

RULES OF THE EXMOOR PONY SOCIETY

2 May 2026

GENERAL

1. Additions, repeals or alterations to any Society Rules shall receive the assent of two-thirds of the members present and voting at an Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting. A resolution for the alteration of the Rules must be received by the Secretary of the Society at least forty two days before the meeting at which the resolution is to be brought forward. At least twenty one days' notice of such meeting must be given by the Secretary to the membership and must include notice of the alteration proposed.
2. The interpretation of any Rules of the Society decided by the Committee shall be final.
3. Any proposition put to vote at a Committee Meeting, or any proposition that in effect negates that proposition may not, between the time of one Annual General Meeting and the next, be voted upon again at the immediately following Committee Meeting, unless fresh information is introduced.
- 4.1 The financial year of the Society shall end on the 31st December each year.
- 4.2 The trustees of the Society may not enter into any arrangement, contract or transaction, or a series of arrangements, contracts or transactions, in relation to the same matter, with an expenditure value exceeding £25,000 without the assent of two-thirds of the members voting at an Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting.
5. All correspondence addressed to the Chairman, on account of his office, and copies or precis of his/her replies shall become the property of the Society and shall be handed, in good order, to the succeeding Chairman at the termination of office of any Chairman.

MEMBERSHIP

6. Members of the Charity shall be one of:-

Category	Voting right
Full Member	1
Life Member	1
Family Member (1 adult + children)	1
Family Member (2 adults + children)	2
Supporter Member	
Student member	
Junior Member	
Honorary Life Members	1

Supporter Membership shall be granted to such persons and for such periods as the Committee may from time to time determine. Supporter Members shall not be eligible to become a trustee of the Charity, nor receive any premiums that may be awarded.

Student Members who must be at least 18 years old and in full time education, are eligible to become a Trustee and receive premiums.

Honorary Life Members may be elected by the Members in General Meeting upon the recommendation of the Committee.

Junior Members shall include all Members under the age of 18 years on the 1 January in the relevant year and shall not be eligible to become a Trustee of the Charity.

BREED STANDARD

7. That the definition of an Exmoor Pony be according to the Breed Standard as follows:

1. Height: The preferred Height Range is - Stallions & Geldings 11.3hh (119.4cm) to 12.3hh (129.5) at maturity. - Mares 11.2hh (116.8cm) to 12.2hh (127 cm) at maturity.
2. General: Definite "pony" character; hard & strong; Vigorous alert and symmetrical in appearance; Mealy muzzle; prominent hooded toad eye.
3. Head & Neck: Ears short, thick & pointed; clean cut face; wide forehead, eyes large, wide apart and prominent with well defined fleshy hood and pale colouration outlining the eyes (Toad Eyes); wide nostrils; mealy muzzle; clean throat; good length of rein.
4. Shoulders: Clean, fine at top, well laid back.
5. Chest: Deep & wide between & behind forelegs; Ribs long, deep, well sprung & wide apart.
6. Back: Level; broad & level across loins; tail neatly set in.
7. Legs: Clean & short, with neat uniformly dark hoof walls; forelegs straight, well apart & squarely set; hind legs well apart, nearly perpendicular from hock to fetlock with point of hock in line with pelvis bone; wide curve from flank to hock joint; legs free in motion with no tendency to sweep or turn.
8. Action: Straight & smooth, without exaggerated action.

9. Coat: Summer - close, hard & bright.
Winter - a double-layered dense coat with an under insulating layer of fine, Springy hair and an outer water-proofing layer of hard, greasy hair.
10. Colour: Bay, brown or dun, with black points; mealy colour on muzzle, round eyes & Inside flanks; no white markings anywhere.
11. Quality: Alert expression and general poise indicating balance and symmetry of movement; flat clean bone.

INSPECTORS

8. (a) Any two members of the Committee or members of the Exmoor Judges' and/or Inspectors' Panel may nominate, in writing, a person for appointment to the panel of inspectors; the Committee to decide the requisite qualification of each candidate. Such nominations may be made to the Secretary at any time but the final appointment shall be made as in 7 (b).

