



RoR Strategy 2024–2026

Foreword



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Chairman



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As we embark on this exciting journey with our new three-year strategy, we stand at a crucial juncture in the history of Retraining of Racehorses (RoR). Our passion and commitment to safeguarding the wellbeing of former racehorses has remained unshakeable since our inception. This strategy, however, marks a significant milestone in our journey. It is both ambitious and achievable.

At its core, this strategy clarifies RoR's position as the leading provider of strategic support and direction of aftercare, as set out in the recommendations of the 2021 Aftercare Funding Review. It is about ensuring that, through RoR's support and activities, and racing's commitment to aftercare, no racehorse ever faces uncertainty or neglect once their racing days are over.

The world around us is changing, and we must change with it. The welfare of former racehorses remains paramount, but our approach and that of the racing industry must evolve to meet the demands of a dynamic landscape.

We have studied the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. We have engaged with experts, partners, and stakeholders who share our vision. We have listened to the RoR community and taken their input to heart. This analysis and collaboration sit at the centre of the strategy we have developed.

In order to deliver our mission we require the collective ownership and support of the strategy by the entire racing industry. No one organisation can deliver it in isolation.

Together, we will make a lasting impact and ensure a brighter future for all former racehorses in Great Britain.

External influences

There are a number of crucial factors that will affect our ability to deliver our strategy including:

Industry recognition of the importance of aftercare and willingness to fund it:

The collective industry support for the sector, will significantly impact our ability to implement robust programmes and initiatives to meet our goals. Industry support is essential to ensure that the necessary resources are available to meet the diverse needs of horses after their racing careers.

Social licence to operate: This is an important area of debate for all equestrian sport. Horseracing is particularly in focus, with a third of equestrians having a negative perception of welfare of racehorses after their racing careers*. Failure to address these concerns risks a decline in support for racing which would have a knock-on effect for aftercare. Public awareness of racehorse welfare issues and sentiments towards racing will influence the success of our marketing campaigns and fundraising efforts.

Economic and regulatory factors: The state of the wider economy will influence organisations' ability and willingness to provide financial support for aftercare. It will also affect the demand for former racehorses from the leisure market.

Engagement with the industry: RoR sits in a unique position linking racing and wider equestrian sport. There is a need to build strong relationships with all relevant bodies, both national and international, share learnings and avoid duplication.

Working collaboratively with trainers and retraining centres:

This is crucial to ensure that our retraining standards and protocols are user-friendly, effective and relevant. Changes in industry practices, evolving training methodologies and advancements in veterinary care will be constantly reviewed and updated.

Educational trends: RoR needs to be cognisant of changes in equestrian practices. Collaboration with professionals, industry bodies, coaches and those who are recognised for their expertise will ensure we stay responsive.

*Savanta, December 2022



Vision, mission and values

Vision

RoR has a clear and simple

vision: For all former racehorses to enjoy a good life

Mission

Our mission is: To safeguard the wellbeing of all former racehorses

Values

The core values that drive our work are:

Compassion: Compassion is at the heart of RoR. We are committed to safeguarding the welfare of all former racehorses, ensuring they receive the care and support they deserve when they retire from racing. Our actions are guided by empathy, respect, and a deep understanding of the bespoke needs of former racehorses.

Collaboration: Collaboration is key to our mission. We actively seek partnerships with the racing industry, equestrian disciplines, horse welfare charities and wider stakeholders to achieve our goals. By working together, we can make a significant impact to the wellbeing of former racehorses.

Trust: We aim to be a trusted source of information and advocacy, driving positive change through knowledge and awareness. We are committed to developing a landscape where expert knowledge about retraining and the ongoing care of former racehorses is shared, educating owners and the public about all aspects of life after racing.

Integrity: Integrity is a fundamental value that underpins our actions and decisions. We are transparent, honest, and accountable in our interactions with the industry, donors, partners, and the wider community.

Strategic goals

Our strategic goals for 2024–2026 include:

Traceability and welfare

In our commitment to traceability and welfare, we will keep track of former racehorses, including every horse bred for racing, on behalf of the racing industry. Our responsibility extends beyond mere tracking; we are dedicated to supporting the wellbeing of these horses, ensuring they receive the care they deserve after their racing careers.

