



Showcase
& Awards
2025

HEREFORD
RACING & EVENTS

Richard Layton Charity Raceday: Making Mental Health The Front Runner

Hereford Racecourse
Community Award



Proudly partnered by



Objectives

Our aim: ‘Making Mental Health The Front Runner’ in collaboration with the Layton family to raise awareness and break the stigma around mental health issues and suicide in the farming community

The county of Herefordshire is steeped in farming tradition from beef to cider, arable to asparagus. But this all comes at a cost, and in recent years an increasing cost to the mental health of farmers, and their families. With the uncertainty caused by changes to inheritance tax in the December 2024 budget and a very challenging 2025 harvest due to drought, the concerns for farmers will only increase, as will the need for support, which is where the headline charity of We Are Farming Minds come in to action.

Marie-Louise lost her husband, and father to Lily & George, Richard Layton in March 2023 to suicide after a lengthy mental health battle. The family are determined to raise awareness and support those in the local Herefordshire farming community who may similarly be suffering from anxiety, loneliness and depression.

Our Aims:

- To bring the farming and racing communities of Herefordshire together resulting in maximum impact for charities
- Cement the fundraiser into the Hereford calendar and longer-term link to support Herefordshire based charity ‘We Are Farming Minds’
- Range of raceday packages to allow family and friends to attend and support in a variety of ways
- Allow the family to establish a positive legacy for Richard



Delivery



Wednesday 27th November 2024 – the inaugural Richard Layton Charity Raceday

We initially met with the Layton family twelve months before the raceday to discuss what we wanted to achieve and set about the planning and activity leading up to the day itself. This included promotion and marketing asset production by the racecourse, plus coordinating restaurant & sponsorship packages which were dealt with by our business coordinator at site, all of which was met with overwhelming support by local businesses and connections to the family

Sold out **charity restaurant** of 160 covers comprising 16 local businesses who enjoyed a sponsored drinks reception, **tipster talk** kindly given by Christian Williams and Herefordshire born and bred champion jockey, Richard Johnson, before a fitting **hearty Hereford lunch** of local beef & produce

7 individual race sponsors supporting the charities, including five new sponsors to Hereford plus **25** additional local sponsors taking racecard adverts and parade ring banner coordinated by the racecourse team, with all proceeds going to the charities

Silent auction for hospitality guests plus **wheelbarrow bottle raffle** for hospitality and all public attendance which both helped contribute over £10,000 to the final total

Around the enclosures: **Midlands Air Ambulance** Pod and information stand, **Injured Jockeys Fund** merchandise stand and **We Are Farming Minds** fundraising and information stand with public raffle

Paddock interviews conducted by Cornelius Lysaght with Lily and George Layton, a candid and honest Q&A which engaged with racegoers and brought the sentiment of the raceday to the fore



Results

£48,216 raised and split equally to:

- We Are Farming Minds £16,072
- Midlands Air Ambulance £16,072
- Injured Jockeys Fund £16,072

All parties were able to join us for racing in March 2025 for cheque presentations

1500 total crowd more than doubling a typical late November weekday crowd for the inaugural event

Local media coverage including BBC Hereford & Worcester radio interviews both in lead up to event and after

Raceday brought **new racegoers** and who some who had not attended since the reopening in 2016, and have since returned in restaurant and as general admission

Young Farmer discount for all Hereford fixtures established, kept simple for on the day purchase on presentation of their club card (£10 ticket) including Saturday fixtures.

Demand for hospitality over and above capacity in 2024 has led to the next Richard Layton Charity Raceday being planned for **Spring 2026** where they can fulfil a daytime lunch and fundraiser for 350 guests, followed by evening racing and live music after. This will also be our season finale so a very fitting end to the 25/26 season. It is anticipated the 2nd staging will raise over **£100,000 for the charities.**



Supporting Information



We Are Farming Minds was established in 2020 by Herefordshire farming couple Sam & Emily Stables, providing a 24/7 helpline, befriending services and funding for professional counselling. In 2025 the charity welcomed their patron, HRH The Prince of Wales, a huge honour and one that demonstrates and rewards the charity for their achievements



Midlands Air Ambulance constitute the largest air ambulance operating region in England, the charity was chosen by the family as their way of giving back after the support they received firsthand during the tragic event they were faced with



Injured Jockeys Fund need little introduction, but it was lovely for Sue Watkins, who is a stalwart volunteer of the stand at all of our fixtures, to receive the cheque on behalf of the IJF as well as Sean Bowen. The charity was chosen by cousin of the family, Sue Howell, who is a racehorse owner herself and they felt it was appropriate to support a racing charity linking the farming and racing communities, a thread that ran through all of the planning, preparation and delivery of the raceday

The Layton family envisage extending the charity days beyond Hereford, and were the inspiration behind ‘Making Mental Health The Front Runner’



Supporting Information

Please follow link to the Richard Layton Charity Raceday video <https://youtu.be/M9PsmWAIbvc>



“We set up the raceday for Richard after he took his own life...for us it wasn’t about the money, it was more about raising awareness of Mental Health in the farming community, Richard was one of 7 farmers that took his own life in 2023 which is a massive number in Herefordshire alone, and for us it was just important that people know that they can speak out”

Marie-Louise Layton

“We are so grateful for the raceday and for raising such a massive amount of money for us. We are glad people are talking and we want to get people becoming more comfortable with discussing their mental health, so the more money and fundraising we can get behind us the more we can do for the community and helping farmers all through Herefordshire”

Ellie Pincombe

We Are Farming Minds

“We just want to say how entirely grateful we are for such an incredible donation, we don’t receive any government funding so we are completely supported by our community and corporate and for that we are entirely grateful for this amount of money”

Kate Bristow

Midlands Air Ambulance Charity