

Wind Turbine experiences

2012 survey results

The
British
Horse
Society



Introduction

The Government's commitment to renewable energy has meant a large increase in the number of wind farms and domestic turbines over the last few years.

In 1995, in response to the Government seeking guidance, the BHS recommended that there should be a distance of at least 200m between a turbine and the nearest off-road equestrian route, which was supported by the Countryside Commission at the time. However, this was based on turbine heights of less than 60 metres and by 1998 there were already applications for turbines of 100m, so the BHS urged Government to revise its guidance to an appropriate formula of three times the height of the turbine with an absolute minimum of 200 metres.

Although the three times height was accepted by the Countryside Agency, the Government's guidance was not revised. The Agency went further and proposed that four times the height be recommended for national trails and promoted equestrian routes on the basis that these are likely to be used by horses unfamiliar with turbines.

Government guidance up to July 2013 said: "The British Horse Society ... has suggested a 200 metre exclusion zone around bridle paths to avoid wind turbines frightening horses. Whilst this could be deemed desirable, it is not a statutory requirement ...". In many cases, this separation distance was adopted as reasonable; however, the latest Government guidance does not specifically refer to horses and says: "Other than when dealing with set back distances for safety, distance of itself does not necessarily determine whether the impact of a proposal is unacceptable." The latest BHS guidance, revised as a result of this survey, gives a number of factors which increase the impact of wind turbines on equestrian access and which should increase the set back distance.

Concerns are frequently voiced by equestrians that wind turbines pose a threat to the safety of horses, their riders, drivers or handlers. It is argued that with training any horse will become habituated to turbines, but reports indicated that this is not always the case. In the absence of formal trials, there is little evidence available to decision-makers on wind energy projects about their effect on horses, so the BHS conducted a survey to gather information and to guide the need for further research.

The aim of the survey was to gather feedback from equestrians across a

¹ Planning for Renewable Energy A Companion Guide to NPPF (para 56)

range of circumstances to indicate the extent of any hazard posed by turbines and to show areas that would benefit from further investigation. The results would be used in responding to proposed turbine developments as well as informing BHS policies and guidance to developers.

The Survey

From 1 May to 23 June 2012, the BHS ran an online survey of equestrians' experience with wind turbines. It was promoted in various BHS newsletters, on its website and by some of its regional groups, as well as being covered extensively in national publications as a result of a press release.

Questions were phrased to avoid attempts to mislead the survey results by false responses and, on the whole, this appears to have been achieved. The data contains some incomplete responses.

Results

Have you ridden near or among wind turbines?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	55.9%	415
No	44.1%	328
	answered question	743
	skipped question	2

How many turbines were there?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
One	22.9%	86
One to five	34.8%	131
Five to ten	19.9%	75
More than ten	22.3%	84
	answered question	376
	skipped question	369

How high were they?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 50m (high voltage 'super' pylons are about 55m)	28.8%	107

50m to 100m	50.3%	187	
more than 100m	21.0%	78	
	answered question		372
	skipped question		373

How close was your route to the base of the closest turbine?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
20m	29.0%	108
50m	25.7%	96
100m	17.4%	65
200m	14.7%	55
500m	9.7%	36
more	3.5%	13
Please explain if you think it would be helpful		65
	answered question	373
	skipped question	372

Responses received:

Windmill turning, and closer than 20m, about 10m

Schooling area only 10m from 5kw turbine

My horse's field is 200m from nearest turbine, house 400m

Horse was spooked by moving turbines at a distance of approximately 500m

Height and distance from the bridleway is approx

Horse was in same pasture as the turbine and was not disturbed at all by it during the week she stayed there

This turbine is very close to a road I ride along

The route went through the middle of the wind farm

I was participating in an endurance ride and the route went along a track through the middle of the turbines in the Lammermuir hills. It was also a very windy day. I was concerned because a turbine in that area had exploded and the blades shattered a few months before!

The turbines are in a neighbour's field

There is a path round the turbine site

I have a wind farm of six turbines less than 1km, but more than 500m, from my house and every day they are turning they terrify my poor horse and it breaks my heart – it's all very well saying they will get used to them – why should they have to – horses are designed to flee from threatening movement and that's just what she wants to do

Probably between 100 and 200

There is one at the other side of my family's farm.

Less than 20m

I was based at Deli Farm, Delabole – one of the first wind farms in Cornwall – where their 800 acres was available for riding

The wind turbine is alongside a bridle path – there is a wide gap in the hedge and you are VERY close to it

Very close as we rode through, so less than 20m

There was plenty of space between us and the wind turbines

I was closer at times

We can ride on tracks through the wind turbine site

The closest (largest) turbine is nearest the road; corner of Long Lane/Short Lane, Stannington, Sheffield 6; although I've never measured it, it seems almost on top of you as you ride past; several people have commented that if it ever toppled, it appears to be likely to reach the roadside, although I understood planning permission stipulates safer margins.

This is the Llandinam wind farm with bridleways going through it

Such a long time ago, memory is not clear!

This was where the bridleway entered the outer edges of the wind complex

Route is a road that passes the field where turbines are

I rode past/through a wind farm in Lancashire in 2000, I cannot remember their exact height and distance from the bridleway

I rode in between them to get on to the beach

Several turbines at this wind farm are less than 50m from a public highway

Terrible experience, horse spooked all over the place . . . never again

Out draghunting with the field when the turbines started up suddenly; this turbine was the outermost but still threw the whole field into a panic

I only like to pass them if there is hardly any wind due to the noise

Less than 10 metres, more like 5

I live just over one mile from the Llandinam wind farm in mid-Wales and had to ride past these turbines on a bridleway that I used to regularly use

I am not sure how tall they were, (large) and we got right up to them

Horse lives in field right next to it

Nasty things, disturb the horses

The turbines are close to a wood which I ride in, but are also clearly visible from one of the bridleways outside the wood

Five miles away

Pleasure ride, went past wind turbines

This was with horses that were used to turbines

One original turbine approx 50m high and 50m from route, then another 100m high approx 100m from route

This was about 18 months ago on the Trans Wales Trail run by the Turner family at Cwmfforest Riding Centre near Brecon; we saw the windmills several times on this day gradually getting closer until we were on a track running past the site

International endurance ride – my horse had never been near turbines before in his life

It is in an adjacent field to my livery yard

These turbines were on the Pennine Bridleway, that is the Mary Towneley Loop near Burnley; I have difficulty remembering how near they were so I have guessed!

This b/w section passed what felt like underneath them, terrible noise – my mare ran to the other side of field

Rode through a wind farm on an endurance ride

Actually less than 20m

Route was on common, not b-way

Was using wind farm tracks

Public road adjacent to wind farm; there are bridledways closer but the horses would not go near

Two turbines approx 10m from public highway

We go right below it

Warcock Hill near Bacup on pleasure ride

Rode close enough to touch it

The turbines are on farm land adjacent to the forest I normally ride on; they dominate the area as they are 125m

The wind turbines are in fields without bridledways, but close to the road

On a house next to the yard gate

Some are within 20m of small country lanes; one in particular is within 20m of bridledway

Less than 20m, in fact I can stand right under it

Turbines were next to the road and the car park where we unloaded

On a path that ran through the turbines, approx 300m from some of the turbines I think, maybe less.

Average distance – the presence of turbines is noticeable over a wide area where I ride, not just when in the immediate proximity

How did your horse react the FIRST or ONLY time you went near turbines?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Did not seem to react	24.4%	88
Aware of the turbines but calm	35.5%	128
Anxious at first & became calmer as went by	12.5%	45
Became more anxious as came closer	7.5%	27
Remained anxious from first approach until well past	15.5%	56
Would not go near turbines	4.7%	17
Other reaction, or any comment		74
	answered question	361
	skipped question	384

Responses received:

To be honest they had seen them from a distance of approx one mile for several months beforehand

I thought it would be a problem in high winds as the turbine makes quite a noise then – but he doesn't react to the turbine at all

Spinning around, was quite scary as thought he may bolt

OK during normal operation, violently react during high speed test

This was in Spain on horses that had passed the turbines before, but the horse was only five years old

My horse was a veteran school mistress – would not have liked to have been on a youngster
Nearly fell off!

My horse became tense as we went up the hill and I had to encourage her to keep going; she then scooted forward every time we passed a turbine, I think this was because of the noise they make

It is now unsafe for me to ride my horse in my own field due to the turbines next door

The first time we went past the turbines were still, which is easier

My horse panicked and cut an artery; I hope this survey will give me room to explain properly somewhere

It depends which way we approached them; down wind the gearing made a VERY loud noise which the horses found upsetting

When she sees them face-on walking along the road she reacts but remains anxious until we go off the road but doesn't over react – but when I'm schooling she can see the movement of the blades and sometimes she leaps sideways, from which I have fallen and most of the time approaching them she is just extremely anxious; everything affects her – noise, movement, height; they are disgusting and highly dangerous for horses

VERY anxious, in fact dangerously anxious

I think it helped my horse that she saw it being put up

He kept on napping as soon as he saw the wind turbines, stayed extremely tense and once almost past them attempted to bolt past them a number of times.

Very difficult to get my horse to go forward, he was napping and trying to run off

I only ride past it when it's not windy enough for it to be moving as it is quite noisy

Horse trusts rider so listened to voice and settled

Tried to jump over the shadows

My horse did not bat an eyelid, even though you could hear it, kept walking forward as if nothing was there

Only looked at the shadows

Fredo made no noticeable reaction when he first saw the turbines

Anxious but followed other horses past

I did not notice the turbine at first, perhaps this had an influence on my usually spooky horse!

The only saving grace to this site is that there is a large livery yard nearby, where horses grazing close fields seem to have acclimatised and act as a calming example and influence to ones ridden past; my horse is sharp, but I was prepared to insist he continued because we could clearly see other quietly grazing horses nearby

Was with other horses which helped – they were more used to them

My wife has a younger horse and we cannot even consider taking him there; the movement and sound is too much!

Experienced horse very well trained – I am an experienced rider

Leading pony in-hand past 13 turbines; passed three turbines then turbines started to turn,

pony pulled away from me then bolted until past the turbines, then stopped

There were three of us and I don't remember any great problem however, and we were riding for an entire week, so the horses were better used to odd things they met

He was absolutely fine and seemed completely relaxed about them

The horse I was riding was used to riding near the turbine with other riders often

Would not have gone past if not in company

I am a very experienced rider having ridden for more than 15 years up to 2* horse, normally easy to hack

I fell off but they are good for the environment so the horse needs to get used to it

Didn't seem to notice the first few times, but then noticed when approaching from another direction

Out hunting with the field was the hilltoppers' field master; the whole field didn't like it as the turbine started up suddenly; two horses spun and bolted, my mare had to stop them; I got off to calm her down; she was always better when being led, not ridden

Had to turn back

The first horse I am referring to is pretty skittish and I thought he'd run a mile and panic – he didn't bat an eyelid

It also depends on the wind speed, as it may be a calm day and no real problems, then the next time it may be windy and the horse will be more anxious to start with until he is used to it

Heart rate quickened, tried to turn around (even with a calm pony in front) and very upset; luckily I was riding in a pelham bit and had a whip with me which enabled me to go past in control (just!!) – my mare is a very well schooled dressage and competition horse

My horse was out with my other horse, just looked at it and the other, older, horse showed no reaction, so he was fine

The turbines are visible from our paddock at home and when they first went up, my horses were spooked; by the time I rode one of my horses near them, I think he was quite acclimatised to them

Severely stressed/panicked/traumatised/terrified/shaking/sweating

It depends on the wind speed that day . . . there are two turbines next door to me; on a windy day they can make a high-pitched noise and on other days they can sound like helicopter blades

Think because he was with others he stayed fairly calm

As previous comment

All but one of the horses on this trail ride had been there many times; the lead horse was less experienced but did not have a problem; my estimate of the distance is my best guess

The wind was blowing strongly, so the horses didn't really hear the sound of the turbines I don't think

Just told her it was a large white tree

Depends on the weather, if it is windy as well the horse was very spooky and tried to get past as fast as possible; if there is bright/low sun the flickers on the road made him spook and jump

I've taken 10 horses around turbines on a wind farm with none of them reacting to them

Reacted badly when they were going around very quickly

Horse kept stopping and trying to spin round, when we went past he kept trying to bolt away

He was very anxious and the only reason I got past them without an accident was due to the fact he didn't want to leave his companions in the ride

She was keen to see where the new tracks took her

Had to lead a whirling frantic horse – there was a gale at the time

Did not react at all; if anything, loved them

Horse naturally highly anxious – improved around large equipment/vehicles

The severity of the reaction depends on wind and shadow flicker direction

needed strong leg and lots of encouragement

Reared upright and would not continue

The shadows caused by the moving blades on the ground were the problem

This was during a high wind and it may be that the horse was more aware of the wind around him which lessened his reaction to the turbines; there was noise from them but I can't say it bothered him

We have much more noisy, fast-moving objects out on hacks

We live on Pennines and she is very chilled and used to seeing them; we have trouble with youngsters, though

Very scared of the noise

No problem at all

Anxious when first aware they were there – now not bothered

One of the turbines started up as we went past and horse had freak out!

My horse reacted no differently

The constant humming seemed to be what disturbed my horse as she showed unease from some distance away

Riders should train their horses, not blame the turbines

How severe was the reaction?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Negligible	25.7%	67
Slight	23.0%	60
Moderate but controllable	28.7%	75
Severe, hard to control	16.1%	42
Serious, out of control (spin round or bolt)	6.5%	17
Please explain if it would be helpful		33
	answered question	261
	skipped question	484

Responses received:

This is during high speed test, not normal turbine operation

Shying, side-stepping, half-rearing

More concerned about signs on the site!

My horse is an experienced endurance horse and copes well with most situations; some other riders at this competition had to turn back at the turbines and retire from the competition because their horses refused to go near them

i have tried grazing my horse in the field closest to the turbines but he still remains unsettled and unrideable in this field

I was not with her when the wind turbine was erected next door; no-one told us; I found her bleeding profusely an hour after it was erected

I would describe her reaction as severe but she is not uncontrollable as she is a lovely horse, but I would not trust that either the noise or shadow flicker or movement wouldn't at any time cause her to become seriously out of control

He is very well schooled and I think this helped to control him

Was anxious of blade and noise above his head but responded well to rider instruction

None really

He is a sensitive animal, big frame 16hh Welsh Section D, about 700kg, and he was genuinely frightened

We were all experienced riders on well-schooled horses that had formed themselves into a small herd

I have four horses, all the same reaction

Only got past on a calm day because older horse accepted the situation

Horse was genuinely terrified and trembling; a less experienced rider would have got decked

There wasn't a reaction at all – turbines aren't a problem

It started turning as we got near, she didn't like the movement or the noise, I had to get off; the other horses with her were all snorting and spooking as well

He looked at them but wasn't bothered; he's a Welsh Cob that spooks at twigs and leaves – wind turbines didn't bother him

I am a BHS Intermediate rider and had to use all my experience to control her in her fear

The turbines were not switched on

Moderate to severe – novice rider would not have coped

Three people including rider struggled to control him

He is a very genuine but young horse, I felt bad at having to put him in that situation, he was frightened.

I felt her tense up and slightly quicken her pace.

The noise of the wind was frightening, even I felt unerved as they are so big

Would have been out of control on my own – as per previous answer, only controllable due to following other horses

I managed to get past but was badly bruised and my horse very frightened even though she is usually calm

I have been riding this horse for more than 20 years, I know when not to push the issue, so as soon as it was clear he would react if we went closer I diverted onto a different trail away from the turbines

Rear with bunny hopping backwards, Spanish school would have been very happy! I wasn't!

Charging and plunging, frothing, would not go past after turbine started, nearly had me off a few times!

To be honest there was no difference in my horse

Control was not really the issue – she was distressed

Take time, let your horse work it out

What do you think your horse was reacting to?

Rank from most to least likely for all.

Answer Options	Most likely	Maybe	Unlikely	Not sure	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
Sound of turbines	102	69	38	14	21	2.16	244
Movement of blades	116	86	15	11	17	2.35	245
Movement of shadows	66	65	60	12	28	1.91	231
Height/sight of turbines	64	73	60	11	18	1.91	226
Blades changing angle of travel	17	36	87	29	51	1.24	220
Blades starting to move from static	20	24	64	14	94	1.41	216
Being surrounded by turbines	20	33	78	19	73	1.36	223
Reaction of companions	14	39	58	12	96	1.45	219
Rider's expectation of negative reaction	13	40	88	18	57	1.30	216
Something else on the site – workers, machinery	8	10	50	8	133	1.24	209
Other (please specify)							19
							answered question 261
							skipped question 484

Responses received:

The sun was high as we drove mid-afternoons, I must say I didn't have the opportunity to drive with the blades shadowing the ground, which I have been led to believe can spook them badly, I can't comment on this fact

The turbine was not in motion

Signs and other normal stuff

A movement high in the sky which the horse cannot understand

They also emit low frequency vibrations which animals are very attuned to – this has affected neighbour's property (an old dry stone wall) over a mile away

At the back of my house I do not hear the turbines but that does not mean she doesn't hear them – in my horse's field which is further away than my house but more directly opposite them I can hear the turbines – swoooosh swoooosh – so the horses are subjected to this all

day long; there is much more galloping in the field than I used to have, but other times they graze happily so I can guess the turbines disturb them at times

I was on ground that was higher than the turbine bases, it felt like the bright, rotating, blades were in our faces

The strength of the wind

Companion, had it not been for quietly grazing horses nearby, I suspect he might have bolted, particularly as it is closest to you right on the bend in the road

Horses are super aware of energy

The reaction was the same as a car parked or walkers with dogs for instance

Horse normally hacks on his own so being alone was not an issue

Our companion was very spooked, he kept on stopping in his tracks and sunk down on his hocks, preparing for flight mode

The noise was unnerving with no obvious source for the horse

My horse is pretty laid back and I was not expecting a negative reaction

Frozen ice coming off the rotating turbines blades; sun reflecting from blades

Something that was not there before

Other horses weren't happy but not to the same degree, but they were behind and the turbine that went on was directly in front of my horse, so no perceived protection from group

No adverse reaction

How close were you to the base of the closest turbine when your horse began to react and at what distance was the reaction strongest?

Answer Options	20m	50m	100m	200m	500m	more	Response Count
Began to react	25	56	49	55	33	16	234
Strongest reaction	50	55	43	30	14	8	200
Please explain if you think it would be helpful							68
						answered question	237
						skipped question	508

Responses received:

Didn't react, only 10m away

Didn't get nearer than 200m

N/A

He got worse the closer he got to them

Was 400m on own property

Again this answer is only approx

Strange question as the horse didn't react! See answer to previous question; you seem to be biased to adverse reactions

My horse became tense as we climbed the hill approaching the turbines; she was still tense as we passed them but started to bolt forward as we passed the base of each turbine; she

was also showing concern at the moving shadows on the ground

My horse has not been the same since the turbines were put up

My neighbour got permission to erect a wind turbine one field away from my horses' day paddock; no-one told me; it was erected one afternoon and when I went to bring the horses in at 5pm I found my big mare hot and sweaty with blood pouring out of the inside of her rear leg where she had cut herself on the opposite shoe; she had clearly walked to the corner of her field, suddenly seen the turbine and pirouetted away in panic; it took four hours to stop the bleeding and she was on antibiotics for two weeks

The turbines are more than 500m away but less than 1km and are full on as I lead my horse from the field to my home; every time I come from my house to the road she reacts until she takes it all in; as I ride out of my drive on to the road it is very possible one day she will react as a car approaches or passes; it has become a very stressful unsafe procedure just to come out of my driveway

Only went to 100m then turned away to avoid potential problems

Looked while walking, carried on as usual

She noticed from some distance and got more upset as we got closer

Horse went past but gave it a good sideways look

Less than 20m

No reaction

The horse didn't react

My horse didn't really react at all to the turbines beyond pricking his ears and marching a little quicker than usual, which was a good thing!

Didn't risk trying to get any closer

He didn't really react!

You can see this turbine turning from right along the road – initiating a reaction; it also becomes visible as you ride up Woodbank and Dobb Lanes – the turning blades emerging over the horizon is most peculiar and elicits response from most ridden horses even though they are nowhere near the actual turbines at this point

But reaction negligible

Negligible reaction

Didn't have need to go any closer, so stayed on edge of horses comfort zone

Turbine was in a school yard, and we rode around the edge of the yard as part of an endurance race

The feeling was quite intense it required riding my horse, I did not feel the need to get off but leadership was required

There was a reaction when we saw them from both horses and inevitably the riders

Same as with a car parked or walkers with dogs for instance, or rabbit

No reaction, so cannot answer this question as it presumes a reaction

Couldn't get closer as horse refused point blank to move forward; not normally nappy in the slightest

They don't react

When 200m away she was eyeing the turbine but was OK, as we got within 150m of the blades, they started turning, then the panic set in; needless to say I have avoided this hunt ever since

Turned back at approx 50 metres

His reaction was only to look at them in the distance/ahead

Still reacted negligibly

No reaction

My mare is usually a lovely calm horse to hack and it was the movement of the blades (and trying to get her to go through the shadows on the ground that really upset her; her companion did not worry very much at all but he was in his late 20s and bomb-proof

Just reacted slightly as it was a new turbine which was about 20m, a bit closer than the others, had no reaction to other turbines which were at least 50m+ away

Had a little shy, once he's used to them they won't bother him

This was the closest we got

As we got closer, he seemed to settle more

Did not really mind at all, just looked

He didn't really react

We approached from a distance so horses could see and here them from early on

I was surprised how little he reacted; the turbine was at an already 'blackspot' but he didn't bother much

No real reaction and no change over distance

She just looked with ears pricked but continued to trot in the same speed

Height and shadows caused initial reaction, but OK as came closer

Bridleway headed towards the first turbine then turned 90 degrees, so ran parallel to group, horse just lifted his head and slowed but was happy to walk past

When he was facing it

My horse could see the blades over the tree tops from a long way off and kept stopping to look at them

Very difficult to say

The track was very close but we could not get anywhere near it, was grateful for field, had it been a road I would not be here

Reaction was negligible

Very slight

Reaction negligible on all accounts

As I approached, she became anxious at the noise and was very nervous passing and tried to run away from them

This relates to first time – when got no closer – I now ride right under them

Strongest reaction between 250-300m

She backed off at first then refused to go forward unless led – this is an experienced endurance pony

She could see them in the distance and was unsure

It was not safe to go closer

Shadows cast at various distances at different times of day; options to take alternative routes are not always possible due to boundary fences for instance and ground conditions such as marshlands and bogs on open mountains

I think react is the wrong word for my experience, horse gave them a fleeting look and carried on as normal

Only one turbine in a field for farm use, very spooked by noise

About 300m on path that ran through forest of turbines

I rode within about 200m of turbines

Have you ridden the same horse at the same turbine site more than once and if so how often?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
No, only once	34.8%	122
A few times	35.9%	126
Often	29.3%	103
	answered question	351
	skipped question	394

Has your horse's reaction changed over time, that is, having been ridden by the turbines before?

Answer Options	More	Less	Same	Depends on conditions	Response Count
My horse now reacts	4	88	84	38	214
Please explain if you think it would be helpful					52
					answered question
					skipped question
					214
					531

Responses received:

I have to ride her in very windy conditions, otherwise on calm days takes no notice

Reacts more on windy days

Has never shown any reaction whatsoever to the turbines

Takes no notice at all

OK now during normal operation, bolt during high speed test for which there is no notification; only a matter of time before there is an accident

Reacts more when windy

Noise is much louder and faster blade rotation on windier days

My horse was joined by six others throughout the week, none of who reacted to it

Never been any significant reaction at both sites

Windy conditions are not as good.

It is too dangerous to ride close to the turbines

Since the accident I have regularly ridden my horse to the turbine and made her look at it; clearly a rider can give the horse confidence; equally clearly, when a horse sees the turbine for the first time, be it in a hack or because it is a newly-installed turbine, the reaction will be panic

If they are going round and it's windy then more so

She always reacts but how bad the reaction is varies each time I ride – I can only assume the conditions affect what she hears and sees – light conditions, breeze and so on, I don't ride out in strong wind anyway so that would not be a factor

But not taken so close

As I have already said we do not go that way if they are moving

I was at that farm for a year before moving, we are about to have turbines erected in the next field to us, I'm not worried about the horse

My horse doesn't bother about the turbines at all after the first time which was minor anyway
He isn't bothered

He's that sort of horse – he certainly doesn't like it, and has to be ridden past it with plenty of collection and leg, but doesn't now feel as though he is likely to explode; he still rushes past the closest point, and I have to judge passing traffic very carefully

Year's interval between each occasion – probably forgotten

But same reaction as with car parked or walkers with dogs

He has got used to them, by riding past on calm days when they are not moving!

It's like anything else, they need to get used to it; a calm and tactful approach and good handling is all that is required

It has never been a problem for myself or any of my children on their ponies

He doesn't do anything more than look at them, reaction is the same each time, he doesn't mind them at all

Depends on wind speed

My mare now gets very upset (jogs, heart beats loudly, sweats and tries to whip around) whenever we turn onto the bridleway towards the turbines

If it's very windy, being a thoroughbred, he is naturally jumpy

The turbines have not yet been turned on in our area; I could repeat this survey in three weeks after they have been turned on

Little or no reaction now

If it's windy and turbines making a noise then horse a little anxious

If it is windy, he gets very spooky by every movement and sound!