(b) The Committee shall, from time to time, appoint Society inspectors following assessment and completion of an appropriate training period. In an emergency the Secretary or Chair shall have power to appoint not more than one person to act temporarily as an inspector. Such appointment shall require the authority of two trustee inspectors, or one trustee inspector where the Chair is also an inspector.

(c) It is the duty of inspectors to inspect the ponies that require inspection before they can be certified for entry into the main section of the Exmoor Pony Stud Book and to sign the prescribed form of certificate if and when they are satisfied that the pony conforms to the Society Rules and is of sufficient merit to warrant registration.

PONY REGISTRATION

9. (a) Any pony whose sire and dam are already registered in the main section of the Exmoor Pony Society stud book is eligible for registration in the main section of the Exmoor Pony Society stud book, subject to proof of parentage as defined in the appropriate EU legislation. Parentage verification by DNA is mandatory for all foals.
- (1) Those that meet the required standard when inspected by Exmoor Pony Society Inspectors shall be registered in Section 1 of the main section of the Exmoor Pony Society Stud Book.
- (2) Those that do not meet the required standard when inspected by Exmoor Pony Society inspectors shall be registered in Section X of the main section of the Exmoor Pony Society Stud Book.
- (3) (i) Any pony not presented for inspection can only be registered in Section X of the main section of the Exmoor Pony Society stud book subject to proof of parentage as in (a) above.

(ii) In exceptional circumstances as decided by the committee, the Secretary may register a pony into Section I or Section X, as appropriate, following

scrutiny of the relevant paperwork by a panel of three inspectors appointed by the committee, and subject to the parentage being verified by DNA. The Society's "Veterinary Foal Inspection Form" must be completed by an independent, practicing veterinary surgeon, registered by the RCVS, who has regularly attended horses over the preceding five years. The pony must have been microchipped and the silhouette completed. The above documents must be submitted along with high definition colour photographs taken in the presence of the Veterinary Surgeon.

(b) No pony shall be registered until the owner has paid the society any due registration fee as may be appropriate.

(c) No pony shall be registered unless the sire and dam have already been registered in the main section of the Exmoor Pony Stud Book

(d) Only foals sired by a licensed stallion will be eligible for registration in Section 1 of the main section of the Exmoor Pony Society Stud Book, subject to the provisions of Rule 11.

(e) No pony shall be registered in Section 1 of the main section of the Stud Book that is deemed to be suffering from hereditary unsoundness or such unsoundness as should, in the opinion of the Society Inspectors, disqualify it from such registration. The owner may call in a qualified, practising Veterinary Surgeon, registered by the RCVS, who has regularly attended horses over the preceding five years, whose decision shall be final. If the Veterinary Surgeon's opinion is given against the owner, the owner will be liable for the Veterinary Surgeon's fee. The Society will be liable otherwise.

(f) Every inspection shall be made on the authority of the Secretary or Chair and every Inspection certificate shall be signed by two Inspectors of the Society and the owner or agent of the pony, only one of such inspectors may be a temporary inspector authorised under Rule 8(b).

(g) The reason for not registering any pony in Section 1 of the main section of the Exmoor Pony Society Stud Book shall be recorded on the inspection form along with the breeding of the pony.

(h) (i) Any pony registered in Section X of the main section of the Exmoor Pony Society Stud Book at first inspection because it did not meet the required standard will be eligible for a single re-inspection at a later date and after a period of not less than 6 months.

(ii) In the event of a change to the Breed Standard, any pony registered in Section X of the main section of the Exmoor Pony Society Stud Book which did not meet the required Breed Standard valid at the time of re-inspection

will be eligible for a single further re-inspection in relation to the change to the Breed Standard.

(i) Ponies will be registered in the main section of the stud book with the Society herd number belonging to the breeder and the individual number within the herd. The member deemed to be the breeder shall either be the owner of the mare at the time of foaling or the person or organisation leasing or borrowing the mare at the time of foaling provided that the written permission of the owner of the dam has been received in the Society office prior to the inspection.

