



COVID -19 Coronavirus Pandemic Horse Owners Survey

An Investigation of Livery Yard Practices



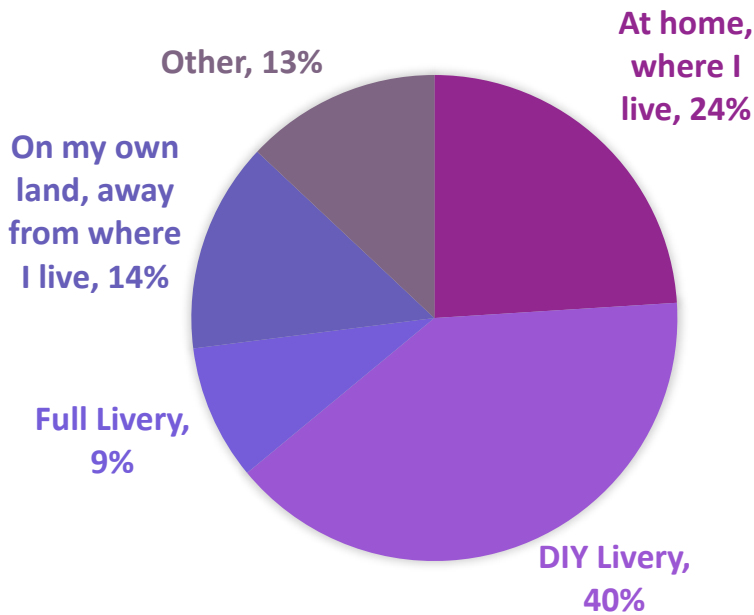
Results based on experiences in Weeks 1 – 4
of the Government instruction to Stay Home
(23rd March - 19th April 2020)

Online survey
Fieldwork 28th March – 19th April 2020
628 Responses

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Overview

- These results are based on 628 responses from horse owners who, on average have 2 or 3 horses (mean = 2.7), therefore representing over 1,700 horses.
- Among those who keep their horses at livery they almost all have 1 or 2 horses (mean = 1.7). Those who keep their horses a home have more (mean = 4.3 horses)



- In total, three-quarters of horse owners have to travel away from their home to look after their horse.
- Almost half (49%) keep their horses at livery, the majority of which are in DIY livery.

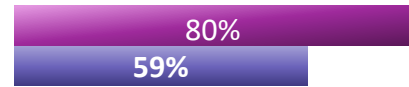
- Those who keep their horses in livery are more likely to have an emergency Care Plan in place for their horses that has been shared with the relevant people

Care Plan	At Home	DIY Livery	Full Livery
Yes, I have a clear plan and the people who would help know about it	46%	68%	70%
Yes, I know what I would probably do, but I've not really talked to people about it	36%	23%	15%
No I don't have a plan	17%	9%	11%
Prefer not to say	-	-	4%

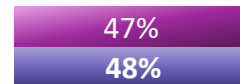
Actions being taken by livery yards (1):



