](#). When holding a show, it is worthwhile to ensure that you have several copies available for use. This report is for WES only and under the Data Protection Act copies cannot be made of completed forms on site, even for the injured person. Copies may be requested from the WES Health and Safety Officer at any time. Copies may be forwarded to the Health and Safety Executive and the police if necessary.

Once complete the form should be sent to the WES Health and Safety Officer.

Pauline Norton: 382 Bullen Lane, East Peckham, Kent, TN12 5LS or chloe276@aol.com

Remember: Basically, remember to record as much detail as possible for every incident however minor and apparently insignificant or "brushed aside" and keep the records until any potential

claim period has expired, and don't be lulled into a false sense of security by "It's OK it was my fault" because even if you get it in writing there is always the potential argument that it was obtained under duress or while they were in shock, and it's often when they get home that the other half or a friend/relative points out there may be a potential insurance claim.

CONCLUSION

Above all enjoy your western riding and again thank you for helping others to enjoy their western riding as well. Stay safe and if necessary, Ask for Help – that is what Council is here for!

Checklist							
Event	Approval	Risk Assessment	Show Manager/ First aider	Approved Clinician	Judge	Booking Form	Schedule and Entry Form
Self-Help Day	Yes	Yes	No FA yes	No	No	Advised	No
Trail Ride	Yes	Yes	No FA yes	No	No	Advised	No
Social Event	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Advised	No
Clinic	Yes	Yes	Yes FA yes	Yes	No	Advised	No
Show	Yes	Yes	Yes FA Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
On line show	Yes	Only if hiring an arena	No FA Only if hiring an arena	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pivo clinic	Yes	YES if hiring an arena for event	No FA only if hiring an arena for event	Yes	N/A	Yes	No

Equipment Schedule

Showmanship: Cones

Horsemanship: Cones or markers as per pattern

Prelim Pleasure: 7 cones or markers 5 marked cones as ABCDG 2 unmarked.

Ranch riding: Cones or poles as per pattern

Trail: Trail gate (rope or metal), Logs or poles, pole pods or blocks if raised, cones or markers, wooden bridge. All should be checked for safety.

Reining: 6 or 7 cones or markers as per reining pattern. It is good practice to give the Judge the arena size prior to the show so they can decide on the relevant patterns.

Western riding: Log/s at least 10 cones.

Versatile horse: Gate, cones and markers as per pattern.

Ranch trail: (See section 18 in rule book for full details) mandatory: logs/poles, gate, wooden bridge, obstacles for dragging/rope.

Working western rail: None specified.

Please see rule book sections for full lists of current equipment. All equipment should be safe, and patterns designed not to trap the riders. The Judge has the final say on the equipment being used.