Setting and assuring retraining standards

We support the successful transition of all former racehorses in their first step out of racing, and provide training and education for leisure owners to develop lifetime partnerships.

Increasing the demand for former racehorses

By showcasing their versatility in diverse equestrian activities and facilitating opportunities for active participation in competitions, we increase the demand which prevents welfare issues from arising.

Community

We aim to build on our thriving RoR community, where members actively contribute and share experiences to collectively champion the welfare of former racehorses, and seek support when needed. By cultivating a sense of belonging and encouraging an open, two-way dialogue, our community will be a diverse and inclusive hub of knowledge, support, and advocacy.

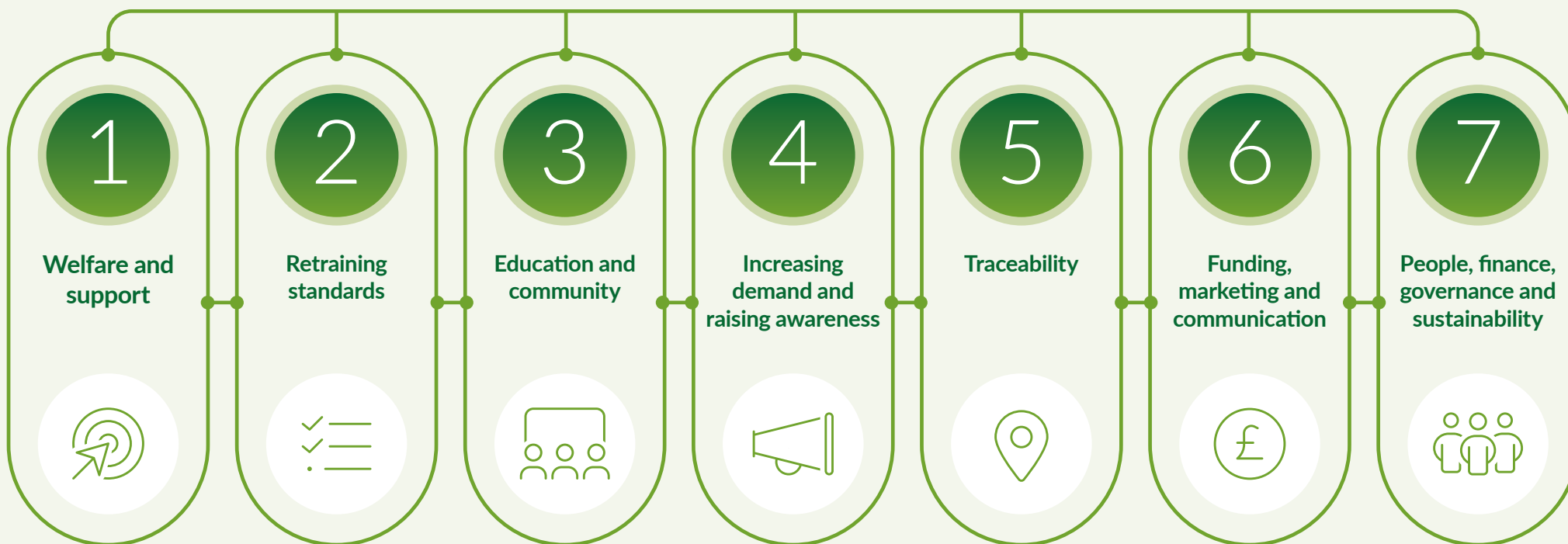


Our three-year strategy



These pillars are interdependent with one another to maximise the strategic impact. It is therefore essential that all elements are sufficiently resourced in order for us to deliver our mission.

Our strategic goals fall under seven key pillars of work



1



Our ambition

is to provide, when required, all necessary support for any horse bred for racing, ensuring a comprehensive and targeted approach to their wellbeing. We aim to quantify the number of horses requiring support, establish clear criteria for funding, and manage its distribution effectively.