(j) If, in exceptional circumstances, a pony is not notified for inspection as per the procedures laid down by DEFRA for registration within 6 months of birth or by 31st December in the year of birth, whichever is the later, a later inspection may be requested. The owner of the pony shall apply in writing to the secretary explaining the exceptional circumstances. If approved by a majority decision of the EPS committee, the pony can be inspected provided that all the following conditions are fulfilled:

- (1) the parentage of the pony is established prior to the inspection by DNA typing the pony, its sire and its dam
- (2) the cost of such identification of parentage to be paid fully by the person requesting the late inspection
- (3) the inspectors are satisfied that the pony can be safely handled for the purpose of inspection and branding, where applicable.

A pony failing this inspection will be eligible for a single re-inspection.

(k) With the exception of foal transfers undertaken at the time of registration and before the passport is issued, notification of sale and the payment of any applicable transfer fee will be the responsibility of the owner listed on the database.

IDENTIFICATION OF PONIES

10. (a) All ponies to be registered must be permanently identified, by micro-chipping. The microchip will be checked at the time of inspection and the number recorded on the inspection certificate.

(b) Ponies that are identified by microchips at the time of registration may be branded at the discretion of the breeder and owner, and in accordance with Rule 10, provided that due weight is given to the welfare of such ponies.

(c) The correct implantation of the chip shall be carried out by a qualified, practising Veterinary Surgeon registered by the RCVS. The readability of such chip at any time shall be the responsibility of the owner or agent. At the time of micro-chipping, a silhouette document will be completed and a hair sample will be taken by the

Veterinary Surgeon and subsequently stored or used at the discretion of the Society. In the event of a microchip being unreadable then the pony may be re-chipped by a qualified practising Veterinary Surgeon, registered by the RCVS. At the time of re-chipping, the Veterinary Surgeon must take a second hair sample unless visual identification can be made. It will be the responsibility of the owner to pay the cost of DNA analysis of both samples to confirm identity. Provided the two samples match, the new microchip number will be entered on the database. If the identity of the pony cannot be confirmed then it and its further offspring cannot be entered in the main section of the stud book.

(d) Any person instructed by the Society has the right, at any reasonable time or place, to check the microchip number by scanning of any pony purporting to be a registered Exmoor Pony.

(e) A microchip number is not the registration number of any pony but all microchip numbers of registered ponies will be recorded by the Society, published in the Stud Book and included in the passport.

BRANDING

Branding is optional. If used, it shall be as follows:

11. (a) No pony shall be branded without the permission of the breeder and owner or agent as defined in 8 (i).
- (b) Registered ponies that are to be branded in accordance with the 'DEFRA Code of Practice for the hot branding of semi-feral registered Exmoor ponies', shall be hot branded by a Society approved Inspector and with an iron authorised by the Committee.
- (c) The pony will be branded on the near hind quarter with a unique visual mark of a maximum of four characters to identify the herd and the individual pony within the herd.
- (d) It is the responsibility of the owner or agent to ensure that the correct brand is used.

STALLION INSPECTIONS

12. (a) Only colts registered in Section 1 of the main section of the Exmoor Pony Society Stud Book are eligible to be put forward for an Exmoor Pony Society Stallion licence.
- (b) In order to receive an Exmoor Pony Society Stallion Licence an entire colt shall be inspected at a minimum of two years of age to be approved for such licence by two members who are on both the Judges and Inspectors panels, authorised so to do, by

the Secretary or Chair. In exceptional circumstances, the Secretary or Chair can appoint a judge or inspector to act as a second inspector.

(c) Such entire colts intended for breeding shall be examined by a qualified, practising Veterinary Surgeon, registered by the RCVS, who has regularly attended horses over the preceding five years, and be certified in accordance with the Society's Stallion Licence conditions.