Does not react anymore

He starts to get anxious before we turn the corner where the turbine is in full view; he jig jogs the whole way past and keeps stopping, trying to spin round

Never any significant reaction

No reaction

Was not bothered at all any of the times we rode past

Other environmental factors influence his behaviour – companions, wind speed, rain

Worse with bright sunshine – but generally better on the whole

As he could see the turbine for some time took no notice at all

Doesn't appear to be bothered at all any more

Sometimes turbines are noisier or blades face in different direction, if blades move he's very scared

I have not been there alone again; the horse is OK but only if following another horse – it will not lead

It's the shadows; no sun, no shadow, no reaction

Totally ignores now

Depends whether blades are coming toward road or parallel to

Doesn't react at all now

No change, couldn't care less about them

None of the horses I've ridden past the turbines reacted at all

It has never been a problem

Wind direction seems to make a difference

Do you think your horse is reacting to the same thing as the first time?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	37.4%	76
No	13.8%	28
Probably	24.1%	49
Not sure	11.8%	24
It depends on conditions	12.8%	26
	answered question	203
	skipped question	542

Do any variable conditions change your horse's reaction and how?

Answer Options	Reacts more	Reacts less	No change	Not sure	N/A	Response Count
Faster blade movement (windy)	67	1	95	12	24	199
Stronger shadows (bright sunlight)	39	4	102	23	25	193
Closer shadows (time of day/year)	25	3	110	21	28	187
Angle of blades more in line with your path (wind direction)	16	4	115	25	28	188
Blades starting to move from static	28	4	83	17	51	183
Companions' reactions	28	4	81	15	56	184
Other distractions	20	3	78	24	55	180
Other (please						

specify) or explain
if you think it would
be helpful

46

answered question

207

skipped question

538

Responses received:

More noise on windy days

As above, my horse – and friends horses who have been with me have never shown any reaction to the turbines at any wind speed or weather conditions

No

She doesn't mind them anymore, and she is a flighty mare

Noise important – small turbines make loud wurring sound

Again, you are suggesting that the horse is reacting to the turbines; he hasn't

I have taught this horse to accept this turbine; it will not help the next time a turbine goes up (and they are spreading like a nasty rash) and we had to go through three weeks of misery and more than £600 of vet's bills over the first turbine

If you forget if you are not hearing the turbines I often think what's she seen? what's made her react? and you look roadside and in fields then you remember about the turbines and sure enough it's easy to tell that's what's bothering her; you look roadside or in fields for instance for all

Completely transfixed by them; does not notice other hazards (such as traffic)

I have to choose my route and do a risk assesment based on weather conditions

No change, very happy

No issue with any of my horses after initial suprise – same sort of reaction to passing garden with barking dog for instance

Always rode alone and never saw the turbines start up while riding past

This horse has never reacted, this has not changed, questions 7 and 8 could be seen to be biased

Niether Fredo or Jacko are bothered

My horse reacts to other horses/riders being upset but not the turbine as it is static

Very windy weather there is more noise, and other unsettling things, generally; if the grazing horses are playing around, that is unsettling, too, although their presence is generally very helpful; when the shadows flash across the road, especially when light keeps glancing off the turbine, all this is more hazardous; we've never seen it start from static, and don't really want to

These questions are misleading; my horse did not react, as I said in previous questions

Calmer companions help him to move past them when they aren't moving too fast, while flightier companions do the opposite as expected.

Same as with walkers with dogs or rabbits or birds

He has, after two years of riding past them, now accepted the situation

Tractors/vehicles at the base of the turbine (newly erected)

This happend four years ago so I can't remember too much about it now, but I think it was

mainly the noise that bothered him

Dependant on the cloud cover and how much the turbine stands out from the background

My horses are more aware of the turbine if it is windier or there is shadow, but not to react as such

The turbines are on an open hillside and pony reacts the same as on any open hillside whether it has turbines or not – becomes excitable and lively to ride! (never anxious)

I have ridden under/around turbines around 85 times in two-three years and never seen the blades turn from static

I have taken her past the wind turbines more than 20 times throughout the past year and she hates them each time

My other horse, a Cob, is just about bomb-proof and doesn't react at all to them, which helps my other horse

Turbine is now seen as part of local furniture

Not entirely sure whether reaction is due to turbines or strong winds at that site and she tends to stride out up the hill past the turbines

He is just anxious the whole time riding past; he trusts me but I feel bad that this spoils our otherwise relaxed happy ride for him

My horse is on his toes in windy conditions regardless of turbines or not

Looks at the shadows if there is strong sunlight

Other distractions are everywhere

Very nervous about birds flying out of the hedge or grass!

Workmen and heavy plant movements

Not ridden past them enough to answer most of these – didn't really notice much change though

Sometimes the turbines are noisier dependant on the wind direction; he pays more attention when they are noisy but would still say that he isn't particularly bothered

He no longer reacts

Traffic passing so horse is trapped between blades and traffic

Only thing he worries about is if there are cows in the fields around them

Moved in October so hard to remember and give accurate guide

My horses are used to seeing all sorts of things so turbines aren't a problem

My horse reacts more to rubbish blowing around than he does to the turbines!

Sound is more noticeable on a windy day, but low-level background hum can be heard from a long way away on a still day – I suspect that this troubles horses at an instinctive level

How 'spooky' is your horse?

Please rate from 1 = not at all to 5 = very spooky

Answer Options	Response	Response
	Percent	Count
1	15.0%	51
2	33.2%	113
3	30.0%	102
4	16.8%	57
5	5.0%	17
Please explain if you think it would be helpful		50
	answered question	340
	skipped question	405

Responses received:

Generally quiet, but when she tries to spook at something she is ridden firmly; when young she was obviously allowed to see things, but then she had to learn that spooky behaviour was not acceptable

Great in heaviest of traffic but will spook if something has changed on a familiar route

Will spook in the road at a cigarette packet and is not too good in traffic

Hates pigs and loud bangs, such as bird scarers

Spooks at shadows in the hedge, litter and bags but is generally laid back

He is partially sighted, but most of the time is not spooky

She only ever spooked occasionally before the turbines and there was always a visible reason

Hates traffic and spooks always

Spooky to turbines or in general? In general a bird can fly out in front of him and no reaction

Horse very reliable, takes confidence from rider, can spook but seldom – for instance, at pheasant flying up in close proximity

Hates plastic, spooks at silage trailers when empty

Fit and very awake but obedient and trusting of me

Mareish!

My horse is 100 percent bomb-proof

If anything appears different my horse can do 180 degree turn, but will accept that she has to go forward when told

He is very sensitive and sharp, got a lot of mental energy, but not really spooky; mostly quite sensible about things like flapping sheets, bonfires, roadworks, into snowdrifts and so on; I do ride him out in windy conditions, and expect him to square up to new things

Spooks at things such as roll of fencing netting in hedge or ditch, basically at things not visible from a distance

Though he's a thoroughbred he's bomb-proof more than 90 percent of the time; our other horses are not quite as good and sadly we avoid the area

Experienced horse

Generally OK except for a few things such as big, loud lorries

Leaf, jumps a mile, big lorry fine

Nervous horse, lacks confidence

Horse is 11 years old and competed at 2* eventing/travelled/stabled away frequently without issue

This particular horse was very spooky!

She is very good at most things, but anything unexpected can upset her start up, really spooked her

Two of our ponies are more reactive though, but still don't mind the turbine

He's a Welsh Cob – it's part of who they are! Leaves, twigs, birds, rabbits, flowers, foliage, stones, tree stumps, you name it he will either look at it or jump out of its way; turbines are fine, though.

My mare is superb in the heaviest traffic and has competed in the musical RC Quadrille – she is also a super showjumper and competes regularly in dressage and eventing

More if it's windy

Depends on situation, he had a short attention span

Occasionally invents horrific dragons!

She is generally spooky but no more reactive by the turbines; she tries to race up the road adjacent to the 13 turbines

Ex-racehorse, even though he's now 16, he still has thoroughbred mentality at times

Is partially sighted, so if not concentrating he can suddenly react to things 'appearing' out of his blind side

He is a young horse who takes most things in his stride, but he has not seen a lot of the world; he is very genuine and a laid back chap, albeit green

Usually reasonably sensible; sudden noises and rattles (such as a noisy trailer) tend to frighten him

He's a veteran TREC horse – seen it all; busy roads to open moors – tractors/low-flying jets and so on!

Ex-racing stock but more mature/sensible these days . . . (give or take!)

Very spooky of sudden movement or the unexpected

We breed competition horses, therefore dealing with youngsters every day

She does long miles alone and doesn't spook

We ride past the turbines to keep off the road

Traffic-proof, but spooky at objects in hedges for instance

15-year-old ride and drive Cob who has sight of nearest turbine from field with no reaction

Three-year-old newly broken in

Hates cows, and all the usual stupid things

He is laid back and can be stubborn – I hack out in spurs to ride him forward

All are pretty bomb-proof

My horse is only five, but she is rarely spooky except in challenging new situations

She's not very spooky, but TBx so very fast reactions if she does react

How would you rate your riding ability?
From 1= novice to 5 = very competent

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1	1.8%	6
2	4.7%	16
3	20.1%	68
4	33.3%	113
5	40.1%	136
Please explain if you think it would be helpful		34
	answered question	339
	skipped question	406

Responses received:

Getting less competent with age, but never up with the top competition riders!

Carriage driver, not rider

Very competent but getting on a bit

I have been riding for more than 30 years and have been endurance riding for 20 years; this requires me to be able to ride over all types of terrain

I am a BHSAI and have worked with horses for more than 30 years

I've been riding all my life and am now in my 60s – and have experience of backing and schooling, and the times I have fallen off were due to jumping mishaps; until about three weeks ago I have never fallen off since probably my teens

BHS 2 and Level 3

Have a good partnership with horse, confident

BHSII T SM

Moderate competence – very calm and unphased

Although riding for a number of years, not confident rider

I have been riding for more than 10 years, on a variety of different horses

Advanced Endurance rider

I have ridden for about 50 years, still hunt and pleasure rides

I've been riding nearly 50 years, owned, bred, driven, shown, hunted Welsh Section D Cobs since I was a teenager, and owned this horse for seven years

Parelli Level 3/4 means I have horsemanship skills as well as riding ability; the two are very different

Was leading pony at the times

I have been riding for 46 years; and horse owner for 45 years

Was lottery funded, ridden for more than 15 years; regularly ridden out racehorses including youngsters on roads

Ride three different horses a couple of times each per week

Always a very difficult question; I always think of myself as about middling but I have my own horses (have done for almost 30 years) and have been riding for more than 40 years; I compete

and hack out but I do not consider myself to be to be a brilliant rider

I have ridden all my life and break in youngsters regularly – also an Intermediate BHS instructor

Have Stage 4

Forty years' riding experience

Ridden all my life

Intermediate

I am an older rider, so not so brave any more but plenty of experience.

I have been riding for more than 30 years and have had my horse for eight years

Successful endurance competitor over several years and 55 years riding experience

Owned horses 29 years

Just an average rider who rides daily.

Been riding on/off for 30 years; done a bit of everything but not seriously, but can hold my own if needed

Been riding for more than 40 years

BHSAI

How would you rate your relationship with this horse?

From 1 = new/difficult to 5 = strong/go anywhere do anything

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1	1.8%	6
2	5.3%	18
3	16.5%	56
4	33.8%	115
5	42.6%	145
Please explain if you think it would be helpful		36
	answered question	340
	skipped question	405

Responses received:

Nine-year-old home bred

I have owned this horse for eight years' she is the Scottish Endurance horse for 2011 for distance covered and points accumulated; we are a great team.

I have had this horse since a yearling – he is now five years old and he really trusts me

I have had her since she was a baby

She is just a delight – sensitive but very trusting of people and occasionally unsure, trusts you and follows you with caution but without fuss

Had years, but stubborn at times

Speak to the horse a lot and take part in horse agility/handy pony so used to doing unusual things; hacks out and sees the world

She's only five!

Owned six months – youngster – good relationship of trust

Owned her for seven years and love her to bits; if I could go anywhere with her I would, but don't have the confidence

I have complete trust in my horse, and my horse has complete trust in me, we are a solid partnership

This horse was hit by a mountain biker, he is now very wary of cycles and motorbikes, and anything coming quickly towards him in an enclosed space; therefore I avoid many of our narrow byways and bridledways, because of the speeding cycles

Fairly young horse but I bred him – Arab so very sensitive!

This horse, while not mine, is a trail horse – he has seen it all!

Ride four horses under turbine, all different from new to eventers (intermediate standard TB/ID fit horses)

Have had the horse since he was a newly broken four-year-old; got to intermediate by eight years old; clever horse

It was good, but he's since died due to head shaking syndrome unfortunately, and this could have been why he was so spooky; I would have no hesitation in taking my two current horses past wind turbines

Had her 16 years, had to get off and lead her past; she was terrified; she will follow me through thick and thin, we have a very strong bond

We do BHS TREC – he is always brave and rarely phased by anything

Go anywhere, do anything within the confines of his bravery!

I do all RC and BS competitions and have even done some TREC classes plus gymkhana games for fun

I was breaking in a baby who did look at the turbines

We go out hunting

After 10 years I can anticipate many of her reactions, but I have learnt not to alert her to potential hazards; she will usually do as I ask – eventually – so we do SJ, XC, TREC

This was a trail riding experience; my mount was an ex-lead horse so he knew his job and would have seen them many times

Only backed for four months

Because he's so quick to react I tend to get more nervous on him than any other horse, which makes him more jumpy

Has done TREC training, so used to the unusual

I have ridden this mare for the last 12 years and have a 12,000km rosette to show as we do many miles in endurance and go everywhere

We point-to-point together, but a fair bit of road work too

I have a very strong bond with this mare, who will do almost anything for me

She will go most places with me, but often prefers me to 'go with her' – for instance, to lead her and face the horrors by her side

Rode the windmill site during construction, JCB's and so on give no problems – it's the shadows

Homebred, know him inside out

Horses I have at the moment are pretty straightforward, but even youngsters become fine with most things they encounter on hacks

He can be a little headstrong at times, but for the majority he is very settled and doesn't believe I'll put him in danger

Please tell us about any experience with a different horse or at another site and whether you would have given similar or different responses to the questions you have already answered. Factors of particular interest are different temperament of horse; previous experience; the type of site (e.g. number, height or distance of the turbines from you); the horse's reactions and possible source of reaction. This may include how you find riding near or among turbines in general.

Answer options

Response count

	180	
answered question		180
skipped question		565

Responses received:

Youngsters are obviously more prone to flighty behaviour, but if ridden regularly, not over fed and given courage by their rider, can be taught to pass anything; rode a large hunter type under a wind farm in the rain and he was fine, having never met them before; but on another occasion was more spooky by a lone turbine on the skyline in winter and I think the shadows effected him

Only one horse and site currently nearby

I have driven my 'spare' pony as well among turbines and she was not bothered either; I do know that many people have problems with these turbines and I can fully appreciate that they could cause serious difficulties to riders and drivers, I think you have to have a sensible approach to these non-efficient turbines with your horses and ponies, I know of several other people who ride and drive up to turbines . . . but they do it each and every day because they have nowhere else to go, they have to 'get on with it', but they are exceptional drivers and riders. Green/young animals and novice rides are another kettle of fish; damned turbines

I have been under other turbines in poor conditions on another spooky young horse; at no time have they bothered about the turbines, much more bothered by pheasants flying out of the bushes and pedestrians and cyclists going by

Ridden three different horses, no reaction from any of them

Only have experience on this horse

Have ridden 100m from North Devon Commercial Array and he took no notice

I do not have another horse and have not been to another site; the one in question runs along a bridle path which is the only one in the area

My situation is that I have to live by the turbines; the horses are OK during normal operation of the turbines but react violently to the HST; there is no legal requirement for notification of this test

I have only experienced riding near turbines in Spain where the horses had no problems as they had obviously become acclimatised to them; I have also ridden TB ex-racehorses in India where they had to endure utter chaos on the roads and tracks, but were completely un-fazed; my opinion is that most horses could learn to get used to them if one has the right attitude in approaching the problem

I find that horses have a good look at them for the first time but very quickly get used to them; I would rather clean energy and a future for my children than fuss over one spooky moment that will pass; horses are good at getting used to things and I think people make far too much fuss!

Have not ridden a different horse past but saw others trying on a pleasure ride I went on and some of them were struggling and very anxious, both horse and rider

Have only ridden in the one wind farm, ten turbines at 110 metres high

My aunt has a wind turbine in her back garden and her horses graze round it all year round and they have never been bothered by it

His reaction was far worse when we come across tractors or any other type of machinery on/around farms

Other horses are less affected; the site is fairly distant, but my horse always watches the turbines warily when they are moving, she is less bothered when they are still

My horse is a Hanovarian Gelding, he is 'fast', and quite sharp (a handful in anyone else's description!); he isn't worried by machinery in general, trucks/air brakes, agricultural machinery, aircraft (including models) do no worry him much, if at all; but should a leaf fall from a tree in the county of Bedfordshire – it's going to kill him; on that ride past the turbines, he was more concerned with a covey of partridges that jumped out in front of him than the 100m high turbines; in my opinion, it's often the riders who become anxious, and because our mounts sense the adrenaline rise, they too become anxious and are more likely to spook, and even take flight as it's in their nature

My other two horses had no reaction whatsoever to the turbines

All the horses I know in my area have some sort of fear of the turbines, these range from moderate to extreme; there is one horse who used to be a 'go anywhere, do anything' but since these have gone up he can become a nervous wreck, spinning and very jumpy

I led two dozen riders through the windfarm on a very misty, windy day; it was quite eerie but only one horse reacted to the turbines, but not that badly; the turbines were making quite a noise

I haven't ridden any of my other horses past turbines yet, but certainly I am sure that one at least who is very edgy would have a very different reaction to coming across them; that said, they find almost everything when out hacking a potential issue

There is one further away from us which our horses pass with no difficulty

I have ridden this horse past another turbine which was smaller and further away, and although nervous his reactions were not as strong; I believe it is too dangerous to ride horses closer than 200m to turbines and that should include being able to ride on your own land

It really depends on the weather; in strong winds I don't go near them, therefore my riding activity is curtailed, but even then the noise is audible over long distances and the moving blades are visible from the horses' field, which can unsettle them; in calm weather, or when they are switched off, we can hack past them, but a worry is that they will start up as we are passing

My vet was appalled that a turbine was installed next to us without my neighbour or the council warning us when it would happen so I could be with the horse and reassure her; this particular turbine is not so much a windmill shape as aeroplane shape; it looks like a large demented mechanical mosquito (and I would imagine that is exactly how it looks to the horse!); even though I have accustomed my horse to this turbine (and indeed, the owner has two neighbour's Welsh Cobs grazing in the field under the turbine – perhaps they cannot see it from below!) any horse going past on the road and seeing it for the first time must be liable to panic; even if the rider is a good one, if you come round a corner and suddenly see it without warning, it

may be too late for the rider to calm the horse; this was a single turbine and relatively small (about 20 metres tall)

No experience of other turbines – I would not choose to ride any horse near turbines if I didn't have to; one near us caught fire last year – they are second hand (from Spain I understand) and I do not consider them to be safe

Farmer has created a pathway by the turbines which provides safer riding away from the public road

I would never subject a horse to wind turbines if I didn't have to, I would move house tomorrow; they are absolutely hideous and the propaganda on how green and environmentally green they are if you do any research is completely flawed; so many are being built on bog and peat which are natural filters for our environment and they are being destroyed by wind farms; ask Noel Edmonds, a previous president of the BHS, who had extensive research done by independent experts and he will tell you the truth about wind farms; most roads around them are all metal roads (hard sharp stones) completely unsuitable for horse's feet; I have an old Arab who has not reacted as badly, but that is leading not riding, and I would never let her take her up close on to a wind farm site; she might not react violently but she would be terrified and I love and respect my horses too much to do this to them – these turbines make me take a breath – they are incredibly dominating and powerful and I have the pleasure of having already four windfarms in sight of my house; there are a total of 13 applications, which mean four villages here in South Lanarkshire will be completely encircled by wind farms; if you really do feel for horses – no matter how many are not bothered or get used to them – should we subject those that will always be stressed by them to these hideous monstrosities

One of the winter turnout fields is 15 metres away from a wind turbine and none of the horses are bothered

I once marshalled on an endurance ride that went close to these turbines; it created a severe problem for many riders (endurance riders do not tend to group – horses are often out individually or in pairs), riders fell in some cases; all subsequent risk assessments showed it was too dangerous to include the route in future rides; reactions were extreme because endurance rides attract horses from a wide area – many would never have seen such things

I also ride past a single turbine that is more exposed and therefore the shadow flicker is more visible; I cannot ride past it when the sun is low in the sky because the flicker goes across the path and is terrifying for my horse, she thinks something is coming for her feet and she can't cope with it

I have ridden my other pony beside a turbine and she was not bothered

Though I agree we need a better energy source, I feel big wind turbines are not the answer

On another ride you have to ride through 20-plus wind turbines; the reaction from these possibly isn't as bad as a reaction to fewer wind turbines. but the horse, who had been very well behaved and relaxed for most of the ride, definitely tenses up and becomes a lot harder to handle once close to the wind turbines; he becomes very anxious and tries to bolt every couple of strides; he gets worse the closer to the wind turbines you get, and once he has gone past them it takes him a long time to settle down again as he is very on edge; being prepared for this reaction at the windmills and having rode him for a number of years, I did manage to control him; however, the experience is not very pleasant and it has put me off riding along this track, so I rarely use an otherwise enjoyable ride

I find that if I am NOT riding straight towards turbines my horse is a bit calmer, but he becomes very nervous when they are directly in front of him

I arrived at a competition in a large field, with eight wind turbines

My three horses had never seen them before, but once they had a look, they were fine

We competed under/around the turbines for four days, in different weather and light conditions
My horses were happy to carry out their job with no further thought to the wind turbines

I have only ever ridden the same horse past this turbine and, to date, have no turbines on the other routes I ride

Personally, I do not have any problems riding near wind turbines, and I am of the opinion that if other riders and their horses have any problems, perhaps they should re-think the routes they take when out hacking; I think a lot of people complain about the wind turbines for the simple reason that they enjoy complaining

They all look at first but get used to it and are not bothered; even considering putting one up in our own fields

Have ridden next to a small turbine 20m high and small blades at Keysoe and horse, although looked, did not react

N/A

Have ridden extensively in Holland where every farm has its own turbine and all the competition KWPN horses are more than happy to accept the turbines as everyday life; some of them are very noisy out there, especially the old ones!

I competed my horse at a horse trials and on walking the course rounded a corner near a wood to be faced with a 50m wind turbine within about 100m; I was convinced this would put off my horse, but she didn't bat an eyelid

Although my horse is super cool, my friends with somewhat livelier steeds do not appear to have had problems; however, this particular turbine is pretty small and insignificant; I have seen other horses look at the turbine, but no more than that

I have to be more on the ball with my older horse as she is very sharp to put her head down, buck and drop her shoulder, depending on her mood

I have two horses who are fairly good riding alone or in company; although they do tend to be more spooky alone; neither of them have reacted at all to the wind turbines at any time regardless of the time of day, company they are with; before the wind turbine was constructed (only recently) one horse had never been down this particular bridlepath which is quite spooky (low hanging trees, shadows, cows in adjacent fields and so on) and they did not react at all; it seems to have made no difference

We avoid the turbine, luckily another route is available

All of my horses have been/are good – no bigger reaction initially than with any new and unexpected situation

Other horse is not spooky, would take him anywhere, has had no reaction to the same turbine

No other experience

I hacked out at the wind farm in a group of six horses; three of which had been there before and three were new to the turbines; none of the horses reacted badly; the horse I travelled with is a very spooky, strong event horse who would not be a novice ride and she didn't react any more than she would at any new place; while it wasn't a really windy day there was a strong breeze and the turbines were turning and making a noise

It was long time ago with different horses from dealer's yard; I don't remember any difficulty riding past turbines; of course, they look and were more precarious in strong wind; but if rider is calm and confident horses stay calm too

I find turbines no more of a problem than other farm things such as pigs, cattle, large tractors

We have several turbines of different sizes in the area, I have ridden and accompanied several horses past them; the only one which I have seen any horse react to at all, is a small garden

one which is above the horse/rider's head and casts a shadow on the road and buildings; the horses have appeared to react to the noise and shadows; it is awkwardly placed at a fairly busy local junction but the horses do get used to the noise; the shadows still cause problems for some horses; the ones local to us are all individual, so more spaced out than a wind farm, and are usually in the smaller height categories; in most cases we are riding along the roads with the turbines in neighbouring fields/gardens; I have no objection to turbines and think that it is best to deal with any problems as a schooling issue

Ridden several horses past the turbines, nothing more than minor reactions

Riding near wind turbines has never been a problem

We have ridden around the Coal Clough wind farm near Burnley when Fredo was stabled there for little while at our friends' place and none of the horses were bothered one bit; we have since had a wind turbine installed on the farm next door to our land and again Fredo and Jacko showed no interest at all; I don't know what all the fuss is about; we would rather this than another Chernobyl or other nuclear power station on our doorstep!

Older horse was braver but still very aware, but after a couple of spins trusted me to know that it was OK; not happy though

From experience riding with other people the horse may be unsure if the rider is, but when given assurance it is safe, it is no more of an obstacle than traffic – in fact, a lesser problem as it is static and always in the same place!

First sighting on different horses the same, then no problem on further outings

Another big Welsh D mare, generally much more laid back than my gelding, whom I rode past this site when it only had the smaller, farther away turbine erected; she danced along but never felt explosive, although the newer one is a more threatening proposition; this mare is sadly now dead

I have ridden other horses near the turbines and they don't seem to be that bothered – but the turbines haven't been moving much; I hate the turbines and riding amongst them as I think they are dangerous to horses and people, as well as the wildlife – and they don't work!

Only the one experience

As mentioned, we do deliberately keep our distance; I don't feel there is sufficient awareness of the dangers of them; just a couple of months ago, there was a turbine within the farm we once rode through (approx one mile from our home) that literally blew apart; that's very dangerous; the speed with which they spin is 100mph-plus – the large column buckled; by pure luck, no-one was around and I have to say this is quite a common occurrence if you do the research; it's only a matter of time before the fatalities begin as the numbers of turbines proliferate; I also wonder just how many of these are reported in the media?