PILLAR ONE

Welfare and support

Why it's important

It is crucial to ensure that every horse receives the necessary support for a fulfilling and healthy life. By quantifying the number of horses requiring assistance and establishing transparent criteria for funding distribution, we can tailor our efforts to meet the unique needs of each horse.



We'll deliver change

Through these key activities:

Reviewing our Vulnerable Horse Scheme (VHS): We will conduct a comprehensive review of the VHS, taking into account the requirements necessary to enhance its effectiveness in supporting all eligible horses. We will explore reciprocal arrangements for the support of horses bred and raced in other jurisdictions.

Retraining Assessment Programme (RAP): We will establish transparent eligibility and funding criteria for all horses that require additional support on their first step out of racing.

Small Grant Assessment Committee: We will provide a single clear process for relevant aftercare funding applications, that benefits both applicants and funders, in order to coordinate and simplify the consistent evaluation and distribution of grants.

Emergency Relief for Thoroughbreds (ERT): We will continue to provide financial support for those horses who are imminently at risk without charitable intervention.

What success will look like

Our success will be measured by:

1

Vulnerable Horse Scheme: Whilst a declining demand would be a long-term indicator that aftercare concerns are being addressed, there will always be a need for the VHS. Measures of success include an 80% reduction in horses referred to VHS within a year of retiring; widening eligibility for all horses bred for racing, maintaining a network of retraining centre partners and increased awareness of the scheme.

2

Retraining Assessment Programme: We will establish the number of horses requiring expert assessment and support at their first step out of racing each year. This will ensure that, by the end of 2025, funded places are available in recognised retraining centres.

3

Grants distributed to aftercare each year: Success involves the transparent assessment and efficient distribution of grants to aftercare initiatives that positively impact and support the welfare of horses beyond their racing careers. We aim to establish a grant fund of at least £150,000 a year.



2



Our ambition

is to establish the industry gold standard for the retraining of former racehorses, ensuring their seamless transition out of racing into fulfilling new careers.

PILLAR TWO

Retraining standards

Why it's important

By setting and upholding high standards, we ensure that no horse is rehomed inappropriately and that every horse experiences a supported journey, contributing to their long-term welfare. This commitment is integral to our mission.



We'll deliver change

Through these key activities:

Establishing retraining standards: Collaborating with industry experts, retraining centres, coaches and veterinarians, we will develop pragmatic, evidence-based and consistent retraining standards to provide guidelines for all those involved with retraining.

Retrainer Approval Scheme (RAS): The introduction of the RAS will incentivise all those involved with retraining to adhere to established standards, recognising them as leaders in the retraining of former racehorses. This will inform all parties of a safe pair of hands to transition their retiring horses to the leisure industry.

Monitoring and evaluation: Regular monitoring and evaluation will assess compliance with the standards, ensuring that approved retrainers maintain the highest level of care. This process will also involve tracking key indicators and measurement of long-term success.

What success will look like

Our success will be measured by:

1

Percentage of trainers sharing data: Our goal is for 100% of licensed trainers sharing initial horse assessment data with RoR by the end of 2026. This goal reflects a collaborative effort towards transparency and responsible retraining practices.

2

Number of approved retrainers: We aim to have 40 approved retrainers by the end of 2026, who are all sharing horse assessment data to validate with licensed trainer assessments, in order to improve outcomes of the retraining process.

3

Active retraining centre community: A thriving community of active retraining centres and approved retrainers, sharing good practice, learning from each other and showcasing the collective commitment to the successful transition of horses out of racing. We will establish a Retrainer Working Group to monitor and improve the RAS, and establish a forum for retrainers before the end of 2025.



3



Our ambition

is to further develop a comprehensive in-person and online education strategy that empowers owners with the knowledge and resources needed for a seamless transition of their horses from racing into new careers.

PILLAR THREE

Education and community

Why it's important

By increasing access to retraining support, we contribute to the success of partnerships, ensuring the wellbeing and fulfilment of both the horses and their new owners.



We'll deliver change

Through these key activities:

Education strategy: We will expand on our multi-disciplined programme of education for members, both on and off the horse including training camps, clinics and online.

Collaborating and expanding networks: We will work with retraining centres, vets, farriers, coaches, welfare organisations and equestrian bodies to influence good practice and signpost to relevant resources.

