Racing Welfare recruits three new members of the Welfare Team to improve national accessibility and respond to increased demand for the charity's services.

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PRESS RELEASE

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In a three-year business plan created in November 2015, it was identified that improving the **national accessibility** of Welfare Officers would support the charity's vision that no-one from the thoroughbred racing and breeding community is left unsupported and that everyone has the opportunity to thrive. Brian Watson and Lynne Clarke have now been appointed as Welfare Officers for Lambourn and the South-West respectively. Gail Burton-Pye has been appointed as a Welfare Support Worker in Middleham.

Brian Watson will join the charity from his role at the **Northern Racing College** where he has four years' experience as a Training Instructor. Brian brings strong experience of working with young people to the Racing Welfare team. In addition to this he has worked in the industry as **Head Lad** to Mick Channon and **Assistant Trainer** to Ian Semple.

Lynne Clarke re-joined Racing Welfare on 2nd March to work as a roving Welfare Officer for the West Country. Lynne previously held this post until 2013 on a working from home basis. Lynne has very extensive experience of working with and **supporting people** in addition to valuable racing connections.

Gail Burton-Pye has accepted the role of Welfare Support Worker in Middleham and will be playing an important role in delivering services to this **increasingly busy** training centre. Gail has strong local industry and people connections from her current post as Yard Manager for Mark Johnston where she has worked since 1996 after graduating from the BRS.

Statistics from 2015 show a record increase in the number of individuals that Racing Welfare has helped. The frontline team and helpline assisted **1,159 individuals** in 2015 which saw a **23% increase on 2014 figures**. The top 3 issues that people sought support for were physical health/disability advice, housing advice and benefits advice. Grants to individuals also **increased by 18%** at £90,638 with the top 3 issues for grant funding being accidents & injuries, disability and housing.

Simone Sear, Head of Welfare, said: "*The increasing demand for Racing Welfare's services demonstrate that the charity's role within the British Horseracing Industry is incredibly important. With work now taking place to increase awareness of our services and the launch of the multi-channel helpline 'Racing's Support Line', we would anticipate that the number of people that we support will continue to increase. We are excited to welcome Brian and Gail to the charity and we are also thrilled that Lynne Clarke is returning. Making sure that our services are accessible to everyone in racing across the whole of the country is now a major priority for 2016.*"

Racing Welfare's multi-channel helpline, 'Racing's Support Line', was launched in January 2016 and can be accessed at www.support.racingwelfare.co.uk.

ENDS……..

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Notes to Editors

Racing Welfare is a UK-wide charity whose headquarters are in Newmarket. It serves the needs of racing personnel from the beginning of their careers through to retirement. The wide range of help provided includes provision of affordable housing, mentoring schemes for young workers, advice for those coping

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with illness and disabilities; through to specialist counselling and support at times of need or personal crisis.

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