



# PROJECT BEACON

## SUMMARY / UPDATE

BRITISH  
HORSERACING'S  
INDUSTRY STRATEGY



# PROJECT BEACON

Project Beacon is British racing's most in depth piece of customer research to date.

It has gathered the views of the British public in order to help the sport develop a customer strategy based on a deep understanding of our fans, both present and future.

While racing has done research in the past, this is the most substantial piece to date, it is:

- nationally representative
- incorporates both qualitative and quantitative responses
- includes a focus on both the sport's existing fanbase and the views of the sport's potential and future audience.



# PROJECT BEACON RESEARCH SUMMARY

## CONSUMER INTERVIEWS

Understanding their interaction with sports, their influences and perceptions of horseracing

## COMPETITOR AUDIT

Learning from how other sports have approached similar challenges and how they resonate with consumers

## TWO SURVEYS

Two major surveys uncovering attitudes, behaviours, motivators and barriers to engaging with horseracing.

## AUDIENCES IDENTIFIED

Identification of the target audiences for retention and growth of the sport

## 7,500 RESPONSES

Across the two surveys we have a depth and robustness of data across the UK and Ireland

## TARGET AUDIENCE INTERVIEWS

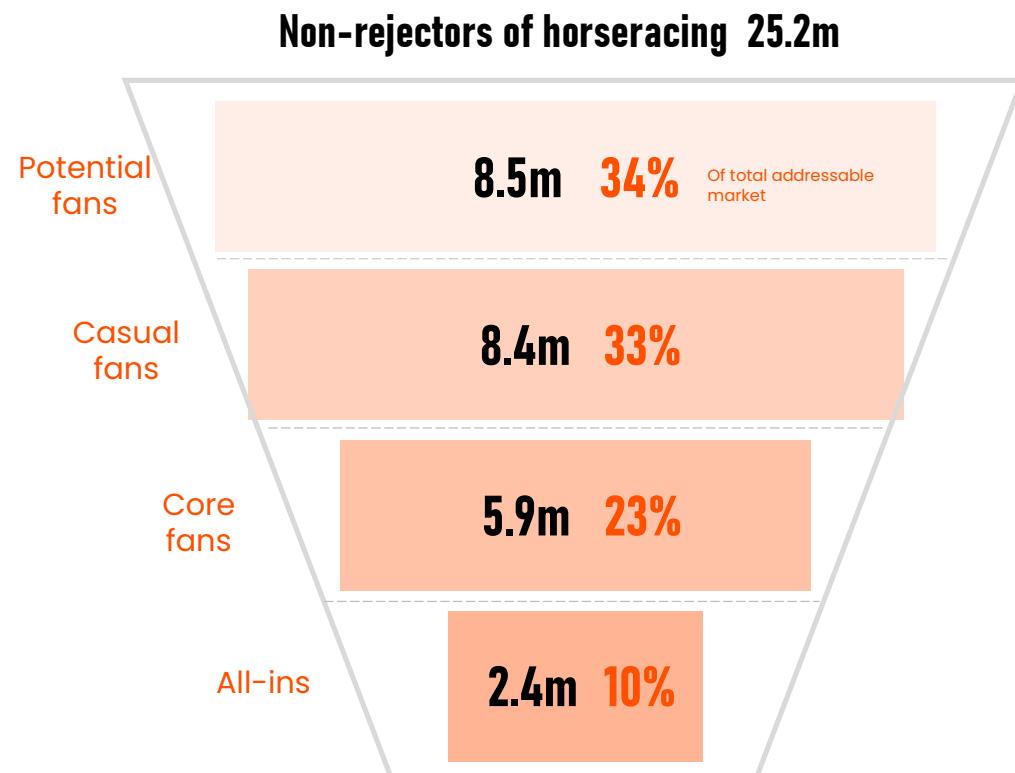
Further interviews with the growth audiences, uncovering what it would take to engage them in horseracing

# FINDINGS SUMMARY

There are 25.2 million adults in the UK and Ireland in the addressable market (non-rejectors of horseracing).