Creating an inclusive community: We will create a safe community, free of judgement that is welcoming and all encompassing, by breaking down barriers to participation and progression, and embracing equality and diversity for all our members.

What success will look like:

Our success will be measured by:

1

Numbers of leisure owners accessing RoR's education programme:

By the end of 2026, we aim for 50% of those registered with RoR to participate in our education activities in their first year of membership.

2

Measure impact of RoR education: Success involves actively monitoring feedback to inform and demonstrate the impact of RoR education. By the end of 2026, we aim for in excess of 80% of attendants recommending an RoR course to others.

3

Numbers that go on to participate in competitions: By the end of 2026, we aim for at least 25% of members participating in RoR education to go on to compete with RoR or other bodies.

4

Relationships with trainers: By the end of 2026, we will aim for our Regional Development Officers to have built strong relationships with 50% of licensed trainers, in order for them to refer new leisure owners to RoR resources.

5

Inclusivity: We will measure inclusivity through member feedback and an increase in the number of participants from hard-to-reach and under-represented communities.



4



Our ambition

is to dispel the myths about former racehorses, and to promote the versatility and nature of the breed. By raising awareness of their ability in different equestrian disciplines and facilitating opportunities for active participation in clinics and competitions, we will continue to increase their opportunities, popularity and demand.

PILLAR FOUR

Increasing demand and raising awareness

Why it's important

Prevention of welfare issues arising continues to be a cornerstone of RoR strategy. By bolstering their post-racing prospects, we help ensure their wellbeing and demonstrate the industry's commitment to aftercare.



We'll deliver change

Through these key activities:

Reviewing all RoR competitions and opportunities for participation:

We will conduct a comprehensive review of our existing sports and activities, ensuring they provide opportunities for competitors to progress, and that they align with our goal of increasing the demand for former racehorses.

Collaborating with the British Equestrian Federation (BEF) and independent equestrian bodies:

We will galvanise relationships with non-racing equestrian bodies to align where feasible, identify new opportunities for participation, and integrate former racehorses into established equestrian activities and events.

Sustainable commercial models: We will explore and implement sustainable commercial models for former racehorses' participation in various equestrian sports.

High-profile RoR events: Hosting and promoting events, such as our National Championships, that showcase the capabilities of former racehorses in different equestrian disciplines, is a central focus of our strategy.

Creating a culture for the industry to champion aftercare: We will create a culture where owners, racecourses and the media speak regularly about former racehorses and what they are now doing. Expanding initiatives such as 'Horses for Courses', we will push for all stakeholders to champion aftercare.

What success will look like

Our success will be measured by:

1

Increased demand and participation: Success will manifest in a growing demand for former racehorses, as evidenced by the numbers participating in RoR clinics and competitions, wider equestrian activities and events organised by others.

2

Recognition of achievement: Success means recognising the achievements of former racehorses in diverse equestrian activities across RoR and other competitions.

3

Raised awareness: Wider understanding and awareness by equestrians and the public of aftercare.



5



Our ambition

is to establish a robust system of traceability of former racehorses. This will be achieved by data sharing with key racing and equestrian bodies and by building an active RoR community.

PILLAR FIVE

Traceability

Why it's important

Traceability is fundamental to our mission; by knowing the whereabouts of these horses, we are more able to attract new leisure owners to the RoR community and provide effective support to enhance their horses' wellbeing.



We'll deliver change

Through these key activities:

Registration: We will work to ensure that all horses bred for racing in GB are registered with RoR and their data is maintained in a centralised database. This will form the foundation of our traceability efforts.

Data sharing: We will work with the British Horseracing Authority (BHA) and Weatherbys General Stud Book to enable us to access comprehensive data, contributing to the traceability of all horses bred to race. Reciprocal international arrangements will be considered in the longer-term.

Collaborating with BEF bodies: To enable us to gather and centralise data relevant to former racehorses participating in various equestrian activities, strengthening our traceability efforts.

RoR community: Data collected from our education, competition and community activities will be instrumental in tracking the whereabouts and post-racing journeys of former racehorses, and building a comprehensive, inclusive and engaging RoR community.