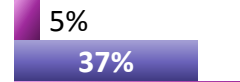
Social Distancing rules



Restricted number of people who can visit yard



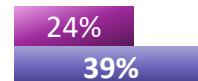
Banned owners from the yard



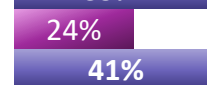
Banned other visitors from the yard



Set specific times to visit horse



Restricted amount of time spent at yard



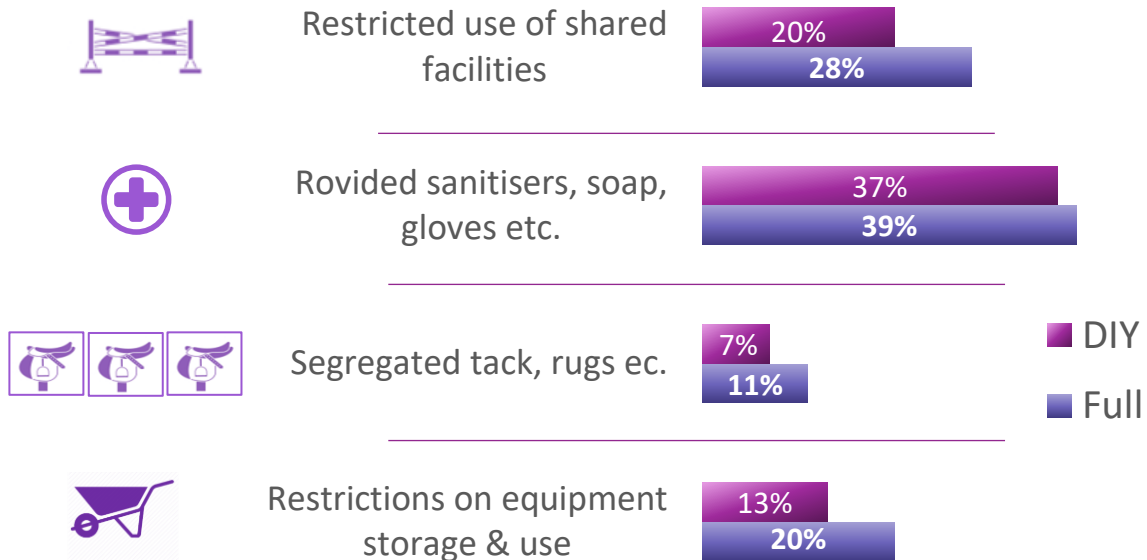
■ DIY
■ Full

- 37% of owners with horses on full livery have been stopped from going to the yard their horse is kept at. Many others are seeing restrictions in place around when they can visit and how long they can stay
- Only a very small minority (5%) of owners with horses on DIY livery have been stopped from going to their horses
- Other restrictions on people other than owners going to livery yards are applied across both DIY and full livery, with almost half either limiting the number of people and/or banning other visitors from yards
- Restrictions on when owners can visit and how long they can stay are particularly prevalent among those with full livery
- Most yards are applying Social Distancing rules (some owners with horses in full livery will not know as they are not allowed to go to the yard)

Actions being taken by livery yards (2):



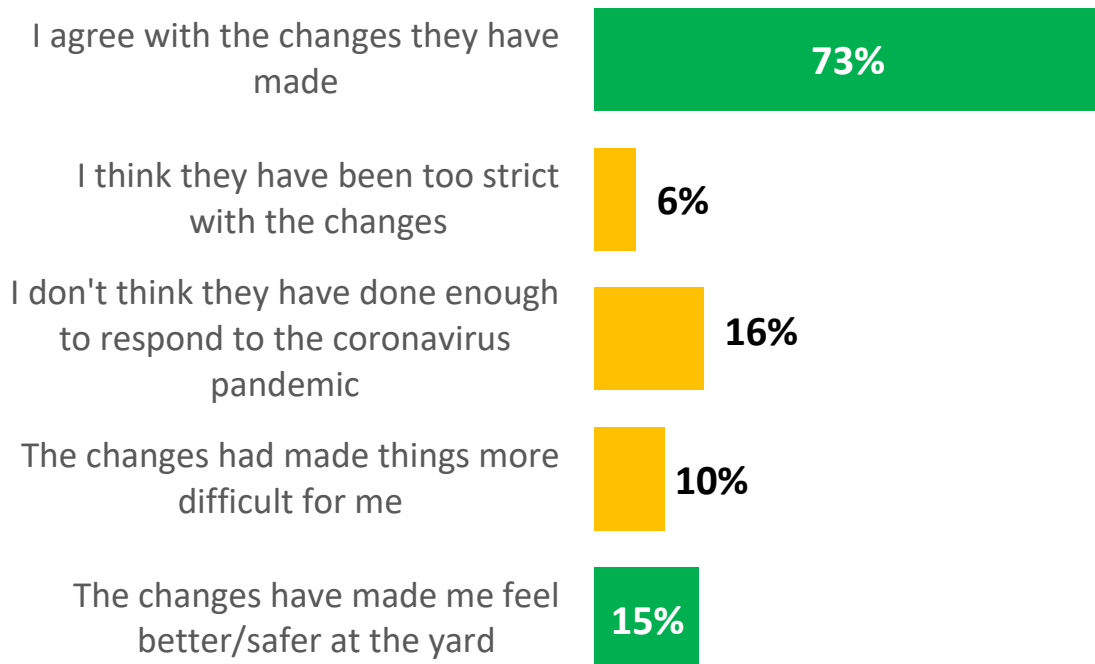
- Whilst we see many owners having restrictions placed on visiting their horses in livery, there appears to be fewer preventative measures in place once owners are at the yard:
 - Given the risks of passing the virus on through contact it is notable that only just over a third of horse owners are aware of their livery yard providing sanitisers or gloves etc.
 - Similarly it is perhaps concerning that only a minority of livery yards have placed restrictions on use and/or segregation of equipment, rugs etc.



