

INSPECTION GUIDELINES FOR MEMBERS

If you are new to the inspection process and keen to learn more this article provides information.

Before applying to have your pony inspected it is worthwhile asking yourself the following questions.

- What does the inspection process involve?
- Why do I want my pony inspected?
- What do I need to do prior to the inspection?
- Is my pony ready to undergo an inspection?
- What happens on inspection day?

Inspections are a means of assessing Connemara ponies against the breed standard of excellence and the classification criteria as established by the CPS/CPBSA. Inspections provide an opportunity for owners to have their ponies assessed by a panel of inspectors endorsed by the CPBSA, who independently assess ponies at a specified venue with the State Representative or nominated Society representative in attendance. Each pony receives a score from each inspector. The inspectors' scores are collected by the State Representative and measured against the classification criteria. The pony's class status is determined from these scores.

Inspections can provide an independent assessment of stock/breeding programs for breeders.

If you are considering having a pony (ponies) inspected then it is worthwhile seeking information from the Federal Secretary and asking other CPBSA members. Ultimately the decision to have your pony inspected should be yours, based on your own needs.

If you have decided to have your pony inspected the first thing to do is to contact the Federal Secretary. The Secretary will explain the paperwork/fee required prior to the actual inspection and whether a veterinary inspection needs to be done. When these requirements have been fulfilled, the Secretary will be in contact with the State Representative who will start making arrangements for an inspection day and venue. Considerations when deciding on a day/venue are availability of inspectors and members requesting inspections, distance, the cost / availability of an appropriate venue, the time of year (weather/daylight).

Where possible an independent venue will be organised and members must be prepared to travel to the nominated venue. Rare exceptions to this could be in the case of the inspection of multiple ponies for one owner or mares with young foals.

The State Representative will contact you prior to the inspection to confirm and give you information re the venue and arrangements. If you have any concerns this is the time to mention them.

If you change your mind about having your pony inspected then the sooner your State Representative and the Federal Secretary know the better.

Prior to the inspection day it is extremely important that your pony is prepared. On the day the inspectors will spend time examining your pony, so it must be able to stand still whilst this happens. This takes some time and unless your pony has had some experience of this in the show ring it is essential that your pony has some practice. Also practise lifting your pony's foot so inspectors are able to examine the hoof structure. After all you are there to give your pony every chance and preparation is important.

Your pony should be clean, not necessarily in show condition, but in good coat and not *overweight*. Bridle wear should be clean and appropriate for control. ie stallions and colts needed to wear bitted bridles, as do mares. Fillies may be presented in leather headstalls if not educated in wearing a bit.



Closer to the day the State Representative will contact you again. On the inspection day, arrive with ample time to familiarise your pony with the surroundings and prepare it. Bring your pony's registration details, but it is only the State Representative who may need to view these. The State Representative will check your pony's details and answer any last minute queries. At the allotted time, the State Representative and inspectors will congregate with you at the inspection area. Each pony presented is given an individual inspection. The State Representative will have given each inspector their inspection sheet and the sheets have identification details such as brands, but not the name of your pony. The inspectors will check this information against the brands of your pony. As this is an independent assessment, there is no need for the inspector to know the breeding of your pony.



Filly in simple leather halter with brand clipped for identification

In some ways the inspection may seem clinical as each inspector independently moves around your pony evaluating your pony and recording their scores/observations. You may be asked questions but generally it is a very quiet time as each inspector is concentrating on your pony. Next you will be asked to walk, then trot your pony out so the inspectors can observe its action. You may be asked to repeat this as the inspectors want to give you and your pony every opportunity. Ensure your pony has been taught to lead out and can display a strong, consistent walk and trot so that the inspectors are able to effectively evaluate your pony's movement and that you are able to show your pony to its best advantage.



Walking the pony out – mare fitted with a simple snaffle bridle

At the end of the inspection the inspectors will thank you and you can head back to your float. At this time the State Representative will collect the inspection sheets to check that all the details are recorded and signed.

If there are other ponies to be inspected on the day, this process is repeated.

At the end of the inspections and/or day, the State Representative will withdraw to collate and finalise the information before informing you of your pony's inspection results and giving you your pony's inspection sheets. This is done in private. The duplicate copies of the inspection sheets from the day need to be forwarded by the State Representative to the Federal Secretary.

In the event you have any concerns, it is appropriate to discuss these with your State or Federal Representatives and the Federal Secretary.

On an inspection day there may be another CPBSA/ Action Group activity taking place. In this situation the inspection area is situated away from the activity so you and your pony have privacy and total concentration from the inspectors whilst the inspection takes place. After you have completed your inspection you are welcome to join the activity.

If you are keen to know more about the inspection process and breed standard, the CPBSA has material available such as DVDs, which have been produced to familiarise people with the breed standard and provide examples and commentary on different Connemara ponies. It is also worth developing your eye for conformation by observing ponies/horses at general equestrian events