

Redwings

Horse Sanctuary



NEWSLETTER
AUTUMN 2020

Pulling together...

How we've coped during the biggest crisis in our history

For the love of our horses

...and how you've helped us through!

PLUS

Stamp out strangles

Our first ground-breaking week of action on this dreadful equine disease

Redwings to the rescue (still)

Our doors have stayed open for those who need us most

And much more inside...



During the coronavirus outbreak, Redwings has had to continually adapt and change the way we work. But one thing that hasn't changed is our responsibility and commitment to every rescued resident in our Sanctuary.

Our greatest time of need isn't over yet.

At Redwings, we will be **counting the cost** of the pandemic for many months – even years – to come. This is **one of the greatest challenges we've ever faced**, and we still need your help.

Turn to pages 18 and 19 to find out more. Meet Audrey – the face of our appeal – on pages 8 and 9.

Please donate today:

- 01508 481000
- www.redwings.org.uk
- Text **AUDREY 20** to **70085** to donate **£20**

(You can also opt to give any whole amount up to £20. All texts cost the donation amount plus a standard rate message.)

Welcome to your autumn newsletter for 2020

And what a strange few months it has been. When I wrote to you in the spring none of us could have foreseen how the world would have changed so dramatically in so short a time.

But we are where we are and I'd personally like to thank each and every one of you for sticking with us and helping us get through the first few months of what is proving to be an incredibly challenging time for Redwings, especially when we know you are all dealing with very tough circumstances yourselves. In 20 years at Redwings, I never cease to be amazed at the love and support you show for this charity and I am truly humbled once again, thank you for your kind donations and messages of support. You can read more about how we have coped through the Covid-19 pandemic in a special feature from page 10 onwards.

It seems equally strange to talk about anything un-Covid related but we do have some other news to bring you!

Firstly, we have tales (tails!) to share of new arrivals to the Sanctuary. Even during lockdown we never stopped rescuing horses and ponies that needed us and you can meet just a few of them on pages 4 and 5. Then on pages 6 and 7 you can read all about the work we've been doing outside our Sanctuary gates – digitally of course at the moment – including the very exciting Strangles Awareness Week.

And what a special Sanctuary Star we have to tell you about this time (pages 8 and 9). We love all our residents dearly of course but our cover star Audrey is one very very special pony and I know you will love reading her story, even if it is rather an emotional one!

Even though our visitor centres were closed for a very long time we still have news to bring you from each site of what they've all been up to (see pages 14 and 15) and I am also delighted to let you know that planning permission has now been granted at our Redwings SWHP site near Chepstow and we can finally proceed with developing some of the horse care facilities there.

On page 16 there's a lovely round up of some of our recently rehomed horses and ponies and on page 17 you can also meet some of our amazing fundraisers who didn't let lockdown stop them raising funds for their favourite horse sanctuary!

And finally a request for your help and support on pages 18 and 19. I'd be less than truthful if I didn't say we are facing one of the most difficult times in our history at Redwings and if you can find some way to continue your help and support over the coming days and months we would be incredibly grateful.

Thank you again and very best wishes,

Lynn Cutress
Chief Executive and Secretary

Lynn showing off her lockdown locks with her 'horsey hair twin' as part of our Mane Event! Read more on page 17!



News update...

A teeny tiny superstar!



Tiny Education Pony Moses hit the big time earlier this year when he was selected to be the new face for Spillers' Happy Hoof (a chopped fibre horse feed particularly good for native ponies like him!). The photographer (who is used to rather larger horses!) was apparently totally smitten by Moses who - after being given a bath which he wasn't quite so keen on - was a consummate professional, posing for the camera like he does it every week! We love the finished result, what a handsome boy!

You are what you eat

Equine obesity is a growing problem in the UK, with almost 30% of horses and ponies classified as overweight or obese, especially our British native breeds. So last year, we teamed up with researchers from the University of Edinburgh to conduct a trial, which involved feeding 50% barley straw and 50% hay to a group of Native ponies at Redwings who we normally struggle to keep to a healthy weight, comparing them to a group fed with a normal hay supplement over the course of a winter.



The study found that all ponies supplemented with 50% barley straw lost weight, an average of 27kg, compared to those just fed hay where only three out of 15 ponies lost weight and the rest gained weight. Their findings have been published in the Veterinary Record and it's hoped this will help more owners out there who struggle with the same issue!!

Redwings to the Rescue



to receive the new headcollars with a little helping hoof from our beloved oldest Sanctuary resident Willow.

Just before lockdown, Redwings donated new headcollars to Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service to support with animal rescues. The donation is part of an ongoing relationship between the Sanctuary and the fire service. We currently provide animal handling training to firefighters and advise on best practice when it comes to leading horses to safety.

District Commander Wil Tel and Watch Commander Mark Cragg joined us (before lockdown) at our headquarters in Norfolk

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*Our cover star is the amazing Audrey!
Read all about her on pages 8 and 9.*

Spot the difference

You may notice your newsletter mailing is a bit different this time. We've included a special feature about the current Covid crisis on pages 10-13 and if you have little ones who usually receive Mini Reds or Young Reds, you'll also find enclosed a shorter version this time designed especially for them. With reduced staff and funding at this difficult time this (temporarily) revised format has helped us to save vital costs but also hopefully ensures they don't miss out on hearing from us.



OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The Charity's purpose is to provide and promote the welfare, care and protection of horses, ponies, donkeys and mules.

Key Contact Numbers

General Enquiries
01508 481000 info@redwings.co.uk

Horse Care Advice and Welfare

01508 481008
welfare@redwings.co.uk

Visitor Helpline

0870 040 0033
www.redwings.org.uk

Address for all correspondence

Redwings Horse Sanctuary
Hapton, Norfolk NR15 1SP





Redwings to the rescue!

News of our frontline work from around the UK

Road to recovery for Matilda



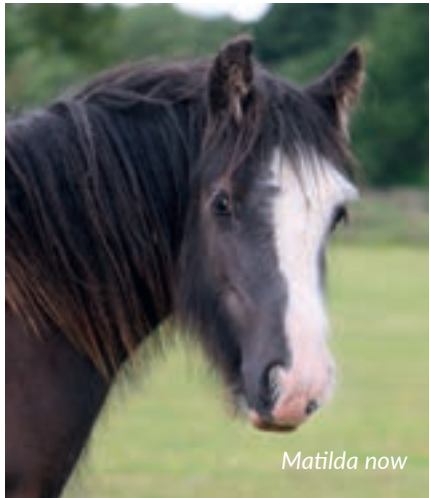
Emaciated and covered in lice, little Matilda was brought into the Sanctuary

in March, just as the lockdown began. The six-month-old cob cross was discovered in a field in South Norfolk. When no owner could be found, she was removed with the help of the Police and the RSPCA and taken straight to our specialist quarantine facility.

Happily, after treatment for a heavy worm burden and inflammation, she started to turn the corner and was moved to our headquarters to continue her recovery. Matilda is now at a healthy weight and has been befriended by super foster mum Mildred, who you may remember helped to care for young pony Fig who was rescued in April last year.



Mildred and Matilda



Matilda now

Ex-military horses put their hooves up at Redwings!

Shortly before the UK celebrated the 75th anniversary of VE Day, we welcomed Blenheim, Casanova, Kenny, Bertie and Rourke into the Sanctuary. Many of them have served long distinguished careers in the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment, taking part in state ceremonial occasions and even standing guard outside Buckingham Palace.

Handsome Blenheim, 24, led a particularly varied career spanning 20 years, which included representing



Blenheim at work



Bertie at Redwings

the Life Guards (the senior regiment of the British Army) in showjumping at the Royal Windsor Horse Show and escorting the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge on their wedding day! With some of the group starting to have some health issues after all that hard work, we offered them a home where they could put their hooves up and receive the ongoing care they would need. Welcome to you all!

Goodnight Nightingale

In April, we assisted the RSPCA in the rescue of an emaciated and partially



blind pony who had been left for dead in a Norfolk nature reserve. Poor Nightingale, estimated to be aged between 10 and 15, was also suffering from diarrhoea and a sinus infection which had caused discharge from her nose.

Our Senior Field Officer, along with one of our vets and members of our rescue team, used pen sections to carefully catch Nightingale, who was very scared, and she was taken into the care of the RSPCA for urgent veterinary treatment. If no owner could be traced for Nightingale, we had pledged her a safe, forever home at the Sanctuary, but she was simply not strong enough to pull through her treatment and was very sadly put to sleep shortly after her rescue.

RIP sweet Nightingale.



Redwings helps with large-scale round-up

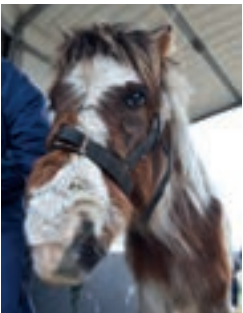
Our rescue team joined the RSPCA and fellow equine welfare charities to carry out a large-scale round-up of 43 horses in Wellingborough in February.

The horses were living on fields that were becoming increasingly flooded due to the series of storms that hit the UK at the start of the year. After

unsuccessful attempts to locate the horses' owners, plans for their safe removal were put into action.

We sent six members of staff and 30 pen sections to help coax the horses across the flooded fields. Once safe, they were taken into the care of fellow welfare charities including the RSPCA.

Partnership working saves two ponies



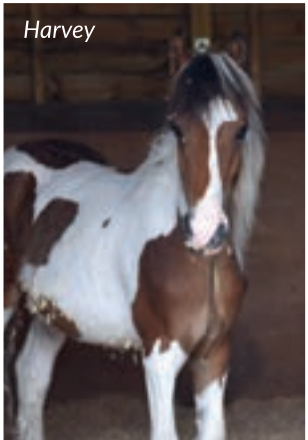
At the start of the year we were alerted to two ponies living on Gelligaer Common, in south Wales, who were in a worrying condition. A community group called Hungry Herds, made up of volunteers who provide hay for the feral ponies on the Common, contacted us with their concerns.