Satisfaction with Livery Yard Actions:



- The majority of owners (73%) are happy with the changes their livery yard have made and this is consistent across both DIY and full livery
- 16% of owners feel their livery yard has not done enough, slightly higher among those on DIY arrangements. Only 6% of owners think their yard has been too strict

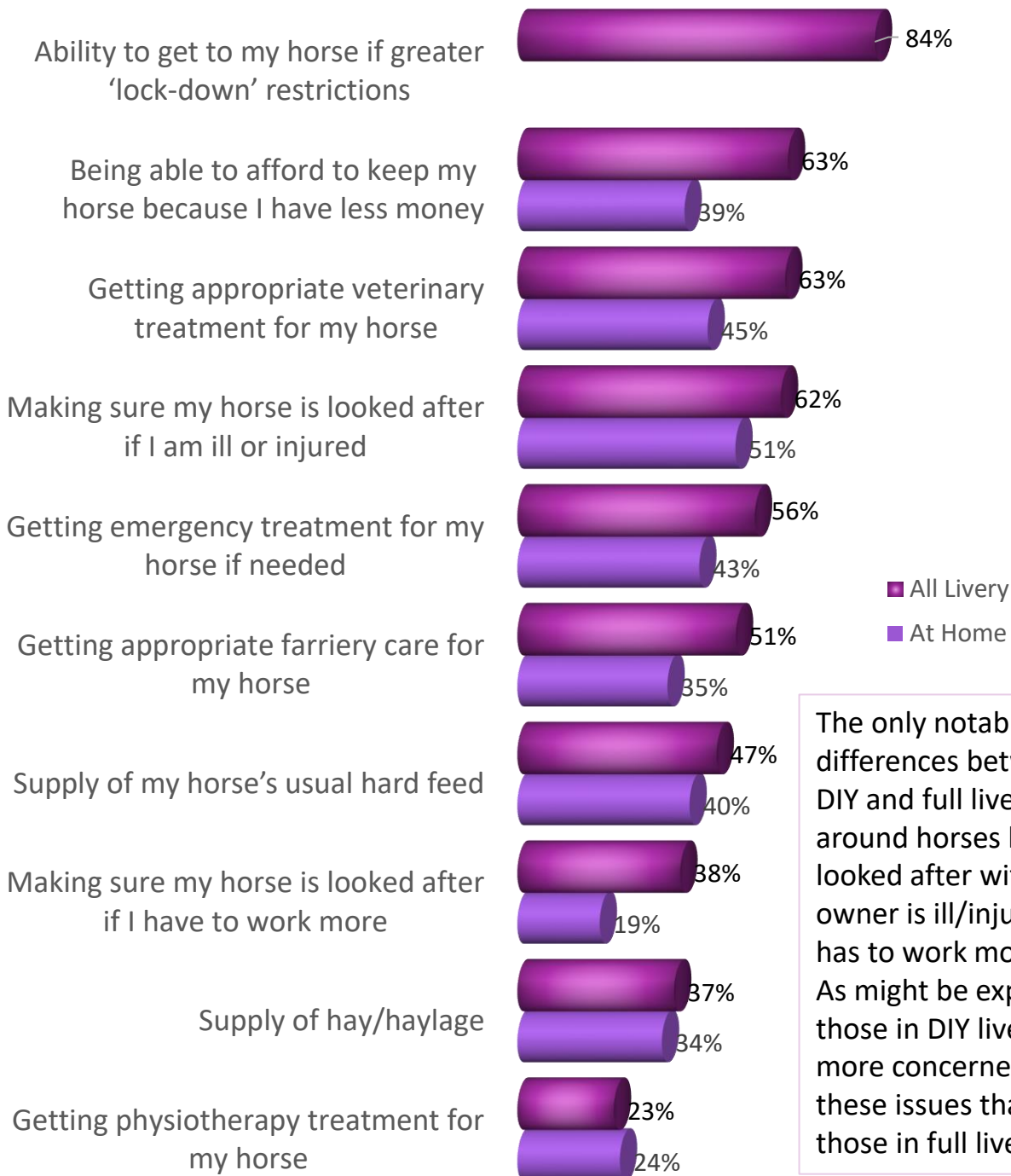


- Overall, whether satisfied or not with their yard, many owners would prefer that there was great consistency of policy across yards, as individual owners are hearing different experiences at individual yards.
- 18% of owners on full livery report that they are currently paying more for their livery. For example, when not able to go to the yard (either through illness, self-isolation, key-worker commitments or not allowed by the yard) some are incurring additional costs for exercising, stabling costs etc.
- Some owners are critical of the extent of restrictions that recent them from spending time with their horse and put forward suggestions or rotas across days/weeks to enable owners to be with their horses
- However, the majority of owners are complimentary about how their livery yard is handling the situation, with examples of yards providing additional help to key workers and doing what they can to support owners



