



media *release*

16 March 2016

**Inspired by Cheltenham Festival? Don't just watch the races, live it!
Watch one of this year's charity race jockeys in training to see what
you could be missing...**

You've got more than an outside chance of fulfilling your dream of being the next Frankie Dettori or Hayley Turner if you take on the Animal Health Trust's (AHT) Charity Race challenge on Saturday 25th June.

The Newmarket based veterinary research charity is offering budding jockeys the chance to fly past the winning post of one of the most iconic racetracks in the UK. It is a once in a lifetime opportunity to ride in the footsteps of some of the greatest horse and jockey combinations the sport has ever seen and a true test of your horsemanship. Charity riders will put on their silks and race over one mile of the Newmarket July Course, cheered on by the crowds in our Gala Day grandstand and hospitality marquee. One thing is a dead cert' – you will have one of the best experiences of your life if you take part and will help the AHT improve the health and welfare of dogs, cats and horses in the UK and worldwide. The money you raise through sponsorship will go towards research and treatment of infectious diseases, cancers and injuries. Last year's riders raised an amazing £23,423 and the AHT would like you to help them beat that figure!

One of this year's favourites for the race is Elizabeth Evans, who is on placement at the AHT from the University of Bath. Elizabeth is currently working within the Immunology department, researching the equine disease Strangles. "Having now worked within the AHT, seen the amazing research that takes place and the special care given to all of the animals that visit, I jumped at the chance to do my bit and challenge myself. I have my own horses and have worked my way through the Pony Club, but this is a very different type of riding. I've started training and am gradually settling into the routine of being up and out on the gallops for 6:30am, as well as attending the British Racing School three times a week to improve my technique. I'm hoping all my hard work will pay off and I get to celebrate in the winner's enclosure!" Elizabeth has filmed a vlog to demonstrate all her hard work and entice any challengers out there to sign up and compete for the 2016 title and trophy. Her vlog will give you an insight into the life and training of a jockey and is sure to tempt you to pick up the reins yourself.

The AHT offers a veterinary referral service for sick or injured horses, dogs and cats, but the charity's real impact on animal health lies in its commitment to research and education. Every clinical department at the AHT, treating sick or injured pets in their hour of need, contributes to research projects to help many more animals in the

future. Whether it be neurology, if your pet is having difficulty walking, surgery, if they have been in an accident, or ophthalmology, if they are suffering from an eye problem. The AHT are experts in several areas of pet health; pioneering cancer research and treatment in horses, dogs and cats and its geneticists are world-renowned for researching and developing DNA tests to eradicate inherited diseases in purebred dogs. It is a fantastic cause for any animal or racing lover to be raising money for and it's not too late for you to join the excitement.

Tempted? Contact hester.abbatt@aht.org.uk who will be delighted to answer all your queries, discuss ways to fundraise and help you throughout your challenge journey. To see what it takes and why you should sign up to the challenge, watch Elizabeth's vlog on <http://www.aht.org.uk/>

Youtube link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YvNH2AxZ-ao>

Ends

For further information, please contact:

Rebecca Calver, AHT press office, 01638 555602/07341 737747

Hester Abbatt, Event Organiser, 07870 428334

Photographs & Videos:

Images can be requested from the AHT press office.

Additional notes:

The Animal Health Trust (AHT) is an independent charity, employing over 200 scientists, vets and support workers. It aims to improve the health and welfare of horses, dogs and cats through research. It also provides specialist referral services and continuous education to vets. Visit the website at www.aht.org.uk