I have a strategy for difficult situations; if the horse was really worried I would get off and take care of him on the ground (it would be important not to be trapped in a tight space); I have nothing to prove riding a tricky situation; in general, given time I can get any horse through the turbines at any distance and get them comfortable; the big danger is those that can't read a horse and try to force them or panic themselves, that is a potentially disastrous situation; as they say in wise horsemanship circles, "It's not about the horse!"

We were part of an endurance race and many other horses rode past this turbine with low/no reaction

I've ridden several horses past the turbines; none of them has ever reacted

All my experiences with turbines, from a single domestic to large farms, has been difficult to some extent, sometimes very dangerous; I have become increasingly nervous to ride out if it involves going anywhere near turbines

Small, domestic turbines are tolerated by my ponies but the larger turbines do frighten them; there is a group of 13 turbines approximately half-a-mile from the ponies' field (S36). At least two more sets of three larger turbines each have been approved by the Council in the same area; I worry that there will be so many large turbines in the area that many of the routes I use to walk/ride/drive my ponies on will become off limits

I tend to avoid riding near turbines as I am usually riding alone and any unexpected spook could have me off and no-one would know; I was a Bridleways officer for the BHS for many years and found that trouble was very random – one day a horse would react and another be fine, the riders I represented were, on the whole, novice and I would not advise them to ride near a turbine unless their horses were in a field or stabled near some; the ever-increasing height and number, thus noise, of wind farms I consider to be dangerous to riders

From my experience of riding horses near wind turbines they do not cause a problem; some horses can be spooked by anything, or even things that are not there, but I have not seen evidence that wind turbines in particular spook horses; they have never spooked horses I have ridden by them or that riding companions have ridden by them who were out riding with me at the time

Rode a younger horse who refused to go near them; after a while we managed to ride pass although it was sideways with her keeping a constant eye on them

I thought it might be a problem but like pylons, once seen not a problem, have more problem from them when it rains, the buzz upsets the horses; all four horses fit eventers, it's the little things that make them spooky, paper, cars going past fast through puddles, birds, rabbits, loose dogs and so on

I was cautious the first time we passed when it was being put up, but the horse was less concerned than me; and that concern was more about associated vehicles, not the turbine itself

The violent reaction would stop me riding my other less experienced/laid back horses anywhere near wind turbines again

We have a wind turbine and all the horses are schooled in the field the turbine stands – they have never had a problem (including youngsters)

Never had a problem with them – crisp packets on the other hand!

My horse is more scared of pigs

I love the wind turbines and I feel sometimes it's the riders reaction to things that spook the horses; it's the same with helicopters and anything else big and noisy; calmness helps in any situation

My riding companion, who has a horse aged 23, but with no experience of wind turbines has no issues at any time, even though the rider is anxious about it

Same site, different horse, this one is a stallion so even though he snorted and his tail was up he was braver, though again I didn't get too close, about 200m was the maximum and the blades were already turning; this was a pleasure ride and we were on our own, so slightly different

My new horse has not reacted at all to the turbines; there are two different wind farms near us, with many smaller wind turbines dotted around; this means that on every hack out, we have to pass, or get close to a wind turbine

We have six horses/ponies of vary temperaments from bomb-proof to quite highly strung – none of them have reacted badly to the turbine

Mother's horse always becomes excitable at wind turbines of any size – speeds up, high trot; mum describes them as 'helping him along'; he doesn't seem anxious, more excitable, again

similar to on any open hillsides

No, only ridden the one horse near them

They are becoming increasingly invasive in our area – mid-Wales

I have taken the same cob to another pleasure ride with two single smaller turbines far apart with many riders who'd never ridden near a turbine and those horses all reacted calmly and without panic; my horse was also quite happy around these turbines but I did expect that he might react differently; I also took my four-year-old on that ride and he, too, was happy

The four-year-old has also ridden around the same turbines mentioned in my earlier answers – large scale, various conditions, louder blade noise, proper shadow flicker; usually the biggest reaction of any horse tends to be in relation to shadow flicker where the blade shadows dance under the horse's path; I took the four-year-old out in the company of other horses who were used to the turbines and he was also 'looky' but rides around them with complete confidence almost all the time; when I say ride, I mean canters and gallops; we use the windmill rides for our faster work and canter all around them; when the youngster's adrenaline is up he is a little more tense going over the moving shadows, but it's nothing really noteworthy

Haven't really seen any sign of reaction from the horse I rode and friends' horses at a couple of different sites

I have the one horse and there is only one turbine near us

There are 23 turbines just over a mile away from my house in mid-Wales and I have avoided going anywhere that has turbines on the route in other areas; the reaction I have from my mare means it is not very much fun for either of us to ride in that direction, but it is one of the only routes that I can go to reach a schooling area that I need to hire to school her regularly; my old pony still has to accompany her now, which is often difficult to arrange, but she would be too distraught to go past them on her own and we have decided it is too much of a risk to both of us if I was to try

Have ridden trekking ponies near turbines – no reaction from them at all

Was driving my old and trusted cob that I bred; came round the corner to hear the swish of the blades and she tried to bolt, something she normally would not dream of doing; did not go back that way and have not done so since

No problem with riding near turbines in general, the cob isn't bothered about them and this helps the Thoroughbred, if the weather is a bit windy he might look at them or watch them when going past but otherwise no problem

I ride the same horse at several different locations, many have single turbines to corporate turbine sites; he reacts differently each time we go past a site dependent on the circumstances; typically windy weather can cause a larger reaction; some ads results in no reaction at all

The person I ride out with doesn't have a problem with her horse either, I do feel that it's very much like riding horses in traffic, if the rider is confident and positive then the horse will take the rider's calmness and trust the rider

I have three horses in the field at the side of a wind turbine and they're fine as it only went up two months ago, but they're not bothered at all; also there is a large one where we ride, sometimes the sun reflects a bit and makes them a little spooky but in general they're not bothered at all

I have a horse coming back into work after a long time off; she is far more concerned by the turbines; the first time we went near them, she was very concerned by them and stiffened; this was when we were in the woods but still some distance away; she became more settled as we got closer and her companion's relaxed attitude to them probably helped

Hunting a different horse in Berkshire (live in Devon) – horse extremely fit and bright – rode near five/six massive turbines on a windy day – horse took no notice whatsoever, maybe because of the focus on hunting and other horses in the vicinity; horse has never seen full-size turbines before, to my knowledge

Three other horses have reacted out of character in similar situations; horses do not like being turned out in field were they can see the turbines, it causes distress; windmill birdscares cause similar problems, so can only assume it is reflections from the blades; most seriously affected horse had to be placed in a darkened stable after his first contact with them and took 48 hours to fully calm down to a manageable level; it proved a challenge to dress his wound that he received as a result of running through a wire fence and trying to jump through a household garage window; feeding and general horse care was quite a challenge during the 48 hours immediately post exposure; our vet was very concerned

Live in Aberdeenshire, we have windmills all over the place now, but I have a four-year-old who can be spooky, but he has never looked at them; whenever we are in company no-one seems to worry about them; they can be noisier some days when it's windier, but they never seem to react to them; they cause no bother to us; also when they build them, they have to make solid tracks to get them to their destination. Most of our hacking is provided by these tracks – they are superb

Only once

No experience to relate

I heard of a friend's horse, at 20-plus years of age, trying to jump all the shadows as they crossed the road

Different horse, same turbine, similar reactions

Never ridden another horse near here

I really don't see any problem with turbines; the problem is more likely to be inexperienced and incompetent riders who are over horsed or do not know how to train a horse correctly to accept new experiences; sustainable power sources are an important part of the economy and should be encouraged

This is on private land, so only visible from the road, and a bridleway running across arable land, both approximately 500m from both road and bridleway; once aware of the turbine, I decided to ride past it on a nice sunny day when the blades were moving fairly slowly; I was also accompanied by another rider on a very calm cob, who didn't even look at it; my horse lifted her head and looked at it for a couple of seconds and then decided that if it wasn't going to get her friend, then it wasn't going to get her; now we pass by whether it is windy or not, they don't take any notice of it; slowly, slowly and sensible, I believe is the answer

Would have different responses with a less courageous horse

Depends on the horse, but usually OK after the first time

No problem

I have ridden in Cornwall and Wales near turbines but on horses which were used to passing them and which ignored them

I would have expected my 18-year-old home bred thoroughbred to have had an 'eppy' and even had someone on foot with lungeline ready the first time we went past the one turbine, but he didn't bother at all and has not since, even though another much larger turbine was erected on the site; the site is a particular bad spot where all our horses get spooky, so it was a great surprise

I was surprised how the horses took them in their stride but, as stated, four/five on this trail ride had many years of travelling the route

On the same horse have ridden in several places with big wind farms and his reaction was very slight – awareness but no spookiness

With single turbines appearing in places we ride regularly we get more of a reaction the first couple of times (to the fact that something exists where it didn't before, rather than to the turbine itself), but again nothing serious

This is the first time I have ever ridden right next to turbines; my horse simply didn't react to them – he shied at plenty of other things that day!

Spookier horse had greater reaction but calmed by quieter companions

Have ridden at least six different horses past the site and all react in a similar way

I think there's too much hype about turbines and horse reaction because you can see a turbine from away, the horse gets to see the movements in the blades from away and gets used to it; wind turbines don't just appear next to a bridleway and shock you, you always approach them

I have a horse that is blind in one eye and he does react to the sound of the blades

I ride a much less reactive horse near the turbines on a regular basis and she never even notices them, even when it's really windy and the blades are turning quickly and making a noise

I have ridden my older horse, who is a flighty thoroughbred; he is very strong past the turbine and on a particularly sunny day was very reluctant to ride up towards the turbine, kept stopping and refusing to go forward; he is an older horse so has seen a lot; I agree with green energy, I really do, but these turbines are an ugly blot on our countryside, they spoil the view and natural sounds that outdoor people seek; they should be placed around industry and existing power plants or out at sea, not in our beautiful countryside; the majority are there just to line greedy pockets at the expense of the countryside lovers; in the majority of cases, a smaller turbine, or better still, a quarter of an acre of solar panels, would do just the same job without the scarring of our scenery; there needs to be serious notice taken of how many and where these turbines are placed; our countryside is becoming littered with them

I have ridden this horse past two or three different turbine sites and also my previous horse (who was much younger); the youngster didn't seem to be bothered at all; I am aware that certain horses (such as my friend's 19-year-old horse) would definitely have 'thrown a wobbler' and be very difficult to ride past turbines; my own has been past two wind farms and also past single domestic turbines – in both cases I didn't have a problem – but was aware that she felt uneasy – slightly quickened her pace and tensed up

I have only ridden past one turbine on one occasion on an ID x TB who has a very calm temperament, I would not take my warmblood anywhere near them as he can lose the plot and wind himself up

Never had a reaction; have ridden very close to small turbines

There was only one turbine (private?) which was a new installation; my horse obviously reacted but I would not be comfortable having to cope with more as a first encounter

I have ridden my novice four-year-old who doesn't react to the turbines either; he's the full brother of my older, more experienced, horse but has been brought up and ridden away by different persons; neither react badly to the turbines; riding other friend's horses, they don't react either, but then it might be because I'm not bothered about them

I have a five-year-old just starting hacking out and I take him by the turbines; he was no more spooky than he is with other new experiences

None seemed to react very much

I am five feet tall and have recently been riding a 17.2hh six-year-old horse past these same turbines; he looked at the shadows in strong sunlight but went on without a problem as he

was ridden positively; most problems with small groups of turbines are due to rider reaction; there are hundreds of horses in the near vicinity of turbines in County Durham and as a BHS CABO I haven't received a single complaint to date

My horses are used to all manner of farm machinery, HGV's, livestock, low-flying helicopters and adverse weather conditions, so don't seem bothered by much

Have ridden the Mary Townley Loop; seeing the turbines at a distance only upset one horse (out of four) who was frightened when all we could see was a blade appearing over a hill and disappearing again; no noise experienced on these rides from the turbines; if we had been closer to hear the noise or experienced shadows it might have been different; it wasn't sunny (unfortunately!)

Have ridden lots of different horses past turbines lots of times, they have all got used to it over time and most have no recatction after a dozen times of going past

The first time I rode past I was tense because I expected a bad reaction from my horse but he just completely ignored the turbine that had been recently erected on a ride that we do regularly; I was quite surprised by this, he has been fine with it every time since, too

Thank you

Have ridden five-year-old on road below these turbines in company – he was looking and starting a bit, but followed the more experienced horse – about 200m away from nearest turbine

I think the fact the site is exposed and windy (for obvious reasons) affects the horses more; due to the exposed location we only ride here in good/fair weather; like all horses they are more restless in the wind anyway, napping and jogging, but they always are when riding across exposed hill tops

The wind farm has increased the off-road hacking available to us (and reduced the number of gates we have to open) so there is also a payback to us for living near the infrastructure, although the motocross brigade seem to have also cottoned on to this, and they are worse than any windfarm!

I have also ridden my young mare near this turbine (on her own), she kept one ear cocked towards the turbine but was not unduly concerned; many years ago I rode her mother under turbines at the first windfarm in the UK, she paid no attention to the turbines but was very concerned about a tractor and baler in the same field

My general experience, and that of friends, is that our horses are entirely comfortable with wind turbines in their landscape; my horses are more likely to be spooked by a crisp packet in a hedge

Young horses find turbines of all sizes unsettling within 200-300m

I found horses became familiar and confident (in fact, they do not seem to notice the turbine) very quickly – they may wonder at it the first time they see it but after that they seem to get used to it very quickly and just treat it as a tree or some other normal part of the landscape; it is a Gaia-Wind 11kw turbine, the hub is 20 metres up and the two blades/wings are 6.5 metres long each, so they circulate quite close to the ground but they rotate at a constant speed (56rpm) and hardly make any noise

I have not repeated the experience although I suspect inactive turbines would not be a problem

We were initially a bit worried about the route but once underway the horses saw the turbines from a distance and our path took us towards them; I think that as the horses had seen them from a distance rather than happening upon them, they were fine; we went quite close to the turbines themselves and they were moving and there honestly didn't seem to be any change in behaviour

None of my horses are worried about the wind turbines, they are more concerned with stray plastic bags; it's not as if they creep up on you when you least expect it; horses see them and have time to become accustomed to them

It's fine – no problem.

I have ridden several different horses under the wind turbines at Romney Marsh, Kent, with no problems

Have ridden around wind turbines for 10 years – wind farm about one mile away and my neighbour has a 50kw – they are quiet – never seen any horses pay any attention to them; neighbour's cows sleep next to the turbine all the time!

My horse reacts more to traffic – at least on the wind farm there are no cars

Our horses are like people – they all have different personalities and they all react differently to different things; they are competition horses (eventing) and they are all fairly sharp; if there is a problem while out riding due to their sharpness, a bit more leg does the trick

To be honest, I believe that you are just as likely to get a reaction from a bit of plastic in a hedge as you are to a wind turbine in a field which is much more visible than the plastic bag

We live in Cornwall where there are lots of turbines; we haven't had any issues with riding near or in the vicinity of turbines

Turbine over the road from yard, no reaction from any horse on yard from young to old, hot bloods to natives

I've ridden several horses past them and never had an unmanageable response; lots of the horses liveried here are highly strung; turbines preferable to farm equipment (especially tracked) or even carrier bags

I now take alternative paths when horse riding as my horse has never got used to the turbines

I enjoy riding in countryside and this experience has been spoiled by having turbines locally, even small ones; I don't enjoy riding nearly so much because of fear of horse's reaction and area not so nice now

Noise and flicker are unsettling for humans and must be amplified for horses, would not choose to ride near turbines if can be avoided but would have had to ride a lot of extra miles not to go past them

Single turbine

I did ride another of my horses very close to some turbines on a Fun Ride; they were very noisy and we were given the option of going another way to avoid them; I was surprised at how little my horse reacted

I would not consider going near the turbines with my other horse; Mylo and I have covered many hours/miles together during our competitive days in endurance, I don't have as strong a bond yet with my youngster

Other horses in my company have relied on my horse for reassurance due to noise and moving blades, when no shadows are present

This horse was fairly young when I rode past the first time and is part warmblood; the same wind turbines as before; she used to look at the turbines but wasn't overly concerned; I never rode her past when all the turbines were moving, so am not sure how she would react to that

I think temperament of horse and previous experience is most important; would be happy to ride my boy past one every day, I'm sure he'd soon ignore it completely as he does the local helicopters, but wouldn't like to come across a different one on a fun ride; for my horse the reaction of companions is also important, he will often go past things on his own that scare him with spooky company

Another, less spooky, horse appeared to have little reaction to the turbines

I would ride a horse I trust near them, but would avoid taking a horse I did not know on a route with wind turbines

My horses are now living in a field near a turbine and react as much to it as they would a tree, which is to say not at all, and I, for one, enjoy living near a turbine; I would rather wind energy to fossil fuels; thank you

The mare I ride reacts more to smaller, more domestic turbines, as the shadows are more flickering

No different, neither of my ridden horses are bothered by the turbines we have experienced – other horse is older, more experienced and really not bothered by almost any eventuality

The wind turbines I ride near are on a large hill I use for fittening work; occasionally friends will ride up with me, the apprehension/reaction is a rider issue not a horse issue; I ride my horse up the hill, she is spooky and would be the type to react to a shadow but does not, I ride friends horses up who do not react at them either, I have only known one horse to react to them, could not pinpoint what it disliked but I know the rider was nervous about riding up the hill near them and was a nervy rider, I would say that affected the horse more than the actual turbines

I am not against turbines and took care to introduce my horses to the turbines as they were being built, tested and then run, they can both see and hear two turbines from stables and fields; just as a wheely bin being in a different position can cause a spook, the fact that the turbine blades change direction from one ride to the next does cause problems; if the BHS guidelines had been adhered to with regard to distance from highway/right of way I think this would have made a big difference, when the blades are at their nearest rotation to the road they are only 45 metres away; the towers are 65m high with 45m blades on top (they are some of the largest in the country), coupled with the whooshing noise as the blades sweep towards you, more room is definitely needed, especially when traffic on the road as well; husband is unable to drive one route as 22-year-old driving cob has bolted down hill just after passing a turbine, we think because blinkers meant turbine went out of sight as she was alongside but noise was following her

We often hunt through the fields with wind turbines and none of the horses ever seem to react; we stand directly below them (within 10m) or canter right past

No problem at all

We have trouble with five-year-old who needs assurance from older horses; we are finding it increasingly difficult though, as we live on the Pennines and three large turbines in separate locations have gone up in the last four weeks; we are averaging around one new one every six-eight weeks at the moment and they are all around bridleways and small riding lanes

None of our ridden horses (seven of them) have ever taken any notice of the turbines when ridden under them; the nearest to the house is 1km, and we can ride right underneath them; the noise they make does not bother the horses whether at home or when ridden

To be honest, our horses have never bothered about them, even when we've been very close to them; there are quite a few on the Pennine hills and we come across them quite frequently; it may be different when I start riding my youngsters out; I find the turbines to be a useful navigational tool as you can see them from miles around

There are 22 turbines that have been erected a few months ago; horse isn't bothered by them at all and can also see them from his grazing; wasn't bothered as they were erected, either

Examples are a stressy DWB x TB mare who would go into meltdown at hidden moving objects behind hedges, but was not bothered by turbines because they are visible

A four-year-old ISH x TB, newly-backed and meeting new hazards was spooky at a child's scooter carried by a parent on his bike, but again, never gave the turbines a second look

Another horse did not react

Our horses watched as three turbines were put up 200m from their paddock; reacted at first, now do not bother at all when ride on the road about 80m from turbines; my son (16) rides past every day, his horse has never bothered, even on first day, very competent confident rider with confident, only slightly spooky, 17.2hh horse that is well used to seeing things

I have ridden different horses through there but never had a turbine start on me; all of them have been wary while going through but that could now be me; so I breathe and think happy non-bunny hopping thoughts!

It seems a lot of fuss about nothing and more rider problem than horse problem; people should think of them as big lamp posts and forget about it!

The turbines are distracting, noisy and intrusive, destroy the feeling of tranquility and spoil my riding experience

My three experienced horses reacted in a similar way as my young horse – I have found that they get used to the sight of the turbines as they do to traffic, but the low-level hum seems to be what makes them uneasy; given the sensitivity of their instincts, I feel they are aware of the sound of turbines before we are

I've ridden with other horses, though always ridden my own horse – the only reactions from the horses were to each other, riding in a group, not to the turbines themselves; when I went with only one companion, it was like any other hack – when I went in a larger group, and several horses preferred to be at the front, we had a bit of argy-bargy till they settled into an order; we had a few creaks and bangs and whirrs off the turbines, but nothing which worried the horses; we were on a huge wind farm site with turbines at pretty regular intervals; the turbines are 70m high, with blades 40m or so long, so up to 110m in the air; we rode right underneath moving turbines, and it didn't trouble any of the horses I was with; the only minor reaction was one of the horses had a double-take at a moving shadow, but I wouldn't even call it a proper spook

We have had two 100m high turbines erected in one of our fields at the back of our house; the horses were not bothered in the slightest; when we rode past them for the first time, they were aware of them, but seemed more spooked by the shadows than anything else; they do not react at all now

Do you have an equestrian business on which you believe wind turbines in the area have had or would have an impact and if so why?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	7.8%	50
No	92.2%	587
If yes, please explain why		69
	answered question	637
	skipped question	108

Responses received:

Should be ok based upon my experience and that of others

Spoil scenery and rides

I have a small B&B with visting riders and drivers who wish to ride in the Dyfnant forest; turbines will definitely put them off coming, I would imagine

We know of equestrian businesses who rely on riding customers and they are very concerned about two threatened windfarms in our area

I do not have an equestrian business

Only a small livery yard, but for myself and others on the yard we would be nervous riding near to a wind turbine; we have recently had one erected close to one of only a few bridlpaths in our area and our many letters of objection were ignored; the horses seem OK but I have yet to take my excitable horse near it!

We have holiday cottages and a friend takes some of our guests riding through the forest and on the mountain, but the access will be severely restricted if the wind farms they propose go ahead, and I shan't be able to ride there any more as I don't think my horses would go anywhere near them, and they will spoil the ride anyway

It is not a 'business' as I do not make money, I put money in; I keep horses and earn money from something else; I have started to breed, but again not for money; our six acre smallholding was built as a stud farm and is only viable as a stud farm – it is too small to be another sort of farm; windmills will always pose a terrible danger to us and risk, making the property unsellable for the purpose for which it was built

Not my own but competing often at Hand Equestrian Centre – would not go there with a young horse

Routes used would inevitably vary as a result; this could impact on rides offered for instance

We are a small stud breeding Welsh mountain ponies and feel wind turbines would constitute a threat to their well being; a natural reaction when a pony is scared is flight, and as turbines constantly make differing and unpredictable movement and noise and shadows they are a cause for concern regarding the stress and flight risk they put upon any equine; and if a turbine site is situated near equines who are living out then the problem is one they cannot escape, thereby forcing them to live in unsafe and unhealthy conditions

We have a small livery yard, and wind turbines in our area would not affect us the slightest

If there was a racing yard, the horses would spook at the wind turbines and it would be very dangerous

Tourists want to hack past them to see them

But surely cheaper energy bills are a bonus!

We were going to work with our horses with autistic children but there are many more windfarms being built in the area and we believe it not to be a good thing to do now

We have a single wind turbine at our local school; our horses did not seem to be bothered about them, but it has been turned off because the children threw their packed lunches into the air and the seagulls got killed as they swooped to get the food

I run a horse sitting business – taking care of other people's horses at their own homes while they are away; I don't think the turbines themselves will effect my business but the severe traffic disruption during construction and maintenance will have a huge impact on the care I am able to provide for my clients

We did start up as a small business whereby courses were run in equine behaviour; also we did open up the centre in order to allow riders to come and stay with their horses while moving along the trans-Wales trails; although not the primary cause for us pulling this venture, it was an important consideration in us not continuing; it is common sense that where you turn a beautiful riding landscape into an industrial complex, essentially; the former is far less desirable or practicable; we do have unique perspective as the enormous scale is unlike anything so far proposed in England

We use bridleways that are going to be affected by proposed wind turbines; it will damage

our business as guests have already stated they would not wish to ride there; they bring their own horses so it is not a question of desensitising the horses; we will be looking to re-route our rides wherever possible

I run a B&B for horses; all my guests ask me about them and how to avoid them; the anticipated proliferation will lead to them becoming unavoidable; I am already losing guests and expect this to continue

Negative impact

I have ridden at equestrian businesses sited very near wind turbines and noticed the lack of any appreciable negative effect

Riding school has had to change riding (hacking) routes for those less confident riders

We breed horses, and we worry that being raised in the shadow of turbines may make them skittish and timid

Maybe livery clients would not come to me; if riding in locality would mean riding near turbines

I live at a farm on a bridlepath, we have eight horses and a planning application has been made for a huge wind turbine very close to the bridle path, there are lots of others who ride along the path as well; I don't understand why, when there are so many accidents on the roads with horses, they are now encroaching on the safety of horse and rider on the bridlepaths; I know they cause shadows and emit a low humming noise, I feel certain some of my horses will spook and they are endangering the lives of small children who ride along the bridlepath to avoid the roads

I don't own the business but wind turbines are in planning stage at Braeside of Lindores 1 of the very few cross-country training grounds around this area, and is used by Pony Club/riding club; NOT good if plans agreed

I run a dressage training yard and I believe the horses would be very upset if wind turbines in the area; not conducive to a calm, relaxed, happy athlete!

