

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

February 2019

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about the use of the whip in horseracing.

I appreciate your concern for the welfare of horses and I share it. I understand that the British Horseracing Association, the governing and regulatory body for the sport, requires that whips used in horse racing must be used responsibly, for safety reasons and only to encourage the horse.

Its policy on this issue was drawn up in consultation with animal welfare groups including the RSPCA, as was the approved energy absorbing design of the whip itself. Full details can be found on its website at www.britishhorseracing.com.

In addition to sanctions from the sport, using the whip indiscriminately on horses could lead to a prosecution under the 2006 Animal Welfare Act, which makes it a criminal offence to cause unnecessary suffering to any animal. I would encourage anyone with evidence that a racehorse has suffered unnecessarily from being whipped to report it to the local authority.

I therefore believe that the provisions of the 2006 Act, coupled with the BHA's rules on the use of the whip, provide adequate protection for racehorses.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris".

CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY

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