Our Head of Welfare and vet Nic de Brauwere travelled to the area and, alongside representatives from RSPCA Cymru, Caerphilly Borough Council and other welfare organisations, managed

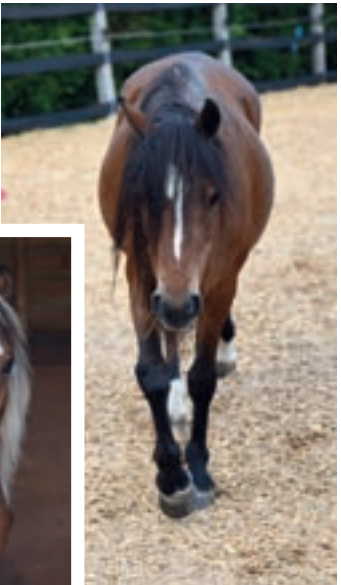
to locate and safely round-up the ponies over two operations.

Heidi, who is about 11 years old, and Harvey, who was just nine months old when rescued, were both extremely thin and were taken into RSPCA care for immediate treatment. Neither were microchipped and with no owners coming forward to claim them, we decided to give them a new home with us.

As soon as they were healthy enough to travel, they were moved to our specialist quarantine facility in Norfolk to begin their new lives at the Sanctuary.



Harvey



Heidi

Ponies pay tribute to the NHS

Just before the lockdown began, we offered a home to 19 ponies who are part of an ongoing prosecution case. Although we're unable to tell their story while legal proceedings continue, we thought you'd love to know that we named them all after NHS hospitals, in tribute to our fantastic frontline health and care workers. So, one day, we look forward to properly introducing you to Chelsea, Teddington, Radcliffe, Alexandra and their friends.

A few weeks later, we welcomed a group of 14 horses who are part of another active welfare case. The horses were being cared for by the RSPCA but when it became clear they would need specialist ongoing care, we offered to help. Happily, they've all settled well at the Sanctuary. These groups are just two examples of the many horses and ponies living at the Sanctuary whose stories we're unable to tell just yet. If you can, please consider making a donation so we can offer a safe and loving home for these and many other new arrivals while justice is being sought for their past ordeals.

Bright and brilliant despite Covid!

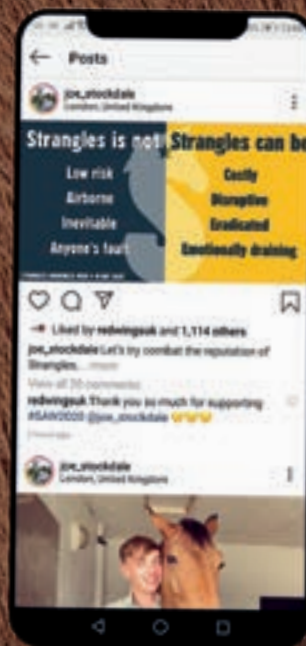
Redwings coordinated the first national awareness week to focus attention on the issue of strangles between 4th – 10th May.



This week of action was created by a unique alliance between leading equine welfare organisations, research institutions and labs who educate horse owners on the prevention of this horrible disease. Strangles is the most common infectious disease in horses and one that Redwings has a wealth of experience in preventing and eradicating. Although it's not deadly in the majority of cases, it can cause real suffering (hence its name). The contagious nature of the disease means owners not only have the worry of their sick horse but also how to prevent its

spread to other horses. From bitter recent experience we all know that being open is vitally important to help track and trace possible spread of infectious diseases but we know that many horse owners worry about telling others on their yard about strangles – 65% according to our survey in 2016 – and just 44% said they would take immediate precautions if they thought their horse may have been exposed. So, the awareness week aimed to tackle the disease's nasty reputation and promote support and encouragement for anyone who may find their horse affected. Although we were not able

to run any physical events during the week due to Covid-19, together all the organisations involved turned our social media channels a bright and brilliant yellow in an effort to raise awareness and encourage support for people who may have to care for horses with this highly contagious disease. We shared myths and facts about the disease and we encouraged horse owners to share their stories in a bid to get rid of some of the stigma that surrounds it. We've estimated that the week reached at least **half a million people** with stories, facts and educational content including a mention from showjumper Joe Stockdale! Thank you to everyone who helped make it a real success!



New horse behaviour leaflet gives horses a helping hand

We have produced a brand-new guidance leaflet to help horse owners outside the Sanctuary avoid behaviour problems. From pulling and barging to kicking and rearing, behaviour problems can sadly ruin a relationship between a horse and human and mean they are sold on or even put to sleep if they can't be handled safely.

Many behavioural issues can be resolved if they are happy in their home environment. This means making sure their instinctual needs are being met for food, friends and freedom

(the three Fs). Even happy horses learn unhelpful habits, so we need to be reading the subtle cues that horses give us. This resource is a brief introduction to horse behaviour and includes a 'handy' checklist to help horses LEARN safely and ethically when those stress levels rise. The resource is free to download and available on our website www.redwings.org.uk.



Billy

Our virtual Horse Fair competition celebrated healthy and happy horses!



Yorkie Lad

Best At Appleby 2020

Appleby Horse Fair is renowned as Europe's largest horse fair and is an important historic pilgrimage for many Gypsy and Traveller horse owners. The Fair has significant cultural importance as a holiday and annual meeting place with the horses at the heart of the event which attracts up to 40,000 people over the weekend. This year it was cancelled due to coronavirus for only the second time in its 250-year history.