Biggest Concerns and Worries

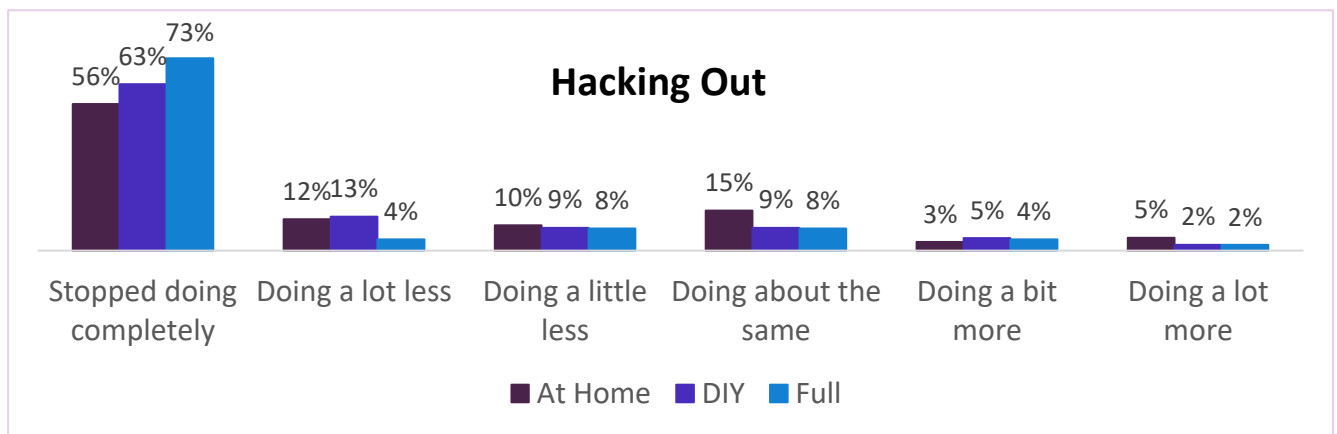
- The biggest concern for those with horses in livery is around being able to get to their horse if movement restrictions are extended.
- The second biggest concern is of not being able to afford to keep their horse. This is mentioned by 63% of owners with horses at livery, compared to 39% of those who keep their horses at home and so have less financial outlay directly/solely linked to their horse



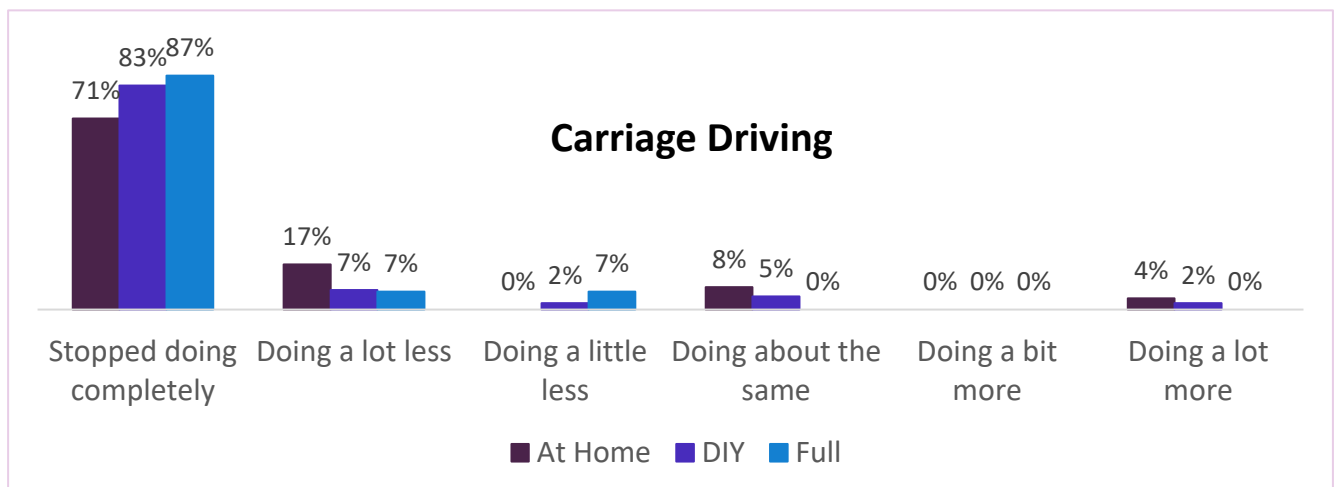
The only notable differences between DIY and full livery is around horses being looked after with the owner is ill/injured or has to work more. As might be expected, those in DIY livery are more concerned on these issues than those in full livery

Riding Habits away from Home/Yard

- Shows and all rallies/horse camp/working day activity has stopped, so any ridden activity needs to take place at home/yard on surrounding roads and tracks.
- Over half of those keeping horses at home have stopped hacking out. This rises to 63% of those on DIY livery and 73% of those on full livery. This reflects in part livery yard restrictions, but also perhaps the impact of peer pressure on yards to reduce activity