The sight of the wind turbines may affect the horses and the noise surely will, as an annoyance while the turbines run and as a scare when they begin to run

I'm also concerned about radiation effects on horses and humans

We have limited off-road riding, and five wind turbines that have just got permission will remove access to a network of bridleways which currently allow riders to hack for hours

Our yard and all the liveries on it benefit from having a good, varied hacking route on our doorstep; the wind turbines don't put us off, it's one of our favourite rides; we are lucky to have such open and accessible landscape on our doorstep; it could be improved by providing a safe parking area for other riders to box up and come and use the rides and it would also benefit from having waymarkers so people knew where to go; we only know because we are local and use an OS map

I cannot risk taking youngsters across the wind farm now, so have had to reduce all my schooling and hacking accordingly; it has made a huge impact to my business and people no longer want to hack across the area on holiday breaks (with their own horses)

People may call on my behaviour consultancy services for this issue

Once the horses are used to them I cannot see them affecting my business (Riding School)

Can't imagine horses or riders would want to ride near them!

I have a livery yard half-a-mile from the wind farm and another one has been passed on the other side of us one mile away; the first ones will be turned on at the end of May, so as yet have only been affected by the sight of them; although we are full and have a waiting list I'm not sure what will happen once they are both up and running

There is a wind farm planned where I hack out every day; while they build it I think it will be a problem but hopefully once the horse has got used to the turbines he will be OK

I am the senior clinician of an equine veterinary clinic situated approximately 800m from a proposed wind farm with five 440ft/125m high wind turbines; while most horses would most likely become used to these constructions with time, many will be startled on first sight and we daily have horses, varying from dearly loved children's ponies to very valuable international showjumpers, eventers, dressage and race horses visiting our clinic for the first time who will be at best apprehensive and at worst may shy and escape; the consequences do not bear thinking about

This site was carefully chosen as a quiet location with good access, with on-site dwelling fulfilling all the parameters necessary for hospitalising and operating on horses and this wind farm development stands to jeopardise years of developing these aims, not to mention the jobs of a dozen employees

They will get used to them in a short space of time if they do react; we have a windmill on our yard, riding and competition yards all very close, no-one seemed to have a problem and it's clearly visible to everyone

The South Dorset Hunt trail hunts on an area which is designated as a prime area for Dorset's wind turbines, if we fail to bang some sense into the money-grabbing landowners, commercial firms and townies (who consume the most electricity but insist the turbines are in the countryside)

I do have an equine business but I don't think that turbines should affect my business

Can't think of any businesses round the area that would be affected

We have a business where people come to ride around a wind farm, so it's a positive for us

I do not have an equestrian business but I strongly believe livery yard owners that start these wind farms are only doing it for the money and it destroys everything – the wildlife surrounding these areas (especially in the building phase, I have witnessed it first-hand, it is a HUGE operation, extremely noisy and they even build roads and so on to get to the sites, and the amount of diggers, builders and traffic we had at our livery was horrific (it took more than a year to complete, too!); our normal farm tracks disappeared and the heavy machinery was beyond belief; the cranes used were huge and I moved my horse as soon as I could – it ruined the beautiful countryside; God knows where the deer-family went that we used to watch early on a morning; why on earth (apart from greed) would anyone want to build wind farms when there are solar panels available? Our livery yard owner was the one with the idea to get the turbines and was heard in a local pub bragging about how much money it will make him and that he won't need liveries any more soon (with that in mind, I moved asap and am really pleased I did!)

The turbines are not animal (or human) friendly, the noise, strobing, sight and disturbance to once lovely ground where there are now concrete tracks smothering – this is the countryside

I don't but there is a riding school overlooking a local wind farm here in Cornwall and they have no problems and are even a large centre for the RDA

We are breeders, our neighbours currently have an application for two turbines of 86.5m, one 300m from our sandschool and the other is less than 200m from bridlepath

I run a small stud and have lost potential customers who did not want their mares to possibly be injured if suddenly frightened

People's perception of the unknown

I suppose you are asking if I think it has a negative effect on equestrian business – no, we run a livery yard and none of the horses are at all scared of the turbine

Despoiling the natural environment and destroying tourist appeal, noise, spooky reflections from blades, unpleasant to ride through an industrial development

I have a business which does not appear to have been affected; my neighbours (who were initially opposed to the project) now agree that they are harmless

The hacking is something that attracts my clients, but if they build the proposed wind farm I am concerned that it will severely restrict the areas and ways we ride, especially for nervous riders

A very large wind farm is planned one mile from us, the turbine blades will be 1,200 ft above us (on a ridge), we are very worried about noise, infra-noise and visual disturbance to the horses and ourselves

Who will visit an area with horses if there are wind turbines? We breed horses and are worried about the high voltage cables as well

I run holiday accommodation which is advertised for riders and offer grazing for their horses

Planning applications have been submitted for three windfarms with a total of 61 turbines to be constructed in the forest and on the mountain, which are the only areas locally for riders

Long-distance guided rides – health and safety issues prevent using a route with windmills which could result in an accident for members participating

I am a horse breeder, we take young inexperienced horses to areas where wind farms are planned; we won't take them there once the wind farms are developed, the roads are unsafe for inexperienced youngsters and so we will be confined to my own land or arenas locally; there will be nowhere else to ride

Visual impact and environmental impact

I believe that if the wind farm had been approved 500 metres directly west from my yard and arena, it would have affected my business; 1 - the eight/nine months of building time would have been terrible for the horses; lorry movements, vibrations during foundation building, loss of access for myself and clients at certain times, and so on, eight/nine months is a long time to have to cope with the massive disruption; 2 – the turbines directly to the east would cause shadow throw as the sun lowered and set, and at the public inquiry the wind farm barrister agreed that the horses would be affected by this, even in their stables; I am certain some of my liversies would have moved on; interestingly and also worryingly, the inspector did not have a problem with any of this and refused the wind farm on non-equine related grounds; these companies are attempting to put large turbines closer and closer to homes and businesses and individuals are told they must suffer for the greater good; I am pleased that the Society is finally waking up to the problem of wind turbines near horses; I am sure those who have brave/easy horses will choose to exercise their horses near them but what about those animals who are not so easy/sensible, especially when they are stabled nearby and cannot choose?

Livery yard close to small wind turbine, some riders avoiding road so limited hacking which means they are now straight onto a busy road instead of being able to hack on a quiet country road

Tried to locate wind farm 500m from our business dealing in problem horses and retraining; in appeal it was refused as deemed too close

I have a livery yard, four turbines have been put up by neighbours, only 15m to hub, the horses were bothered when being put up; by bothered I mean that they looked great standing alert in their paddocks, same reaction when the hunt is close by; we now ride on the road for about 10 minutes in trot to get to tracks, passing the turbines on the way, about 150m away, no reaction at all from the horses; I have applied for a turbine on my own land

They do not disrupt animals; why do you think sheep and cattle graze underneath them?

I don't have a business yet, but the wind turbines around my area have certainly had an effect on the area and the how safe some of us feel taking our horses out
 Saddlery – I will be affected by their impact on riders and foxhunters
 Building of turbines will close bridleways close to them
 The turbines in our field has not made a difference to any of the horses or our business

How would you rate the risk that wind turbines present to you, horses and others? From 1 = low risk to 5 = high risk

Answer Options	1	2	3	4	5	Response Count
You	309	60	75	55	114	613
Horses	213	69	89	82	157	610
Other riders	183	73	99	103	146	604
Other users or people around	259	93	84	54	91	581
Please explain if you think it would be helpful						179
			answered question			616
			skipped question			129

Responses received:

I think turbines are the greatest risk near roads because of the traffic; riders are not being taught how to ride to correct their horses sufficiently, too many are passengers and only taught about riding dressage tests and so on and not given guidance as to how to cope with obstacles

I do not presently ride near turbines but other horses and their riders and people around them will need de-sensitising from moving turbines

Both projected developments have public right of way footpaths and bridleways presently onsite; accidents happen with turbines; there is a lot of documented evidence for this

I feel riders and their horses are in danger of injury; and the general public could be hurt if a horse bolts into a road

I was nearly thrown from my horse during the HST, the other horse in the field bolted exacerbating an injury that had been checked by a vet that morning; the risk to other riders is that there will be NO notification if this test is being carried out; the brakes coming on to stop the blades turning causes a sound like a military jet

As an experienced horsewoman and with knowledge of commercial wind turbines I can't get my head round what risk these installations might present; in most situations commercial scale turbines would have the effect of improving access for riding; any risks that I can think of would be so small as not to register in the context of other accepted risks

I think like most new experiences horses will get used to wind turbines the more they see them and realise they do not move closer to the horse and will not hurt the horse

Consideration should be taken of nearby bridlepaths when planning the siting of wind turbines!

The noise and the blades turning would frighten both of my horses and the ride would not be enjoyable, as the surroundings will be totally spoilt

If a horse does react to a turbine it will want to get away from it, which potentially means

travelling some considerable distance – and being a risk to itself, its rider and others in the area

Noise and flicker effect; dangerous to riders due to the size of turbines and movement distracting riders

Noise, flicker, shadow, sudden starting and stopping, proximity to tracks

Surely clean energy is worth it

The proposed turbines in our village are within topple distance of a road well used by horses as well as dog walkers, runners, cyclists – and cars, of course

A spooked horse can throw rider and may cause accident to other people

Unable to answer question; radio buttons inop!

One close by would be a major hazard to me while riding

I think that as long as horses are given time to adjust they would get used to wind turbines, they are used to churches and houses aren't they?

I do not believe there is a risk to my health, but there may be a risk to horses and/or riders if a horse is spooked by the wind turbine; if the horses are used to them, I would doubt there is any risk at all

The horses are not as likely to be frightened by the turbines as inexperienced riders; as I commented on the previous question, I feel that it is the rider's anxiety that is passed to the horse via adrenaline

I believe it is just a question of gentle desensitisation for the horse; why should it be any more scary than a lorry passing by at speed?

There are many hazards for riders to contend with; wind turbines, in my opinion are low down on the list

All horses and riders have different capabilities and abilities; the presence of turbines on riding and walking routes creates a greater risk of horses getting spooked than if they were not there; some horses will never be able to deal with wind turbines, whereas others can; to avoid excluding some riders from the countryside, wind turbines should not be located within a good couple of miles of riding routes; wind turbines do malfunction and can shatter, causing danger to all path users; again turbines should not be placed within a couple of miles of walking and riding routes

The unpredictability of wind turbine movement/noise puts all at risk where animals are concerned

I try to manage the risk, such as avoiding riding past in strong wind when they turn fast and are noisy

Modern wind turbines will change gear/speed depending on the conditions; as this is not a constant there will always be a risk that horses will be spooked by them; I believe wind turbines should not be located alongside footpaths or bridleways and there should be a legal minimum separation distance, such as twice the height of the turbine from base to highest wing tip

I consider them to be unsafe – one caught fire last year

Low risk for me because I have no wind turbines near me; higher risk for others because every obstacle presents some form of risk

Noise and movement (shadow)

All it takes is for one thing different to happen to what they've got used to to cause them to react and the turbines are so massive that any change in what they are used to is massive and so is their reaction

Certain times of the day there is a hypnotic flashing which gives people headaches and I feel a horse ridden passed that wasn't used to a turbine could be dangerous

In my experience I believe horses are unpredictable near wind turbines so there is a greater risk of accidents

They can set fire, lose rotary blades and in cold conditions there is a threat of ice-throw; they can also act as lightning conductors

While my horse was jogging sideways if there had been people walking I may have hit them

Always take young horse or first-time horse out with older ones that have been before

There does not seem to be any evidence yet about the use of turbines on land and the reaction from horses/horse riders

Anything that spooks a horse can be catastrophic

Can't answer for other horses/riders depends on their experience and confidence

People are often afraid of change and its effect on their environment; especially in connection with their horses

I cannot speak for wind farms, which could be a totally different situation altogether

I think that horses could become spooked easily by wind turbines

I wouldn't like to have to take my spooky horse closer than about 200m

I'm deaf and have tinnitus; I find wind turbines increase tinnitus noises; there's also the mental problem in which you know that they are unnecessary, Wales has hydro-electric schemes which could be added to, also Wales's main income comes from tourism; most of the wind powered industrial sites do not, as stated, continue to work all year and are often still; the article 'The dirty truth about Britain's clean, green wind power dream' on page 22 of 'Live', The Mail on Sunday, has been hidden by the people who install the turbines; it tells of toxic lake poisons Chinese farmers, their children and their land – left behind after making the magnets for Britain's turbines

Horses are unpredictable, a bag might spook them or not; don't think it fair to ask other riders or other people when you have no idea of temperament or experience

It's no more than another tall building to ride by

Riders are sometimes as much to blame for their horses spooking; it helps hugely though if they are grazed in the vicinity of turbines; they get used to them; I'm personally not a fan of turbines, I think they are a blot on the landscape of our beautiful countryside; put them on industrial estates and brownfield sites or along the motorways if they are that marvellous and do no harm

Other riders are more at risk if they are unconfident or don't trust their horse's reaction

Riders need to be confident and able so the horse remains calm

You can never be sure of how horses/people will react and I consider wind turbines to be quite dangerous

If it goes wrong there are no environmental impacts unlike nuclear power

Young horses can be dangerous if spooked causing damage to you, themselves and possibly others; they will only get used to them if they live next to them; however, serious accidents could happen in the process; if they do not adjust they would have to live elsewhere; casual encounters with wind farms are unlikely to desensitise them to the turbines

My horse is less risky now with this turbine, but another one in a different location would be another matter; I think they are initially very dangerous for most ridden horses, although horses liveried near them do acclimatise, as do those ridden regularly past the same sites; I do feel a

schoolmaster/nanny horse could be really helpful in the first instance; I feel the noise and light flashes/shadows could be detrimental to people living nearby, and I think it's quite distracting for drivers when near roads – as in this case

Re the question below, our horses can see them from their field and are used to them from afar but not close up; however, like anything they would get accustomed over time if ridden regularly enough there

Much will depend on competence of rider and horse's temperament

Please research the safety record; it is on record that numerous turbines throughout the UK blow apart with potentially lethal force; it happened again in one close to where I live

I think that if horses are properly prepared and desensitised to the kinds of things they might meet out on a ride, including traffic, flapping plastic, bikes, umbrellas, other horses then they will be mentally prepared for whatever they will encounter; likewise, if the rider is trained in how to help horses overcome their worries about new stimuli then the rider ought to be able to quickly help a concerned horse to habituate to new things; the trouble is that many riders don't know how to do this and many horses are ridden out into the world without proper preparation; I make it the horse owner's responsibility to learn how to train horses to overcome fears and there will be no need to go about complaining about what everyone else does

I can't really answer the 'other riders' question – how could anyone know? Depends on their horse

Horses are 'panicholics' and a bolting horse is a danger to themselves, their rider and others in the vicinity

I expect that the risk will vary from horse to rider dependant on the weather conditions at the time; after all, horses are prey animals programmed to run off at high speed when they come accross something they are unsure of; I'm not against turbines and am sure most horses can learn to cope with them; however, I believe that they should not be built within close proximity to bridleways; if a blade or whole turbine comes down near a bridleway it may result in carnage

I think it matters whether riders using the rights of way near a wind farm are novice riders; many novice riders don't think of danger until it is too late

Noise and shadow flicker are likely to alarm my horse when out riding

Depends on the horse – if spooky probably more risky, and rider – if tense and expecting a reaction, horse will be unhappy!

Flicker shadow and movement are a lethal combination to riders and horses alike

I'm worried that amplitudinal modulation will lead to sleep disturbance and other health detriments

Less confident riders may expect problems and ride tense which will impact on the horse's reaction

I am aware of ice-throw being a risk to me; with my experience it would be dangerous to ride anywhere near them, especially for novice riders/nervous horses; if I reacted as mine did it could set others off; not safe for other people around if horses bolted

They are good for the environment, people have to get on and deal with them; they are all over Spain and they don't have any issues with the horses over there!

In this area the bridleways are often along deep ditches; if a horse was alarmed by emerging from a sheltered/wooded area (also many of those here) and seeing a turbine the risks for horse, rider and footpath users could be very high

I have been near wind turbine in blustery weather; they make a tremendous amount of noise; I would not ride a horse near to wind turbines

I think the shadow flicker could cause horses to spook, which could be dangerous

Like with any machinery there is always a threat of danger, particularly with wind turbines where there is no statutory minimum distance of separation; visitors/tourists to areas maybe unaware of turbine sites and to come across them unexpectedly can cause problems

A recent wind turbine application that has been granted permission will limit/stop access to hours of road hacking

My young horse jumps at drain covers, plastic bags and so on and is totally happy on hunts; riding is about being 'with' the horse and showing them our world at a pace and with a 'feel' that helps them grow up without fear and with trust in us as their guides and companions; wind turbines I am sure are like anything else; we plan to have one ourselves shortly and it's near a bridlepath; I would expect to work with the bridleway association to put warning signs at the points needed and to offer open days for people to bring horses into the field and let them run around, graze, get used to the turbine, and then be led and trained near it before being ridden; I would rather do appropriate training to familiarise our horses with things than live anywhere near a nuclear power plant or something else poisonous, which is far worse for us and the horses we love

Horses may be spooked by many things; I don't believe turbines are any more/less risk

Horses get used to almost anything if properly introduced to them and given time to understand that they do not represent a threat; many horses, after all, are used to seeing fast-moving metal objects suddenly appearing around corners – cars!

Wind farms would be set off-road, I can't see why they would be a problem if they are set back from the road and not near a bridleway

I think that if riders had horses they were unsure of, they would avoid riding near turbines

It would be a bigger risk if we didn't have them and energy was provided through increased nuclear sources; the turbines are graceful and responsible; they can, and will, be decommissioned after 25 years, returning the land to how it was; environmental impact assessments are carried out to ensure appropriateness of sites; we need more renewables!

Risk involved with horses and their riders relates to the accidents which might occur as a result of frightened horse bolting

Visiting horses may react to turbines; some riders may not use a venue/facility or visit an area where turbines are present because of their perception, or based on previous experience of turbines

People's perceptions are detected by horses, so if the person is anxious or nervous unnecessarily it could wind the horse up

The majority of horses will not tolerate wind turbines and the result is likely to be an extreme reaction in the horse, such as bolting/erratic behaviour, resulting in injury or death to horse/rider or both

It all depends on the horse/s, the rider/s and the public at the time

The bridleway goes right through the middle of the wind turbines and recently one turbine broke and fell to the ground – if this were to happen to anyone riding/walking by they could be killed

Having seen horses kept in the fields in which wind turbines are located, it's pretty obvious the two can co-exist

If the horses were under my training – directly or via supervision and instruction of their owners – then the risk is low as I'd work out the training at a rate that didn't provoke large, fearful reactions and I would be positively reinforcing calm reactions, thereby increasing safety

My horse does not like pylons, let alone something similar and moving; they are also reported

to affect birds

1. Turbines change from non-moving (silent to whooshing and moving); horses are affected by sudden and unexpected noises and movement and one cannot guarantee what the movement or noise is one time will be the same another day; 2. The blades collect ice in cold weather conditions and the motion of the movement can chuck off the ice chunks over relatively long distances; 3. Heavy wind requires the machines to close down but there are many instances of blades or parts of blades being found broken off and on the ground at a distance from the machine such as would kill anyone, whether horse, rider, driver, car driver, dog walker and so on, the list is endless; 4. Then there is the strobing light issue should the sun be behind the moving blade which causes flickering light, which I imagine could cause absolute terror with a horse encountering such for the first time; 5. Where large wind farms are constructed, such as in Fullbrook in North Devon – much of the access roads were altered to facilitate the delivery of the massive machines by articulated lorries requiring police escort so they could negotiate bends in the road; after the construction the altered back roads are wider, clearer for instance, allowing for faster movement of traffic, thus increasing the danger risk to horses – ridden and driven – using those same roads

A horse frightened by wind turbines thinks only of its own safety and is liable to injure others as well as itself

New wind turbines are very quiet

See previous answer, obviously handlers and riders would be at risk in the same circumstances

Expensive to the tax payer for the amount of renewable energy they produce

Sudden movements/sounds spook my horse who is 17.2 and likely to bolt

Like anything else, common sense will keep you safe

Depends on the horse, if the horse is spooky, can cause a domino effect

I think it depends on a lot of factors, hence taking the middle ground here; my first hand experience is limited

Some spookier horses will find them a problem, mine don't

I watched around 12 horses go straight past the turbines – all were fit, lively horses; in Scotland where my husband lives, the horses don't seem to notice the turbines

Horses have got used to tractors lorries and trains, I don't believe this will be any different, horses just need to be introduced to them properly

I don't think they are as dangerous as I expect my horse will

I live in an area due to potentially have three wind farms built; it is a rural area wonderful for off-road riding which looks as though we will not be able to ride any longer

If horse is frightened by turbines, danger to rider (me) and to others nearby (riders and others)

The noise and the frightening blades which do and can break in high winds coming out of balance

We, as riders, have to keep off the roads for fear for our safety and yet now, with wind turbines popping up around our bridle paths, it would appear that nowhere is safe; they spoil what would otherwise be a relaxing peaceful non-eventful ride

Dangerous in high winds, sheer factor, strange humming noise, upsets horses

Some horses are not happy when turbines are first set to work but, like other things, if introduced correctly this fear may subside

I believe that it really depends whether you have a confident horse and rider (if either party are not sure, they could cause a problem)

I believe poor ability and improper training has more to do with issues riders have than what they actually encounter

Wind turbines are an excellent way of reducing our carbon footprint – whether we like their aesthetic impact or not, we just have to get used to them

Would be a risk to others as horse would be out of control

Horses are very sensitive to vibrations in the air and movement around them, I wouldn't want to ride anywhere near one, I'd be too scared of getting hurt

I think some horses might spook at the turbines and cause rider to be injured; I don't live near any turbines

I think wind turbines are a good green solution to lots of problems, but I can appreciate that some horses would not be impressed by them

Horses try to run away from things they are scared of; they can very quickly spin round; that is when I (and probably other riders) are most likely to fall off

I'd rather they were there than building a new coal-fired/nuclear power station or incinerator; as there is only one moving part, my horse has become accustomed to them very quickly; there are other distractions and dangers that are more serious or disturbing than a few wind turbines

Location is quite remote – very unlikely to see others in vicinity at same time as riding

These can cause a horse to panic and it is hard to predict the outcome for all concerned

If horses see the turbine in the distance they become accustomed, it is more a rider being nervous issue that makes the horse worried

No evidence of risk

Lot of negative perceptions from people with no experience of turbines

Not many round here so can easily be avoided

Lack of sleep due to noise; personally I don't live near any, but would be terrified to ride my horse near one

The noise, unpredictability, flicker, size would affect people and horses, but I believe horses being flight animals would run rather than stay still when confronted by huge turbines

Horses/riders shouldn't be used as an excuse not to have wind turbines; I would rather had turbines which are no more noisy than pylons and look more graceful, than a nuclear power station

If the wind picks up there is a problem for all horses their riders and anyone in their way

Any horse can spook at anything, that's in their very nature; in any case, if they had a wind turbine near them, they would get used to it easily, as the stud farm/riding centre near Delabole Wind Farm in Cornwall has shown, which has been in operation since 1991

Too much hype and myths about the impacts of wind turbines, many more distractions for horses in the countryside

Horses will become accustomed to wind turbines; turbine developments are usually placed at appropriate distances from bridledways and so on, and careful design can ensure horses do not get a sudden and unexpected surprise by seeing them for the first time

Horse would be afraid of the infrasound vibration, the blade movement, the blade noise, the shadow cast by the blades and may react dangerously – for instance, bolt, rear, shy badly causing rider to be unseated; loose horse would cause danger to pedestrians, cyclists and vehicular traffic

I can't answer concerning other riders because there's such a diverse range of experience/

views and so on

No experience

A horse is an unknown quantity, and a fall from a horse can be serious; a loose horse is likely to injure itself and others

I ran a 'bring your horse on holiday' business, I have since retired, but would without a doubt know that the proposed installations of the wind farm locally would have seriously affected my business; bringing a horse to any area for a short stay would be suicidal in my opinion

Having done some reading around the subject I don't believe wind turbines are a big risk, particularly when compared cars

I can see that it is possible a horse would spook, but no more so than at any other strange looking object

Since the initial negative reaction by my horse, I have looked at the issues of wind farms, and I personally reckon it is the ultrasound generated from turbines which is affecting my horse; however, I am very concerned over the safety of the turbines as there has been more and more accidents as more are being built, from turbine blade breakages and fires

As an inexperienced rider, I know that I do not have the knowledge and feel to anticipate the reaction of my mount in the presence of proposed wind factories we may have several hundred of the biggest turbines (600 feet high, 450 feet wide) in the nation within a few miles; further, the 20-year installation and replacement program will cause chaos on the road system for miles around and discourage essential tourism in this remote area; I will not ride again in such circumstances

If they are sensible horses I see no reason why they would not get used to wind turbines

Wind turbines should not be near rights of way because of the risks, however small, they should be elsewhere

Concerned re safety, have heard of ice scatter and the blades coming off

Shadow flicker is big problem, as is the sound of turbine blades 'woosh'

As a result of responding to the planning applications I am aware that there have been a high number of structural failures and turbines bursting into flames

If you are riding on a road past a turbine/s then the risk to other users dramatically increases because if the horse becomes uncontrollable and traffic is passing then other road users could also be seriously hurt; I will avoid riding near turbines unless they are not moving

I put two for other riders as I can imagine that there are some horses who wouldn't like them. Or it may be that the rider themselves didn't like them (I was more worried than my horse the first time that I rode past; on a spooky horse, this could have caused problems; luckily, he is well behaved in general)

Horses are flight animals; these turbines are enormous, make a noise which changes with wind speed, also throw shadow flicker in sunlight over a large area; think riding near them is an accident waiting to happen

At a local community liaison panel meeting, Iberdrola reps could not take members to a wind farm locally over winter time as it was considered too dangerous; there are incidents of ice throw, lightning strikes and fires, and worse still, blade or turbine collapse; at present, not many accidents but as they encroach into areas where people visit it is only a matter of time before accidents do happen more frequently

As I haven't ridden near them I believe there would be significant risk to occasionally riding close past them; however, I believe that most horses, if stabled/fielded close by will adjust; other users of bridlepaths may be affected if horses go out of control because of a turbine

I don't feel that they present a problem, horses will get used to them being there

Other riders' horses behaviour may be influenced by rider's perception; turbines must be very unpleasant for those who live near them; both the sight of them and the constant low hum

The moving shadows of the blades will be very difficult and I truly don't think my horse will go past; also he will be difficult and block other riders' uses of the path; the building works will be very disruptive as well

With noise levels reaching 60dB, this has potential health issues, and given the superior hearing of horses, could cause constant distress and occasional alarm

Why should wind turbines present a problem?

