

Hold your horses...  
the UK Human Equine  
Interaction Register is  
coming!



*Kindly supported by The Sir Peter O'Sullivan Charitable Trust*

# Vision

The UK Human Equine Interaction Register (HEIR), supported by HETI, aims to bring together all people involved in the field of human equine interaction, ensuring high quality service provision and creating greater awareness of this field of work.

Those on the Register will have demonstrated that they have both human and equine welfare at the heart of what they do.



# Purpose

The National Register aims to act as a helpful resource for service users, commissioners, funders, practitioners, health and social care professionals and anyone wishing to find out more about equine assisted or facilitated services the UK.

It will offer a framework for practitioners and organisations to work within, to have confidence that HEI programmes and activities are delivered professionally and safely, resulting in positive outcomes for all.

# Who is it for?

- The Register will be a voluntary register for individuals and organisations providing equine assisted interactions or facilitated learning.
- The overall intention is to help develop standards for practitioners who use equine assisted or facilitated therapies including psychotherapy and physiotherapy, education, learning, coaching or activities, through the creation of a central register and hub which promotes effective, high quality, safe, ethical practice and which is easily accessible to all those who work in this field.



# Who's Doing this?

Developed with specific reference to the UK, the development of UK HEI Register is part of Horses in Education and Therapy International (HETI), the international federation of this sector with experience of similar registers in other countries.

The development phase is being overseen by a volunteer steering group representing professional individuals from a broad range of HEI disciplines, in close liaison with HETI, to develop the expected standards and ongoing administrative and governance processes.

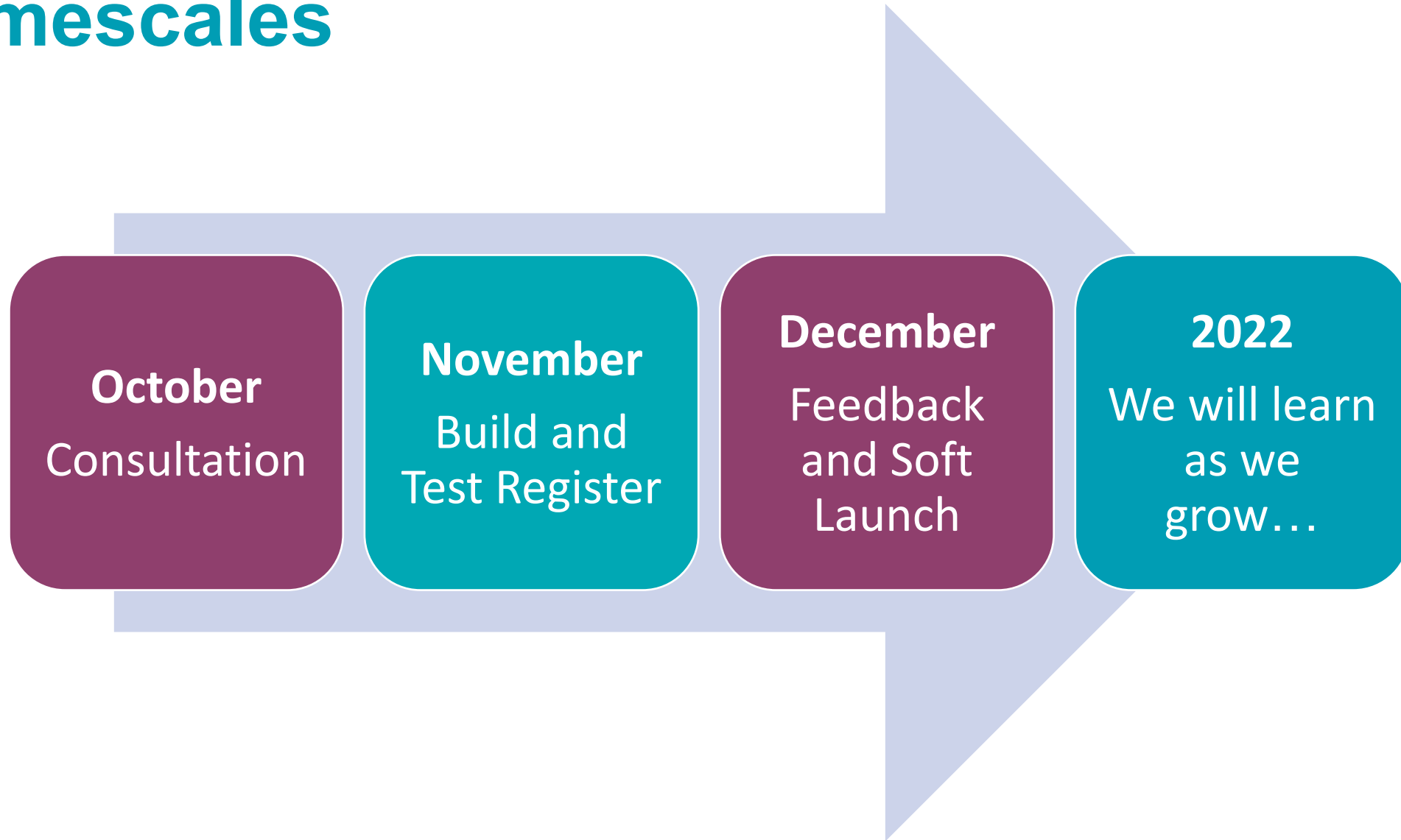
It is proposed that the Register will be overseen by an independent committee of guardians on behalf of the sector and interested stakeholders.