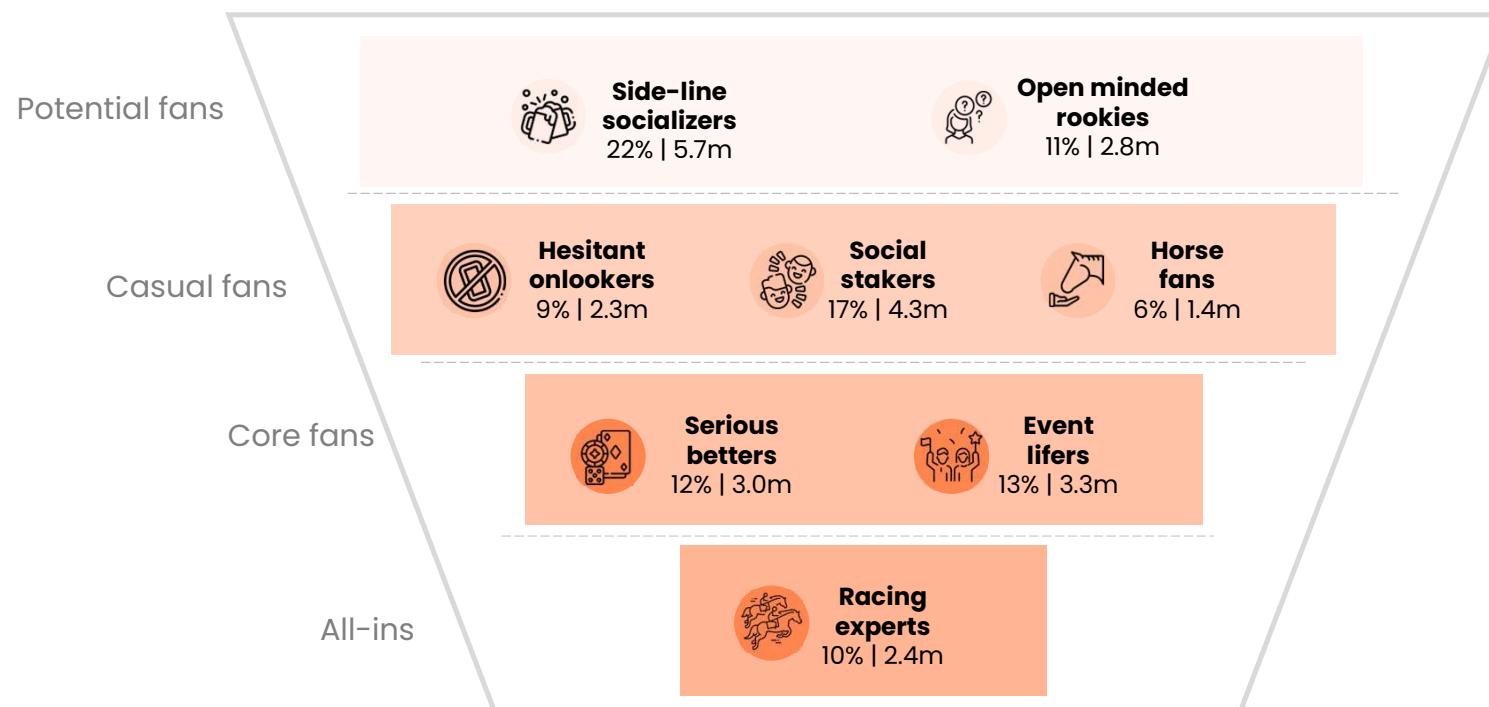
Within the addressable market there is massive potential for growth: Two thirds of the accessible market (16.9m) are potential fans (who have no current engagement with horseracing) or casual fans (who have irregular, one-off engagements with horseracing).

In order to drive growth we need to focus on these core growth audiences.