Far quieter and 'low impact' than many people think

Radiation from nuclear power and waste cannot be seen and is potentially far more hazardous

Potential risk to other riders if they are not confident to pilot their horses in the vicinity of turbines

This question, in my opinion is biased; there is no proof turbines pose a risk to anyone or anything

Without sufficient distance I believe them to be dangerous, at other points of the wind farm where the turbines are further away we find no problems, either with noise or blade direction

I think my horse would be terrified of them moving and the big blades and the humming noise

Because these almost useless things are putting up utility bills and hence risk of fuel poverty, they also make our wonderful countryside ugly

Depending how close to horses I do not think they will become accustomed to them

I'm not bothered but I understand that some people are and their horses may pick up on that

They are huge, noisy and visually frightening

Can be busy road with traffic and is narrow; some riders not as experienced as me, less years in saddle

Don't understand why turbines are perceived to be a problem; gas crow scarers are more potentially spooky

Depends on the horse, but some react badly

From my experience living in Germany, wind turbines do not present any high risk to horses; they are often in horse's fields without any negative effects; the horses are happily grassing beneath them

The horses could be spooked

Noise and shadow flicker

Horses are sensitive creatures, and I believe that they will be consistently disorientated by the sounds and vibrations and so on caused by turbines

Not that noisy up close and horses get used to most things; probably be more scared of a cow; also, the likelihood of them being located right on a bridgeway is slim, but anyway they are used to pylons

I watch horses walk along busy bypass without worry, I see horses grazing in fields next to the M1 on Bank Holidays who do not care!

What do people want, pollution or green energy? Get a life!

The blades have been known to shatter and gearboxes catch fire

I think the noise is an overlooked factor, because it is more subtle an irritant

I think there's more risk on any road than on the wind turbine area; my horse didn't seem to

worry about the turbines at all; she is generally good in traffic, but is very frightened of cars with trailers and isn't too keen on tractors, but the noise and movement of the turbines didn't bother her; I don't think I'd go on a very windy day, but then who wants to ride when it's blowing a gale anyway (and I have to box over to the windfarm so that's more a point of not wanting to drive the horsebox when it's really windy)

Risks vary with the experience of riders and temperament of the horse, I think risk should be weighed on a worse case scenario; a young inexperienced rider, for example, or a young horse, both of which could easily get into trouble if spooked by a turbine close to bridleways/roads; I personally think those close to roads riders use cause the biggest concern, as riders may be put in even more danger if their horse panics in front of a car, for example

Wind turbines are here to stay . . . stop moaning and accept them

I think turbines are the greatest risk near roads because of the traffic; riders are not being taught how to ride to correct their horses sufficiently, too many are passengers and only taught about riding dressage tests and so on, and not given guidance as to how to cope with obstacles.

Do you believe that most horses will become accustomed to wind turbines with appropriate handling? Please rate from 1 = very likely to 5 = very unlikely

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1	41.3%	255
2	13.6%	84
3	16.2%	100
4	14.9%	92
5	13.9%	86
	answered question	617
	skipped question	128

Potential wind turbines: How would you rate the effect on your access opportunities if a turbine or wind farm was built where you normally ride and why. From 1 = no or little effect to 5 = major or significant effect

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1	29.6%	175
2	14.2%	84
3	9.5%	56
4	9.6%	57
5	37.1%	219
Please explain why		316
	answered question	591
	skipped question	154

Responses received:

Older horses fine, youngsters would need time and perseverance, which could be difficult if nobody to ride on an older horse to give the youngster confidence

Can make some areas of hill land easier to access if access is given

Traffic is far more dangerous

I have a nervous Thoroughbred and my grand-daughter is a novice rider on her Cob

Having to ride near it to gain access to hacking trails

It will take years to establish this wind farm and the major traffic involved with tipper trucks being on time and motion and the large wagons involved will be a nightmare scenario

Far better access now to off-road riding as a road has been built to the turbines which allows us to get off-road far easier and quicker

Don't really know

With sensible calm handling most horses will soon become accustomed; if my four-year-old ex-racer can, any horse will

There are many proposed new locations and indeed existing locations for turbines in my immediate area, although they are not in the vicinity of where I ride

I would be scared; it depends how close to turbines are the rights of way and also, obviously, weather conditions

I rely totally on getting my competition horses off our busy roads, so hacking across country is becoming almost as dangerous with these turbines

I would be unable to ride as it would be unsafe for me to do so

I have to live underneath these turbines; as stated during normal operation the horses have become used to the insidious noise now under investigation by environmental health; the HST will put me and my horses at risk at least once a year, possibly more (already the test has been carried out twice); there is no obligation for the operator of the turbine maintenance crew to tell nearby residents when this will occur; horses will never become used to the HST

Minor disruption during construction with potential to significantly improve access in medium to long term

We would just have to get used to it, like horses get used to railways if they live near them

I would avoid riding near wind turbines if I had an alternative route to take, to avoid any risk of having an accident on my horse, as I know he doesn't like them

I ride in open countryside – the presence of these things would severely restrict access

Because the horses would soon get used to them but you would have to doge them in canter

They propose to put a wind farm on the plateau of our mountain and if so, I shan't be able to ride there because neither of my horses would go near a turbine, especially if it starts to turn while we're near it, when they would undoubtedly run home

I could not risk riding near the turbines any more than I would risk riding on a busy 'A' road; the noise, movement and shadows (which can vary in different conditions) pose a risk from a significant distance away in circumstances where horse and rider may be on or near a public highway; the turbines appear very close and affect a large area around them; this is not just the case of getting past a scary object in a hedge – or one HGV vehicle – so that once you are past the risks quickly go away; turbines look – and can sound – very close for a significant distance meaning that the risk area should the horse take fright is very considerable indeed; if there is a line of turbines this problem is multiplied many times over; even if a horse passed them safely on one occasion it may not on another if the noise or shadows are different

They will be right beside bridlepaths

I would no longer be able to ride near turbines; horses will not become accustomed to them because no two days are the same and the turbines will be making a different low frequency sound depending on the conditions

Area closed during construction, traffic problems, changes to local traffic systems, increased road hazards, restricted access post-construction

This nearly happened in our area and an appeal that went to the council twice was eventually granted – they wanted to put a wind mast up to measure wind speed 150m high less than 20m from the bridlepath in an area of natural beauty with the view of future turbines – the amount of stress, anxiety and local concern it caused was beyond belief

Three 330 ft turbines will be within topple distance of the road if the current plans go ahead

So far there is only the one wind farm but more applications are in for another 60 turbines around the area – these will cut off my alternative routes

We are getting a new wind farm around us and the company are putting lots of new bridleways up to connect and expand the existing bridleway; it's a major effect but it's very beneficial

My horse would never become fully accustomed to a turbine close to home

Would still ride past areas if turbines were built there

They are planning to build 12 along the main bridleway nearest our yard; the major construction work installing them would itself stop any access

Would probably deter all local riders from using any adjacent bridleways

Not sure how the horses I ride would be affected by them as they are not used to them

We would just have to get used to it

Armistead wind farm in Cumbria is being constructed very close to a local bridlepath; I no longer use the bridlepath because my horse does not like turbines in the distance, I would not wish to take her close to one

I have no issues with wind turbines, and my horses are not interested in machinery or such things; they are more worried about leaves falling from trees, or the sound of oil seed rape ripening (crackling) in the sun!

There might be a problem to start with, but I think my horses would get used to them – they can't be worse than the enormous tractors they currently have to deal with!

Think horses would get used to them if had constant exposure

Taking the risk of riding past a known serious hazard is not sensible or responsible, therefore it would limit access to routes

I no longer ride along the road where this turbine is situated, it is just not worth the risk

I don't see them as a significant issue

It would certainly have an effect initially, with most horses needing to learn that they are not at risk

The noise would present a major problem and sunshine glints on the turbine blades would spook horses

Initially I would not be able to ride because of the disruption caused by the construction phase; then my horse would have to get used to all the change; this is more difficult than seeing turbines on a route you don't normally ride; who knows if my horse could deal with this

As my horse is unrideable at home due to the neighbour's turbines, I know further turbines would be very limiting to my riding

A wind farm would be intolerable

There are limited bridledways where I ride; the traffic makes riding on the roads difficult; the presence of wind turbines near a bridledway would further restrict the places where people could ride safely, particularly if they were training a young inexperienced or nervous horse

I believe the current regulations allow them to be built too near to roads and tracks; I also question how safe they are from an operational perspective

It would make me wary to use that route, so it would probably reduce the amount I used the bridledway; I would be worried that I would have an accident when hacking out alone

Potential risk of injury for horse and rider

I do not and will not ride near the wind turbines – I can only now ride in one direction away from them and I do not enjoy riding at home at all now; I take my horse to a livery place in the summer time so I can enjoy my riding and there is better off- and on-road riding; she is not bothered by riding on roads at all except here, since the turbines were erected

The bridledway network is highly fragmented and there are really only two ways out; if turbines were erected on one of these it could potentially cause me to move my horse; my experience with wind turbines dates from where I used to keep my horse!

We have a planning application, which has been accepted, for a medium sized turbine close to a local bridledway; this very busy bridledway is much used by the local riders of whom there are about 40; if this turbine goes ahead, it will be the first time that local horses will have experienced a turbine and, as any rider knows, a change on a well-known route will usually freak out a horse who views this as their territory with which they are familiar; this may not be the case if it was on a totally strange route; it would then simply be part of a new and exciting different ride

I don't believe it would be dangerous, but it would spoil the quiet and peaceful surroundings, adding yet more stress to our lives

Little effect as they are vertical structures

If everytime I rode I had to go past wind turbines I would most likely choose to not hack out any more, as it is very unpleasant having your horse get very upset at something, so if I could avoid it I would; at the moment you can avoid the wind turbines that are up, as these aren't very close to where we live

We have planning about to go in for nine wind turbines near us; we ride past where they are going to be built most days; that would stop me riding that route

I may have to give up riding a particular route

I would not wish to ride near them if the blades were rotating

Access to our local bridledway is along a busy road where at one part there is at present a proposal for seven 126m high turbines, which at that height will easily be seen from the road

Would get used to it

Unless the area became completely closed to us as riders, it would not affect us

My horse is well behaved, so don't think it would bother him too much; have a friend who I ride with and her horse wouldn't go near one I don't think, so would stop me riding there with her

because I wouldn't be able to ride in peace as I wish to, and my horse would be terrified

We have several and have no problems – young horses may spook a bit

I may have to change where I ride due to a turbine being put up where I ride; did not know about this planning application until too late to complain!

The noise of construction has been upsetting to horses; nearby wind farm not finished until end of May 2012, so nothing operational yet

Already got a development up and running and I 1) hate riding past it, but 2) have no choice

If I did not love my horse (Casper) so much I would have not invested so much time and effort (he was a neglected horse), I would have stabled him elsewhere or not been able to afford to stable him (stables away from wind farm have put prices up)

Spook the horses

If access remains free and suitable tracks are maintained

As long as we still have a bridleway, access should be fine

A wind farm is being built on Forestry Commission land locally which has been a very popular ride; the car park has now been blocked and no entry signs erected

All my riding is road work; the last thing I need to worry about is how my horse is going to react every time I pass this area; knowing I would have to pass this area a lot of the time as it would be on my circular route and the drivers here are getting more inconsiderate every time I go out

It has not affected me to date, and I thought it would before it was constructed

I do not currently ride on land where they are being proposed

I assume that rights of way will be maintained or alternatives put in place

Horses don't like moving shadows; also, these are major industrial sites so are extremely unfriendly

Detrimental effect during construction due to lorries on the road, but potentially positive effect is opening up areas of previously un-rideable land; would be nice if larger schemes could build a rider track to link previously unconnected bridleways

When people gathered for a meeting to resist new turbines, they made my horse jump and I fell off; just not expecting people there and didn't see them soon enough; that's been my worst experience from turbines!

The wind farm where I rode has actually improved access for riders and increased off-road access by providing almost 100km of tracks

Already experienced around them, don't expect problems when the turbines go up next door

Suggest correct riding and introduction and there wouldn't be a problem

If my horse wasn't bomb-proof, my answer would be different here, as I can tell that any horse who is not confident, particularly on its own, will probably spook at one – it is a big, fast moving object that emits a strange sound

How would affect us? It would not once it is built

I have young sport horses which are extremely fit and their senses are heightened; I don't want to be killed

Sudden appearance on familiar route

Noise from the blades, spooking horses, wind whistling through the blades

Assume there would be a safety exclusion zone, but alternative access could be address through planning legislation

Horses will get used to strange things; I live on a farm and my horse still has a problem when the combine comes out once a year, but accepts it by the end of harvest

More are to be built but that does not change the bridlepath access

A wind farm, multiplicity of large turbines would prevent me being able to go anywhere near;

the acclimatisation process necessary to calm horses is simply not possible while hacking out, and would be irresponsibly dangerous on the public highway

These things take years of upheaval and the enormous wagons and so on would be a huge threat, as well as the wind farms themselves – and the pylons; people don't care about horse riders and the access; the bridleways across the Llandinam farm are often blocked by locked gates for instance

There would be an effect while it is being built, but when finished and settled no or little effect. Probably difficult during installation or if they are near a busy road or near a sheer drop for instance, when introducing new horses, so depends on where they are in relation to the riding access

I would expect a horse regularly ridden near wind turbines to become accustomed to them, as do horses that live near high speed railway lines or under RAF flight paths

As long as bridleways/riding areas weren't closed off, thus affecting access, I would carry on as normal; I would expect my horses to become accustomed to wind turbines with appropriate training/handling

I have no objection to one for domestic use but not as a commercial project because I live on a very small island

Would say five while under construction, but probably a two once established

This partly answers question 16; people need to understand that an increasing number of wind farms will be using turbines that are absolutely enormous in scale (more than 400 ft, dwarfing Big Ben); they are largely untested for acoustics; general safety; shadow flicker; there are, in other parts of Europe, a minimum set back from dwellings and things like bridleways for jolly good reason; safety and risky acoustics aside, who on this earth wishes to ride the landscape with hundreds of these enormous moving structures enclosing some of the best and most beautiful riding and walking scenery? We are talking hundreds in some areas, too; it may be as safe and comparative to riding along the breadth of the M1 perhaps!

I am in the Chilterns, nothing planned so far

I would teach my horses not to fear the turbines and see it as an opportunity to teach them something new

I have several ride-out options and frequently trailer away

The risks of noise, flicker and vibration would make it dangerous to ride there; also, the surfaces of the bridleways will be affected and I imagine be service roads of scalplings and not the beautiful grass tracks our barefoot horses are used to

Not riding regularly at present so cannot really comment on this question

I usually ride alone and despite my horse being very experienced and steady, there are wind changes that affect the noise the turbines make; shadows crossing the ground can affect how a horse behaves; as I have no opportunity to graze or stable my horse near a wind farm the unknown becomes more of a factor

It would depend on the company's rules; where I rode in Scotland we were free to ride where we wanted to; the Right to Roam Act should extend to England and Wales

My main route is over a local hill where developers are trying to build a wind farm – it is my main off-road route; I am sure my horse would get used to the noise/flicker if it were constant, but what if it suddenly starts up when I am near them?

The companies are offering money to local communities to help improve access and so on in the area, but they have to agree to welcome the wind turbines; this puts the user groups in a very difficult position; also, the companies installing the turbines need to work with local authorities and take into consideration the position of public bridleways, for instance

I think with appropriate handling the horses would settle and get used to them – just like hacking and coming across large, noisy vehicles like tractors takes time for some horses to get used to and others don't bother; I think it would really vary between horse and rider; personally, it wouldn't worry me.

Planners require wind farm developers to increase countryside access as part of their proposals, so I believe that access opportunities will be increased

Flicker shadow – visual impact – industrialising the countryside

I don't think riding by them is as bad as living near them

Will be next to a bridlepath

A wind farm was built near me where I ride, which was very worrying; it was a case of getting my horse used to it, or not riding out

If access was reduced/denied during construction then re-introducing horses to a route they had not crossed for some time which now had turbines in situ would have to be done carefully

We won't be able to ride along the bridlepath

Already I can no longer hack where the latest wind farm has been built; there are numerous planning applications in the pipeline including one at a cross-country training ground; I will not be able to use this facility if planning goes ahead

I wouldn't be able to use the surrounding hacking and hills for fitness work for my horses

They'd just have to get used to it!

I would be worried about the impact on safety for my horse; I would not enjoy riding near turbines, which I find overbearing and intimidating

My horse would need to be become accustomed to these new features in the landscape that would be met along our hacking route

Given the dangers posed by wind farms – there are many hundreds of accidents reported to date – in addition to the danger of ice-throw in cold weather, it is almost inevitable that eventually access to wind farm sites will be restricted

I already have limited access to the common land here as my neighbour turns mares out on the common and they stand around by the gate, so I cannot re-mount my stallion as he is too excited; if there were turbines up there as well I would seriously consider selling the horses

We have turbines built in our area and the right of way has been closed which passed across the land

These are threatening huge industrial installations

In our area (Staffordshire Moorlands – Tittersworth Reservoir area), we have very few bridleways; to have a turbine/wind farm constructed near/by any of the limited number of bridleways would have a major effect – particularly for those who feel they could not use the bridleway due to the turbine/wind farm; given our undulating terrain you could come across a turbine with very little warning visually, but not necessarily audibly – as humans we would understand what is ahead, that is not so for the horse

My only route to bridleways from stables will potentially be right past proposed wind turbines it would be another limiting factor, affecting where to ride

I would be nervous about riding any horse near the turbines; current proposals nearby would put 100m turbines less than 1km from Two Moors Way, some of which is bridleway and in fields adjacent to a few of the roads here; I would also not wish to ride through the noisy alien environment the turbines create – I ride in the countryside to enjoy it for what it is

We would negotiate a way through or round with the landowners

The significant effect would only be during the actual building

A wind farm may even serve to increase off-road riding if permission is given to ride on the access tracks in between the turbines; this has been successfully done on some wind farms

We have guns going off all around us during shooting season and we ride on roads with tractors and milk tankers, which don't pose any problems now; the main thing that the horses spook at are large stones on the ground and tree trunks in the hedge, which are non-moving objects

The majority of local countryside isn't accessible to us anyway, but the existing turbine site hasn't affected us anyway

To accustom horses to wind turbines the animal would have to live near to them and have regular sight/contact; most of us access the countryside for holidays and so on, which would not allow for training and acclimatisation; undoubtedly some easy-going horses would build up a tolerance to them

It would affect us when they are being built, obviously we wouldn't be able to ride with them going up; that's a shame but if more are going up then planning for access for horse riders should go hand-in-hand with the development process; if a route doesn't exist already then one should be included to enhance the spaces we have available to ride in

Destruction of the environment is due not only to turbines but also the infrastructure needed to install and maintain them

I would not be prepared to risk taking my horse close to wind turbines – so in real terms access would be lost

Depends on the location and the horse

May be affected adversely during construction, but access tracks may make access easier for some

Where I ride there are few routes to take and it would mean a very restricted area to ride in

There is only one turbine and at least it has a landscaped area in front of it

They will stop me riding my horses in the area

Movement/noise would be unsettling for the horse

This has already happened to me and it has ruined my riding access in one direction; applications for a further 17 and 11 will completely block my riding in three directions (Tan 8 proposals)

I have another horse who is more spooky

I'd have to do some training with my horses – fortunately, I enjoy this aspect of keeping them

There is no off-road riding here, and if a wind farm was built anywhere near here it would increase the traffic on our very narrow roads and make it quite impossible to break young horses to harness, as it would be too dangerous

Horses are lively enough across fields without permanent structure to negotiate

Several farms in the North Devon area are seeking permission for single or pairs of turbines, even three local parish churches plan to build two each; many of these farms and proposed sites have bridle tracks adjacent and/or local roads which are used by riders to access same. Because of the varying intensity of movement, noise, flicker and so on there is bound to be a severe impact upon riders' ability to use said bridle tracks; there have been three applications near to my home, all of which have bridle tracks and access routes which would be unuseable in my opinion for equestrian activities

Heavy traffic during development phase

I cannot risk riding out if my horse is likely to react violently to wind turbine blades moving

Horses would just get used to them

Currently open access in all forests – will be restricted by building of turbines

Would not like any extra un-natural noise in the environment – birdsong is so precious to hear

My very rural AONB (Blackdown Hills) should remain free of horizon-impacting monstrosities

I would be very anxious taking out a young horse on my own near turbines on a sunny and windy day – I always ride alone

Our only quiet lane accessible from these premises runs past the site

We live right near the cliffs, so hopefully we should still be able to ride near them

During construction it would be restrictive, but when operating it'd be fine

Wind turbines were erected near to home and to where I ride and the only impact on my riding has been that I have not yet ridden past them on the road, as I have slight concerns, but I have ridden past them on a number of bridlepaths with little effect; I may have an advantage in that my horses can see the turbines from their paddocks; the turbine company are about to put a sound monitor in my garden; if I can access any appropriate sound data (with their cooperation) would this be useful?

The movement and sound will disturb my horse

Why should I subject my horse to these abominations?

Our access would be increased majorly

My current horse would accept new turbines eventually; another horse may not be so tolerant

My horse hates anything noisy or anything like that; it would be a potential accident in the making for me

I live on Dartmoor and so have a vast area to ride over, fortunately

If my two horses react badly to wind turbines I would use that route less, maybe not at all

Horses need to be introduced to them slowly, as is the same with other strange objects, they need time and patience

I think the presence of a wind turbine on a normal ride or route would deter a horse and rider (or carriage driver, as in my own case) from using that route if it was particularly windy because of the increased noise from them

As long as you're sensible and use the right approach to adjusting to any new situation, things should be fine

The traffic involved with the installation could cause a problem

Would cause lots of stress to the horses

I believe that my horse may react initially but would soon adapt with confident handling; I may get a chance to prove this soon as there are at least four applications on routes I use, with varying numbers and heights

It will become a place to avoid for fear of accidents because horses will definitely be terrified; they are flight animals and will take a long time to accept turbines as normal

Access is only likely to be denied when they are building them

There is an application for planning for a large wind farm very local to me on Llanllwni Mountain/Brechfa Forrest; I think access will be forbidden during construction and there will be heavy traffic on the surrounding roads; after which we have to accustom our horses to these alien objects!

I currently ride a friend's Icelandic horses, mostly on tracks on a local estate; there are probably limited opportunities for turbines but these two are pretty laid back so would expect them to get accustomed with relative ease

Biggest issue is with potential for contractors laying tarmac access routes on bridleways or rough tracks

My only concern would be during the building process – I would want assurances that routes would be re-routed appropriately

They are installing a wind turbine in the area now, it is just by a bridleway but none of the horses have been bothered by it

The experience won't be as nice; views, noise and I expect my horse will be frightened and this makes the experience stressful; I wouldn't go there just in case

Avoid that road if weather conditions mean it might be a problem

The developer usually has to upgrade all public access on a site so you have an enjoyable experience

Limited bridleways in area; peat bogs at some times of year

Because of the works required to build the turbine and maintain it (tarmac roads), lorries and other vehicles across what would have been fields and natural tracks

We already have a wind farm near the access to one set of woods and the horses have all got used to them being there; if more were erected next to access points then I would think the horses would get used to them being there quicker, as they are used to seeing them now

I believe that the noise that a large turbine makes would cause an accident – horse will react badly, bolt, whip around into the path of cars/lorries/tractors/cyclists or pedestrians – fatalities if near roads

The potential wind farms will cover the moorland and forestry, leaving the riders in my area with nowhere to ride but on dangerous roads

We've only got one bridleway, which runs through a farmer's land who hates horse riders and tries his utmost to scare us away (the matter has been reported to the police); because of this, riders have very little access to any really quiet area around here; for a normal loop hack we have to go through a village and cross one major road; any further hacks are even worse; wind turbines would just be the last nail in the coffin!

My horse has had no close contact with wind turbines, therefore I would anticipate that she would not readily pass by or through such installations without a large amount of desensitisation work; this potentially could take months to achieve

There are sufficient safeguards in place to protect rights of way

The riding would be even more dangerous than it is now; I haven't been in person near to a wind turbine, so not sure of the noise or the effect on me or my horse

Normally built on farmland separate from bridleways

Judging by the situation in Wales, existing bridleways will become roads and there will be an enormous amount of traffic including HGVs during construction and maintenance

Sometimes working, other times not, and no such thing as a bomb-proof horse, also people are frightened of the things

Would put me off riding in the area; accessible bridleways are limited enough in the UK

My horse is a 'go anywhere, do anything' sort of horse – but she's definitely not a slug!