For more than ten years, Redwings has been attending the Fair as part of a multi-agency team led by the RSPCA which helps horses during the event as well as offering education to fairgoers on equine welfare. To encourage more interaction and knowledge sharing between vets and horse owners at the Fair we have recently started to run a regular competition in which vets offer welfare awards to those owners whose horses are in excellent condition, and this has created opportunities for hundreds of conversations about horse welfare and what good welfare looks like.

With support of the Traditional Gypsy Cob Breed Association, we took the competition online this year and created a virtual competition for horse owners who would have been going to the Fair. Just like the real event, Redwings Welfare Vet Nicola Berryman was tasked to choose a winner who met her horse health, happiness and horsemanship criteria.

The virtual competition attracted more than 150 entries as owners shared images of their beloved horses and gave reasons why they should be crowned Best at Appleby 2020 – in fact we had so many we had to close the competition early to give us time to judge them

all! The competition also generated thousands of views and comments, all supporting examples of healthy, happy horses. Winner of the Vet's Choice award said: 'I'm so very proud of Billy and my Dad [who had recently passed], we will treasure Billy for the rest of his days'.

The competition also created the perfect chance to share awareness-raising films made with fairgoers last year on issues such as the changes to the microchipping legislation, as well as to promote the work of the equine welfare charities to the horse fair audience.

To find out more about the work of Redwings at Appleby Horse Fair, read our blog or watch the films on our YouTube channel.

I'm so very proud of Billy and my Dad (who had recently passed), we will treasure Billy for the rest of his days

Winner of the Vet's Choice award



A real Sanctuary Star!

Even in the most challenging days of the lockdown, our rescued residents helped to put a smile on our faces and remind us of why we love doing what we do.

The moment that Horse Hospital patient Audrey was finally discharged from veterinary care and was able to share a field with her new friends for the first time in five years was one we will never forget.

Her inspiring story really highlights the amazing commitment our vets and carers give to every horse that comes through our doors to provide them with the happy and healthy new lives they so deserve – and this story was one that attracted the attention of the media across the country!

Ten-year-old cob cross Audrey first took up residence at our Horse Hospital in Norfolk in 2015 so she could receive intensive treatment for the serious hoof infection canker.

A year later, having exhausted all options including topical treatments and even surgery, it was agreed that Audrey would be given a final summer to enjoy some peaceful turn-out and then it was likely she would have to be put to sleep due to the impact her condition was having on her quality of life. As there was a risk that her canker could be contagious, she was given her own stable and special care paddock at the Hospital, between which she split her time. During this time, her hooves were dressed, treated with iodine and put into protective boots every day. Then, to the vet team's surprise, her condition started to stabilise.

Vet Sarah Prior, who is based at our Horse Hospital, said: "We were very sad that she was on her own as we like all the horses to be in herds where they can exhibit their natural behaviours, but she seemed so content that it became difficult to justify putting her to sleep.

"If she had been miserable, then it probably would have been another story, but we decided to keep monitoring her and that's what we continued to do for the next few years."

With the help of our Behaviour specialists, our vet nurses helped Audrey stay as relaxed as possible during her hospital stay and provided ideas for enrichment activities.

Then, in 2019, to everyone's amazement the canker looked like it was starting to clear up. Over the next year, our vets slowly began to withdraw from dressing Audrey's hooves and started looking for some suitable friends for her.

In March this year they were finally able to introduce her to fellow ponies Clarence and Fleetwood and bid her an emotional farewell from the Hospital. A wonderful video of Audrey excitedly galloping around her new paddock with her new friends was shared across many news websites and has been viewed over 2,300 times on our YouTube channel. It certainly put a lump in all our throats! We can't wait to share with you what she does next!

To find out how you can help us help ponies in need of special care, just like Audrey, please turn to pages 18 and 19.



for Audrey!

"Seeing Audrey out in a paddock, making new friends, has brought a tear to quite a few people's eyes! We honestly thought she may never leave the Hospital as that was the only way we could keep on top of this terrible infection she had – she kind of became the Hospital mascot! Especially in the times we're living in right now, knowing – however long it's taken – that we've been able to turn her life around and to see her so happy, has been an incredible lift for everyone."

Sarah Prior, Veterinary Surgeon

"Audrey is now discovering what it means to be part of a herd and how to interact with her friends. She's settled in really well but she hasn't forgotten us – she's very loving with us and still walks over for her cuddles. I'm so glad we can offer her a home for life and continue to give her the care she needs for as long as she needs it."

Talita Arantes, Hapton Farm Manager, who helped Audrey integrate into her new herd

"To dedicate five years to treating a pony, with no real end date in sight at one point, shows the incredible extra mile our teams go to, to ensure our rescued horses enjoy the happy lives they deserve, often after such terrible neglect. I'm going to miss seeing Audrey in her special paddock outside our offices every day, but I can't wait to hear about her new life with her friends!"

Lynn Cutress, Chief Executive

"Audrey has been my most treasured patient from the moment she came into the Sanctuary, probably because I felt so sorry for her due to the pain and discomfort she was in and I was determined to help her. Audrey and I have been on an emotional journey from recovering from her surgeries and the rollercoaster of progress and relapse, but we were not alone in this as the whole team played a part in her treatment including the hospital staff who kept her bed clean and offered enrichment for her.