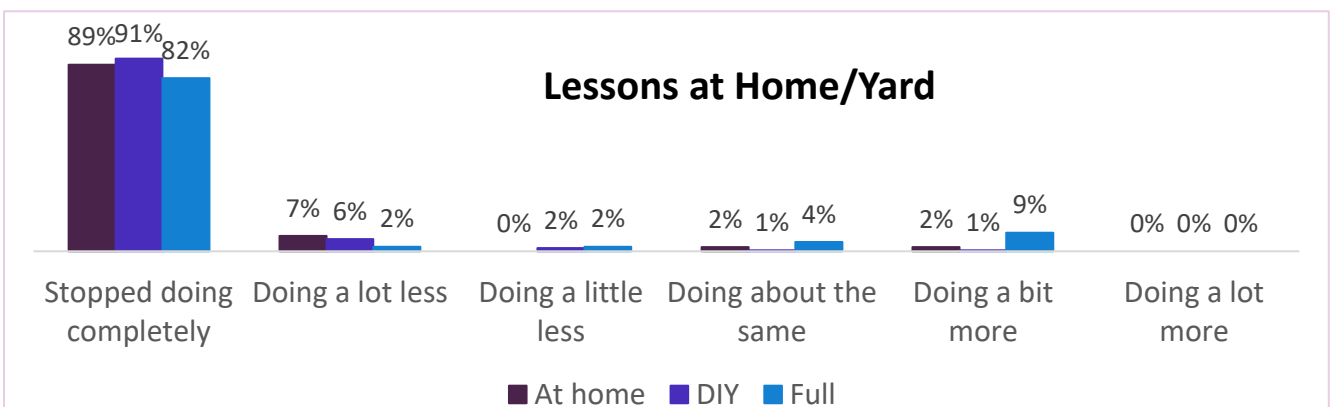
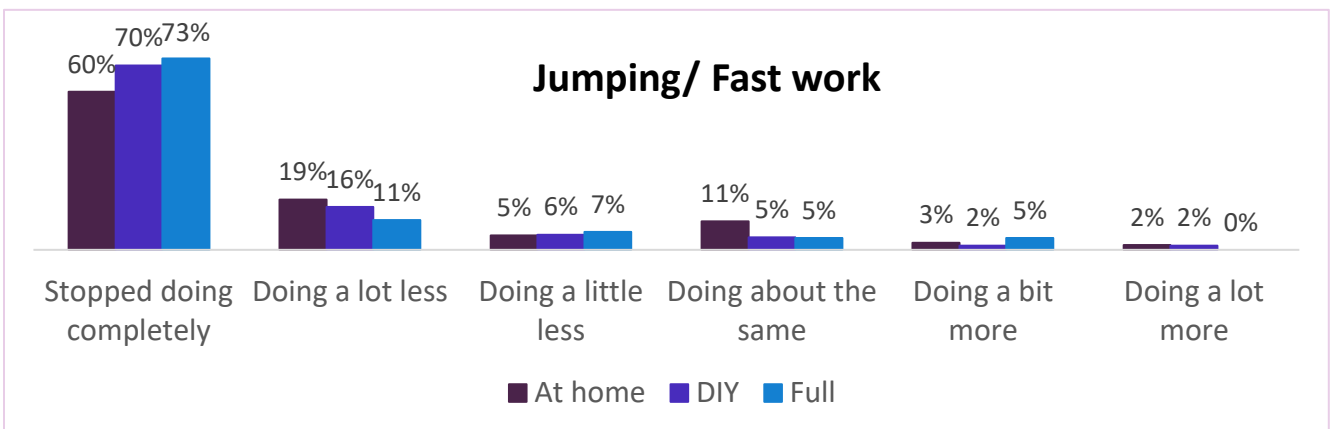
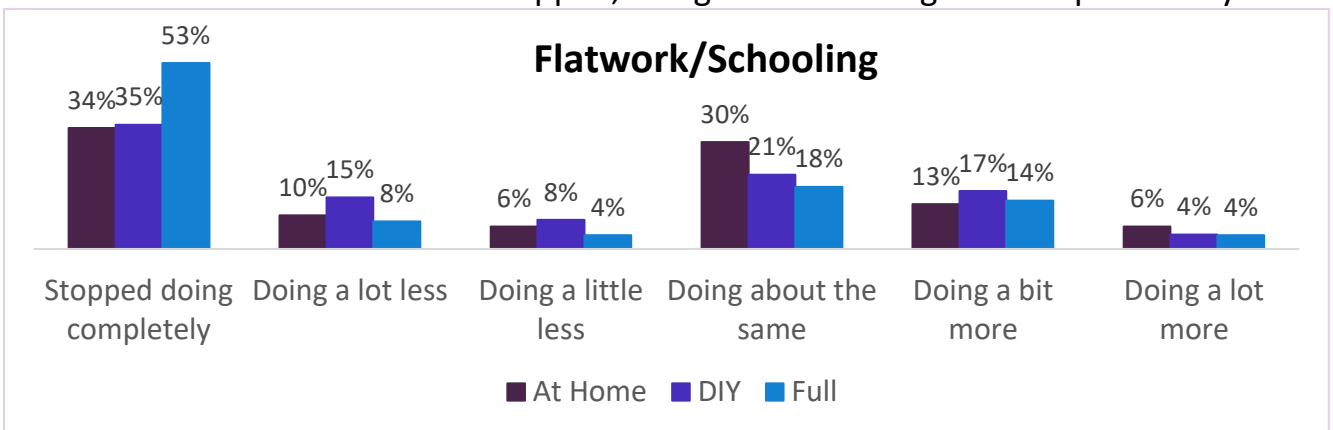


