RoR
Retraining of Racehorses®



RoR STRATEGY 2027–2031

Working together to ensure that every horse bred to race is visible, valued and cared for beyond racing.

Glossary

This glossary explains some of the key terms used throughout the strategy and how we use them within RoR.

Aftercare: The care, support and oversight of horses once they leave racing and throughout the rest of their lives.

Charitable partners: The specialist equine welfare charities we fund and work with to help deliver our welfare safety net. Our charitable partners include World Horse Welfare, HEROS, The British Thoroughbred Retraining Centre, Greatwood, New Beginnings, Racehorse Relief, The Racehorse Sanctuary, HAPPA and HorseWorld.

Ex-racehorses/former racehorses: Where we refer to ex-racehorses or former racehorses, we mean the broader population of horses bred to race, whether or not they were in training or raced.

Horses bred to race: The term we use for horses eligible to register with RoR and access our support, whether or not they were in training or went on to race. All eligible horses must have an official racing passport, such as a Weatherbys passport registered with the General Stud Book (GSB), or an equivalent recognised racing jurisdiction passport.

Key performance indicator (KPI): A quantifiable measure used to evaluate the success of an organisation, employee, etc., in meeting objectives for performance.

Non-racing agreement (NRA): An NRA places a restriction on a horse from being entered or run in any race under the Rules of Racing and/or Point-to-Point Regulations (as indicated) after it has been retired from racing. It must be signed and completed by both the current owner (or trainer acting on their behalf) and the new keeper or buyer of the retired racehorse.

Owners: Where we refer to owners, we mean the current owners of former racehorses.

Participation: The many ways former racehorses and their owners can engage with RoR, including competitions, education, training, events and online opportunities.

Partners: Organisations and individuals RoR works with to support former racehorses, including racing bodies, charities, retraining centres, veterinary professionals and equestrian organisations.

Racing industry: The organisations and individuals involved in British racing, including racing owners, breeders, trainers, racecourses and racing bodies.

Racing owners: The owners of horses while they are, or were, in training for racing.

Registration: The process by which former racehorses, and their owners, are recorded with RoR, helping the industry maintain a connection with horses after racing.

Relinquishment: The formal and permanent transfer of ownership of a horse to a charity, with the previous owner signing over all legal rights and responsibility for the horse. The charity then assumes responsibility for determining the most appropriate course of action in the horse's best interests.

Retraining: The process of helping a horse transition from racing into a suitable second career or new role.

Traceability: A term used across the British racing industry to describe the ability to know where horses are and who is responsible for them throughout their lives. For RoR, this relates to maintaining visibility of former racehorses after they leave racing, enabling us to connect their owners with relevant support, guidance and services throughout the horse's life.

Welfare safety net: The support coordinated by RoR for former racehorses that may be deemed vulnerable without charitable intervention. RoR assesses each case, determines the most appropriate course of action, and provides advice or practical help where possible. For eligible horses requiring further intervention, RoR funds care through its network of charitable partners, which may include rehabilitation, retraining and rehoming or, where it is in the horse's best interests, humane euthanasia.

FOREWORD

DAVID THORPE, CHAIRMAN



Every horse bred to race deserves a future in which they are visible, valued and cared for beyond racing.

That belief has guided Retraining of Racehorses since the charity was founded, and it remains at the heart of this five-year strategy.

RoR's 2024–2026 strategy marked an important period of development for the charity. It clarified our role, strengthened our focus on welfare, education, traceability and community, and set the foundations for more effective support for all horses bred to race and their owners.

Over the next five years we must build on that progress. More former racehorses and their owners need to be connected to RoR earlier and kept within reach throughout the horse's life. At the same time, demand on our welfare programmes is increasing, driven by cost-of-living pressures, wider challenges across the equine welfare sector, and, in some cases, limited experience of caring for a former racehorse.

Public expectations of racing are also changing. People rightly want to know that horses bred and trained for the sport are cared for after their racing careers end. For British racing, this is not only a welfare responsibility; it is central to maintaining public trust.

As British racing's official aftercare charity, RoR plays a key role in delivering the Horse Welfare Board's *A Life Well Lived*, British racing's industry-wide strategy for horse welfare, providing trusted guidance, evidence and coordination on life after racing.