## **Steering Group**

A group of people with a collective will to make the Register a reality. They have current experience of HEI professional practice reflecting various disciplines within the sector

# Timescales



# Principles

- **Inclusive** the Register is open to everyone involved in the sector and brings together practitioners from multiple disciplines
- **Trusted** the Register provides a fair and robust structure based on collaboration so those in the sector and those using the register can trust it to be a reliable resource.
- **Standards** the Register promotes high standards of welfare for both equines and humans, as well as high standards of service delivery.
- **Independent** the Register is independent of commercial interests, training programmes or professional associations and does not make value judgements about different models of human-equine interactions.



# Standards

- Clear evidence of relevant **competence to practice** and commitment to **professional development**
- Demonstrable evidence of high **equine welfare** and management standards
- Clear communication of services and the potential benefits including **service user engagement**
- Demonstrable evidence of **professional reflection** of operational benefits and impact
- Evidence of sufficient management and **governance** structures in operation

# Minimum Evidence?

What might be appropriate for applicants to provide as evidence of meeting the standards?

The following may be relevant:

## To Protect the provider

- Certificates or evidence of qualifications/learning in area of Health & Wellbeing practice (professional portfolio)
- Insurance cover - Prof Indemnity, Public Liability (& Employer liability if applicable)

## To Protect the service user

- Certificate or evidence of qualifications/learning in area of Equine assisted interactions (organisational learning log)
- Safeguarding Policy/statement
- Health & Safety Policy/statement including first aid, fire safety

## To Protect the equines

- Local authority licencing
- Equine Welfare Policy including Rider weight policy (if applicable)
- Equine Health strategy /Contract with local Vet

# The Register

The Register will be publicly accessible through the HETI website.

It will:-

- Publish the purpose and key standards for professional operation within the sector
- Be searchable by organisation and postcode
- Publish contact details and services offered (links to websites and social media)
- Provide templates and support for those who do not meet the standards but wish to do so
- Explain the complaints and appeals process

# Evidence of skills, experience and qualifications

HEIR recognise that stakeholders external to the sector seek confidence in the sector and its professionals when identifying appropriate services, and this is often through professional regulators and membership bodies.