- A greater percentage (over-three quarters) of those who normally drive their horses have stopped doing so on the roads. Again the figures are higher among those who keep their horses in livery



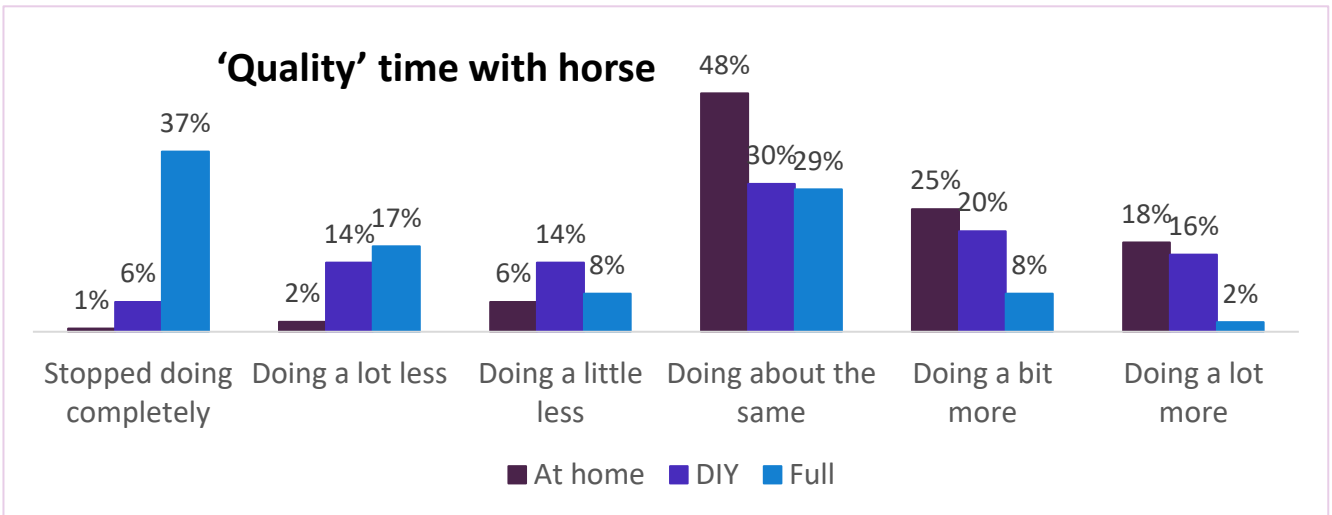
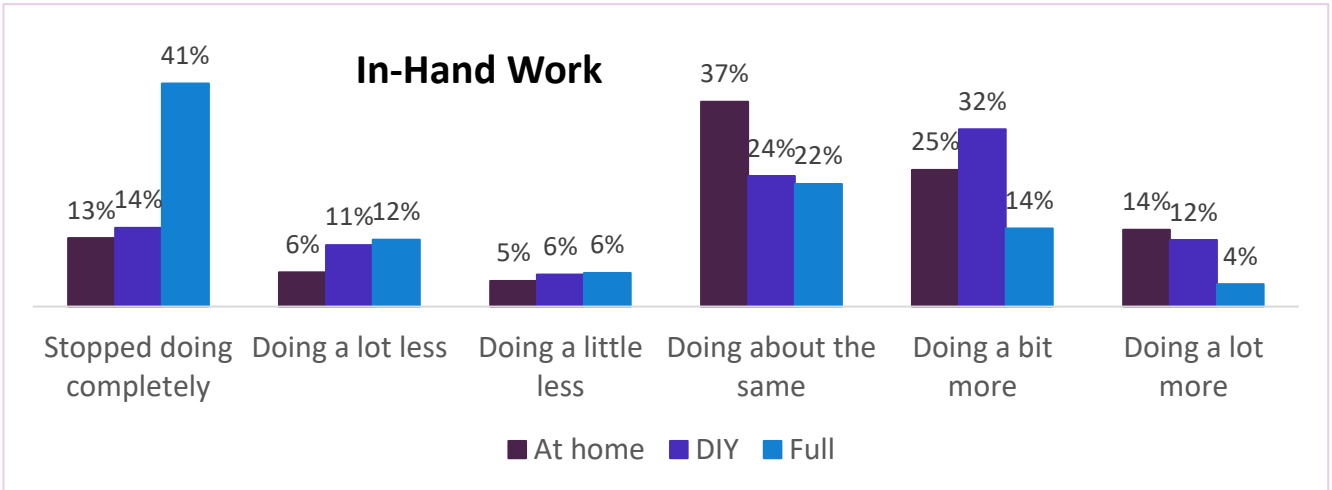
Riding Habits at Home/Yard