But lasting impact cannot be delivered by one organisation alone. It depends on action, partnership and sustainable funding from across racing, welfare, equestrian sport and the wider RoR community.

Through better visibility and connection, trusted education and guidance, and timely welfare support, RoR will work with others to improve lifelong outcomes for former racehorses.

Together, we will seek to prevent welfare issues wherever possible, provide a clear safety net when needed, and create more opportunities for former racehorses to be valued and celebrated, demonstrating the positive futures they can enjoy.

BUILDING ON THE 2024–2026 STRATEGY

The 2024–2026 strategy marked a significant period of change for RoR, strengthening our role in aftercare, expanding our reach and services, and putting the charity on a much stronger financial and organisational footing.

In 2025, RoR moved into surplus, with annual income increasing by around £1 million compared with 2024. More than half of our income now comes from independent fundraising, giving us a more diverse and resilient funding base.





What shaped delivery

Not every ambition set out in the strategy could be fully realised within the period. Delivery has been constrained by the timing of investment, with increases in industry funding taking longer than anticipated to materialise, while funding for the redevelopment of RoR's digital infrastructure was only secured later in the strategy period. As digital transformation is a key enabler for much of our future work, some of the planned activity will now be delivered through the 2027–2031 strategy.

What we achieved

During the strategy period, RoR:

Secured BHA endorsement of RoR's strategy as British racing's industry strategy for the aftercare of former racehorses.

Established direct data sharing with the BHA for horses leaving racing through a non-racing agreement (NRA), a major step forward for traceability and connection.

Significantly expanded education and support for owners, alongside stronger retraining standards and professional guidance.

Strengthened welfare support, with greater emphasis on early advice, triage and intervention before problems escalate.

Strengthened relationships across racing and the wider equestrian sector, building greater confidence in RoR's ability to deliver and demonstrate impact.

Joined the British Equestrian Federation as an Associate Member, strengthening the representation of former racehorses within the wider equestrian sector and creating greater opportunities for collaboration, education and participation.

Secured funding for the redevelopment of our website, CRM and digital services, providing the infrastructure needed to improve registration, traceability, education and engagement.

Diversified and grew fundraising, partnerships and sponsorship, reducing reliance on industry funding.

What we will build on

The next strategy will build on these foundations by increasing registration and traceability, ensuring more former racehorses remain visible and connected to RoR.

It will also strengthen education, guidance and welfare support throughout life after racing, while creating more opportunities for former racehorses to be valued, celebrated and supported across the wider equestrian community.

This will be underpinned by new digital infrastructure, stronger owner journeys and impact reporting, and continued diversification of income.

RoR enters 2027–2031 from a much stronger starting point: financially more resilient, better connected, with stronger partnerships, improved access to data and significant investment already secured for future development.



EXTERNAL INFLUENCES

RoR's ability to deliver this strategy will be shaped by a number of external factors over the next five years, including:

Growing public expectations

Public expectations of racing and equine welfare will continue to grow. Racing's Project Beacon research shows that what happens to the horses after their racing careers are over is a significant factor in public trust, making visible, credible and effective aftercare increasingly important.



PHOTO: © ASCOT RACECOURSE

Racing's economic model and market pressures

Financial pressures are affecting racing owners, breeders, trainers, retraining centres, welfare charities and funders. At the same time, the number of horses seeking homes after racing can exceed available demand, increasing the importance of responsible retirement planning and sustainable routes into life after racing.

Successful transitions

The first step out of racing matters. Racing owners and trainers need the information and support to plan appropriately for retirement, while new owners need the knowledge and confidence to meet the individual needs of a former racehorse. Not every horse will be suited to every second career, making appropriate assessment and matching important.

Data and visibility

Once horses leave the regulated racing environment, there is no legal requirement for their owners to register with RoR. Better data sharing, stronger digital systems and a compelling registration and membership offer will therefore be essential if more former racehorses are to remain visible and connected throughout their lives.

Partnership and collaboration

No single organisation can deliver effective aftercare alone. Progress will depend on strong partnerships across racing, welfare and the wider equestrian sector, supported by sustainable funding and shared evidence.

VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

VISION

Every horse bred to race is visible, valued and cared for beyond racing.