- The HEIR will identify and consider relevant experience, qualifications and programmes of education that meet the declared purpose and vision of the register.
- Qualifications and training awarded or delivered by a regulated awarding organisation or bodies with independent quality assurance mechanisms eg PSA accredited registers.
- Accreditation and Regulation are separate activities but are associated through high standards of hierarchical processes using independent third-party experts.
- Relevant documents will be uploaded to the Register (not published)

# Proposed Annual Fees

A fee structure will be applied for the administrative costs involved with reviewing and verifying documentation, database maintenance, website development and marketing of the HEIR.

	Size	Proposed annual fee (Based on HETI Ireland Register)
<b>Individual Practitioner</b>	Free-lance practitioners or those involved in running / or part of an organisation	£50
<b>Small Organisation</b>	Operating from one location with 10 or fewer members of staff / volunteers working specifically in the field of equine assisted services, therapy and activities	£150
<b>Medium Organisation</b>	Operating from one or more location or with more than 10 staff / volunteers	£250
<b>Large Organisation</b>	National Organisations practicing therapeutic equestrian activities	£500
<b>Training Organisation</b>		£500

# Governance

- It is proposed that the register will be overseen by an independent committee of guardians on behalf of the sector and interested stakeholders including:-
  - HETI Committee Member
  - Steering Group Member
  - Lay Person
  - Providers from representative disciplines
  - Commissioner / funder
  - Service User
  - Admin Support
- Appointment of guardians beyond the development and pilot (2 years) will be by expressions of interest and election with guardians in post for three years.
- The tenure may be amended (up or down) to ensure continuity of oversight and mitigate against loss of operational knowledge.

# Consultation Methodology

- Online survey
- open for four weeks and promoted through:-
  - Facebook (261 followers and growing). Regular reminder posts
  - Shared by Steering Group and network
    - EAFPN, NEWC, SW Practitioners Group
  - Media release to equestrian media
  - HETI website and promotion through social media
    - 103 responses

## Face to Face

- Two online webinars (afternoon and evening)
  - 49 participants in total
- Face-to Face meetings held at RDA HQ and The Mare & Foal Sanctuary
  - 23 participants in total



# Key Themes

- Generally supportive – helped to alleviate concerns that they would be “told what to do”
- “Open and participative” – lots of positive feedback
- No concerns raised about Governance
- Fees seemed acceptable
- Principles and Standards broadly agreed but lots of discussion and concern about:-
  - Equine Welfare Standards – NEWC have established sub-group
  - Terminology – lots of links / sources sent to support this. HETI view is that local nomenclature should be agreed for UK use.
  - Qualifications V experience
  - Sector sometimes isn’t taken seriously
  - Need to consider ground as well as mounted therapy
  - CPD is needed
  - Annual checks / site visits
  - Differences in opinion about Local Authority Licensing (not applicable in Scotland)

