

Summer 2026 Newsletter

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Penbode Equine Vets

Since 1840





Congratulations, Abby

We are incredibly proud to congratulate Abby, our Veterinary Technician, on being recognised as the second highest-achieving newly qualified Equine SQP in the UK following completion of her AMTRA examinations in December 2025.

An SQP (Suitably Qualified Person) is specially qualified to advise on and supply certain animal medicines, playing an important role in supporting horse health, welfare and responsible parasite control. Their high level of training and qualification means they can advise on safe medicine use and suggest suitable options. And when an animal needs a diagnosis or a vet-only medicine, they'll make sure owners are directed to a vet.

Abby received her award from Lord Trees at the House of Lords in recognition of this outstanding achievement. We are delighted to see her hard work, knowledge and dedication recognised by AMTRA and the wider veterinary profession.

Congratulations, Abby – a fantastic and thoroughly deserved achievement!





Why Foot Balance Matters for Your Horse's Soundness and Performance

Jeremy Hyde
Veterinary Surgeon
BVetMed MRCVS

The old saying "no foot, no horse" remains as true today as ever. A horse's feet form the foundation of the entire musculoskeletal system, and maintaining good foot balance is essential for both soundness and performance.

Foot balance refers to how the hoof is shaped and how it bears weight during movement. Ideally, the hoof should allow forces to be distributed evenly through the foot, limb and body. When a hoof becomes imbalanced, excessive strain can be placed on joints, tendons, ligaments and muscles. Over time, this can contribute to lameness, poor performance and an increased risk of injury.

Even subtle imbalances can affect the way a horse moves. Horses may shorten their stride, become reluctant to work, struggle with certain movements, or show reduced athletic performance. In some cases, chronic hoof imbalance can contribute to conditions such as tendon injuries, joint disease, heel pain and hoof wall cracks.

Regular farriery is key to maintaining correct hoof balance. Every horse is an individual, and hoof care should be tailored to their conformation, workload and any underlying health concerns. Routine assessments by your farrier, combined with veterinary input where necessary, can help identify potential problems before they become significant issues. Your farrier may find a set of foot balance X-rays a useful tool as part of their routine assessment from time to time.

Owners also play an important role by monitoring hoof condition between visits. Changes in hoof shape, cracks, uneven wear or alterations in movement should be investigated promptly.

By investing in regular hoof care and maintaining good foot balance, you can help your horse stay comfortable, sound and able to perform at their best for years to come.

Penbode Equine Vets: Proud Supporters of Young Equestrians

The last few weeks have been very busy for Tetcott & South Tetcott Pony Club whose members are based in Holsworthy and surrounding areas.



They have run some fundraising events for their Club which included an Area Triathlon Winter Championship Qualifier (shoot, run and swim) and an Area Quiz attracting nearly 200 Pony Cub members from Somerset, Devon and Cornwall.

"Penbode Equine Vets were incredibly generous with their sponsorship enabling sashes, beautiful rosettes and much coveted goodie bags for the prizes winners. The generosity was complimented through out both events with lots of smiling members donning their sashes.



Tetcott & South Tetcott members enjoyed success at both events and secured a qualifying spot at the Quiz finals.

As a Club we are very grateful. With the kindness of the sponsorship, it enables us to have greater funds to be able to support all our members with their training and achieving their goals. We welcome new members and offer taster sessions at our rallies, if anyone is interested in joining us please do get in touch, we can be found on facebook or 07388 365744 Georgie Brown DC Tetcott & South Tetcott Pony Club. "



A woman with blonde hair, wearing a blue polo shirt and a blue riding helmet, is smiling and standing next to a white horse. The horse is wearing a black halter and a saddle. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with trees and a fence.

Summer Parasite Control: Three Things Every Horse Owner Should Know

by Abby Wade J-SQP

1. Test, don't Treat

Routine worming without evidence can contribute to resistance. Every time you give a dewormer, you kill the susceptible worms, leaving only the drug-resistant ones to survive and reproduce. Relying on frequent, unnecessary treatments speeds up this process, meaning wormers will eventually stop working. Use faecal egg counts every 8-12 weeks throughout the grazing season to help decide whether treatment is actually needed. However, it is worth noting, standard faecal egg counts do not detect tapeworms, pinworms, bots or encysted redworm, so these must also be considered throughout your worming program.

2. Manage your Grazing

Regular poo picking (at least twice weekly where possible) is one of the most effective ways to reduce worm burdens on pasture. Removing manure interrupts the lifecycle of worms, minimizing the risk of internal parasite infections and serious health threats, like colic. Keeping stocking rates at one horse per 1-1.5 acres prevents manure concentration and overgrazing. Most infective larvae only travel up to the first 3 inches (7.5 cm) of a grass blade. Avoiding overgrazing ensures horses do not have to eat close to the ground, significantly reducing ingestion rates. Alternating grazing with cattle or sheep can also help - these livestock species have different digestive systems meaning they can "hoover up" and digest horse worm larvae without becoming infected themselves.



3. Think Beyond Worms

Warm weather also brings midges and flies, which can cause irritation and spread disease. The *Culicoides* midge - responsible for causing Sweet Itch in susceptible horses - is most active during dusk and dawn. Stabling horses during these periods can provide relief from bites. Physical barriers such as fly rugs, specific sweet-itch rugs and masks and using repellents (especially those containing DEET) can all help keep horses comfortable. Removal of manure also reduces the risk of ectoparasites, as well as avoiding grazing near standing water and woodland where possible. Particularly relevant in wooded or tall-grass areas, ticks can transmit diseases, including Lyme disease. Physically inspect your equines daily, paying close attention to the chest, under the belly, inside legs, and under the jaw. If you do spot a tick, ensure prompt removal using a dedicated Tick Twister to ensure the entire head is extracted.

My top tip would be to always weigh or accurately estimate your horse's weight before giving a wormer. Underdosing increases the risk of parasite resistance and may reduce treatment effectiveness.

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Caring for horses across Cornwall and Devon

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