(d) In order to receive an Exmoor pony stallion licence, a colt must have passed its veterinary inspection, be DNA parentage verified to registered Section 1 parents and have passed the Society's own inspection.

(e) No pony is eligible for registration in Section 1 of the main section of the Exmoor Pony Stud Book sired by a colt that has not previously been approved and certified as in "b" to "d" above excepting that:

(1) a foal sired by a colt three years old or under, that has not been rejected as in "b" to "d" above, shall be eligible for registration provided that:

(a) the colt has passed his veterinary inspection and been DNA parentage verified prior to the registration of any such foal and

(b) the foal has had its parentage verified by DNA testing.

(2) should the sire be four years or older and have been gelded it shall be approved and certified as "a" and "b" above except for its ability to procreate. The full cost of inspecting a gelding shall be borne by the owner or person requesting the inspection.

(f) The owner of a colt deemed not to be up to the required standard for licensing at the first Stallion Inspection shall have the right to offer the colt for a single re-inspection not less than 6 months from its first stallion inspection. The full cost of such re-inspection shall be borne by the owner.

(g) No colt shall be licensed that is deemed to be suffering from hereditary unsoundness or such unsoundness as should, in the opinion of the Society's inspectors, disqualify it from registration. The owner may call in a qualified, practising Veterinary Surgeon, registered by the RCVS, who has regularly attended horses over the preceding five years, whose decision shall be final. If the Veterinary Surgeon's opinion is given against the owner, the owner will be liable for the Veterinary Surgeon's fee. The society will be liable otherwise. If, in the opinion of the Veterinary Surgeon, the pony is free from hereditary unsoundness the owner may re-present the colt for inspection at any time.

(h) Owners of colts requiring inspection shall give the Secretary, in writing, not less than 42 days' notice before they wish to present any colt for inspection.

SHOW RULES: General

13. (a) Exmoor Pony Society (EPS) competitions must be run under the Society's rules except:

- Dope testing is run in accordance with National Pony Society (NPS) rules.
- Where an individual class is being run under another organisation's rules.

(b) It is the responsibility of any person showing/producing/judging to know which organisation's rules apply for each class.

(c) No person shall behave in an offensive, abusive or unpleasant manner to any person or any pony at any show, event, venue or workplace associated with the EPS. This includes social media.

(d) Members might be held personally responsible for the actions of any non-EPS membership family member(s) if their conduct amounts to what would have been a breach of the rules had they been a member of the EPS.

(e) It is the duty of every member to immediately report a suspected rule breach and to assist the officers of the EPS in their investigations of suspected rule breaches.

SHOW RULES: Impartiality

14. (a) **A judge may not adjudicate, nor may an owner/producer/rider compete in a class in which, to their knowledge, there is a pony that has one of the following, or similar, connections with the judge:**

- bred, sold, leased, produced, broken or trained by the judge or by the judge's immediate family or by someone with whom the judge resides or has a personal relationship. Group teach-ins of 3 or more riders and demonstrations are exempt.
- bred, sold, leased, produced, broken or trained by the judge's employer, employee or business partner/associate. Group teach-ins and demonstrations are exempt.

Since 1st January the preceding year the following also apply:

- the owner/producer/rider/handler has exhibited in the show ring or produced a pony for the judge or the judge's immediate family, or for someone with whom the judge resides or has a personal relationship.
- the owner/producer/rider/handler has exhibited in the show ring or produced a pony for the judge's employer, employee or business partner/associate.
- the owner/producer/rider/handler has entered into a commercial undertaking with the judge (stud fees and associated costs are excluded).
- the judge has shown or ridden a pony on behalf of the owner/exhibitor/producer.

Note: the above may differ to other organisations.

(b) The following are classified as immediate family for the purposes of clarification:

- Husband/Wife/Partner
- Parents/Partner's Parents
- Grandparents
- Brothers/Sisters
- Sons/Daughters
- Uncles/Aunts
- Nephews/Nieces
- Step Grandparents
- Step Parents
- Step Brothers/Sisters
- Brother/Sister in Law
- Step-children and siblings of partners
- Legal Guardians

(c) The onus is on the exhibitor to stand down in any class, championship or final where there is an infringement.