MISSION

To protect the wellbeing of former racehorses by supporting owners, providing trusted guidance and ensuring help is available when it is needed.

VALUES

Our values guide how we work and the standards we expect of ourselves and others.

Compassion: We put the welfare of former racehorses at the heart of our work, recognising the individual needs of each horse and the people who care for them.

Collaboration: We work in partnership with racing, welfare, equestrian sport, owners, trainers, retrainers, funders and the wider RoR community to improve outcomes for former racehorses.

Trust: We aim to be a trusted source of guidance, support and evidence, helping owners make informed decisions and strengthening confidence in aftercare.

Integrity: We act with honesty, transparency and accountability, using evidence and responsible decision-making to guide our work.

WHO WE WORK FOR AND WITH

The welfare of horses bred to race is at the heart of everything RoR does, but achieving good outcomes depends on the people and organisations responsible for horses throughout their lives.

Former racehorses are our beneficiaries

Their lifelong wellbeing is the reason RoR exists and the ultimate measure of our impact.

Owners are central to delivery

Racing owners and trainers have an important role in preparing horses for life after racing and planning appropriately for their transition. Once a horse leaves racing, the new owner makes the day-to-day decisions that determine its care and future. By helping owners at each stage to access trusted information and support, and helping non-racing owners to register and stay connected, RoR can improve outcomes throughout a horse's life after racing.

British racing has a shared responsibility for aftercare

Racing is a principal funder and strategic partner of RoR, and has a responsibility to support horses as they make the transition out of the sport. RoR helps racing fulfil that responsibility by providing the framework, evidence, support and coordination needed for effective aftercare.



RoR'S ROLE

RoR leads and coordinates British racing's approach to aftercare, providing the framework that helps former racehorses remain visible, supported and protected throughout their lives. We do this through registration, membership and traceability, trusted guidance and education, provision of a welfare safety net and welfare support, standards, data and evidence.

Effective aftercare depends on shared responsibility and close collaboration across racing, welfare and the wider equestrian sector. RoR's role is to connect and strengthen that system, helping to ensure the right support is available at the right time.



How RoR supports responsible ownership

Responsibility for a horse sits with its current owner. While a horse is in racing, the racing owner is responsible for planning appropriately for its retirement, including how the transition will be managed and funded.

When ownership transfers to a non-racing owner and the horse leaves racing, ideally with an NRA, responsibility passes to the new owner. The previous racing owner cannot be expected to remain responsible for the horse or provide future financial support unless this has been specifically agreed as part of the sale or transfer.

RoR supports responsible ownership at every stage by providing clear guidance, practical support and, where needed, access to our welfare safety net.

OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

How our work creates lasting change for former racehorses:

If more former racehorses are visible and connected to RoR, we can reach owners earlier with the right information and support.

If racing owners and trainers, non-racing owners, retrainers and professionals have access to trusted education, guidance, standards and appropriate support, horses will be better prepared for life after racing, make more successful transitions and be less likely to experience preventable welfare issues.

Where difficulties do arise, earlier support can help resolve problems before they escalate and reduce the need for horses to be relinquished.

If former racehorses are valued, celebrated and supported throughout their lives, they will have better lifelong outcomes, while racing can demonstrate responsible aftercare and strengthen public confidence in the sport.



PILLAR ONE

1 Visibility, traceability and connectivity

OUR GOAL

To strengthen traceability, registration, data sharing and engagement across all stakeholder groups, so more former racehorses are known to RoR and connected to appropriate support.

Why it's important

RoR can only support the horses and owners it can reach. Once horses leave the regulated racing environment, maintaining visibility becomes more difficult. Registration and membership are the practical mechanisms through which we can stay connected to former racehorses and their owners, better understand where horses are and what support they may need throughout their lives.

How we'll deliver change

We will strengthen registration, data sharing, membership and digital systems, working with racing bodies, racing owners, trainers, retrainers and equestrian partners to support responsible transitions and make registration a compelling and valuable proposition for owners. We will encourage continued connection with RoR throughout the horse's life through improving our membership offer.

What success will look like

More former racehorses visible to RoR, stronger connections with their owners, better data and clearer evidence of their lives beyond racing.