Dangerous in high winds, blades may sheer off, noise from blades rotating at speed

We already get bombarded by low-flying jets (all week) and helicopters; we are high up on

the Fells and have now got cows as well as loose horses – turbines would destroy it completely
 There have been wind turbines located next to our local bridleways and they've not had any impact on my riding opportunities

The only other time I have been past one turbine my horse had just done a very long ride and was tired; normally I would expect her to react; also, I have nowhere to safely get her accustomed to turbines

Until I have to take either of my horses near to a moving turbine, I would not like to say either way

It wouldn't affect me unless previous rights of way are closed and not re-routed

I'd say small installations of turbines aren't a problem, but large developments, such as the 45 planned at Newton Aycliffe, might be more problematic; I'd say a distance of 200m should be maintained

Would take some getting used to

As indicated in the previous question, our horses will just get used to them as they have done with traffic, trains, working in coal-mines, and working with heavy artillery in wartime

If it was noisy I would not want to go there – my horse would react based on past experience and the fact he is anxious over noises, and it would spoil the peace of the countryside

I just wouldn't be able to ride there any more

They are not only unsightly but also noisy; if one owns a very good horse then perhaps they would get used to wind turbines, but the average horse would not get used to turbines easily; it would be safer if wind turbines were not erected near bridleways

They are the unknown to the horse, who knows what will happen?

I would want to get the horses used to the wind turbines gradually, but I don't imagine it would cause a problem once the horses were accustomed to seeing and hearing the turbines

Depends how many there were, how big they were, and how fast they are going; until you experience riding past a wind farm I don't think you will know for definite

I can always find another route in this rural area

Although I believe they can be habituated to them – changing weather conditions make this a difficult and long process, so it's not practical for the pleasure or hobby rider and is an additional burden for businesses

I would not be able to ride past or towards them

There are strict guidelines for the positioning of land-based turbines such as distance from properties and public rights of way – and these guidelines will be adhered to under UK planning laws

Positive effect – as we now have accessible tracks across once boggy, inaccessible moorland

The only effect would be during construction with large plant/vehicles and so on; do not see it as a problem when up and running

This would curtail access and would be access by name only

Breed young horses

My experience is that my horses are not bothered by turbines and I think most horses would very quickly get used to them in the landscape

Nearest turbine proposed would be 120m from my gallop and grazing and even when it is being built my horses would be subject to dust sudden noise, large things swinging from cranes and so on

Small turbines move faster and are usually placed nearer roads

Little effect as long as access was not restricted or cut off

Wouldn't risk taking my horse near one; they can give up different noises so you could never rely on them to try and desensitise your horse

There are plans to build 40 606ft high turbines and a substation in the Dyfnant Forest, mid-Wales; the Rainbow Trails Association uses the forest for safe off-road riding and driving and this will cease if the wind farm plans go ahead; during construction and after I would not be prepared to risk mine and my horses safety in this wind farm wasteland

More access

I admit there are no turbines where I ride currently, but we all have to adapt if we want a world for our children's children to live in; horses got used to seeing pylons marching through the countryside, and aeroplanes overhead, so why would turbines be a big issue? I would object a whole hell of a lot more strongly to nuclear – and have raised my objections to Hinkley which is in my county

The wind farm application will need to ensure that access is maintained and adequate, safe distance to turbines is allowed for

I enjoy riding and I like wind farms equally; I don't see any problems

The bridleways will be still open and the turbines will be placed far enough away from the bridle paths

The wind turbines would usually not be sited directly next to a bridleway, there would be a buffer zone in place; however, if near, my horses would probably look at them but since they take a lot of their confidence from me, as their rider I am confident I can take them past – as I have taken them past anything varying from a very loud, massive harvester, to pigs, to a crisp bag in the hedge; getting used to them by passing regularly does the rest

Might be restrictions while the wind farm was being built for safety

It is my experience that a wind farm in the area has a significant positive effect on access opportunities if the community liaises with the developer and cites this as something they would like; I would especially like to point you towards Edinbane Wind Farm on the Isle of Skye; this is great for me and my kids, who can now hack on a good surface in a traffic-free area on an area previously inaccessible because of the peat

Many bridlepaths and tracks are obstructed, obscure or neglected; wind farm operators can be encouraged to increase public access

They don't usually seem to be fenced off

Noise, scale, and movement

I only ride out on the land owned by my parents, there is ample space and the horses are grazed there so they would also get the opportunity to become accustomed to any potential turbine developments before I would ride near them

I would not be able to ride this route as I would be afraid of losing control of my horse; in addition, my horse suffers from Cushing's syndrome and it is important not to introduce him to causes of stress as this could provoke shock laminitis, which is a symptom of the syndrome (high level of cortisol release)

Would not consider it safe to ride near turbines, even the quietest horse would be spooked if a turbine which was not moving suddenly started to turn

I think my access opportunities will increase as wind farms in Scotland open up lots of new tracks

I don't think that wind turbines are a real issue for horses

Not many bridleways but goodwill from farmers; it would depend if any routes were subsequently blocked, due to wind farm

I would not wish to ride on turbine tracks due to safety and preferring to enjoy unspoilt countryside; I would also not wish to contribute to further industrial development in the countryside

Apart from the upheaval of the installation period, the noise and ground tremors created by them would seriously upset the vast majority of horses

I imagine increased numbers of gates and general access problems, plus changes to hard surface for access to turbines which increase danger to horse and rider

I understand that during construction access will be limited and perhaps a bit of extra caution needs to be taken if riding close to the turbines and on the access tracks, but otherwise it'll be OK

During the construction it was more difficult; in our case the alternative was a residential development, which would have ruined our best hacks

Noise interaction from hundreds of machines, destruction of existing trails and facilities and despoiling of the very landscape that I have come to love

I wouldn't risk an accident while riding; for instance, horse spooking/napping to not go past
We live in north west Norfolk where it is quite flat; if a wind turbine was put up it would be very visible

The countryside would be ripped up, access roads put in, large areas of concrete and industrial site; we have fought a campaign for six years costing thousands to stop two wind turbines being built near two byways and it takes a huge amount of time; why can't there be a law to stop developers even thinking this would be a good site in the first place? Councils spend thousands as well, they are afraid of making a decision in case the developers appeal and it goes against them and they have to pay costs

Do not want to ride past wind turbines because they are noisy and spoil the view

They would be built in the forest I ride in, Dyfnant Forest, along with possibly being placed on my family's land

Would not ride in the area, it's not worth the risk

The planning applications are to build 145 metre turbines within 50 metres of the forest trails used by riders

The turbines are not the problem, it's the access roads and the construction; the construction traffic goes but the access roads are left behind, ruining bridlepaths and rights of way!

Because of the hazard they pose, tracks being closed, and they spoil the reason why I choose to ride there – for instance, peace, quiet, views, in safe surroundings

Bridle paths are so few, any danger to users due to windmills are unacceptable; an unseated rider on open mountains in remote areas, possibly with no mobile phone signal, is an accident waiting to happen

If a wind turbine/turbines were built where I normally ride I would choose to avoid the area altogether; a horse could perhaps become used to a turbine over a long period of time but in trying to train the horse to be ridden near to one the chance of the horse spooking badly would be significant and so a dangerous risk for horse and rider

If it was somewhere I ride regularly they would get used to it

I will have nowhere to hack out; I live near the Dyfnant, loads of trails but Iberdrola want to put 35 185m turbines around the trails, one next to the car park and a substation behind the community building; across the road from there is another area earmarked for wind farms;

the roads are unsafe here and with the extra wind farm traffic there will be no place to ride other than at home in the field!

Because my horse is not easy to hack out at the best of times, and we don't go out sufficiently frequently for him to get adjusted, I would probably no longer hack out from where we are and drive to a safer location; if I had a hacking horse, though (rather than a highly-strung competition horse) I think that the impact would be large for a shorter period of time while he got used to it

As long as there was enough room to pass safely, my horses would be OK with it

The shadows moving again

It would destroy the beautiful local landscape, and with the level of ground preparation, concrete, rubble, Land Rover track for access and vehicular access to turbine maintenance, it would not be beneficial; there is also the very real risk of horses taking fright and bolting; have you any idea how much noise the bigger turbines make? Take a lobotomised and deaf horse near one, and you might be alright!

Some effect to begin with while horses got used to it, but then could carry on as normal

A planning application is in at the moment which would affect us, but they have offered to create new bridle paths for us

Trying to desensitise a horse to a wind turbine in an open area could be highly dangerous; what if it suddenly starts working when you are close? Horses' hearing is highly sensitive; many people choose to avoid.

Negative effect whilst under construction and positive effect when network of paths completed

Disruption during construction

Significant effect if close to bridleway or road, but if far enough away from boundaries then I don't think they are a problem

I already have heavy traffic, trains and low-flying helicopters – none of which have ever bothered any of my horses – so why should wind turbines? They are virtually silent and static

I would hope it wouldn't have an effect this would need careful monitoring

One has been built in adjoining land and has had no negative effect

They wouldn't be able to build on the Malvern Hills and surrounding commons due to legislation protecting it – or at least I hope not anyway – not that I have anything against wind turbines in any way, but I feel that AONB's should be protected

Dependent on the size of the complex, small scale can be negotiated, alternative routes established with co operation; a national policy/strategy is required to address these issues; large scale complexes may be more problematic; in the south of Spain, Andalucia, there are huge areas devoted to wind farms – cattle and wildlife are unperturbed; they are unsightly and noisy but actually quite remote and in underpopulated areas; the scale is huge and riding there would not be a pleasurable experience

Depends on the attitude of horse and rider; I can see some horses having serious issues over confidence around them – they are huge and alarming from a horse's point of view (prey animal) – and are sometimes on and sometimes off, so unpredictable; other horses will take them in their stride. I would personally not feel confident riding around wind turbines as they freak me out, let alone transferring that fear to my horse

They built the M25 where I ride and it didn't have any great effect

En route to an arena I hire, but only occasionally I use it

Any future horse I have will be trained to accept them and current horses are fine with them

Near an airport

Ruin countryside and don't believe they are environmentally friendly; bring back nuclear energy; we can't store electricity from turbines, anyway; ugly things, tourist industry will be blighted in Britain

While my horse is very relaxed about individual turbines in most situations the combined noise and effect of a wind farm would be a totally different scenario for us both; I wouldn't ride in such circumstances as it would be dangerous for us both

If anything, may create better access due to access for maintenance on the turbines

Turbines are here already; they are on a route we used to ride before and we continue to use it; potentially there are another 12 going up, and we may actually end up with more tracks we can hack along

The noise I think will cause a few accidents over the next few years

I would try and use the fact that wind turbines were being put in to argue for better access to the area as a compromise, so arguably I would say that it could make my access better

Daily trails, not all horses will tolerate them, especially young horses; becomes a danger to both riders and horses

A large number are planned where I ride causing problems due to construction traffic and the turbines once working

I know the reaction of one small farm turbine to my laid back horse; would avoid a wind farm with the noise; although I don't believe a horse should be wrapped in cotton wool, my horse's reaction did take me by surprise and he did not grow accustomed to it

My horses no longer bother with the turbines that they see every day

Would prevent me riding that route

Only if access is blocked; for instance, the land around the wind turbine is fenced in

I wouldn't be able to ride anywhere in the vicinity of them

Because It would make the horses nervous

Some bridleways are close to ditches with water in, if the horse spooked the risk to horse and rider is significant; I also drive and would be very concerned about coping with spooked horse while driving on the roads

There is already a significant wind development three miles away in the other direction and we avoid riding that way; there is also another major wind farm development planned for the Clocaenog Forest which will severely impact on our lives, not just from a riding perspective

I would not be prepared to risk injury to myself or horse

Not prepared to put my safety, or that of my horse, at risk from potential handling problems because of the effects of wind turbines; therefore access will be restricted

I do not like the horse's reaction when approaching them, he gets very jittery on approach, I would not feel safe if I had to ride past them more often, not only for me but others, especially pedestrians and cars around me

Erection of turbines or wind factories is preceded by road-building and then heavy transport, and accompanied by pylons; result – dangerous activity and cluttered land

Again the planning regulations are sensible for these and also horses can get used to most large things, it is the small things they get scared of

Horses would be unlikely to notice them

I would encourage riders to contact wind farms for access to the land rather than opposing

them; they are trying to foster good relationships with people, they may even put down an all-weather surface for us to use!

I wouldn't ride near them for fear of spooking the horse

The turbines are often placed in open access country which leaves fewer places that are not industrialised

The area where I ride is slowly being filled with turbines – the rumour is that 300 are planned over the wide area

I think it would be significant – it would be a pain while it was actually being built, and then it would wonderfully improve access to new routes once the windfarm was open

I would have to carefully consider routes, dependent on conditions and avoiding turbine and as I ride alone on my horses, should one be spooked or something happen, I would be particularly at risk

I guess it will have an impact as people are negative and do not understand change . . . just like when the motor car arrived

I would be very worried that my horse would react badly and this would restrict the places where I could ride

I believe that my horses would get used to the wind turbines with time; they don't like new white lines on the roads when they are first painted!

Closure of bridleways while turbines built and then trying to get your horse used to them afterwards

Areas would be unusable

I don't see how it could be a problem, unless very noisy, but as far as I am aware they are not; we have no bridleways, so they couldn't

Existing wind turbines: Select any of the following that apply to the effect wind turbines have had on equestrian access in your area, whether a wind farm or single/few turbines.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
There are no turbines where I live or ride	38.2%	217
No effect – there was no access where there are turbines now	15.1%	86
Previous equestrian access has been maintained	22.9%	130
It has reduced the length or choice of routes I can ride because I avoid the area	18.8%	107
Change in surfacing, gates or similar has made it less suitable for me to ride	4.4%	25
It has provided new routes or links	7.6%	43
I don't know	6.7%	38
Please briefly describe how		103
	answered question	568
	skipped question	177

Responses received:

A small one right beside the bridleway for several years and no problems reported

My carriage is wider than a horse so a horse gate is useless to me

Far better access to off-road riding

Grass track to large stones the horses struggle with

I am having at times to box up to go to different bridleways to avoid turbines, so big effect on me.

There is only this bridleway near me so I now have to ride on the roads but there is one in planning

There are currently no turbines near to where I live, although an application exists which will mean my access to the bridleways will be prevented because I could not take the risks involved

There are several windfarms at various planning stages which will blight the whole area for equestrian activities

This would be the case if there was one closer than the one recently erected

Wind farm has been approved despite extensive protests in Langford, Bedfordshire

I already avoid one wind farm which means I can no longer use one bridlepath. A large single turbine has been proposed close by other bridlepaths which, if approved, will have a major impact on routes we can use

The RSPB are consulting on erecting a wind turbine at their HQ near me; I will be lodging an objection citing the same grounds that they, themselves, have used to object to other windfarm developments; personally, I have no real objection to it, only an objection to the RSPB using double standards

Permissive access through one site has been easier

Unless the winds are light

I have already answered this

The turbines are located in fields close to the road I used to gain access to forestry riding; this is somewhere I do not feel safe going to anymore

As explained above

There is no turbine yet, but planning has been granted for a single wind turbine nearby

YET – proposal is at pre-planning

The livery yard close to the site has bridleways quite close to the turbines

No new routes, I now hate riding past them as I know Casper will at some time endanger himself

In a garden near a track

The single turbine is close to a bridleway which is in constant use: I shall encourage more replies from local riders

Depending on how windy I would avoid the area

These are major industrial sites – places people and horses are not welcome

A number of schemes proposed near me ranging from single turbines on farms to 15 turbine scheme in forest

None here yet; give it a few months though!

In most cases we ride on the roads past the turbine sites which are on private land with no historical equestrian access

I still ride along the bridleway, but I do not know if others have stopped using it

Only one small turbine near a remote cottage – no effect on our horses

I have lived near a single turbine and it restricted my use of routes

Hopefully it may produce more access!

But, although I ride along the route, some other people simply cannot ride the adjacent roads when the windmills are active because of their horse's fear. I understand that a small number of livery horses never acclimatised, repeatedly colicked and panicked, and have moved elsewhere

There was no change

What is becoming noticeable are two things; 1) Landowners who seek or are making a lot of money, do attempt to restrict access; 2) There are warnings around the perimeter about the safety of walkers and riders; how long before (for health and safety) reasons, access is limited?

I often go and ride a new area, I deal with what is in front of me

I ride all over the country; I never know when i might come across a turbine

We avoid going through a wind farm on our five-day route across the Cambrian mountains; it has become a 'no go' area

I need to contact a local riding stable to see if they still ride near the turbines next to them; turbines are increasing in height and number, which make them more threatening

The turbines are in the sea!

Only plans for wind farms

I avoid wind farm on very windy days, for obvious reasons!

There is currently only one wind farm near to where I used to hack; if all the applications for wind farms are granted in this area I will no longer be able to hack safely pretty much anywhere in the future

No change

My past experience with a wind turbine, as previously mentioned was in Somerset; I now live in Derbyshire

Route where the turbines have been built is now closed

There are currently no wind turbines; as a community we successfully objected to a 75m turbine alongside one of our few bridleways – but that does not mean plans for future turbines will not be successful

Several proposed sites along the A14 on two/three areas that I ride in

Turbines not built yet

The site has been there as long as I've been at the yard, so I can only assume that the provision has stayed the same due to historic OS bridleways; I would like to see added bridleways included in the development of plans for future wind farms; communities often benefit financially so riders should benefit from improved access, and if that means considering parking and turning areas for horse trailers then it should happen with the development process

There is planning for wind turbines were I ride

Surfaces are now shale instead of grass so now very restrictive; more gates to open and often these are locked

No change

Because the blade of the moving turbine appears to 'pop up' at various sightlines when riding

the roads adjacent to the farm upon which there is one near my home located, I avoid those routes; that is in one direction from my home, there are other routes opposite and either side but there are applications pending on three of those directions also, which will impact upon me; there is also the pending application at Batsworthy Cross which will have a huge impact and effectively remove from me the ability to use the route I used regularly for keeping my carriage horse fit for competitors

We won a battle against the installation of a wind turbine in a good riding area, thank goodness

Existing small, farm turbine is adequately set back from the highway and apart from the initial reaction of my horses I have had no problems

Planning application just submitted

The turbines are in two farmer's fields, either side of a road; the woods and bridlepaths near the turbines are unaffected; I have some concerns re riding on the fairly busy county road, as the turbines are both sides of the road and I am unsure of my horse's potential reaction to this

Other reasons such as heavy traffic not associated with the wind turbines and problems with 'neighbours from hell' in the locality have contributed to the route restrictions

Our access is majorly increased

Turbines are in field by lane, therefore does not affect access along lane

I haven't heard of any local horse riders having any problems

There is currently an application for a large (100ft) 50kw turbine on my normal carriage driving route, so we are awaiting the planning decision on this

Only came across them as we were on a pleasure ride

Yet!

The horses have not been bothered by it

There are some planned that will have a big effect as it's common and forest that riders use

It has been so bad I moved my horse to a different town altogether

On a farm six miles from where I live and don't ride anywhere near to them

The one turbine is at a local senior school right inside the school area

There are two small turbines close to (within 50m) a bridleway which I use on a regular basis; my horse hardly notices them

I came across the turbine having boxed over to a friend to ride with her

Since the turbines have been put in place, what was once a short 'there and back' route has been linked into another across the hill we previously couldn't link up to without accessing a busy road

I travel to the area where the turbines are; there are none on my doorstep

More turbines are planned and will be nearer equestrian access, however, this does not mean that this will not change

Turbine erected in a farmer's field next to the road

Only one on a farm local to me

As before, there are bridlepaths up by the wind turbine but these are bridlepaths by name only as they are inaccessible; without these turbines, the bridlepaths would be a fantastic ride with spectacular views; it seems such a shame that these bridleways are not being used for their purpose

No turbines yet!

I ride in the New Forest which is a national park and therefore restricted from turbine development; I've ridden a couple of times in the Netherlands with wind turbines nearby, but the horse I was riding was so used to them spinning that he didn't bat an eyelid

I can now ride on a traffic-free area where this was not possible previously

We have successfully defeated two separate applications for a windfarm in areas where I ride
As above, the alternative was a residential development

Several wind factories are proposed for this area, with hundreds of turbines; I will avoid the area; facilities will be destroyed and changed

National Grid are proposing to erect wind turbines and pylons in my area and if they did it would have a devastating effect, not only on my riding, but may pose a risk to my horse and my health – which I believe definitely will have an effect

The moving ground shadows from the blades are the problem; the noise they can get used to with time

Another wind farm is being built 1km from my yard; the above is my choice when it has been finished

Answers based on two separate areas where I've kept horses

Have to ride on road past three turbines to get to bridleway, can only go when wind is in certain direction because turbines built too close to road. Haven't yet managed byway due to site construction traffic but turbines look even closer to right of way; turbine/traffic sandwich not good

There are applications for wind turbines by me – this does not bother me

Access is now more suitable to be ridden on in winter

There are no big turbines in my immediate area; there are some small private turbines attached to private dwellings but the horses don't bat an eyelid at those, either

None yet; construction about to start

Horse now moved back to my parents' farm, so not on my hacking route at present

New bridlepath has been put in of a better quality

There are plans to put up wind turbines on the farm I ride around, my horse never reacted to the test turbine

Close to road at end of livery yard driveway, no effect now horses are used to them

They have been proposed and I am very much in favour

It has changed nothing

It's built on a huge area which was all bog land, so there are around 100km of tracks over an area which was previously impassable; the surfaces are fine for walking and trotting, with up and down hills, so great for fittening; some of the tracks are now starting to grass over in the middle, so hopeful that there will be canter opportunities in due course.

If you think a particular turbine site has had a severe effect on equestrian access, please describe how and its location (grid reference if possible) so we can identify it.

Response

Count

78

answered question 78

skipped question 667

Responses received:

Dyfnant Forest Rainbow Trails

North Crawley, Bedfordshire

Elmbridge area, Worcestershire

Magdalen Farm, Gristhorpe YO14 9PD

Proposals in the north east of Cumbria will affect riders

Dyfnant Forest Rainbow Trails Project in Powys will be severely affected if 35 x 606ft tall turbines are built in the forest; the construction will alter/affect all established routes including the purpose-built car and trailer park; at this pre-planning stage countless (and mainly fruitless) hours of volunteer time are involved in trying to liaise with the developers have still not achieved any form of mitigation either pre, during and post construction; it has taken almost ten years to establish an award winning equestrian facility which could be destroyed, or certainly limited in its appeal, to its original targeted equestrian tourist market

It was one near Escrick Park and not sure if access was granted that day for pleasure ride only or not as do not live in that area and have not visited since

Birdsedge HD8 8XP; four turbines planned; three will be too close to road used by horses (including those from John Whitaker's stable)

Alltwalis Wind Farm, Carmarthenshire

Will potentially affect Langford/Biggleswade, Bedfordshire

Dorcas Lane

It is on the road between Sutton on Trent and Ossington, going over the A1 bridge, passing Caledonian depot

Proposed erection of five wind turbines at Harbour Cross, Torridge, North Devon

Crystal Rig, Lammermuir Hills, East Lothian/Scottish Borders – Scotland – 11km south of Dunbar and 16.5km north west of Duns

317257/116057

Fullabrook, North Devon

Hill Farm, Earsham Street, Wingfield; highly visible from the road and scary for hackers who see it for the first time

Tir Mostyn, Denbighshire, North Wales

Planned Hand Equestrian, Clevedon

There is an application in for a turbine site at Fauch Hill (Pentland Hills) West Lothian and the local BHS representative, along with Oatridge College, have given their support to a hair-brained scheme to provide a track by the developers up on to the Pentlands and have car parks and other such hideous commercialisation of the site that is actually part of the Pentland Hills; what do they expect to find up on the Pentlands – bog and peat bog and lots off it; old drove roads exist if they want to ride on the Pentlands – surely for the solitude and wild experience – is why you would want to ride on the Pentland Hills; I was absolutely shocked and dismayed at such a prospect; are we to assume then that in supporting the Government line on wind farms BHS has no thinking capacity for itself and they approve of the devastation and destruction this does to our natural landscape and the wildlife that will be greatly affected at this site? otters have already been seen by the side of the A70 – dead – not to mention numerous badgers and this site is less than 1km from the A70; I hope this survey will enable you to research further and find a more truthful side to the experiences of wind farms

Turbine sites do affect equestrian access because you are restricted by your own risk

assessment dependant on weather, flicker noise and possible maintenance work; the quarry generated by the excavation of the stone to form the foundation of the turbine at AB518UX is out of bounds for all walkers and riders, so yes, equestrian access has been restricted but the turbine owner will argue that is not the turbine but the quarry

There is a planning application in for Coldhams Farm, Swineshead Road, Riseley, Beds

Proximity of turbines to one end of the bridleway grid ref NZ489127; site between Seamer in Hambleton and Hilton in Stockton-on-Tees

Caithness as a whole

Its effect is particularly relevant to riders on public highways in Sheffield, Long Lane/Short Lane in Stannington, S6

Llandinam, just south of Newtown, Powys

Scottish Power (CeltPower) P&L Llandinham WindFarm, South of Newtown (Powys)

Llandinham wind farm and new proposed turbines at Bwlch y Sarnau and Llanbadarn Ffynydd, Powys

Royd Moor wind turbines, Ingbirchworth S36

Will find out

Ulley, Rotherham; not built yet but going ahead

Bicker Fen wind farm; some locals no longer ride because of it

The proposed wind farm site at Grange of Lindores, Newburgh, Fife, Scotland; I cannot see this very useful facility continuing

No

Bryntitli, Rhayader

Millhouse, Penistone, S36

No

Llandinam, Powys

The turbines were very carefully placed either side of the bridleway; however, I fought (and won) proposals to move a bridleway for a future proposal that wanted the bridleway directed into a bog as the existing bridleway was on the only good soil around

I cannot speak specifically as the large site in North Devon is not on my riding/driving routes as some 20 miles away, but the local single ones do, as will Batsworthy Cross site if approved the appeal is due for hearing in June 2012

Would rather not comment

Sorry, I have no knowledge of this

Current application in on land at NGR 312536 111830 (Highlands Farm) Hemyock, Devon, which we are awaiting decision on

Never had a bad experience

Carno, Powys

Wind turbine at Drax (Rusholme); horrific!

