

## **Simple Guide To Horse Insurance**

Having owned horses for most of my life I know first hand how difficult it can be to obtain clear information about insurance policies and exactly what cover is being offered. As equestrian insurers all offer varying levels of cover it's important to know exactly what benefits you're being offered in order to avoid any 'surprises' in the unlucky event of a claim.

Having a thorough understanding of the horse world as well as the UK equestrian insurance market, I'm always pleased to offer friendly advice if requested and I'm available seven days a week for quotes and enquiries.

The minimum cover I would recommend for horses and ponies is Death of Horse, Theft and Straying and, if you're not a BHS or BSJA member, Public Liability. (As a BHS or BSJA member you get Public Liability cover with your membership.)

Other options include Vets Fees, Saddlery and Tack, Personal Accident, Permanent Loss of Use and Trailers and Horse Drawn Vehicles. The following is a brief summary of these benefits:

### **Death of Horse**

Designed to pay the sum insured for death due to accident, illness or disease. This may also include the cost of removal and disposal of the carcass.

### **Theft and Straying**

Cover in the event your horse is lost by theft or straying and is not recovered within a set period (usually 60 or 90 days). You must inform the police. Advertising costs may also be included.

### **Public Liability**

Financial protection if you are sued because your horse has caused injury to another person or damaged their property. Most insurers offer at least £1 million. If you are involved in an accident DO NOT admit liability. Contact your insurer and they will advise you how to proceed.

### **Vets Fees**

Covers you in the event of large vets bills. There will be a maximum benefit per claim and most companies will require you to pay an excess (which could be a set figure *or* a percentage of the total claim). Make sure you are clear about the excess before you go ahead with a policy. Many companies also offer cover for the cost of transport to and from a veterinary hospital and livery charges whilst there, and alternative therapies.

### **Saddlery and Tack**

Covers the replacement cost of lost, damaged or stolen tack. It's common to have an excess with this section of cover. Cover can be 'New For Old' or 'Standard' (used market value). Check if extras, for example rugs, are included and whether purchase receipts are needed in the event of a claim.

### **Personal Accident**

This insures you, or anyone riding your horse with your permission, for death, injury and permanent total disablement. Dental treatment is often included. Any existing medical conditions should be declared to the insurer.

### **Permanent Loss of Use**

Based on the sum insured, this offers financial protection if your horse can no longer be used for any of the activities it is insured for (e.g. if your horse can no longer be ridden, but the vet does not recommend humane destruction). If the horse can still be used for breeding most insurers will only pay out a percentage of the sum insured.

### **Trailers and Horse Drawn Vehicles**

Cover for fire, theft, accidental damage and public liability (when not in use). When in use public liability should be on the towing vehicles insurance. Most companies require that a security device is fitted when not in use. An excess is common with this section of cover.

### **Worth Noting:**

- Most insurers will provide the minimum cover of **death and theft and straying** then give you the option of adding extra sections of cover depending upon your needs.
- **Pre-existing conditions** will be excluded. Underwriters may remove an exclusion after a certain period if your vet confirms in writing the condition has not reoccurred.
- Check for any specific **underwriting requirements**, e.g. 2 or 5 Stage vettings, leg x-rays, copy of loan agreement or purchase receipt, letter to justify horse's market value, etc.
- **Discounts** are often available for multi horse policies.
- Some insurers offer cover whilst competing outside the UK.
- All insurers have an upper age limit on their standard policies. When a horse reaches this '**Veteran**' age (often between 15 and 20 years) cover is reduced to accidental external injury only for Death and Vets Fees.
- Most companies won't cover horses over 15 years for **permanent loss of use**.
- Always clarify your **policy excesses** before cover is taken up (Most commonly for Vets Fees, Saddlery and Tack and Trailers and Horse Drawn Vehicles).
- The cheapest policy is not always the best value. Read your **policy wording** carefully to check for any exclusions or limitations. Remember, you have a 14 day '**cooling off**' period if you are unhappy in any way. All insurers must refund your premium in full if you cancel the policy within 14 days from the start of cover.
- Check the insurers **refund policy** in the event you wish to cancel cover during the policy period (after the first 14 days of cover). Some companies offer pro rata refunds (the most fair method, based on the number of days left to run on the policy) and some offer sliding scales of refund (e.g. 25% of annual premium refunded if policy cancelled after six months).

If you are concerned about an existing policy, or your renewal date is fast approaching, please do not hesitate to call me on 01283 520447, or email me at [kerry@kahorseinsurance.co.uk](mailto:kerry@kahorseinsurance.co.uk). I'm always pleased to be of help.