HEADLINE KPI

55%

of horses in non-racing agreement (NRA) data registered with RoR by the end of 2031

(September 2026 baseline: 15.2% based on NRA data made available to RoR from July 2025)

HEADLINE KPI

2,500

new horse registrations each year*

(Baseline: 1,685 new horse registrations in 2025)

**Includes horses identified through NRA data and horses registered through all other routes.*

PILLAR TWO

2 Welfare, education and lifelong support

OUR GOAL

To help former racehorses make successful transitions out of racing and support owners throughout the horse's life, reducing preventable welfare issues and the need for intervention.

Why it's important

Many welfare issues can be prevented through earlier intervention, practical education and trusted guidance that build owner confidence and capability. A connected and informed community helps owners seek advice before problems escalate, while strong partnerships ensure vulnerable horses can receive direct support when needed.

How we'll deliver change

We will expand accessible education and continually strengthen our welfare support, ensuring that horses requiring charitable support at any life stage receive the care and rehabilitation needed to enjoy a fulfilling life after racing.

We will also develop evidence-based guidance, support retraining standards through the ongoing development of the Retrainer Approval Scheme, and work with charity partners, commercial retraining centres, vets, coaches and equine professionals to improve outcomes.

What success will look like

More owners accessing support before problems escalate, fewer preventable welfare issues, stronger welfare pathways, clearer best practice in the retirement process, a framework to support a horse's transition out of the sport, and fewer horses relinquished to RoR for placement with our charitable partners.



HEADLINE KPI

12%

of welfare enquiries resulting in relinquishment, by helping owners find appropriate solutions through earlier guidance and practical support

(September 2026 baseline: 16%)*

**As awareness of RoR's support grows, we expect more owners to seek help, often at an earlier stage. An increase in enquiries should not therefore be seen as a failure, but as a sign that owners know where to turn before problems escalate or horses are passed from home to home. Demand will also be influenced by factors beyond RoR's control, including economic and environmental pressures. Our role is to make sure trusted, practical support is there when it is needed, helping horses remain safely in their existing homes wherever possible.*

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PILLAR THREE

Participation, demand and public confidence

OUR GOAL

To grow demand for former racehorses, and to ensure former racehorses are visible, valued and celebrated in all aspects of life after racing.

Why it's important

Participation is about more than competitions and clinics. It strengthens traceability, provides education opportunities, builds community, showcases the versatility of the Thoroughbred, and provides racing with evidence, stories and visible examples of positive life after racing that can help demonstrate responsible aftercare and support wider public confidence in the sport.

How we'll deliver change

We will develop a broader, more inclusive and accessible participation offer, working with partners where appropriate, and celebrating success in all its forms, from horses enjoying hacking to those thriving in the competition arena, and everything in between.

We will ensure every former racehorse can access relevant opportunities and support, and that their owners feel a sense of belonging within the RoR community, whether through our online platform, competitions or in-person education events. Competitions will be regularly reviewed to ensure they remain viable, inclusive and accessible, while upholding high standards of welfare.

What success will look like

More owners of former racehorses seeing value in being part of RoR, wider recognition of former racehorses across sport, leisure and companionship, stronger demand for Thoroughbreds, and better evidence available to racing to demonstrate responsible aftercare and track public confidence over time.

HEADLINE KPI

10,000

individual users of RoR participation activities per annum by the end of 2031

(Baseline September 2026: 4,500 users per annum)



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PILLAR FOUR (ENABLING PILLAR)

Funding, impact and organisational sustainability

OUR GOAL

To secure the funding, systems and organisational resilience needed to deliver our strategic goals and demonstrate impact.



PHOTO: © THE THOROUGHBRED BREEDERS ASSOCIATION

INCOME REQUIRED TO DELIVER THE STRATEGY

£4.5m

Build progressively towards an annual income of £4.5m* by the end of 2031, with growth phased over five years and aligned to the cost of delivering agreed priorities

(Baseline 2025: £2.3m annual income)

**RoR's financial planning assumes that around half of annual income will come from the racing industry and half from independent fundraising.*

Why it's important

Responsible aftercare requires sustainable investment and shared commitment from across racing. RoR must be able to show clearly what funding enables, what it costs to deliver and the difference it makes.

How we'll deliver change

We will grow income progressively over the five years, with increases in expenditure linked directly to agreed strategic priorities.