- Riding activity at home/yard has cut back considerably with fast work and lessons stopped by the majority of horse owners, whether their horses are at home or in livery
- Just over a third of owners have stopped flatwork and schooling, higher among those in full livery where yard restrictions prevent them from riding. It is notable though that over a third of owners are doing the same or more flatwork and schooling at the moment
- For those who would normally drive their horses at home 48% of those keeping their horses at home have stopped, rising to 80% among those kept at livery



Behaviour Changes

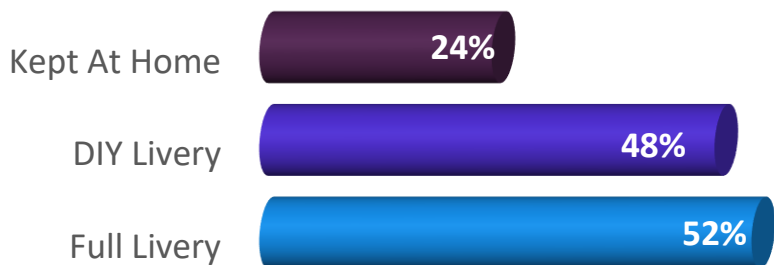
- In-hand work and 'quality time' spent with horses has increased for the majority of those who keep their horses at home or at DIY livery. This contrasts sharply with horses in full livery, where yard restrictions appear to be impacting greatly



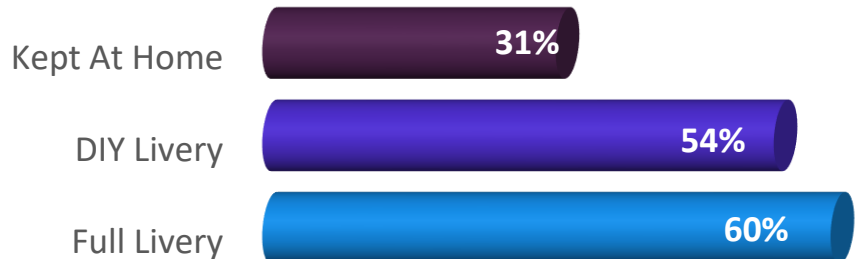
Impact on Horses Wellbeing

- The lack of ridden activity in particular is raising concerns for many horse owners, both in terms of their horse's physical and mental wellbeing
- Concerns are greater among those with horses at livery, reflecting the lower levels of activity taking place
- Concerns are highest among those with horses on full livery, reflecting the greater restrictions and that some owners are concerned that the changed routines will also be affecting their horses