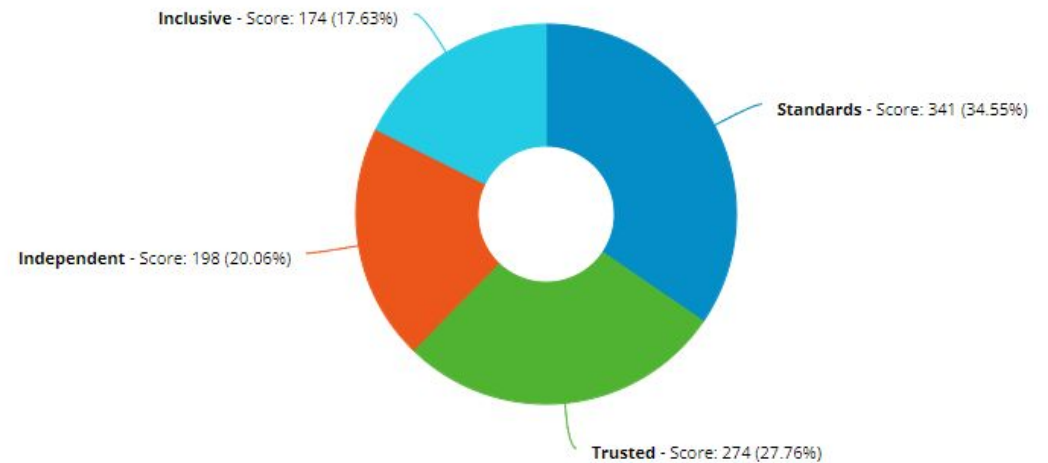
# Concerns Raised

- There is a serious and urgent need for CPD training for those already qualified in the equine-assisted field, which is both professional and affordable.
- I would like to see some form of inspection, and the provision of support both to meet the requirements and also to enable continuous improvement/development for members
- Sometimes the most qualified person and facility cannot beat someone wise and experienced
- I think that some of the proposals might lead to problems as one size does not fit all!
- There are already a few fees incurred in managing a facility, what benefit will this bring to a group which already has good governance?
- What would this extra registration provide to the already professionally registered therapists?
- 50:50 split between those with qualifications and those without!

The Register aims to work to four principles,

- **Inclusive** the Register is open to everyone involved in the sector and brings together practitioners from multiple disciplines
- **Trusted** the Register provides a fair and robust structure based on collaboration so those in the sector and those using the register can trust it to be a reliable resource.
- **Standards** the Register promotes high standards of welfare for both equines and humans, as well as high standards of service delivery.
- **Independent** the Register is independent of commercial interests, training programmes or professional associations and does not make value judgements about different models of human-equine interactions.

Please rank them in order of importance to you, the first being the most important:



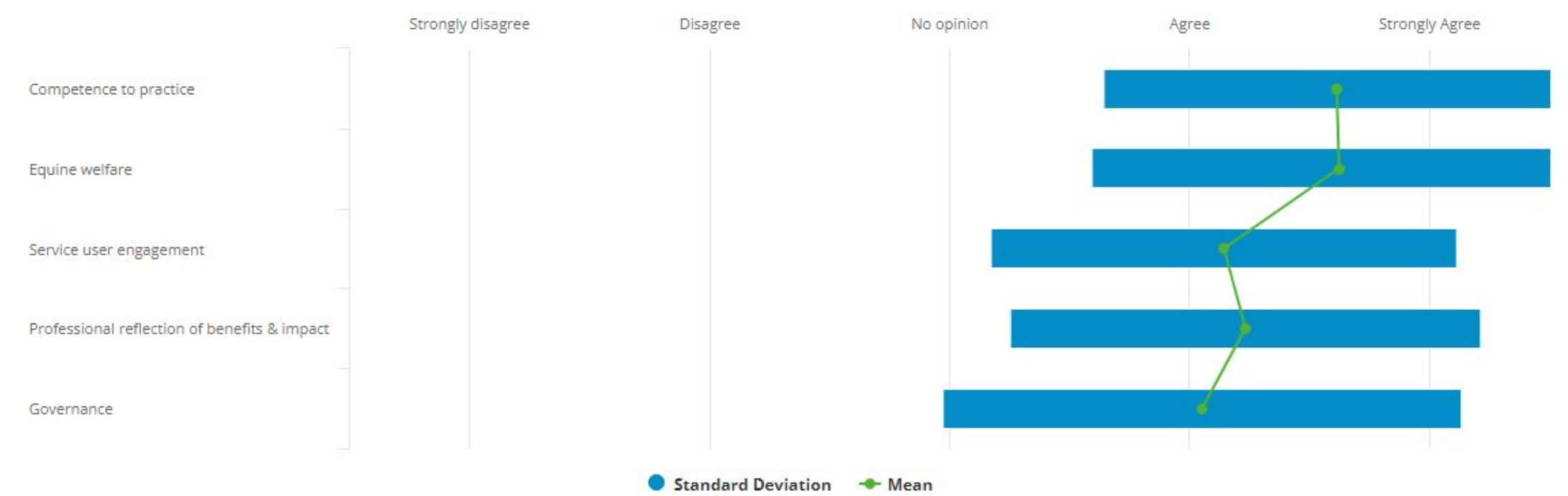
**Is there another Principle you would like to add?**

Number of responses: 31



Acceptance to the Register would require commitment to five Standards, to what extend do you agree or disagree with the proposed standards outlined below?