Single 'domestic' turbine very close to a bridleway at Fullicar Lane, Brompton, Northallerton, North Yorkshire SE 383 973; as a BHS Access Officer I was contacted by local riders and a riding school proprietor who said that they had severe reactions from some of their horses – one rider had been thrown off; the riding school could no longer use this bridleway to take children for hacks out; it's the only bridleway near enough to their stables for them to use

County Durham

Llangwryfon wind farm

BHD has been out and has lodged objection

Alveston near Thornbury, South Glos, in process of being built just 50m from bridleway

I would never ride again on the route near Bacup!

Edinbane wind farm, Isle of Skye; Grid Ref: NG344506

Great Eppleton, High Sharpley and South Sharpley all in tight cluster on Sunderland/Durham border; one of the sites is under construction, one turbine approximately 100m from adjacent bridleway on Green Lane; shadow flicker is a problem; avoid the area if windy due to speed of blades, flicker and noise; dogs also affected by the noise

The proposed site in the Dyfnant Forest in Mid Wales will have a devastating effect on all riders and carriage drivers

See above

Alltwalis wind farm, Carmarthenshire; riding with landowner's consent

Braich Du. Glanrafon, Corwen, Denbighshire – with a further 25 x 145m proposed; help! www.stemm.org.uk

The Fermyn Woods Country Park site in Northamptonshire; we pulled out of a house purchase because of this wind farm planning go ahead

Ard Ghaoth

www.devonwindpower.co.uk/fullabrook-wind-farm; turbines too close to highways/rights of way, approx 45 metres

Round Hill Farm New Road HX7 – too close to bridleway; Shaw Top Farm, Shaw Lane, Hubberton, West Yorks; larger than normal turbine too close to road

Walton Road, Abronhill, Cumbernauld – privately owned, believe by Guilveir

The turbine is next to a BOAT (byway open to all traffic) located at the end of a 'no through road' at Cae Gwyn in Cyffylliog; there are other turbines with planning in the area being erected

I doubt there are any!

The planned North Wales wind farm at Clocaenog Forest and those already around the Llyn Brenig area have had some effect and I believe that this will become considerable over time

Is there anything you have not already said in relation to your experience with wind turbines or wind farms that you think may be helpful?

	Response Count
	220
answered question	220
skipped question	525

Responses received:

There is a lot of misinformation about wind turbines that is not true in reality

The wind turbines I've encountered have had no effect whatsoever on the horses I've ridden

I think turbines are 'rider frighteners' rather than 'horse frighteners' though there is no doubt

that a few horses really are frightened; in the wild horses do not suffer from predators from the air so the higher the turbines and the moving parts get, the less I think they will affect horses; they will just become large white poles, little different from electricity pylons; the smaller domestic turbines may end up being a greater problem to rider safety, though they have less impact on the countryside as a whole

I think this particular site in the Dyfnant is already established as an area enjoyed by the general public, there is even a club room in constant use there; there are thousands of acres of moorland around us, I would ask why target a settled area of tourism, it doesn't seem to add up

I have only positive things to say about my experiences with local turbines; the landowners are more than happy with me riding past as they realise it is better for riders to be off the public road; other local turbine owners have a similar reaction, although not all have through routes

I live in the Exmoor National Park where there are now many shoots, they affect riding and horses and safety far more than the wind turbines!

Perhaps we should be asking for new bridleways through windfarms as a condition of their planning permission – it could provide some good links between existing bridleways or quiet lanes

An 80m turbine is being applied for in Stewartby, Beds, which is next to a field I have youngstock in; it is not needed and grossly oversized, together with noise/nuisance issues

People will tell you that they will and do cause all manner of problems because there is a well orchestrated movement in this country to encourage people to prevent (by whatever means possible) the development of wind farms because a minority are offended by the way they look

Wind turbines are relatively new in this country; soon they will be popping up all over the place; at one time there were no railways or cars, but horses had to get used to trains and vehicles just as they will have to get used to wind farms; harvesting wind as a power resource should not be viewed as a negative thing, as we as a country need to do something about where we are going to get our energy from in future years when the existing, outdated nuclear plants are eventually shut down and fewer are built to replace them, oil stocks are running lower and prices running higher; why not use the one resource which we know is not about to run out?

I realise some less experienced riders may take more of an issue with wind turbines – but I'm afraid if you are not capable of dealing with the horse you are riding in any situation which may cause the horse to spook, you should not be out riding on your own anyway; horses are unpredictable; anything can make them jump, from a car backfiring to a pheasant flying up in their face out of a ditch; the advice I would give anyone unsure about riding around wind farms is to check where they are, and check all routes available to be ridden around them before you ride out

I can only say that wind turbines are a means of generating cash for those who build and operate them; they serve no other purpose

Where they intend to put the wind farms near us will totally spoil the beauty of the place and there will be no joy in riding there at all, especially as the horses will be very nervous

Horses' potential reactions pose a very high risk and given the distance from which a turbine can affect a horse's behaviour mean that the risk to riders and others in the area or on the public highway nearby is unacceptably high, in my opinion; these turbines can appear very close when they are half a mile away or more; if a horse has a bad reaction this reaction is unlikely to be limited to a short distance; for instance, it is not like going past a combine harvester where within a few seconds or a short distance you may be clear of it – rather riding past a wind farm with several turbines would be like going past a convoy of combine harvesters miles long on the main road; few riders will ever have the opportunity to try and

desensitise their horse to turbines in a safe environment and will most likely face them for the first time from a public highway without knowing how their horse will react; many riders – including myself – would choose not to expose themselves and others to such a risk

They are too large and will always have an effect on the countryside for multiple reasons

There is very little empirical evidence on the effect of low frequency sound on people and no evidence on the effect on horses; I don't want to be one of the first people to do the experiment! I'd rather avoid the areas altogether – the countryside is ruined by them anyway; low frequency sound or not, I wouldn't want to ride in an area blighted by these pointless monsters

The developers constantly state that horses get used to turbines eventually and that there is no need to consider minimum separation distances from tracks and trails; if they do, they refer to the 200m separation from the original BHS document; the 200m original distances was advised when turbines were relatively small, not these monstrous 600ft giants; from local canvassing people have said they would steer clear of the site completely, which the developers use to their advantage when they quote number of incidences involving horses; we are also finding equestrian properties around these sites are being blighted by even the threat of a potential development

I think the size of these things, sound they make, shadows they create, are appalling and should never be allowed near a bridle path – one riding accident is one too many and there is a place for these things, which is out in the ocean away from the land!

www.birdsedge.co.uk/bolt.htm

A community group has been set up to fight a totally inappropriate wind-turbine plan

I am considering moving away from this area if the other wind farms get planning permission as it will not be a horse-friendly environment

Under the 1835 Highways Act, section 70, windmills were required to be at least 50 yards away from the boundary of any highway; earlier Highways Acts contained the same requirement; unfortunately, this requirement was repealed by the 1959 Highways Act; maybe it's time to press for something like this to be made law again

They should only be placed well out of populated areas, if at all, as they are always a potential hazard to riders and their horses

I think that wind turbines are a superb way of creating a 'clean' energy for the future, but unfortunately anything new will potentially put horses and riders at risk; horse riding is a potentially risky sport and I would say that you are at risk if any new building or erection was built close to where you normally ride if the horse is not used to it

With a confident rider, you could manage to get your horse used to them

If the turbines are needed for clean electricity then we will all just have to get used to them or put up with less green ways of generating electricity

Proper and prior preparation in terms of gentle introduction and desensitisation should prevent horses being spooked by turbines

My experience was on holiday in Norfolk

There are plans for more around us; it seems the general idea is 'well, we have one, what harm will another three do?'; yes, I do believe we need to source renewable energy but at the cost of health and well being to animals and humans alike?

My first encounter with a wind farm was our hunt's opening meet which was right in the middle of the farm with 50+ horses passing within 10m of the closest turbine; I was surprised at how few horses even noticed them

I am disappointed that there seems to be no limit as to the numbers of turbines Scotland is getting and my area in particular

Planning officers need to be made aware of the potential dangers to those riding and handling horses near wind turbines

Wind turbines are not environmentally friendly; John Prescott fed us a lie and the new Government is running with it; we do not have sailing ships any more because they are not commercially effective and the same is true for windmills; they still need to be plugged into the grid so the owners can draw from the grid when the wind does not blow – and back up the grid when the wind does blow; this creates surges of generation on the grid which produce more carbon emissions than if the grid could run at a constant speed; to call it eco-friendly is a lie, scientifically; windpower exists because companies are fined by the Government if they do not produce 15 percent of energy from renewables; to avoid the fines they pay to erect wind turbines or farms, offering greedy farmers free electricity; they sell the electricity at a high price which is recovered in two ways – 1) higher electricity bills for the consumers, 2) the Treasury selling carbon allowances to other people on the basis that we are polluting less so others may pollute more; this is under the EU's 'Emissions Trading System'; these carbon allowances are bought by people who cannot clean up their act (such as people in Poland and Slovakia, burning brown coal, according to the German newspaper 'Spiegel Online'), so effectively pollution is increased in the EU by wind turbines; furthermore the UK treasury, in its greed for money, has been selling more and more carbon allowances, including some it had hidden in its bottom drawer, and thus driven the price of the allowances down, so it is cheaper than ever to pollute; this is cynical, dishonest and damaging the environment; we should not be talking about the danger to equestrians from windmills – we should be exposing the dangers to all animals, people and vegetation from the dishonest policy of encouraging windmills, driven by a cynical Government's need for cash and an ill-thought out EU policy (yet another one!)

They are highly dangerous and potentially have the ability to completely traumatise horses – some will obviously get used to them, but others may never be the same again

Closure of Forest Commission (Wales) areas normally accessible to riders during long (two year) construction phase has had very significant impact, including closure/diversion of existing bridlepaths

It must always be remembered that horses are flight animals by nature and also have very small brains; I accept wholly that most animals can get used to most things but this requires significant desensitisation in some cases; unless your field was next to a wind farm I am not sure that most riders could expose their horses to sufficient wind turbines to ever make them safe

Good luck!

I consider wind turbines to be an unnecessary intrusion into our countryside; they are without doubt a difficult object to de-sensitise against as it may not be possible to view it from a distance; I also consider the noise to be unsettling for a horse, likewise the moving shadows it throws; all in all they are an expensive and impractical way of providing alternative energy and are costing the country a lot of money in subsidies and paybacks; it is a shame that farmers are being offered incentives to erect them; up to £1,000 per day which we are paying for!

Extensive research has been carried out with the Technical University in Wageningen (Netherlands) and the Rotterdam Police; I have, however, so far been unsuccessful in locating said research/findings

No

I am very much in favour of renewable energy and feel that the small amount of inconvenience that wind turbines may cause is a small price to pay for a pollution-free energy source; in fact it may open some areas for equestrian access

I believe wind turbines should not be positioned near to bridleways because some horses react very badly to them

No

We can see the rotary blades of a wind turbine that is four miles away and if the ponies catch sight of the movement they run away towards the gate; one of which is a 20-year-old mare who has lived here for 12 years

They are securing our future and usually in farmers' fields and not near roads and tracks; have had no issues with them and would love some of our own

Wind turbines should be offshore; we have solar panels for inland!

Planning applications should be notified to the BHS and local riding clubs as well as residents in the area

I hate riding past turbines as I know how my horse reacts

TREC Scotland offered me the opportunity to ride around Whitelee windfarm as part of a group, which was a valuable supported way of finding out how my horse would react; a lot of riders do not seem to hack out and lack experience of everyday phenomena so are unable to cope with anything slightly out of the ordinary; it's not the wind farm at fault, just the education of the horse and rider

No

I think riding is dangerous enough encountering rude and ignorant drivers, without adding fuel to the fire

I was concerned before it was constructed, not only from riding but as this is quite close to my horses grazing field; from riding and grazing I have not noticed any impact; no-one from my livery yard (+30 horses) has changed their riding routes since the wind turbine has been installed despite some horses who are fairly highly strung; therefore I perceive no impact

It would be nice to think new riding access paths could be made with new turbine developments

As an endurance rider a turbine is no more of a threat than a lorry or a tractor or a pig farm; I wouldn't want to object so long as we maintained access across/around them; my horse wouldn't bat an eyelid

Personally I live and ride within Dartmoor National Park and I would support any wind turbines within my area as I would rather have that next door than a nuclear power plant; with correct introduction the horses would be fine; I have ridden past hundreds in Cornwall and have never had a problem

A warning sign along the bridle path would be helpful!

It is ridiculous to suggest any animal, creature of nature or domesticated pet cannot get used to a wind turbine; they have got used to mobile phone masts, broadcasting masts, aeroplanes, cars, trucks, trains, tractors, buildings large and small, storms and anything else the world throws at them; there may be a few casualties to begin with, but isn't that true of the roads? More animals die on British roads than any wind turbine will kill

I think it has been covered; occasional encounters could be extremely dangerous and if I lived near them I would not ride near them because the process of getting the horses used to them would be hazardous

No

I think possibly high winds may have an effect but I think riding in high winds dangerous anyway as horses are more spooky because of sudden gusts and blowing debris

Apart from the blight on our beautiful countryside and the total expense on a useless power source which has been proven in other countries but which our government does not seem to comprehend; no!

I live on a dairy farm, and we have given some serious thought to a wind turbine ourselves; and larger than the ones at Stannington, to be viable; we are very aware it would be hard to site this for maximum wind advantage and also to meet safe siting margins in relation to the highway (quite well used by horse riders, because there is no nearby bridleway); the sales advisor seemed to suggest that legal distance requirements might be negotiable; I wonder how often this is happening in practice?; anyway, we're not doing anything further about this at present

The wind farms going up all around the country spoil our views, are noisy and there are more friendly ways, if more expensive in the short term, but in the long term cheaper to provide energy; how many of these turbines have already proved that they are not fit for purpose?

I am all for wind turbines, but would prefer to see them built offshore, rather than destroying more areas of the British countryside

When horses are worried they need to move their feet; just make sure the paths are not tight; that would add risk; hard to manage gates and poor fencing are a bigger problem with an unhappy equine!

Yes; you did not ask the question, 'do you feel you have enough knowledge and experience to help a horse to not be afraid of new things he might meet on a ride?'; and if the answer is no, then what are you doing to improve that?; many horse riders think everyone else should work around them; we need to fit in to the environment so we need to be able to teach horses to handle things in it

The disruption to existing bridleways through the construction time will be huge and affect our trail riding business enormously; we will have to change routes and utilise different accommodation providers so will not be taking our business there; we need to risk assess all our routes and those travelling through wind turbines carry too high a risk to be viable routes so it will make those bridle paths inaccessible to us

We have a windfarm nearby which can be seen from home; my horses were very aware of it when it was first built and spent many hours looking in its direction and listening, but are now completely used to it and ignore it; my horses are not ridden and there is no direct access to the windfarm so I don't know how they would react close up, but I'm sure with care and familiarity they would become quite used to it

No

I can only say it was an exhilarating experience to gallop underneath these huge structures across sand dunes; the horses looked at them but didn't mind at all

Wind turbines are only now starting to be understood – what at first seemed a fairly insignificant development has turned our countryside into a pincushion landscape for little return – an overall negative – health, visual, cost, efficiency and other issues demand a rethink

They should be built on-shore except at least 2km from human habitation

I would much prefer to have wind turbines than fast cars or lorries; people seem to have forgotten that horses are animals and not machines, perhaps a survey on that would be a better

The turbines are frightening enough, but the construction work is even worse!

Surprisingly little impact

Horse and riders face enough dangers from traffic and the like in the countryside; wind turbines will add to this and leave nowhere for us to ride safely

Being a animal lover I am horrified at the statistics regarding bat and bird deaths due to wind farms; in this area we have had a release of Sea Eagles to try and reintroduce these magnificent birds to Britain; some have remained in this area and yet there are numerous

planning applications for new wind farms in the pipeline; I don't fancy these birds' chances if they are 'sucked' into the blades; if I thought for one minute wind power was the answer to global warming then the sacrifices might be worth it; however, there is irrefutable evidence that wind farms are not the answer

I don't think they are an issue, if only they could be run off the hot air at the livery!

In a recent planning decision the impact on horseriders contributed to the refusal of permission for a wind farm locally; I believe the BHS should be much tougher in its stance – our local rep was next to useless – and help protect riders and horses from the negative impacts of turbines

As mentioned earlier, with correct handling the horses will get used to new structures around them; although no turbines in my area there are various types of bird scarers used frequently in nearby fields and my horses get used to them very quickly; the more our horses are exposed to different elements the less stressful for them when experiencing new things

At Crystal Rig in Scotland there is a notice at one entrance warning of various dangers including throw and even 'danger of death' (they had a blade break and throw just a few months after opening) and yet at another entrance there is a right of way that runs nearer to the turbines than the entrance with the notice

You ask whether horses can be trained not to react to turbines; I think this depends on the size and distribution of the turbines and the temperament of the horses, some will be OK and will be desensitised quickly, others will never like them and will be a danger to themselves and their riders

No

I avoid all turbine sites because of the danger, particularly riding alone

Horses kept on our field have been to fun rides with wind turbines; the turbines did not affect the horses at all

All I can say is that I would avoid areas that have turbines/wind farms as I do not ride to experience the industrialisation of the countryside; horses can be unpredictable – even the safest of horses can have its moments; having to ride past turbines/wind farms is introducing a possible hazard where none existed before

The BHS could have contact with turbine sites that asks if their sites are secure to livestock and have water; and whether the BHS could offer members and other riders the chance to book some short periods of grazing on the sites; this could help the landowners manage the grass, and help the horse owners get their horses desensitised; it could be win-win as the land gets grazed and horses learn to lower their heads and eat, relaxing and releasing calming brain chemicals around turbines; that will make rides safer thereafter

I think it's important for the rider/handler to feel unemotional about a turbine or wind farm, else they may project negative feelings and create a sense of uncertainty

I think there is a lot of scaremongering going on; if properly introduced to them, horses readily get used to cars (fast moving metal objects that suddenly appear around corners); there should be no difference with wind turbines, with the exception that they are static in that they will become part of the normal environment once installed

Only that I would dread them being erected near to my riding area, my old fella will go anywhere, do anything except when we encountered wind turbines, hence the thought that if they are on my route I actually think I would have to avoid it at all costs; please make the powers that be erect them out at sea!

I would just like to encourage people to try it; I'm sure people are put off by the industrialised landscape, the vast size and scale of the turbines; I know listening to some older riders they were very stubborn in their views, even though they either no longer rode, or didn't have a wind farm anywhere near them (20 miles away) – they had this perception that horses hated

them and then spread this negative word; it simply isn't always the case; I never thought for a minute that Mr Darcy would go within a mile of them, never mind stand comfortably underneath them happily; challenge your views, find out for yourself, but take a confident companion horse with you; we've been known to take a whole yard ride of 15 horses up to the turbines and sit around them having a picnic; can you imagine the horses snoozing whilst we ate our sandwiches and had a small sip of cider on a summer's day?

If horses are handled/educated correctly with wind turbines, the same as when they are educated for traffic and so on, there shouldn't be a problem with wind farms; I have found new horses may not like new situations, but with the correct handling they become accustomed to the changes.

They will destroy the heart of Wales if allowed to proliferate

There seems to be no statutory duty for planning authorities to consult user groups on the impact of proposed turbines on PROW's; also, many planning authorities and developers seem to pay scant regard to the BHS advice on the siting of turbines in relation to bridledways

Some horses will not adapt

The noise and shadow flicker plus the flailing arms of a turbine would completely freak out most sensible equines

Wind turbines in my area are fully supported by the farmers in this area (due to the money they will receive annually); however, there are a lot of horse owners in the area who are not farmers and if Tan 8 goes ahead many riders (like myself) could be severely restricted; I enjoyed working for the BHS (highest membership gain when I was secretary) but felt too strongly to sit at the same table as someone who said that 'all horses would get used to them with enough exposure'

I would caution the BHS not to become a proxy in certain people's battle against wind turbines; represent your members, but don't make yourselves look foolish by repeating claims without checking the evidence; it is well known that horses are not bothered by wind turbines

I think that to get a horse 'steady' to the swish of the blades if the horse has the slightest inclination to be upset takes huge tenacity and braveness; as that noise is abhorrent to a lot of horses, especially a driving horse as they can't see where it's coming from; this makes the rider/driver very nervous

It's a nuisance that horses may require training to cope with – education regarding wind turbines should include this aspect so that riders are made aware of this

I do not think the majority of people have any idea of the impact these machines would have upon them, their horses, lives and safety should turbines be erected in their locality – it is only when faced with the irrevocability of them once they exist that people realise the extent of such impact – by which time is too late!

I think this is a huge fuss about not very much – probably the same fears were raised by riders and drivers when the steam engine and the car were first invented; you train your horse properly for road work and other matters and, if very highly strung, ride out with a sensible companion or two, not alone; living near to turbines may well be different but for riding, let's stop getting hysterical and get on with it; if it's a real problem, perhaps your horse could graze with others in the vicinity of the turbines to acclimatise?

There are fewer and fewer safe off-road places to ride nowadays; within 45 minutes of my home there are only three places and we have to compete with prams, kids on bikes and loose dogs for instance; if wind farms increase in number, it is likely that safe places to ride will reduce in number

No

No

I know people in Holland have had similar issues with wind turbines there

There is a proposal to build a wind farm in the Dyfnant Forest in Wales which has the Rainbow Trails which I ride, and many of the proposed turbines are directly on the trails and one at the coralls where the horses are tacked up and settled prior to riding, so I think it will have a detrimental, if not dangerous, effect on my riding experience

They do not affect us, they are providing our future; horses in general are not worried about them

They are better for the environment, just let them be and get on with it; there will always be things that change where you ride and so be it, if you're not in control, don't ride

I strongly believe that the benefits of wind turbines in relation to global energy vastly outweigh the short term cost to riders training their horses to accept them as part of the landscape; is it really any different to getting a young horse past a buzzing pylon in the rain, or traffic for that matter?

I think that wind turbines/farms are here to stay and that horses should be capable of accepting them without question; from experience watching riders from my livery yard most of the problem arises from nervous riders, not nervous horses

No

I think many small turbines are being erected without appropriate planning; two have gone up next door to my property; they are noisy, interfere with TV signals and have made the ponies a bit more jittery; I hope this will pass in time

When cars were invented, you had to have a man walking in front in case they frightened the horses; living in the hills of Wales our horses don't even flick an ear if low-flying jets scream over, but they don't like scrambler bikes (the noise) or hot air balloons, again the noise of gas jets is what they react to; horses will become accustomed to anything given time and the right handling; for instance, my horses would have a fit in London traffic, in as much as horses in other parts of the country are frightened by aircraft

No

Equestrian off-road routes are already limited and under threat; wind turbines are another obstacle, forcing riders onto increasingly busy roads; we need to have a voice in the siting of future turbines

One of the problems presented to me has to do with the disturbance during construction with the increase in heavy traffic on rural roads and down small tracks, in one case adjacent to a breeding and training establishment

There is a lot of over-reaction and nimbyism on the subject

Where sites have multiple wind turbines there may be more of a problem than those that have one or two turbines, but the main issue would be the individual horse's temperament/attitude in general

Haven't had any experience with horses and wind turbines yet – not looking forward to having to try and accustom my horses, or give up hacking altogether as there is nowhere else to ride locally

I think they are a blot on the landscape!

They spoil enjoyment of the beautiful area in which I live and ride

No

My riding partner from Brechfa won't ride close to the Altwallis windfarm boundary because her horse gets jumpy at the 'whooshing' noise it makes, like he gets on a very windy day; she is scared she will come off

Like to see them so probably have relaxed feeling when endurance ride goes near them which may well pass on to the horse

I believe the BHS should come out and support wind farms like the RSPB have done

Not only are they bad for horses, but they have many horrible effects on the environment and people living nearby who have to put up with them

No

Ugly, pointless things – the amount of environmental damage they do when they get built doesn't justify putting them up; solar panels are so much better; also – plant rapeseed for bio-fuel (hybrid cars) for instance; wind turbines do not strike me as a green option at all – I have seen how long it takes and how many machines, lorries, cranes and so on – all burning fuel!

The most damaging aspect is on the environment – in terms of traffic as mentioned above, but more importantly in terms of destroying the very reason for visiting beautiful areas such as mid-Wales; in these areas rural communities benefit from equine tourism; this will be lost if the areas are destroyed (aesthetically) by turbines; also the areas most at risk are the areas with fewest people to fight for protection of the landscape; turbine applications in less environmentally important areas, but with a high nimbby population will get turned down and the companies will take the easy rich pickings of mid-Wales

It seems that horse riders in general are being slowly squeezed out; the roads are so dangerous because motorists just do not consider that a horse may be around the next bend and hardly any motorist adheres to a 30mph speed limit; you take your life in your hands when you go out for a hack; we are frowned upon for being on the roads these days, let alone road rage, even issues about horse droppings; bridleways are not the safe haven they once were – so many have bird scarers it would seem almost deliberately placed so dangerously close to where the horses pass, and now we have the extra hazard of wind turbines to discourage us from accessing certain tracks; bridleways over the years are cut up by main roads; who would honestly expect to ride or cross a main trunk road on horseback, obviously this is not going to happen; soon enough we will all just be riding in ever decreasing circles at home on arenas; in fact, I know two people who, short of going in their horse box somewhere for a hack, this is all they do, it is a crying shame; when I was a young girl, we had so much more freedom to ride, in safety; people gave you room and thought of it as a healthy pastime, but now we have the whole class distinction coming through in angry motorists and being squeezed off farm tracks by desperate farmers; I dread to think if my grandchildren will even get the chance to have ponies

The big problem is how the rider feels feeds through to the horse; if the rider is frightened so will be the horse

Horse's temperaments vary tremendously – not only that, but on one day a horse which would normally walk past a turbine without reacting at all and the same horse on another day might have a reaction; I know this isn't particularly helpful for this exercise, but horses are unpredictable!