Concerned about horse's mental welfare



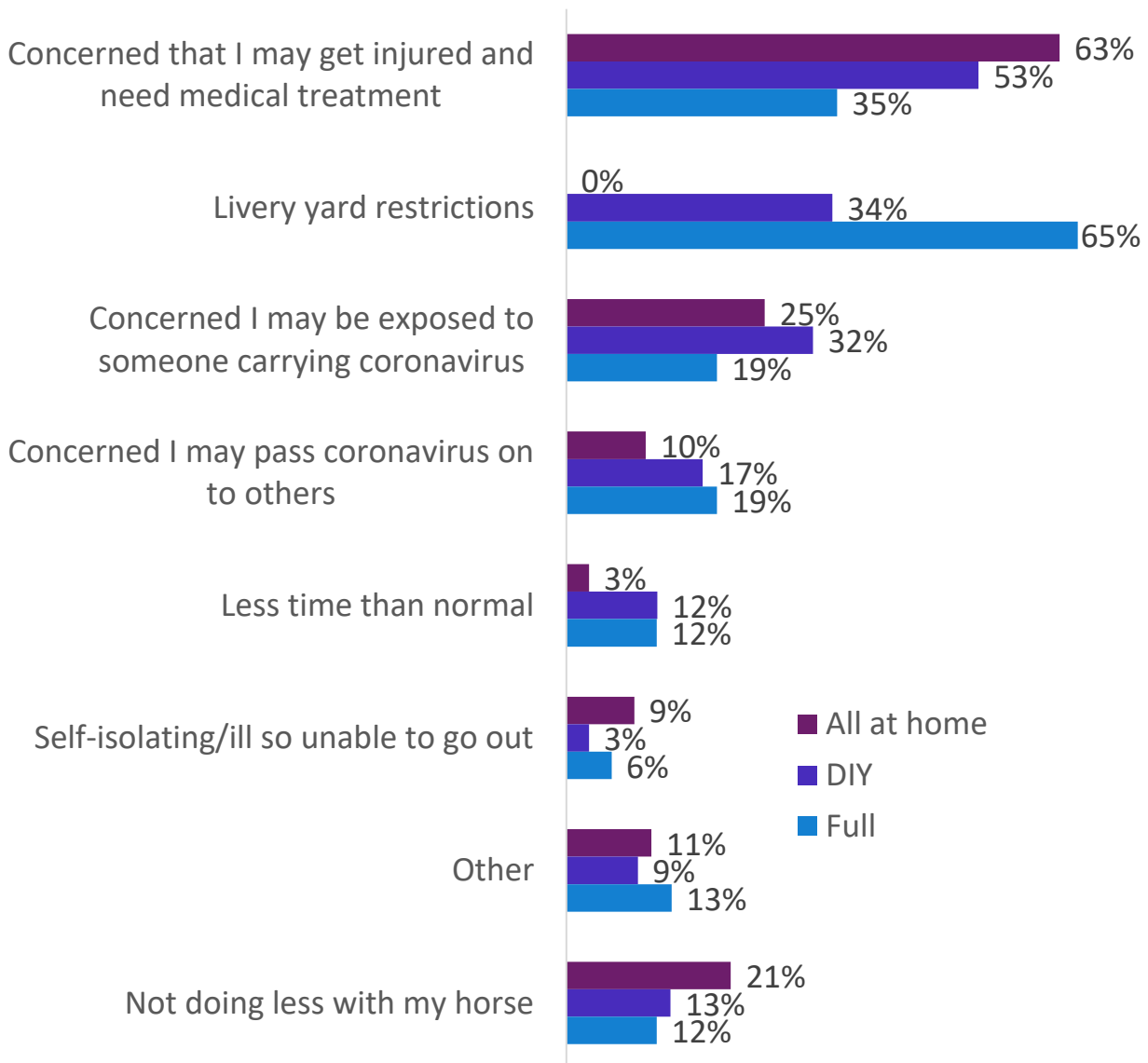
Loss of condition through reduced work



Reasons for doing less



- Those with horses in livery are more likely to be doing less with their horses than those who keep them at home, reflecting a combination of yard restrictions, social distancing and self-isolating.
- The main reason horse owners are doing less with their horses is through concern they may get injured and place greater strain on the NHS.
- However, for those in livery, yard restrictions are a major influencer, particularly where horses are on full livery. Here we see 65% of horse owners saying yard restrictions are reason they are doing less with their horses
- Concerns around contracting the virus are highest among those at livery yards





The Timeline to Lockdown

Date	Action
Friday 31 st January	First 2 cases announced
Thursday 5 th March	First death announced
Wednesday 11 th March	Government announces £30bn additional spending to protect the economy against coronavirus
Thursday 12 th March	Cobra meeting “worst public health crisis for a generation”. Advises anyone with symptoms to stay home for 7 days
Sunday 15 th March	Announces that daily press briefings will take place
Monday 16 th March	Urged to stay home, avoid pubs and restaurants and social distance
Tuesday 17 th March	Public warned that “extreme measures” would go “further and faster”. Loans, tax cuts and grants announced Vulnerable people asked to self-isolate
Wednesday 18 th March	Announced that schools will close from Friday 20 th March
Friday 20 th March	Schools close. Nightclubs, pubs, cafes, restaurants, cinemas, gyms ordered to close Furlough policy announced
Monday 23 rd March	‘lockdown’ begins – people told to stay at home, avoid gatherings of more than 2 people Shops ordered to close Police empowered
Thursday 16 th April	Confirmed that Stay at Home instruction would remain in place for at least a further 3 weeks