"Audrey proved in her behavioural training how incredibly intelligent she is and I taught her a couple of commands that were just for fun too. I enjoyed her morning greeting of a whicker, she would definitely recognise my voice and I would often stop to have a little 'Aud' time whenever possible, including her 'spa days'."

Lou Gedge, Nursing Team Leader



Audrey is introduced to her new friends Clarence and Fleetwood



Audrey with vet nurse Lou Gedge in her special care paddock

The Outbreak – Coping in a Crisis

The last few months have been a rollercoaster ride for everyone in the UK and across the world. Our Chief Executive, Lynn Cutress, reflects on the challenges we've faced here at Redwings during this incredibly difficult time.



In October I will hit a major milestone. It will be the anniversary of when I started at Redwings 20 years ago – although the fizz is currently on hold as it turns out it's not quite the right time to celebrate. However, I'm not alone in longevity at this wonderful charity. Amongst our senior management team and Board we have several members of staff who have been with us more than 10 years and some, like me, have worked here for more than 20 years including two of our most eminent Veterinary Surgeons, Nic and Nicky. It's a real case of strength in depth, and that experience has been invaluable over recent months. Part of my role at Redwings as Chief Executive means I have always had to present to our Board of Trustees the

biggest risks to the organisation. And over the years sadly but inevitably some of those risks have come to pass. We've seen an outbreak of Strangles at Redwings (a highly infectious equine disease), we've dealt with a very serious recession which saw a huge drop in income across the charity sector, we've seen (rightly in my view) major changes to the governance of charities following the Olive Cooke affair and of course for Redwings in particular we have dealt with many very upsetting and sometimes devastating rescue cases. However, I never could have conceived of having to deal with a human pandemic on such a scale or that it would have such an impact on our organisation or the wider world. We have had to close visitor centres and adapt our working practices. We've had to cancel our attendance at events across the country and even our own Show. Our rehoming programme had to be put on hold. We've seen staff furloughed and even some self-isolating although thank goodness we have remained Covid-free throughout. I know there are many out there that haven't been so fortunate in many ways and our thoughts are with all those families that have been affected by



Lynn and Apricot

these tragic events and all those businesses and charitable organisations who are facing challenging times as a result. We are definitely not out of the woods and will almost certainly be facing a funding deficit over the next year if not five years. However, I have to say I am so proud of the way the team has pulled together at this difficult time and absolutely amazed at the way you, our fantastic supporters, have stepped up to help us as you can read on these pages. Without you we would be facing an even bigger mountain to climb right now. Thank you to you all.



Lynn and Trustees at the opening of Aylsham in 2013



The Corona Chronicles

At the start of the outbreak we began a blog called the Corona Chronicles to try and keep everyone up to date on what changes we were making and how the outbreak was affecting us. Little did we know we'd be writing 20 editions of it!

Here are just some of the ways we had to change at Redwings to cope with the crisis. You can read every instalment of the Corona Chronicles, written by Press and Media Manager Steph Callen, on our website www.redwings.org.uk.

Our amazing carers had to really be flexible in the way they worked during this time. Some of the measures introduced included disinfecting vehicles and shared spaces (such as tea huts!), keeping farm vehicles well ventilated, avoiding sharing equipment such as radios and washing PPE such as hats and boots regularly, on top of frequent hand washing and adhering to social distancing. Where social distancing was not possible, our carers and the vet team were encouraged to create 'social bubbles' and work in pairs or small groups to cut down on the amount of interactions with others.

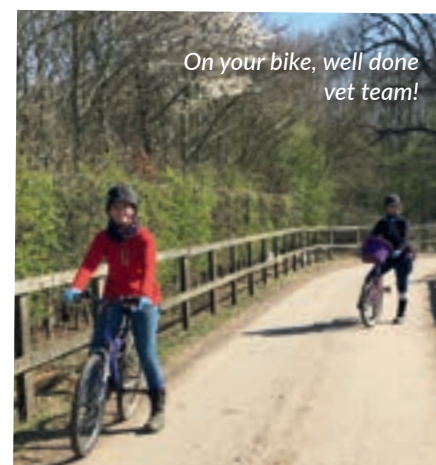
In line with industry guidance, our in-house vets were only able to undertake emergency work and any essential, regular treatments our horses needed to maintain their health. Where possible, veterinary staff were working "on-call" from home and were being supplied with CPD to complete during any downtime. As the rules were relaxed they were gradually able to increase the number and type of treatments they could do but with 1,500 residents to care for that left quite a significant backlog as you can imagine.



Baby Face Nelson learning about hand washing etiquette



Disinfecting everything in sight!



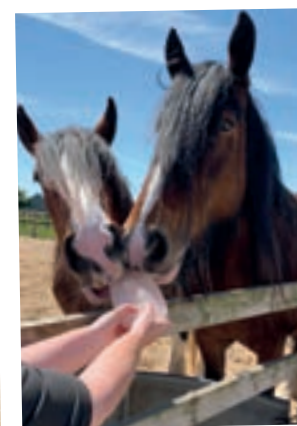
On your bike, well done vet team!

