

The Devon Horse & Pony Sanctuary

2021 NEW YEAR - NEWSLETTER



An animals eyes have
the power to speak a
great language.

-MARTIN BUBER

WELCOME TO OUR LATEST NEWSLETTER

At the time of writing we are just starting another full lockdown and as we look back on 2020 with some amazement, who could have foreseen last January that our world would change so much.

Our work at the sanctuary has continued despite the best efforts of this horrible virus and as we enter 2021 we know that we will be needed more than ever. A little later on in this letter you will see that we are going to try and do 'our bit' to not only help equines but to also help some of the people effected during this terrible year.

January and February as always are the hardest months for our wonderful team, they work very hard during the wet cold months to keep the horses and ponies in good condition and Dartmoor can be very harsh.



DEVON HORSE &
PONY SANCTUARY

But little did we know when we went into full lock down in March that we would resume our commitment to give a permanent and safe home to Police horses that retire through no fault of their own but more of that later as more Police horses are due to join us this year.

At the time of the lockdown my wife Alison and I took this as an opportunity to work at the sanctuary every day and do many of the things that we haven't had time to do. We can now really see the fruits of our labour, so a big thank you to Jack, Matt and his team, Graham the electrician, Civil Solutions (who kept delivering) and especially Nick the carpenter, for all their hard work. And of course a very big thank you to our yard manager, Micala for keeping the whole place going through the lockdown and since, with the help of the team, Ann, Ang, Julie and Holly.

A special thank you to our neighbour (Farmer) Brian Warne who allowed a new electricity supply to the Sanctuary across his land and for digging the trenches. We now have a proper office and the tack room which has been renovated, so that we can receive a small number of visitors on rainy days. It will become a great area for introducing visitors to what we do and to have a cup of tea, (the kettle is always on). We have a new loo which is a great deal nicer than the old one and thanks to many tonnes of hardcore we can now move vehicles freely without sinking up to our axles.

The stables are being extensively renovated each one benefitting from a new roof and stable doors, efficient lighting and hard surfaces outside to combat the Dartmoor mud.



Great picture of a rainbow with retired Police Horse Rio



The sanctuary is situated within the Dartmoor National Park so we have to work closely with the planning authorities which has been interesting, I say no more.

And thanks to the contribution by one of our lovely supporters we have a purpose built sick bay which hopefully we won't need too often.

The Devon Horse & Pony Sanctuary is dedicated to taking in unwanted, abandoned, neglected and cruelly treated equines and during the course of our working year, where we can, we rehabilitate and find good, loving homes for horses and ponies that can go out on permanent loan, although they can always come back to us if circumstances change. A major part of that process is home visits to make sure the home is safe and comfortable and the loanee has the right skills and knowledge to provide a good home.

Of course for most of the year this has had to stop as we are not allowed to visit other premises. Secretly we didn't mind too much as this has given us a chance to enjoy our animals.



We have been enjoying the company of our rescued 'Dartmoors' they are very affectionate and really enjoy lots of fuss and attention. Rudolph we hope will find a wonderful home. He is such a friendly chap we will be very sorry to see him go.

From the left, Rudolph, Vera and Amber in the background)

Vera has been through some kind of trauma on the moor, we don't know what it was, she was going to be shot as she was considered dangerous. I am so pleased that we saved her. We are careful around her as she can sometimes be unpredictable but we all love her, as on her good days she is very affectionate. She is too difficult to re-home and will live out her life here with us.

Amber and Josey were taken in by DHAPS when they were found by a farmer wandering the roads on the moor. It was found that their owner had died and they had been thrown out onto the moor to fend for themselves. When they were found they were terribly thin and malnourished. After being with the sanctuary for a year and with a lot of care we were able to find Josey a wonderful new home where she is very well looked after and loves her new life. Amber will stay with us until she learns to trust humans a little more.. She is certainly getting there, so we are hopeful that a loving new home will be found for her soon.



