

Autism in Racing launched at Musselburgh Racecourse

Musselburgh Racecourse will be the first Scottish race track to support an initiative which aims to raise awareness of autism.

Autism in Racing has been launched to British Horseracing's stakeholders to promote understanding of the condition and to educate racing's workforce and racegoers.

The East Lothian track is taking part in a pilot which will see autism-friendly sensory spaces installed at Musselburgh and at Doncaster and Haydock Park racecourses.

The initiative was founded by horseracing broadcaster and commentator Bobby Beevers, whose personal experience with autism led him to question how the power of horseracing could be utilised to raise awareness and ultimately support anybody with autism.

On selected racedays, families living with autism can enjoy a day's racing and take advantage of a mobile sensory space provided by third-party experts Immersive.

Staff working in the racing industry will also be encouraged to complete an e-learning module which has been created to provide a sound foundation of knowledge into autism. Written in collaboration with the Autism Education Trust, a certificate of achievement is available to all who successfully complete the course.

With funding from the Racing Foundation, Autism in Racing is a

further example of the sport's desire to promote equality, diversity and inclusion at all levels.

Autism in Racing founder, Bobby Beevers, said: "I honestly believe that this is one of the most exciting and unique projects our sport has seen. Horseracing is both diverse in its make-up and inclusive in the way we operate and this initiative signals that we welcome everyone to join us."



Commentator Bobby Beevers' personal experience with autism led to him founding Autism in Racing

[Musselburgh Racecourse](#) general manager, Bill Farnsworth, said: "We are very happy to support this wonderful initiative which

we hope will provide positive and memorable racing experiences for autistic young people and their families, as well as raising awareness of autism across the racing industry.”

British Horseracing Authority Chair, Annamarie Phelps, said: “I am delighted that, with this pilot programme in place, racing will be able to welcome families and individuals with autism to enjoy a day out at the races in a safe and supportive environment. It is our ambition to be a sport that is open and welcoming to everyone regardless of their background and any differences they may have.

“The mobile sensory room and the impact of the educational module will help open up racing to a new cohort of fans and extend our community. Enormous thanks are due to Bobby for his vision and hard work bringing together expertise and enthusiasm to make this possible.”

Emma Chantler, Programme and Content Manager at the Autism Education Trust, added: “At the heart of the Autism Education Trust is the belief that good outcomes can only be achieved by working in partnership and it’s great to see the Autism in Racing initiative is opening conversations and spreading awareness about autism across the sport. By doing so they are helping our mission to create culture change in mainstream society by educating people about autism.”



Immersive's mobile sensory rooms will feature at Musselburgh Racecourse

Under the banner of Racing Together, the sport's community engagement collective, a collaborative group was assembled to support Autism in Racing. The group is represented by the British Horseracing Authority, Racecourse Association, Diversity in Racing Steering Group (DiRSG), members of the racing media and includes cross-sport expertise from Arsenal Football Club, a recognised leader in this field within the football community.