(d) The Show Secretary must ascertain and consider proportionately any impartiality issues when considering Judge/Steward nominating.

(e) A Judge must enquire if their Steward has any other interest, financial or otherwise, in a pony in any class being judged and take proportionate steps to ensure impartiality where that applies.

SHOW RULES: Judging

15. (a) Judges must only be accompanied in the ring by persons appointed by the show or a Probationer Judge approved by the EPS.

- (b) Probationer Judge should seek both the Judge's and Show Secretary's prior consent to their presence.
- (c) Judges are asked to always have their Rules Book readily available to them in the ring as it is their responsibility to see that everyone adheres to the class rules.
- (d) Whilst Judges are encouraged to carry schedules, they are forbidden to refer to the show catalogue either prior to judging, or while judging their classes.
- (e) If, in the opinion of the judge, any pony entered for an event, adjudicated or to be adjudicated by the judge, is in an unsound condition, the judge may, at their discretion, require the rider/handler to withdraw the pony from the class.
- (f) If, in the judge's opinion a rider's or handler's conduct is detrimental to the character and interests of the EPS they may eliminate them from the class and they may also report them to the EPS Committee.
- (g) The judge may require that a pony which reasonably constitutes a danger leaves the ring. The judge's decision is final.
- (h) If a judge has reasonable grounds to believe that a rule is being contravened the judge must ask the rider/handler to leave the ring and the pony must be withdrawn. The judge's decision is final.
- (i) The judge may split a class according to the prevailing circumstances.
- (j) If judging using a marks system where marks are allocated for ride/manners and for conformation/Breed type and there is an equality of marks, the ride mark should take precedence, however if there still remains a tie then the judge's decision is final.
- (k) When judging Brood Mare classes, judges must take the condition of the foal into account.

- (l) The Judges' decision is final provided all relevant rules have been followed.
- (m) Notwithstanding any verbal response, Judges should confirm in writing within 2-weeks of any invitation whether or not they are attending. The commitment should be honoured.
- (n) Judges are advised to make prior arrangements with the Show Secretary regarding their expenses and accommodation. Expense forms should be submitted to the Secretary on show day.
- (o) Judges should always be punctual, smartly dressed and not smoke or use mobile phones in the ring. They should present themselves to the show secretary at least half an hour before their first class.
- (p) Judges should avoid meeting exhibitors or their helpers on the day of the show prior to entering the show ring for judging.
- (q) Prior to the completion of the competitive element of any show Judges must not accept accommodation or hospitality from any potential exhibitor at a show where they are judging.
- (r) Judges should not call any exhibitor by their name and must remain detached and impartial. No social conversation should take place.
- (s) Before judging commences, judges should discuss with the ring steward the procedure to be adopted in the ring, and thank the steward after the classes.
- (t) Instructions to exhibitors should generally be conveyed through the ring steward.
- (u) Judges should present rosettes unless a sponsor wishes to do so. A Judge may withhold rosettes if entries are of insufficient merit.
- (v) Judges must be unbiased and fair, must treat each exhibitor the same and remember it is only the pony that is being judged.
- (w) Judges must report to the Show Secretary any:
 - i. Health and Safety incidents that occur during judging and fill out any relevant forms.

- ii. Judging or ring irregularities to the show secretary e.g. delays, amalgamation of classes, course building faults, uneven surfaces etc.
 - iii. Competitor or pony irregularities, eg. non eligibility for classes, rudeness, conflict of interest etc.
- (x) Judges should consider the welfare of the pony as paramount, taking into consideration rider weight/experience and whether the pony is under or over-weight and penalise accordingly. For guidance see: <https://www.bhs.org.uk/horse-care-and-welfare/health-care-management/horse-health/fat-scoring/>
- (y) Freeze branding should not be considered detrimental to a pony in the show ring.