SWEET LITTLE AMBER



HAPPY JOSEY



HERBIE, VICTOR, PEACHES AND HOLLY

We also have the Shetlands who are so cheeky and funny and keep us in fits of laughter, they are real survivors. For instance, Peaches and Victor were rescued from a back street yard in Cardiff in a state of complete neglect, starving and without water, they are now the picture of health, maybe a bit too healthy around the girth. But my Mother the founder of DHAPS always said she would rather see a well fed round horse than a thin one so we have always tended to make sure they have more than adequate food, sometimes the Shetlands look a little too well, so they are on a diet in the New Year. Sadly, they will be leaving us soon to go to their fabulous new home.

FIESTA



The Oldies are doing well especially Fiesta. She had been stolen and abandoned after being used for illegal cart racing. When found, her legs were scarred from being hobbled with wire and she was covered in cigarette burns and completely traumatised. She was found at the back of a Ford garage, hence the name Fiesta.

We thought when she she first arrived all those years ago, that she was in such a state we would be lucky to keep her alive. Although old and a bit forgetful she has a happy life with her best friend Tess, 'another old soldier'. They stick by each other all day eating and sleeping side by side. Both have had serious health issues during the year but thankfully both are well now.

TESS



During June there were a number of violent confrontations in London and in one particular incident Police horses were deployed in Whitehall. The horses and officers came under a barrage of missiles. The Police horses bravely held the line but even these courageous animals can only withstand so much. One horse had a bicycle thrown under it and it's hooves got caught up in the wheels, a thug fired a flare at the poor horse from just a few feet away and it ran for it's life. The female officer was knocked from the horse and received terrible injuries.

This prompted us to start taking Police horses again at Manaton. If injured and unrideable they have very few places to go and for the officers it's a comfort to know that their faithful animal can enjoy a peaceful, safe and loving retirement.



And so began our mission to help with the rehoming of Rio - a Metropolitan Police horse who needed to be found a safe and secure home quickly, as his eyesight was failing in one eye and as such he couldn't perform his duty. His previous rider delivered him to the sanctuary. She told us how immensely brave he is and would go into any kind of situation. She was very grateful that we would look after him until the end of his days and we couldn't be happier to give this wonderful horse a new chapter in his life.



Rio arriving at Manaton



Rio meeting visitors at the Sanctuary

NEWS

In the Spring to early Summer of 2021 we hope to take give a home a to a few more Police horses. These brave animals have served their country and deserve to be looked after in their retirement. Unfortunately the Police do not have the money or resources to look after these magnificent animals in their retirement so we have to raise every penny to care for them. CAN YOU HELP US?

We are now able to offer a really good facility for sick or injured animals found on the moor or abandoned elsewhere. We couldn't do this without the help of our kind and generous supporters.

This terrible virus has made us aware that we are in a perfect place to bring some happiness into people's lives. While at the same time continue with our animal welfare work.

In particular we want to help the front line workers who have been through so much. Equines have amazing healing powers and their antics always lift your heart, so we are going to share this happy place with small numbers of visitors and groups and provide a place where people can spend time in a wonderful environment with our animals who have also been through so much.



We can only do this on a very small but personal scale, and we hope that if just for a few hours, we can offer some hope and light in people's lives in the coming years.

Thank you again to everyone that helps us, either by offering their skills, or by donation. We are only a very small charity which has been in existence since 1976 but we hope that what we do makes a difference to both equines and people.

If you would like to donate and help us to continue our work we would be most grateful.

Ways to help:

BY CHEQUE MADE OUT TO DHAPS AND SENT TO
DHAPS, THE OLD BARN, MANATON, DEVON TQ13 9UW.

OR BY PAYPAL - PLEASE USE THE EMAIL ADDRESS devonhorseandponysanctuary@gmail.com

Another way of helping us is to have a direct debit for as little as £5 a month. If we could get 100 people to sign up to this, we could help so many more horses, ponies and donkeys.

If you would like the details for our bank account please email us.

Keep safe and well and we will be back with more news soon

Roland, Alison and all at DHAPS

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"Saving just one horse will not change the world but will change the world for that one horse"