What success will look like

Our success will be measured by:

1

Registration numbers: By 2026 we aim to have 20,000 former racehorses registered on our database.

2

Number of horses with known pathways out of racing: Success will be evident in the increasing number of horses with well-documented and known pathways out of racing, showcasing their successful transitions. 100% of horses assessed and retrained through the RAP, RAS and VHS will be recorded on our database by 2026.

3

Community engagement: Success entails active engagement in all RoR activities, building a community where former racehorses' journeys are shared and celebrated. By 2026 we aim to have 60% of registered owners actively engaged with RoR.



6



Our ambition

is to create a compelling case for support that clearly conveys the importance of financial support of former racehorses through RoR's charitable activity. This will help us establish sustainable funding from a variety of sources, including the racing industry, ensuring our financial stability and ability to meet our goals.

PILLAR SIX

Funding, marketing and communication



Why it's important

By developing a strong case for support and securing diverse funding sources, we can ensure that former racehorses receive the care they deserve beyond their racing careers. Financial stability is key to increasing our impact and expanding our reach.

We'll deliver change

Through these key activities:

Developing a clear case for support:

We will craft a persuasive and well-articulated case for support that clearly communicates the urgency and necessity of backing former racehorses through RoR. This case will serve as the cornerstone of our fundraising and communication efforts.

Building an industry funding model:

We will establish an industry funding model that fosters collaboration with the racing industry, leading to substantial support to deliver aftercare in a sustainable way.

Implementing a comprehensive marketing communications strategy:

We recognise the importance of planned communications, effective storytelling and consistent messaging. Our comprehensive marketing communications strategy will encompass a well-structured annual content planner that ensures regular, engaging, and purposeful communication with all our stakeholders.

Development of our marketing communications channels:

We will ensure our marcomms channels are fit for purpose, and aid us in achieving our goals.

Establishing diverse funding streams:

Our fundraising strategy will diversify our funding sources, reduce dependency on a single channel, and allow us to secure financial stability from various avenues.

Promoting the wellbeing of former racehorses:

Our strategy will not only celebrate the breed and the diverse careers they enjoy, but also focus on the welfare work that we do. We will collaborate with industry stakeholders, showcasing the mutually beneficial impact of our efforts and ensure that the industry recognises the importance of their role as a pivotal partner in RoR's work.

What success will look like

Our success will be measured by:

1

Industry funding goal: Over the next three years, our objective is to elevate industry funding by ten times current levels, to cover core RoR activities including our welfare and education streams and direct support for horses. Achieving this milestone would serve as a powerful testament to the industry's support for aftercare.

2

Effective RoR digital and CRM systems: We will initially refresh and then seek to redevelop RoR's digital and CRM systems, creating platforms that are fit-for-purpose for our communication and traceability goals.

3

Increased support: Success will manifest in a growing number of members, supporters, donors and partners who are engaged with and committed to our cause.

4

Fundraising: We will look to triple our fundraising (non-industry) income from 2024-2026, achieving financial stability through diversified funding streams.





Our ambition

is to strengthen the core elements of RoR—the people, finance, governance and sustainability—to create a resilient and effective organisation.

PILLAR SEVEN

People, finance, governance and sustainability

Why it's important

This pillar is central to our mission and serves as the bedrock for all our endeavours. A highly skilled and engaged team is the driving force behind our success, sound financial management secures our ability to support former racehorses, and robust governance practices ensure accountability, transparency and sustainability.



We'll deliver change

Through these key activities:

Team development: We will invest in our people, empowering and nurturing their skills and strengthening their commitment to our mission.

Operational management and policy compliance: We will ensure the organisation's effectiveness, transparency, and ethical conduct.

Sound financial stewardship: We will ensure efficient direction of our resources to activities that maximise our impact.

Reserves policy: We will ensure that RoR continues to have a robust reserves policy that maintains an enduring legacy which, in conjunction with the permitted use of our endowment funds and the income generated through our investment strategy, will contribute to the delivery of our aftercare ambitions.