SHOW RULES: Exhibitor Conduct

16. (a) Exhibitors must ensure they are in the ring at the right time and should not expect a class to be held up for them.

- (b) Exhibitors must comply with Stewards' or Judges' requests at all times in the ring.
- (c) Exhibitors or riders must not remove themselves or their ponies from the ring during judging without the Judge's permission. The class ends when the Judge dismisses the class.
- (d) Exhibitors should be dressed neatly and circumspectly and wear the correct number for the pony they are showing.
- (e) The use of any artificial aid to excite the pony is not acceptable. No whip may be carried in any class which exceeds 30" in length and no change of whip is permitted without the judge authorising its use.
- (f) Judges must not be approached on the day of the show, until after the class has ended.
- (g) Exhibitors must not offer hospitality to a show judge prior to the completion of the classes.
- (h) The welfare of the pony is paramount. Consideration must be given to rider weight/experience and whether the pony is under or over-weight. For guidance

see: <https://www.bhs.org.uk/horse-care-and-welfare/health-care-management/horse-health/fat-scoring/>

- (i) Handlers of stallions and colts in in-hand classes must have attained their 14th birthday before 1st January of the current year.
- (j) Correctly secured skull caps/riding hats must be worn by all Riders of all ages. These must meet one of the following standards:
 - PAS 015:2011
 - VG1 01.040 2014-12 – This standard must also have either a BSI Kitemark or an Inspec IC Mark
 - ASTM F1163 2004a or 04a onwards – This standard must also have a SEI mark
 - SNELL E2016
 - AS/NZS 3838 2006 onwards – This standard must also have a SAI Global Mark
- (k) A competitor whose skull cap/riding hat comes off or unfastened whilst competing will be disqualified.
- (l) Handlers of ponies in in-hand classes aged 14 years and under must wear a correctly secured skull cap/riding hat that meets one of the above standards.
- (m) The EPS strongly recommends body protectors are worn in all EPS jumping competitions especially over fixed obstacles.
- (n) Riders of stallions must have attained their 12th birthday before 1st January of the current year.
- (o) Spurs are not allowed in any Ridden class.
- (p) A fall of pony or rider in any class will result in disqualification. The rider must not remount in the ring.
- (q) No change of rider/handler will be allowed during a class without the Judge's permission.

SHOW RULES: Pony Eligibility

17. (a) For Pure Bred Exmoor Pony Classes only ponies registered in Section 1 of the Exmoor Pony Society Stud Book may be shown at Exmoor Pony Society shows, affiliated

shows or any show governed by the Society's show rules and thus be eligible for Society premiums or awards.

- (b) Age is calculated from 1st January of the year of birth.
- (c) All ponies exhibited in ridden and driven classes shall be four years old or over.
- (d) Stallions 4 years old and over must be in possession of an Exmoor Pony Society Stallion Licence to be shown at such shows.
- (e) Two/three year old colts can be shown provided they have not failed a stallion inspection or whilst pending re-inspection.
- (f) Colts and stallions, 2 years old and over, must be shown in a suitable bit and have a Bridle Disc.
- (g) Mares with a living foal born during the current season are not eligible to compete in ridden classes.
- (h) All foals must be at least three weeks old on the day of the show and must accompany their dam into the ring and be led alongside her as much as possible.
- (i) Exmoor ponies must be shown in natural condition. The following treatments are prohibited:
 - Trimming of any area of coat, mane, forelock, ears, whiskers and jaw line, under- belly, tail or feathers. Note driving class exemption below.
 - Clipping. Note ridden and driving classes exemptions below.
 - Plaiting.
 - Application of make-up or artificial colouring.
 - Attachment of any false hair pieces.

Driving classes only - the trimming of tails only is permitted. Any pony that has had its tail trimmed cannot be entered in in-hand or ridden classes until the tail is fully re-grown.

Ridden and/or driving classes only - may be clipped except the legs and jaw line. Any pony that has been clipped cannot be entered in in-hand classes until the clipped areas have fully re-grown.