

FARRIERS REGISTRATION COUNCIL
DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE
HELD AT THE FARRIERS REGISTRATION COUNCIL, 14 SWAN COURT, FORDER WAY,
CYGNET PARK, HAMPTON, PETERBOROUGH, PE7 8GX

FARRIERS REGISTRATION COUNCIL

-v-

MR GEORGE BRINKWORTH DIPWCF

DECISION ON APPLICATION FOR RESTORATION TO THE REGISTER

1. Application for Restoration to the Register

1.1 By an Application dated 8 May 2025, Mr. Brinkworth sought restoration to the Register following his removal on 14 November 2023. In his application for restoration Mr. Brinkworth stated that he had continued to keep up to date with Continuing Professional Development and had achieved solid sobriety for more than a year with the help of Alcoholics Anonymous. He was working within the equine industry as a stud hand and had also continued bare foot trimming. He stated that he sought restoration not only for financial reasons but also because he regarded being a registered farrier as part of his personal identity. In his application form he wrote that being a farrier is *“who I am and it’s been a key focus within my life. I also relish the opportunity to redeem myself in the industry that I have let down so much with my past actions from previous years”*.

1.2 Mr. Brinkworth’s application included a number of testimonials from those who know him, work with him and had experience of his journey towards sobriety.

2. Background

2.1 Mr. Brinkworth was first registered in December 2019.

2.2 In December 2021 Mr. Brinkworth received a warning and reprimand from the Disciplinary Committee following a conviction, in October 2020, for driving with excess alcohol.

2.3 In May 2023 Mr. Brinkworth’s registration was suspended for three months, following a persistent failure to supply details of his CPD record.

2.4 On 14 November 2023 Mr. Brinkworth was removed from the Register following a further conviction for driving with excess alcohol. At the time of his arrest he was between three and four times over the prescribed limit and had been observed to be driving erratically. The Committee which imposed the sanction of removal from the Register observed that *“the Respondent’s conduct created a clear and obvious risk of harm to others... The conduct was reckless, premeditated and occurred in the context of a previous conviction for the same offence and a previous adverse finding of, and warning from, the Disciplinary Committee”*.

- 2.5 Mr. Brinkworth told the Disciplinary Committee on that occasion that he now recognised that he was an alcoholic and recognised that this was a disease. He was attending Alcoholics Anonymous and had then completed four months sobriety. He said that he had been [redacted].
- 2.6 The Disciplinary Committee acknowledged that the Respondent had developed insight into his condition and was making every effort to ensure that there was no repetition of the circumstances which had led to his conviction. However, the Committee was satisfied that the seriousness of the offence and the Respondent's previous disciplinary history required the Respondent's removal from the Register. This course was necessary to safeguard the reputation of the profession. The Committee concluded its Determination by noting the recent progress made by the Respondent and hoped that this progress would be maintained. It issued a direction under section 15(7) of the *Farriers Registration Act 1975 (as amended)* that no application for restoration was to be made until 15 months had elapsed from the date of its direction.

3. Evidence

- 3.1 Mr. Brinkworth gave oral evidence to the Committee. He told the Committee that he had been abstinent from alcohol for fourteen months and was heavily involved with his local branch of Alcoholics Anonymous. He routinely attended two meetings a week and spoke every day to other members. Prior to this 14-month period he had been abstinent for 10 months before lapsing on one occasion when he heard some difficult news. However, he had recovered rapidly from that lapse, attended Alcoholics Anonymous again and felt that he was now strengthened in his practice of abstinence. He explained to the Committee the strategies he now adopted to facilitate continued abstinence and the support provided by Alcoholics Anonymous.
- 3.2 Mr. Brinkworth told the Committee that his removal from the Register had enabled him to develop his insight into his addiction. He considered that it had been necessary for him to reach a particularly low point in his life before he developed the insight that was now enabling him to live a sober life. He believed that he now had in place strategies, in particular better communication with others seeking sobriety, which would enable him to remain abstinent.
- 3.3 In relation to his future work, if this application was granted, Mr. Brinkworth said that he envisaged a gradual return to farriery with the help of a friend who was an Approved Training Farrier. He said that he hoped to work with him in the first instance. This would enable him to re-develop his skills. He had continued to work with horses and had kept up his trimming skills. He was still in touch with many farriers in the local area.
- 3.4 He told the Committee that he fully understood and recognised the way in which his previous conduct was liable to undermine the reputation of the profession. He was confident there would be no repetition of his previously irresponsible attitude towards his Continuing Professional Development obligations. He attributed his previous attitude to the same addiction which had brought him before the Criminal Courts in relation to driving with excess alcohol.
- 3.5 The Committee also heard evidence from person A, who had known Mr. Brinkworth from his earliest appearance at an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting. Person A was himself a long-term, successful participant in the Alcoholics Anonymous programme and was able to explain to the Committee the programme's philosophy.
- 3.6 The Committee also read a number of written testimonials which were submitted as part of Mr. Brinkworth's application.

4. The Committee's decision

- 4.1 Mr. Collis, on behalf of the Council, indicated that the Council was neutral in relation to the application. He produced helpful written submissions on the law to be applied.
- 4.2 The Committee accepted the advice of the legal assessor.
- 4.3 The matters which led to Mr. Brinkworth's removal from the Register were serious. They involved two convictions for driving with excess alcohol and a persistent failure to adhere to his responsibilities in relation to Continuing Professional Development. It seemed likely that all these matters were affected to a considerable extent by what Mr. Brinkworth accepted was his addiction to alcohol.
- 4.4 The Committee recognised that its function today was to consider whether Mr. Brinkworth was now a fit person to be admitted to the Register. If the application was to be granted the Committee would need to be satisfied that Mr. Brinkworth had taken appropriate steps to ensure, so far as that could be done, that there would be no repetition of similar conduct in future.
- 4.5 The Committee was impressed with the level of insight shown by Mr. Brinkworth and with the steps he had taken, since his removal from the Register, to address his addiction. The Committee was satisfied that he had done all that could be expected of him in this respect. Importantly, Mr. Brinkworth's testimony was supported by the credible and helpful evidence of Person A and by the letter, included within his application, from his sponsor at Alcoholics Anonymous. In this connection the Committee also had regard to the two testimonials from his managers at work. These spoke of an individual who was now well-respected, hard-working and reliable.
- 4.6 The Committee also had regard to the testimonials from farriers and other equine professionals included within Mr. Brinkworth's application. These confirmed Mr. Brinkworth's continued enthusiasm for working with horses and the skills which he brought to bear. The Committee was satisfied that there was a strong public interest in enabling a competent farrier to return to practice where that could safely be done.
- 4.7 In the light of all this evidence the Committee has concluded that Mr. Brinkworth is now a fit person to be readmitted to the Register.
- 4.8 Mr. Brinkworth's application for restoration is therefore allowed.

Disciplinary Committee

25 July 2025