Our vet nurses also came up with an inventive way to ensure they practised social distancing – they started using push bikes! Our Horse Hospital, for example, sits in a site that is 350 acres in size so our vets and nurses often clock up the miles travelling back and forth to see their patients. By cycling, they were cutting down on car sharing and helping the environment at the same time!

Elsewhere we were sadly forced to close our visitor centres from 20th March and we also had to cease all rehoming operations for a number of weeks which again put extra pressure on all the teams and our Sanctuary numbers. The closure of the visitor centres also meant all events like the Adoption Star birthday parties had to be cancelled.

On the frontline of course, welfare concerns don't stop during a pandemic, so our welfare line remained open and our Field Officers continued to investigate any reports where possible. In fact, in the period from March to the end of July we brought in 70+ horses to the Sanctuary including Matilda and Heidi and Harvey who you can read about on pages 4 and 5.

Throughout it all our staff stayed incredibly positive and a huge thank you to them all. They even got stuck in to some of the stranger requirements our new position put us all in, from filming little Raven the pony 'clapping for carers' on a Thursday night, to conducting virtual 'visits' to their centres and even carrying out socially distanced birthday parties for our Adoption Stars behind the scenes! Well we couldn't have them missing out on their cake now, could we?



Ice cube treats for the horses during a very hot spell of weather



Lockdown baby boom

Seven adorable foals have been born at our Norfolk sites since the outbreak began, which really helped to raise the spirits of our equine carers as they worked hard to ensure our 1,500 rescued horses and donkeys remained well cared for at this challenging time.

Six of the new arrivals were born to one group of rescued horses, who were brought into the safety of the Sanctuary last year while pregnant. In true Redwings tradition, the horses were named after distinct themes – in this case, money or currency and famous artists – and so the names of their foals have also followed suit. Now, little Lira, Rupee, Peseta, Ruble, Wonga and Warhol are happily taking their first tentative steps into the world together, but their arrivals have not been without drama!

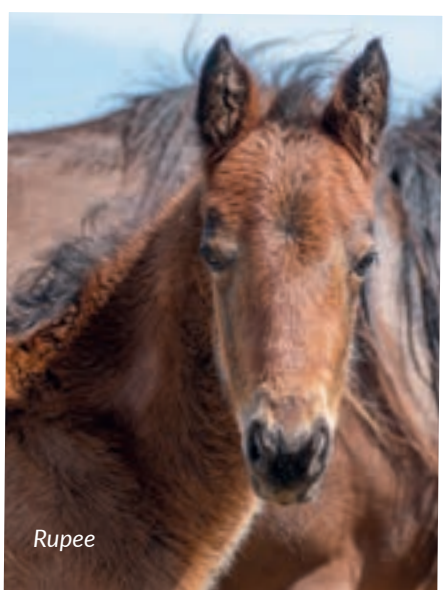
Nicola Berryman, Welfare Veterinary Surgeon, said: "We always keep a close eye on any foals born at the Sanctuary, especially as their mums have often lived through some tough ordeals and their offspring sometimes need extra support. This group of horses posed the additional challenge of being completely unhandled so we had to keep our interventions to a minimum to avoid causing any unnecessary distress, but luckily most of them have been absolutely fine.

"We had a little drama with Wonga who, having been born in the middle of the night, decided to use her first steps to squeeze herself under the fence and explore the next door paddock where she was discovered in the morning. We knew straightaway we had a cheeky one on our hands!"

Meanwhile, little Whirl was born to mum Viennese - from a group named after biscuits! The pair were rushed into our Horse Hospital shortly after his birth when it became clear that Whirl was disorientated and struggling to suckle, and so was not receiving his all-important first milk, full of essential immune-boosting antibodies. Over the next few hours, the vet team carefully collected milk from Viennese's udder and hand fed Whirl to ensure he did not miss out on this vital goodness which will help protect him from any infections in his early days.

Whirl is now suckling happily from his mum and the pair enjoyed some peaceful time at the Horse Hospital together so they could continue bonding before they returned to their field.

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Supporting the Sanctuary from your sofa

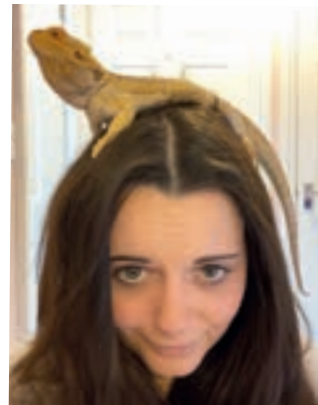
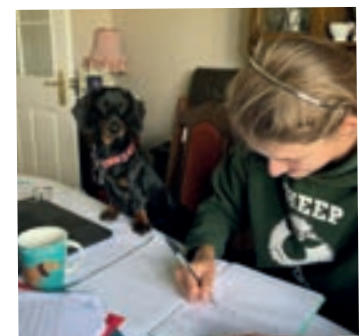
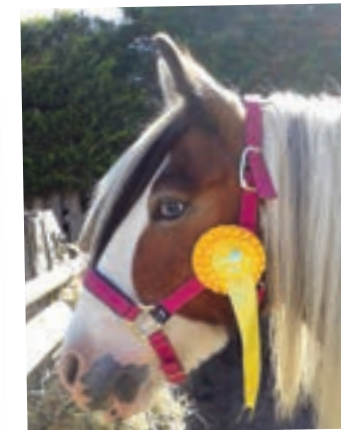
All this strangeness during the Covid-19 pandemic has forced a great deal of innovation across the country and Redwings was no exception! With donations down and our visitor centres closed, not to mention the events that had been cancelled and the financial pressures as people across the UK faced job furlough or redundancies, we were and still are facing some very difficult times ahead. We had to find ways to raise funds and also to ensure that you, our wonderful supporters, could keep in touch with us and the horses during this crisis.