Review of governance: We will continuously review and enhance governance practices to maintain trust in RoR, and ensure that effective policies and procedures are in place to underpin all of our activities.

Our commitment to sustainable practices: We will focus on reductions in travel and review our events and ways of working, aligning with industry partners and championing good practice on sustainability standards.

What success will look like

Success will be characterised by:

1

The RoR team: Success will manifest in a highly skilled, motivated, and engaged team, recognised and respected throughout the industry, and driving the organisation forward with a shared commitment to our mission.

2

Financial growth: Success is represented by a strong financial position, ensuring the organisation's capacity to support former racehorses effectively. We aim to generate sufficient income to fully fund our activities on an annual basis.

3

Good governance: Success is reflected in compliance with the Charity Governance Code including robust risk management and audit practices.

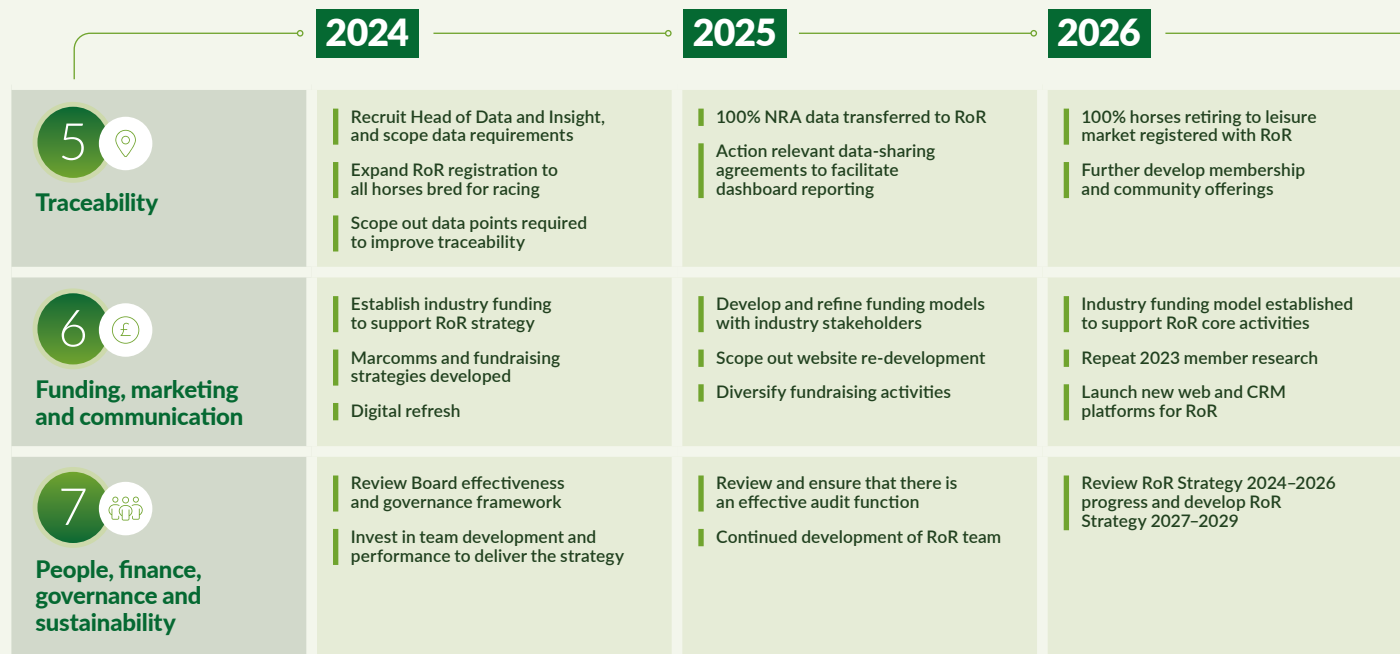
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Meeting our strategic goals: Success means that by 2026 we are on track with our strategic objectives, making adjustments as needed to achieve our goals effectively.



Strategic timeline







Retraining of Racehorses (RoR) is
British Horseracing's official charity
for the welfare of horses who have
retired from racing.

Patron: Zara Tindall MBE

Patron: Sir Anthony McCoy OBE

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