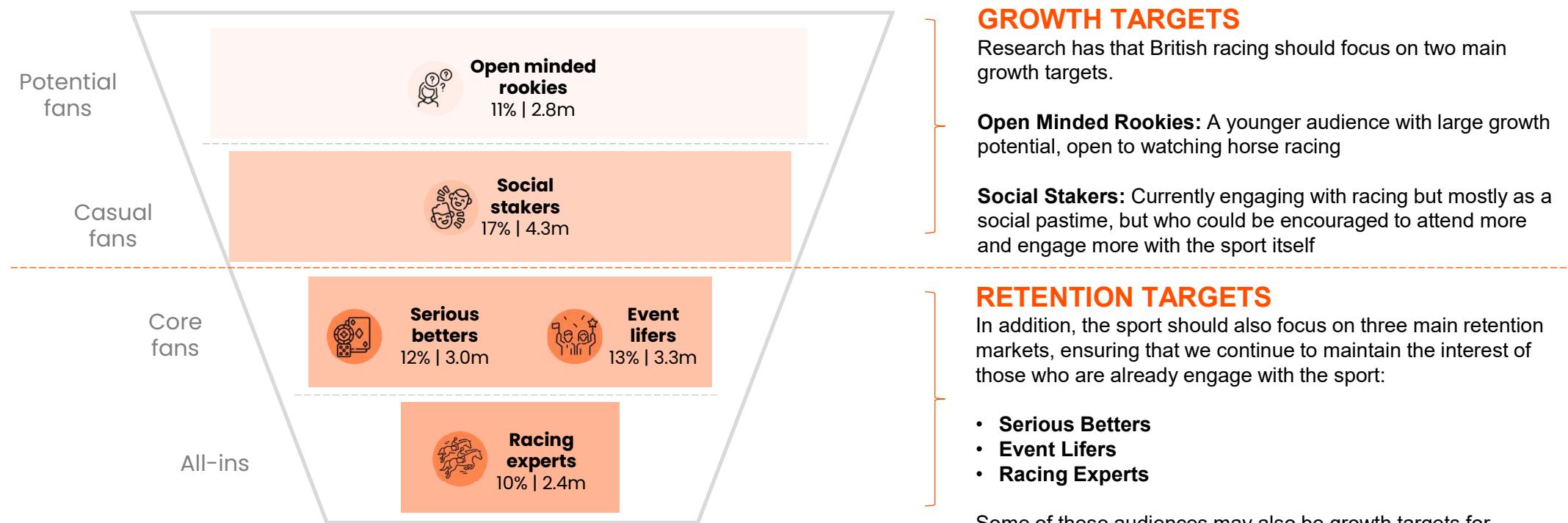
# TARGET AUDIENCES

Eight different types of customer have been identified amongst the 25.2m addressable market.



# TARGET AUDIENCES

Amongst the 8 target audiences the research has identified Growth and Retention targets for British Horse Racing