Should not be placed anywhere a bridle path under any circumstance

No

Only to reiterate my previous sentence and that when talking to others they have had some similar experiences – why are we destroying our countryside when there are alternative ways; we are an island, hydro power, solar power?

I really don't think that the horses care about the wind turbines all that much – as previously said – it might be the rider expecting them to react, which then becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy

Any rider is aware that some horses, on some days, may spook at something old or new;

personally a turbine changes direction and noise each time a horse may go past, so each time it is different to them; knowing the nature of horses, flight would take over as it does with any changes on a normal route, but is it then up to us as owners or riders to know this about our dear friend and make sure we handle them in the correct manner, introducing them sympathetically

Most riders have no means of safely getting their horse used to turbines and have to deal with whatever happens at the time of meeting them

Stop the hysteria and treat them as we would any other distraction; train our horses correctly – they get used to wagons, tractors, noisy sub-stations, why not turbines for goodness sake!

I think the BHS should change its stance; we are using our horses as a tool because we (some of us at least) don't like the visual impact of the turbines; yet what is the alternative?; ever more exaggerated climate change, loss of species?; we live in a world of our making and we have to accept innovation designed to stabilise the climate and biodiversity loss (even though it's probably already too late)

They are a scourge on the countryside and an inefficient, costly way of producing energy; if they weren't heavily subsidised no-one would build them, as they cost more to build and maintain than they ever produce in power

Huge windfarm sites are being planned across mid-Wales, one of the few areas which is safe to ride, no traffic, open spaces, and so on; these turbines will effectively stop riders from being able to use those areas; I consider myself to be green, but I don't believe the 'benefit' of turbines outweighs the damage to the environment

I think that we should all be doing our bit for the environment, and as wind turbines provide a sustainable fuel source, we should support them!

I and my horse have no problem with them – they are there for a good reason and I feel much more at risk riding on a busy 'A' road nearby; our local farm has a turbine and we are also investigating living off-grid

A friend of mine has summer grazing in an adjacent paddock to the wind farm and the horses haven't reacted to them at all (Thoroughbreds)

Riders are concerned about how their horses will react – horses are more frightened of the unexpected (pheasants/cyclists/black flapping plastic and so on) they can acclimatise to a turbine because although the blades move, the main structure doesn't; it is the rider's role to instil confidence into their horse and once a windfarm/turbine is up and running it becomes the norm

Decisions need to be evidence-based and not based on perceptions

I took part in the BHS Wind Farm Familiarisation Day at Whitelees at Fenwick and was surprised how little the horses reacted to the turbines; it is definitely a place I would ride in the future

Our village will be surrounded by 18 industrial sized machines, all of which are separate applications; this will ruin our lives and others (Ludchurch, Pembrokeshire)

If we don't switch to renewable energy soon, a few wind turbines will be the least of our worries

My business will have to close down and I will have to move out if the turbines proposed near me get planning approval; I cannot risk other people's horses so close; a couple of years ago during the balloon fiesta a hot air balloon landed in the field next door and all my electric fences were brought down by horses freaking out; luckily, it was only cuts I had to deal with, it could have been broken legs or tendons

The Holderness Hunt rides under turbines at Lissett without any problems

Mid-Wales is fighting to prevent turbines destroying its beauty and tourist trade; today it was announced that the Welsh coastal path has been opened, but will people visit when confronted

by huge turbines?

From my experience the turbine has almost no effect whatsoever on horses or their owners

Anyone who objects to wind turbines should be offered an alternative of no electricity for a week, or having a nuclear power station in their garden instead; I am sorry, I am very very strongly in favour of anything that will help power this country without recourse to such awful power plants as Hinkley point; they pose far more risk long term for everyone; turbines are actually very graceful to see, and have far less impact on the land ultimately

I think that wind farms promote a sense of calm and harmony with nature

I think initially an introduction to turbines should be treated carefully, but mine became accustomed after seeing them a couple of times and now doesn't really acknowledge them

I would prefer that my horse becomes familiar with new objects – I gently exposed him to the experience; I think my horse has a new confidence from the experience; the turbine has not physically prevented me from my access and I feel as a rider, it is for me to adjust to my environment – as I would do if I rode somewhere new and different; my concern is seeing inexperienced riders pushing their skills

We have a small turbine on top of a road sign near us, for powering the light-up sign; the horses go past it every day to go to the field and sometimes when ridden, and I have only once had a problem when the sun was shining through it, causing shadow flicker on the road; the horse jumped at this slightly but not uncontrollably; I believe horses can become accustomed to such things very easily

I am disappointed how this survey is generally very negatively worded; I hope these results are not manipulated in the press, as I do not think you have asked the questions fairly; my experience of wind farms and access opportunities has been positive and my horses have become accustomed to them very quickly

Wind turbines are a minor issue compared to car drivers and shooting!

My horses love wind turbines; I have seen beginners, intermediates and experienced horses and horse people ride quite happily under or around wind turbines; they do not create any problem at all

Wind turbines are not cost effective, they are the reason that our electricity bills have increased so steeply, they produce more carbon in their construction than they save, they are a health threat to people with heart problems, they can cause mental health problems (infrasound vibration), epilepsy and they destroy the landscape

I am generally in favour of alternative energy sources, and believe that all should be supported in order to secure funding and adaption of technology in future

With a bit of careful planning and sensible riding windfarms are great for riding – the more the merrier for me

Wind turbines are static and predictable and horses can therefore desensitise quickly to them; to me the greatest danger when out riding is still traffic, which is unpredictable and so often at very close range – even a horse as good as mine can still be taken by surprise by a car speeding past very close; wind turbines, helicopters and jets all seem to be accepted within a very short space of time

No

Horses and wind turbines are a poor mix, and I would not be interested in riding along the access tracks for safety and aesthetic reasons; the access tracks themselves are an encroachment into our wild areas, and should not be built; the wind turbine industry is politically expedient, but an ineffective source of alternative energy

There should be enforceable minimum distances from bridleways, housing, and so on; clusters

of turbines and wind farms should not be allowed; in our area we now have to attempt to negotiate two operational wind farm sites with a total of six turbines, with another three under construction, all in adjoining fields; at least two further wind farm sites are being considered in the immediate area

Really I have to say that I've found this survey to be more than a little leading; I'm glad that the Society is actively looking out for us, but it appears that they have already made up their mind

My experience was in a different area from where I live and I would not like to live near turbines because of the destruction to the countryside whilst they are being erected, and the amount of concrete that has to go into the ground means our rural fields will never be the same again; I do not trust the big power firms because they are only interested in profit

A wind farm of 21 x 127m turbines is proposed on the open access land next to our smallholding; the nearest turbine will be 900m from our field; we have two much loved ponies, one 33 years old; I have read how turbines can affect human health and have a friend who had to move because they made her ill, so I worry about the health of my family and animals

A planned eight turbine site close to my house is going to stop my riding in two out of three directions and will stop me riding this horse in my riding arena!

Re will horses get used to wind turbines?

If the horses are stabled by them then have no choice, but why would I want to take my horses to a 'Danger area' to let them get used to it?; the proposed developer of a local windfarm could not take a concerned group to a working windfarm due to health and safety issues

I hate them and Cornwall is becoming overwhelmed with them, but I must be honest and have to say that the wind farm near us does not affect my riding at all and my horses appear to take no notice of them; perhaps a new horse may be surprised, but I suspect would get used to them

I think that it would be helpful if the BHS added to its safety guidance information on turbines bursting into flames; the proposals to build windfarms in forests mean that this raises the potential for forest fires

The companies should be made (by law) to leave the site, the access and the going the way it was before the turbines were erected, there should be no change apart from the turbines themselves; where we ride on the beach, the cable laying has had a significant impact on the riding surface on the beach

All paths are closed during construction (possibly for two years), no alternative routes made available, resurfaced areas hard and compacted, ditches and drainage channels alter off-road tracks and so on

I think that the riders worry more than the horses; I know that I did, but none of the horses on our yard (20+ horses) have ever had a problem

Some horses may or may not get used to turbines, but it only takes one accident to kill or injure a horse or rider; in many of the remote areas where the bridledways are, help may be a long way away or with no phone signal, potentially no help; I think horses need confidence, one serious incident is enough to destroy confidence for good; my horse tried to jump a five-bar gate when he was a stallion, he was stuck across the gate and although very lucky as we were close at hand to help and the vet was very good with him, he will not jump now; we have tried all manner of things and instructors but he ploughs through things, but will not jump; this happened eight years ago and after a couple of weeks' box rest he came out physically unscathed, but clearly there is mental scarring; I would not take the chance of taking a horse to a wind farm and so I will have to accept that in the near future the joy of hacking will be taken away from me and my horses permanently

I think that if turbines are built close to an existing bridlepath, then sufficient diversion of a route

should be mandated as part of the application procedure and a minimum distance should be set

Inefficient, unsustainable and completely ruining the Scottish landscape, given tourism is now our biggest industry; very, very few wind turbines in the south of the UK, so it is easy to pontificate when it does not impact locally

Wind Farm developers are ruthlessly forcing these useless industrial developments on communities; the actual electricity they produce is a fraction of what is predicted when they apply for planning; they are not concerned for local businesses and hold the equestrian sector in low esteem; they love to talk about rights of way, but in my case had no argument for my business objections because they had not chosen to take us seriously prior to the public inquiry; the Inspector was not interested at all; beware!

In West Scotland much land used for wind farms was previously soft and not used for riding; if the roads and paths installed for access are open to cyclists and riders then we only benefit from their presence

No bigger issue than cycling clubs who pass horses in bulk/being near airfields/motorway bridges – you acclimatise your horses to the hazards that you come across

I only got close to a wind farm once out hunting, the horse was aware it was strange but did not seem too bothered; there two of us, neither horse was an issue but both are 'go anywhere' hunters

We need more wind turbines to combat climate change; not combating climate change will have a lot more risks and place a lot restrictions on riding

I have no problem with them, having had more than a year of close personal experience of one and welcome renewable energy

I think in general people have a negative opinion of wind turbines, with many having a nimby opinion; personally, I think they're actually quite nice to look at, certainly don't spoil views, and are not noisy – I've had picnics under them before now; if people were better educated about them, there would be less opposition

Horses get used to jets and helicopters if there are a lot in the area (and for this I am grateful as I know that whilst my horse might have a fit at a leaf, it will be fine with a jet shooting overhead!) and so I think that it wouldn't take long for them to get used to turbines – particularly if they were turned out under them (or is this going a step too far?)

Look abroad to where wind power is widely used

I am strongly in favour of wind power, but in conjunction with a coherent government strategy and legislation which addresses local needs as well as the need for greener power

Safe passage, off-road, would minimise risks by removing traffic worry, horses seem prone to drift out in effort to keep turbine in sight under certain conditions; even when turbines not in sight the noise under certain wind conditions seems to be unsettling to horses, a low pitched droning noise seems worst; when the blades are rotating towards you the whooshing noise is like something being thrown at you

I would much rather have wind turbines than busy roads any day

We had a temporary one at Scotts Farm, Herts, and it was taken down a few years ago; nuclear is way to go to protect countryside and rural life; the only beneficiary is the landowner

My horse is pretty much bombproof so they don't affect him, but I can't say how other horses react

They are a con to solve a non-existent problem; CO₂ is a gas necessary for life on earth, increases in it follow, not precede, warm periods in the earth's history

Too many, too large (recent planning applications have been for 18m and bigger) and too close

to areas historically accessed by horse riders

They would be better out at sea

They really don't bother me; I'd prefer them to the whopping great power stations we have on our doorstep

No

Horses will hardly notice or get used to them, like other things of modern day living

We are about to find out if horses and turbines mix; my feeling is that they will not

I am epileptic and have also heard that wind turbines can bring on seizures; I need to avoid; having grown up in the countryside I really dislike them more than pylons as the pylons are a silent evil and do not make sound or movement

Our horses are fine with turbines, low-flying helicopters and local shoots; anything horses see on a regular basis desensitises horses; owners make horses worried, for example, why some horses cannot ride through fields of cattle or sheep because the owner anticipates a problem, which teaches the horses to be afraid

Problems when building the site; heavy lorries going along/across bridleways/byways and local roads

No

There has not been enough research done on the subject; good that The British Horse Society is evaluating the subject

They are unsightly and dangerous to riders; the bigger they are the worse they are; why should we share beautiful countryside with these monsters?; turbines have taken peace and tranquility away

In my opinion and my experience so far my horse does not like them, and whilst he gets jittery on approach any sudden movement could spook him (bird flying out of hedge for instance), hence I try to avoid going near them; sometimes when with a group or weather conditions have to go near them (alternative routes get flooded and I like to exercise him as often as possible)

The prospect of riding near turbines terrifies me; I don't believe there will ever come a time when horses will be comfortable and familiar with them; it only takes one spooked horse to initiate carnage

As a society we need to not rely so heavily on gas that we import and are at the mercy of outside influences; therefore, we have to start investing in renewable energy; if this means that horses have to get used to a new element in their lives then that is something that needs to happen

Many people may tell you that wind turbines are noisy and this affects animals, they aren't; they are very quiet and there are many more things you should be concerned with!

How did horses cope with windmills?; I would imagine it is similar; how will horses cope with flooding, climate change, mass migration of people and food shortages caused by the effects of the continued use of fossil fuels?; how do motor vehicles – the biggest danger to horses – affect horses?; are you trying to get those banned too?; now there's some questions for you!

The irony is they produce very little useful power and do nothing to reduce carbon emissions

I feel that the long-term effects on horses that spend a lot of time in the vicinity of wind farms needs study – people in my locality who can hear them have found their health affected; as horses are more sensitive, the impact on them could be greater; aside from the risk, should a blade come loose, which seems unlikely, I think most horses would get used to windfarms in the area and not react dangerously but their general ease and comfort could be impacted upon in the long term

I think that people have to be sensible how they introduce their horse to turbines; I went first time with a friend whose horse lives in a field within sight of the wind farm, so that horse wasn't bothered in the least, and so my horse wasn't bothered in the least either; getting your horse used to the wind turbine from a distance would be sensible, going a bit closer to them gradually; that said, on my first encounter we rode right under turbines and my horse wasn't bothered; I think the horse will pick up on whether the rider is worried, so the rider should do things within their own comfort zone, too; I'll definitely keep riding around wind farms, but I'd always pay attention when I'm riding and would be aware of weather conditions, engineers, lorries in the area, and so on

With anything, horses become familiar over time; my horse is terrified of cows but it doesn't stop me riding past them and he is becoming more and more comfortable; horses can spook at butterflies, daffodils and pylons, so I don't think the wind turbines would cause huge problems in the long run

Work with the builders of turbines not against them

Has your horse, or a horse you know, ever reacted to turbines in a way that resulted in a fall or injury, to itself, its rider, companions or someone else in the vicinity? If yes, please describe the situation. If this is not the horse and site for which you have already answered, please include your assessment of the 'spookiness' of the horse, the rider's competence and conditions at the site, if you know them.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	6.3%	32
No	93.7%	472
If yes, please describe		52
	answered question	504
	skipped question	241

Responses received:

Not mine, can't answer for anyone else as wouldn't have seen it happen with my own eyes

There will be references to accidents involving horse and/or riders, but I have not researched these

Not yet, but that is only because of our riding capability; lesser riders would have come off if their horses had reacted like our horses

I have already reported this incident to the BHS; but I was nearly thrown from my experienced horse during a lesson; my younger horse bolted and ripped stitches that had been checked and were holding an injury looking good that morning

I am an experienced rider with a relatively spooky horse that has become used to all manner of agricultural machinery or vehicles; he has spooked dramatically twice, both times the result of something he didn't see coming; wind turbines don't jump out of the bushes or appear out of nowhere; if they are likely to cause a problem that can't be overcome for an individual horse I'd suggest there are greater risks lurking around each and every corner

I would not risk this happening

I no longer ride myself, but have concerns for young riders in the area

A friend's horse threw her as it spooked – very competent rider and usually a well balanced horse – conditions, gusty wind

I have not put myself in a situation where there was likely to be injury to myself or my horse

I have answered this already

While riding in my wood chip-covered riding area at the back of my house I had noticed that when I was lungeing my mare she had started reacting in one direction; she can see the road that goes away from the village from this position and always reacts to people and bikes for instance, on on the road – has a look – pulls up to her full height – and then carries on, but this was something different, something else and it took me some time to realise she was seeing the movement of the turbine blades between the trees; I try very hard to forget they are there and never look in their direction; but this was new and she was genuinely frightened; as they weren't going away I continued and then when I started riding her I was aware as she came down the long side she was tense and reacting as she had when being lunged; I ignored and carried on and tried to avoid going down that side, but one of the times I did take her down that side she suddenly leapt sideways – like she has never done and I almost managed to stay on, but came off backwards; she ran to the other side of the arena and stood stressed and upset; she was clearly still looking in the direction of the turbines and having investigated every other possibility she was definitely not frightened by anything else; by this time I did notice there was changing sunlight and I can only assume she caught an unexpected movement, shadow or flicker; at an earlier stage I did say I do not fall off horses unless there is a very good reason and more often than not I manage to stay on in situations when I would not have been surprised to come off; this horse does not spook because of her temperament

Near accident

Both my and partner's horses are normally very sensible, but even seeing/hearing the wind turbines on the mountain top more than a mile away sent them into a panic; they spun around and shot off, we've never seen them act so scared before; in our effort to control them one horse kicked out and damaged his leg on a stone; not serious, thankfully, but we were all really shaken up

They have not to date been injured when they panic and run at the sight of the turbine rotors that are four miles away, but were the turbines closer I would expect this could lead to an ever present danger of injury from fear

The horse, when it was level, bolted towards the visitor center where children and families were sitting at a picnic table; the rider managed to eventually stop the horse just before the children; I think it was the noise that set him off

I belong to an affiliated bridleways group, am a DABO, and have heard a number of local windmill stories; for instance, I understand two horses spun and took off when faced with the aforesaid turbine starting up, one rider fell onto the highway verge while her horse subsequently slipped over speeding round the gateway back home; I have never been able to contact these riders (livery yard wouldn't release details) but understand they all recovered and their horses moved elsewhere

Old friend in California was experienced, having ridden for 50-plus years, but a bit stiff; a woman in her 60's on a horse lacking in experience got near the turbines, he got worried and moved quickly, spinning around and unseating her – she broke a hip and an elbow; not nice; he left and used up a long flight line then came back of his own accord and grazed under said turbines while we waited for medical assistance; the site was massive, with plenty of room to move; if she had got off and managed it from the ground she would have been fine; it is not the habit to get off in the UK (even though I am a Brit) but it is very wise unless you have a really independent seat and are 100 percent sure of your horse; plenty of room for 'better safe than sorry'; for me, the turbine is like going to the beach, same high energy creating a tense atmosphere if you are not used to it; hope this helps

There is one small turbine near here and my own horse is braced and tense when we ride past . . . it is only a small turbine and the noise it makes from above is unpredictable; I am taking the time to desensitise my horse to that small turbine, but as to a whole windfarm it would not be fair to ask him to go through that; he is not a spooky horse under normal circumstances

Falling from a bolting horse, but thankfully not injured

I do not use routes which pass the larger turbines, thus avoiding the possibility of a serious incident

Youngster tried to bolt when walked in hand with experienced companion; have not taken him near them since (12 months ago)

Not yet

Friend's horse reared and friend fell off, no injury other than a bruised leg; horse also was napping away from the turbines although some distance from them; rider and horse not as experienced as I/my horse, however, neither rider nor horse could be described as novice

But I would have no issues riding my horses past them and if they didn't like it I would work through it!

I would not dream of taking a horse near to turbines

My horse bolted through a wall after passing the windmills, having been spooked further by livestock in a field; I believe he would've coped with the livestock had he not had his adrenalin levels cranked up by the windmills immediately prior

Horse bolted in the mountains but rider was OK

Not yet as those proposed are not yet built in my immediate vicinity, save one on a farm which is only a few months old; however, I would not intend to try it for myself nor recommend anyone else to do so

Injured self while turned out in the field due to an adverse reaction to windmill when turbine first arrived/started working; bolted at hedge and a wall before pushing through fence into my garden

No, as we were clever enough not to force the horse any closer!

On a pleasure ride we passed within 100 yards of a wind turbine; the horse in front of me spooked severely, the rider lost control and her horse ran back down the track towards me and my horse; as my horse was unsettled by this, I dismounted and led her past the turbine which she coped with very well and the other rider followed us but remained mounted; she was an inexperienced and unconfident rider and I believe would have struggled to get past had I not been there with my horse for her to follow

I was lucky not to fall when she bolted, but had a big field to help and could not get close to the monsters anyway

But I was lucky as he wanted to go with the other horses

A horse that is normally calm can be overcome with fear and panic, in every other sense the horse is calm

We don't take the risk any more

I have spoken to a lot of people doing my own research and people I met living in Devon and Cornwall did not like riding near turbines but did say that after being turned out (risking injuries) near turbines before riding near them, most horses did eventually accept them; it is the 'getting used to' phase I am worried about

The mare knocked me over two or three times as I led her through the wind farm; I was OK but I am 64 years old and could easily have been badly hurt

When researching evidence to oppose the applications I have previously mentioned I received letters from riders who had had serious accidents caused by turbines; one rider suffered a fractured skull due to her horse spooking and her falling; I had one report of a group of national hunt jockeys taking riding school ponies past a wind farm and they could not get the ponies to pass; most riders are not of this standard and most ponies/horses are not riding school ponies!

Horse spooked and knocked over a lady walking on same path

We keep away

I know of a horse that spooked when seeing the turbines after rounding a bend and the rider came off; I do not believe that this is a horse which normally is a problem, and the rider has many years of experience

In Germany there are recorded incidents of horses spooking at turbines; one ended up in a ditch and one through a fence, but there are other incidents and I have kept the articles on file for reference

Another rider; they were not near the wind turbines at all, but the noise freaked the horse out, and it reared and bolted; this was a youngish horse, but a sensible sort; rider absolutely confident and able

Flight animals – what do you expect?

I have never heard of any incident, ever; my horse spotted a neighbour's new mini windmill from about 1k distance (stopped and stared); when we rode past it at 50m she made no sign of fear or interest, despite it being an extremely windy day and audibly noisy; I cannot use this as wind farm example as it was on our normal patch (more likely to spook)/we were above it/ it is tiny and cast no shadows

We have a few small wind generators that individuals have installed on their properties nearby; I ride a particularly spooky horse and, yes, he has spooked at the shadows cast by the blades turning and has tried to spin on the road, but I take care and check whether any vehicles are approaching before riding past

Member of a local RC, from knowing most who hack in this area I have not heard of anyone having problems

Not applicable

Husband's horse bolted while being driven on road, scraped head, neck and shoulder as had to be driven into hedge to stop her as on downward hill coming up to bend; horse, 22-year-old Cob, never spooky, bomb-proof ride and drive horse; had been introduced to the turbines over period of several months but on this particular day wind was in non-prevailing direction that meant blades rotating toward rather than parallel to road; had been driven on same route for 10 years and with the turbines for three months, never a problem before

Horse spooked at the turbine as it is big and moving; it was a young horse and the rider got injured

I daren't go near them again

Think it is only a matter of time (see previous comment)

N/A because – thank goodness – these things have not yet reached my area; I hope they never will

Demographic of respondents

The age range of riders is strikingly highest in the 41-60 range (50 percent), followed by 26 percent (26-40) and 12 percent above 60. Eighty-three percent of respondents were female. This could simply reflect the type of people willing to respond to a survey, although it is also a reflection of the BHS study on the health benefits of riding¹ which found that horseriding is an activity and sport enjoyed by mature women. It is of particular concern to the BHS that access opportunities should not decrease and further threaten the



capacity for mature women to enjoy exercise. Geographic distribution was predominantly in Yorkshire and Humberside, followed by Wales, the South West and East of England. This may relate to distribution of turbine sites but may also be affected by how the news of the survey was disseminated.

Conclusions

The survey questions could have been improved and, while there was an effort to be impartial, the questions may appear to invite responses of a negative reaction, although the survey was aimed to find out the extent of the negative impact of turbines as it was already known that some horses are not troubled by them. There was a very limited budget available to produce the survey and, as the need for data was increasingly urgent, it was decided to accept the imperfections. As expected, the results indicated the need for further research with controlled trials to rule out variables.

The incidence of adverse reaction in quiet horses and with highly skilled riders is of particular concern. It means that the impact of turbines is across all horses, even those chosen for their placidity for more vulnerable riders

¹ BHS The health benefits of horse riding in the UK 2012

such as the inexperienced, older, disabled and children.

As access to off-road equestrian routes is very limited with large areas that have no off-road routes at all, it is vital that no constraints are added which might prevent safe access by any equestrian. Any turbine near a route used by horses has the potential to increase the accident risk unacceptably and to significantly reduce the opportunities for safe routes. The lack of off-road routes means that most riders are forced to use roads at least part of the time, despite the dangers from motor traffic. Wind turbines close to roads adds to the risk of accidents, both for horse and rider and for other road users.

While some equestrians will continue to use routes near turbines in safety, others will avoid the area. This discriminates against those without the capacity to accept the turbines; it puts additional pressure on other routes in the area and, particularly where there are few off-road routes, safety of equestrians and other road-users could be compromised if the result of the turbines is increased road use. Movement of horses away from an area of turbines is also likely to affect businesses dependent on equestrian trade.

The survey supports other BHS studies that show horse riding and carriage driving as activities and sports enjoyed by mature women. This has significant health benefits for a range of the population that otherwise would be unlikely to have outdoor exercise, as demonstrated by the BHS study, published in 2012, on the Health Benefits of Riding. Anything that has a detrimental effect on women riding is therefore acting against the health interests of the country.



2013/9

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