Firstly, we made sure our social media was buzzing with photos and videos from the Sanctuary, especially with content that would lift people's spirits such as our daily #HoovesofHappiness posts.

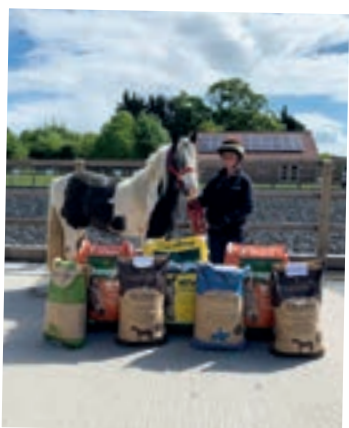
We also set up the Young Reds at Home Online Academy to help all those parents facing weeks at home with their little ones! This is still available on our website and includes colouring sheets, quizzes and activities all about horses and donkeys - and Redwings of course! There are even certificates to collect along the way.

We set up some online fundraisers, notably the Redwings Show Online which was created after we had to cancel our physical Show this year. The online 'Show', which ran through JustGiving, consisted of a number of fun dog, pet and horse classes including Handsomest Gelding and Prettiest Mare, Waggiest Tail, Best Working from Home Buddy and Pet who looks most like their Owner...as well as the Gymkhana in your Garden challenge which made for very entertaining viewing! It ran for two weeks and in that time we received well over 600 class entries and raised more than £2,000 for Redwings. Huge thanks to everyone that took part, it was so popular that we are already thinking about more online Shows in future!

Despite the incredibly challenging times we've seen some amazing support all round. From the generous supporter who ordered a surprise donation of 22 bags of feed which turned up at Redwings HQ, to companies like Spillers, Equilibrium Products



and SEIB who have given donations of feed or funds, to Brakes Foodservice and a lovely local farmer who donated a load of carrots and apples for the horses, and of course to you our wonderful supporters who have already responded to our coronavirus appeal in huge numbers. Thank you all for your kindness it really is greatly appreciated!



If you feel able to support us through this time please turn to pages 18 and 19 to find out how.

News from around the Sanctuary – 'Your Redwings'

With our centres shut to visitors for most of the Summer because of Covid-19, here is just a snapshot of what has been going on before lockdown and behind closed doors!



Ada Cole

Essex,
EN9 2DH

REDWINGS

The Nation's Toast

On Friday 8th May, the nation came together to commemorate the 75th anniversary of VE Day. At 3pm across the country, people raised their glasses in a toast to remember the heroes of World War Two and across our Redwings sites staff and equines got

together to raise their own tea mugs and water buckets too! Even Ada Cole Adoption Stars Zippy and Elvis couldn't resist taking part and having a (pretend!) cup of tea in their own Adoption Star mugs with their carers! Cheers!



Long-eared arrivals!

Redwings Ada Cole have welcomed three new donkeys to the herd this year! Jed, Snowy and Solomon arrived at Redwings in December 2019 following the closure of the Sussex Horse Rescue Trust. The three boys quickly settled into life at the Sanctuary and it wasn't long before they

made plenty of new four-legged friends. The three long-eared residents initially got to know their new pals over the paddock fence, before integrating with their new herd, which includes Adoption Star Dotty, retired Adoption Star Del Boy and his best friend Rodney!

REDWINGS

Aylsham

North Norfolk,
NR11 6UE

REDWINGS

A generous donation from CT Baker Group

As part of their 250th anniversary celebrations, the staff of CT Bakers were asked to select 12 North Norfolk charities and community groups to donate £250 to, and we were delighted to hear that CT Baker Budgens of Aylsham nominated Redwings Aylsham to receive their donation! Shane Woolston, CT Baker Budgens of Aylsham Store Manager, said: "Many

of the team have spent time with their families at Redwings Aylsham and wanted to do something to help support the great work they do to care for the horses".

Their generous donation could help fund five veterinary health checks for new arrivals to the Sanctuary, or even pay for enough hay to feed almost 20 horses for a whole month!



REDWINGS

Caldecott

Gt. Yarmouth,
NR31 9EY

WELCOME

Birthdays in Lockdown

Our Adoption Stars at Redwings Caldecott, like many of our supporters, have been celebrating their birthdays in lockdown this year. Normally visitors and adopters would be invited to join their four-legged friend for a big birthday party, where the Adoption Stars get to show off their freshly groomed locks during a special birthday parade, play party games and there's even a cake

for our birthday stars to tuck into! But this year our Adoption Stars, including Victoria and Muffin the mule (pictured here), have celebrated with their carers, who have spoiled them with grooms, plenty of cuddles, and, of course, their birthday cakes, which, as you can tell - they rather enjoyed. Muffin, Victoria and the rest of the Adoption Stars can't wait to celebrate with you next year!