This will be supported by continued growth in grants, philanthropy, partnerships and public fundraising, alongside stronger impact reporting and financial planning.

Our longer-term ambition is to work with racing and aftercare partners to develop a single, coordinated funding plan for aftercare activity across the sector, providing greater clarity, consistency and sustainability.

What success will look like

A resilient funding base, clear evidence of impact, and increased confidence from racing, funders and partners in RoR's strategy and ability to deliver it. Over time, this will be supported by a more coordinated, sector-wide approach to funding aftercare.

MEASURING OUR IMPACT

RoR's impact must be visible, accessible and evidence-led

Online impact area

Over the next five years, we will develop a public online impact area, updated in real time, bringing together:

- **Progress against headline strategic goals.**
- **Key statistics and trends.**
- **Welfare, education, traceability and participation outcomes.**
- **Impact stories.**
- **Funding and partnership delivery.**

This will provide a clear, regularly updated picture of what RoR and our partners are achieving, strengthen accountability to funders and stakeholders, recognise the contribution of those we work with, and help racing demonstrate its commitment to former racehorses throughout their lives.





DELIVERY TIMELINE

The roadmap on the following pages sets out our current delivery priorities for 2027–2031. Each year, projects and timings will be reviewed against available funding, strategic priorities, evidence of impact and the changing external environment to ensure resources remain focused where they can have the greatest effect.

PILLAR KEY

1. Visibility, traceability and connectivity
2. Welfare, education and lifelong support
3. Participation, demand and public confidence
4. Funding, impact and organisational sustainability

DELIVERY TIMELINE

2027

Launch new strategy 2027–2031.
1 2 3 4

Lead renewed discussions across the racing industry and wider sector to establish a sustainable and equitable funding model for aftercare.
1 2 3 4

Progress the website and CRM redevelopment.
1 2 3 4

Complete the membership review and agree the future membership model.
1 2 3 4

Grow major donor and philanthropic support, including establishing a dedicated working group to help identify and engage new prospects.
1 2 3 4

Develop Welfare Management System reporting and integration with internal digital platforms.
1 2 4

Develop and prepare educational content, participation opportunities and resources for integration into the new digital platform.
1 2 3 4

Establish working groups with the appropriate expertise from stakeholders to inform RoR outputs where relevant.
1 2 4

2028

Launch the new website, CRM and digital member journeys.
1 2 3 4

Introduce new membership models and stronger registration and membership campaigns.
1 2 3 4

Launch online education and on-demand support.
1 2 3 4

Relaunch Source a Horse with improved accessibility and user experience for both buyers and sellers, supporting responsible rehoming decisions.
1 2 3 4

Grow the RoR community through targeted campaigns and improved engagement.
1 2 3 4

Provide accessible vet care for owners of former racehorses through partnerships and collaboration.
2

Build on partnerships with professional and leisure equestrian organisations to expand education and participation opportunities.
2 3 4

2029

Increase RoR registration through NRA data, membership and wider industry alignment.
1 2 3 4

Launch a new RoR channel to help communicate news from across the aftercare sector, showcase our impact, and educate and support owners.
1 2 3 4

Develop the online public impact area, showing progress, outcomes and partnership delivery.
3 4

Strengthen public-facing storytelling and campaigns around life after racing.
3 4

Collaborate with research organisations to develop evidence-based best practice.
2 3 4

Increase participation opportunities for a wider range of owners of former racehorses.
3 4

2030

Use data and evidence to influence aftercare practice.
2 3 4

Build on a sustainable, evidence-led education and participation programme by scaling high-impact initiatives and directing investment towards activities that deliver the greatest welfare and engagement outcomes.
2 3 4

Work with racing and aftercare partners to develop a single, coordinated funding plan for aftercare activity across the sector.
1 2 3 4

2031

Evaluate progress against strategic goals and headline KPIs.
1 2 3 4

Identify future risks, opportunities and investment needs.
1 2 3 4

Develop the next strategic cycle.
1 2 3 4

RoR
Retraining of Racehorses®

Retraining of Racehorses (RoR) is British racing's official aftercare charity for horses bred to race.

Patron: Zara Tindall MBE
Ambassadors: Adele Mulrennan and Kevin Blake

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