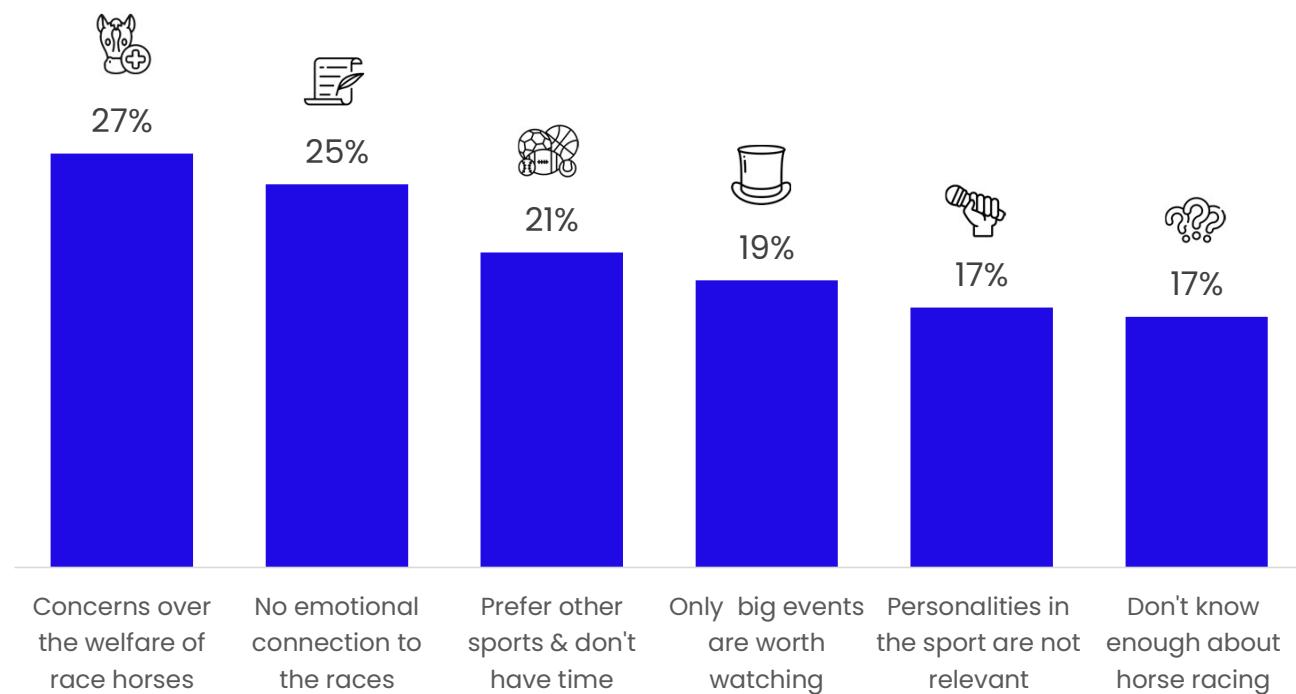


# BARRIERS TO ENGAGEMENT

The research tells us that the main barriers to engagement for potential and casual fans engaging with the sport are:

- Concerns over the welfare of horses
- Generating an emotional connection to the races
- The quality of the product

These concerns must be addressed through the development of the customer strategy.



# WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

The research has identified six core areas which the sport must focus on to drive engagement with the sport

## Address welfare concerns

Shift perceptions and grow layperson understanding of the treatment of horses

## Demystify the sport

An easy way to understand form and the sport enables more emotional investment and lead to a sense of more educated betting

## Create a race structure and narrative

A clear and simple structure to follow that fosters support and creates a narrative to follow (e.g. a league or top tier)

## Build emotional connection

Generate organic interest in the world of horse racing – the big players and personalities, as well as the drama and adrenaline of the sport

## Evolve the race day experience

Race day experiences that drive deeper engagement with the sport and cater to a wider set of audiences

## Making ownership more accessible

Make ownership feel attainable, with lower cost and easier to become involved in

From this information we are developing a consumer strategy, which is aligned to the sport's industry strategy.

# A HEAD START

Beacon has also reaffirmed some pre-existing industry insights and the importance of some industry initiatives that have given us a head start, e.g.:

- “The Going is Good” promotional campaign is in line with main motivations for engaging with racing amongst growth audiences
- The HorsePWR campaign and the inclusion of welfare messages in advertising
- GBR’s work to promote jockeys and raise their profiles. Content around jockeys is the no.1 thing that growth audiences are interested in when it comes to creating a connection with racing
- Restructuring GBR to focus more on social media
- Initiatives like Premier Racedays and a focus on the sport’s highlight events, paving the way for simpler structures, making racing more accessible and easier to follow
- Work to develop a simplified race card, the first in a pipeline of initiatives to help demystify racing and make it more accessible



# HOW THIS WILL BE DELIVERED

The industry is now organising itself to deliver against this strategy. This includes:

- Establishing a Project Beacon delivery office to provide leadership and cross industry co-ordination in the implementation of the customer strategy
- Align existing and planned work across the industry for the six areas of focus to ensure clear priorities for 2026
- Defining multi-year plan and securing the required investment
- The continuing evolution of the sport's marketing function, as part of the process of reviewing governance structure
- Identifying and further development of solutions to address the key jobs to be done and remove barriers to fan engagement

Our thanks go to the Horserace Betting Levy Board (HBLB) as principal funders of Project Beacon.

