



## **Worshipful Company of Saddlers agrees to Chair Saddle Fitting Steering Group**

The Worshipful Company of Saddlers has accepted an invitation from leading bodies across the equestrian industry to chair a steering group that will look at education, training and qualifications for Saddle Fitters. Those invited to attend include the British Equestrian Trade Association, British Horse Society, British Equine Veterinary Association, Society of Master Saddlers, Master Saddle Fitting Consultants Society and the Saddle Research Trust. The aim of the group will be to consider the current provision of saddle fitting education, training and qualifications, and guide a response to the needs and changes identified for the future.

The Company strongly agrees to the requirement for such a review. The Prime Warden, Charles Barclay, said: “As an interested but impartial party, we are pleased to accept the invitation to chair this new steering group, the need for which was made to us by a number of the organisations now invited to participate in the first meeting.”



The Prime Warden, Mr Charles Barclay, presenting a saddle to Libby Head of the USA the Highest Placed Rider Under 25 at Badminton 2016.

British Equestrian Trade Association executive director Claire Williams said: “We are pleased to be invited to participate as a core member of the Saddle Fitting Steering Group.

Saddle fitting has grown substantially as a recognised profession over the past 15 years. There is a pressing need for more formal education and training opportunities among those in the trade, whilst the riding public also need greater levels of information in order that they understand better the crucial role of the saddle fitter.”

Society of Master Saddlers chief executive Hazel Morley said: “We are very pleased to be working with the Worshipful Company of Saddlers and other leading industry organisations to take forward saddle fitting training and qualifications. This important work has been one of the Society's main objectives since the introduction of our first saddle fitting qualification in 1995.”

Saddle Research Trust director Anne Bondi said: “We are very pleased that this steering group is being established to lead the development of a wide-ranging saddle fitting education, training and qualification system based on the best evidence and research available, and look forward to working with other leaders in this field.”

The first meeting of the core members of the group will set the agenda to move the project forward, drawing up terms of reference and considering those with additional expertise who might be invited to attend as co-opted members from time to time. The aim will be to set out the broad plan of action and agree a way forward with an open mind to potential opportunities.

#### **FOR MEDIA ENQUIRIES...**

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