Number of responses: 101







To protect the equines, we are proposing that the following evidence is required as a minimum. What is your opinion of this proposal?

- Local authority licencing
- Equine Welfare Policy including Rider weight policy (if applicable)
- Equine Health strategy
- /Contract with local Vet

Number of responses: 98



**Do you have any other proposals about HEIR governance arrangements?**

Number of responses: 58



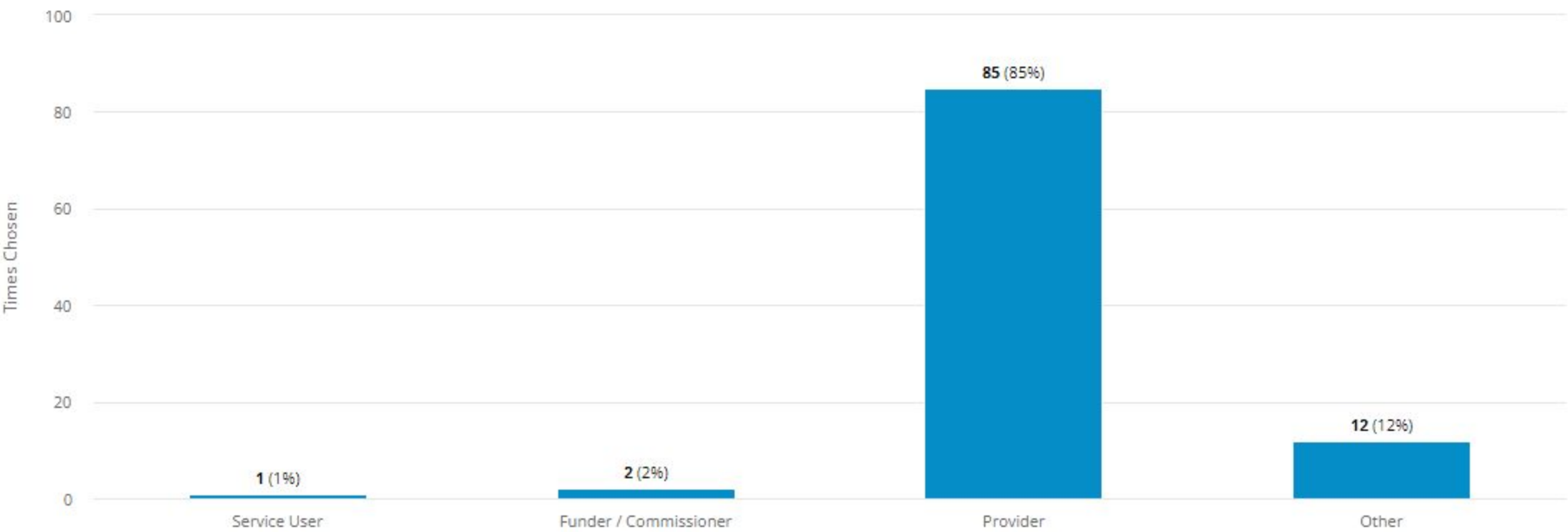
Is there anything else we need to consider?

Number of responses: 54



Tell us about you...

Number of responses: 100



# Next Steps

- Publish the findings
- Develop FAQs
- Build and test the Register
- Determine legal considerations of GDPR and 'membership' rights
- Agree welfare standards and terminology to use
- Complaints / appeals process
- Checklists for policies and supporting documents
- Confirm plans for 'Soft Launch' at the London International Horse Show in December

# Keep in touch



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WWW.  
[hetifederation.org/uk-national-register](http://hetifederation.org/uk-national-register)