



Suzanne Homewood

Business Development Director candidate

I am very excited to be appointed for a second term as Business Development Director, at a time when our sport, horse welfare, and its role within social and environmental change can play a crucial part in helping build and sustain a healthy, harmonious future within a more natural world.

The last four years have seen so many changes impacting the way we work, play, and interact with nature. Expectations, priorities, and relationships have changed, and that includes what we expect from our equestrian networks and of course our governing bodies and membership organisations. The health of our horses and their environment continues to be a priority as our natural resources start to become more impacted from climate change, and economic stresses take their toll on many areas including suppliers to the market, event venues and competitions.

British Dressage itself has changed considerably over the last four years, with huge leaps forward in the quality of communication, particularly online, from our website to our social media presence, providing access to so many new followers and members by sharing what we do and what we stand for. Working with our media partners Horse and Country, live streaming events, bringing friends, family, and worldwide connections closer to our sport through video has enabled our members to stay connected, wherever they are. BD at Home, created during the pandemic, has extended into many support areas such as fitness, nutrition, member stories, training, access to our top rider tips and advice, and so much more, that our members have told us they find invaluable.

Our new insurance and legal partnerships have enabled us to offer even better benefits to our members, helping to reduce the overall cost of horse ownership. Our National and Winter Championships have taken steps to reduce waste, be more inclusive and celebrate our diverse culture and membership. Our sponsors and marketing partnerships have continued to introduce educational content, giving first-rate access to expert advice. And we have been leading the way across the UK equestrian sports with our approach to horse welfare through our rules, judge training, and education tools.

I therefore believe that we need to continue to build on the member engagement, communication, and community, providing greater access to advice, guidance, and support across many aspects of health, welfare and of course our competitions. We will continue to increase our range of member benefits, diversifying with new products and services that help support a more environmental approach to all aspects of sport. We also want to celebrate and reflect even further our diverse and engaged membership base so we can continue to retain, and attract new people to our sport, and grow beyond our current record number.

This ensures we maintain a strong commercial baseline that enables us to invest in our office teams, our competition structure, our officials and venues, and every aspect of our organisation. With reliance on such a wide range of stakeholder groups and people to run and execute our sport, the participation and engagement of our members is what keeps us growing and thriving.

I am confident that we can, with the aid of a new Commercial Manager working alongside our existing strong Marketing and Membership teams, find new suppliers and partners that can reflect our priorities and ambition for building a sustainable sport that brings people and horses together in harmony, whilst delivering value for our current and future members.