Mountains

Scotland,
DD8 3SQ

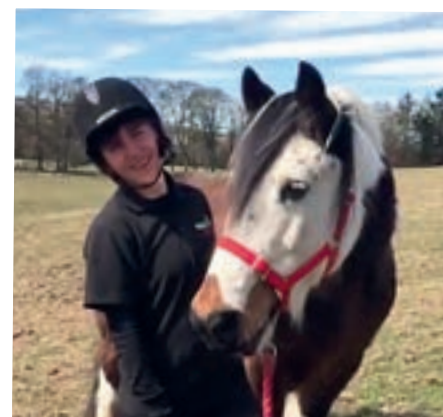
REDWINGS

Loneliness Awareness Week

Loneliness Awareness Week runs from 15th - 21st June and this year we partnered up with a local organisation that specialises in combating loneliness during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Each day we introduced our supporters on social media to a video of one of our Redwings Mountains team and their

favourite resident, highlighting the importance of friendship for both humans and horses. We also shared some links to online activities people could get involved with at home to help them feel part of our Redwings community while our visitor centres were closed. There's no substitute for a good pony cuddle of course!



Oxhill

Warwickshire,
CV35 0RP

REDWINGS

St John's Priory School visit

Earlier in the year, members of the Equestrian Club at St John's Priory School in Banbury paid a visit to Redwings Oxhill. The children were given a guided tour of the centre and learnt how we care for our rescued horses and donkeys; in particular they discovered how we encourage horses onto our weighbridge and what we do if a horse is too nervous to step on it.

They all had such a wonderful time that they decided to sponsor Adoption Star Rumpel too! Sarah Harrison, a teacher at St John's Priory School who takes the children to Equestrian Club, said: "The children had a fabulous visit to Redwings Horse Sanctuary. Wendy (Redwings Oxhill team member) was very knowledgeable about the horses and shared their stories with enthusiasm and compassion with the children."

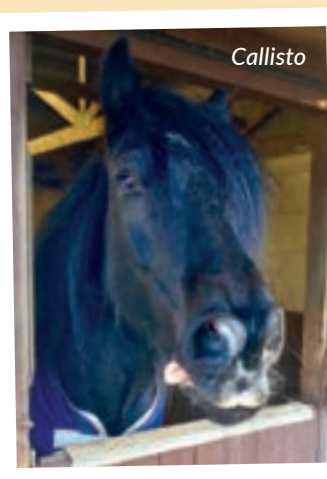


A new home for Brina

Whilst we had to pause our rehoming operations during the earlier stages of the coronavirus lockdown measures, as restrictions were lifted Welsh cross Brina was the first pony to be rehomed using our new virtual home checks and trials. Brina was one of seven ponies who were rescued from Gelligaer Common in Wales in 2016. Pressures on the Common from indiscriminate breeding, unscrupulous owners abandoning their horses, and adverse weather meant the ponies were in poor condition and in need of help. But happily, Brina has been now rehomed as an unbacked project and her new Guardian family are proud to report: "She's settling really well. Everything is being done very slowly to keep things in her comfort zone, but we are also introducing new things to challenge her to learn."

"Her field companion is Isabella, our falabella who's been with us for 14 years and turned 18 last week! Isabella has been on Blue Peter so she's a little bit famous! Brina is also often found rubbing noses and whinnying at her neighbour Teddy too, and she nickers at the whole family when we walk past her field which is so lovely."

Guardian Tracey, and her daughter Tuesday, hope to take Brina showing next year and then begin the process of backing her for younger riders.



Callisto



Blade

All-important companions!

Lots of the ponies who find homes through the Redwings Guardianship Scheme are rehomed as non-ridden companions, as they may be unsuitable for ridden work. As companion ponies they have vital roles in their new homes as friends for other horses, and their Guardians too! Meet Blade and Callisto...

Native cross Blade joined his Guardian family in 2018 as a companion for their pony Toddy. Guardian Tasha proudly explained: "Within hours of Blade being introduced to Toddy, Toddy was a completely different pony and much calmer and easier to handle. Blade has also struck up a partnership with my daughter Jess, who had previously been anxious around ponies. She has so much fun grooming him and playing games with

him. He has become part of our family, and knowing we are helping Redwings, even in a small way, is so rewarding."

Meanwhile, at 15.3hh Cob cross Callisto is perhaps not the typical horse that people would think of as a non-ridden companion, but he was the perfect fit for his Guardian Charlie who wanted a companion for her ex-racehorse Tara.

"I knew I didn't have time to ride two, but I wanted another horse so that Tara could live out more, with company. It made sense that it would be a larger horse that would be more compatible with Tara's needs, and Callisto fit the bill perfectly. He is known affectionately as the BFG (Big Friendly Giant) and he is such a funny, charismatic chap!"

And finally... Redwings Smartie is on the run for charity!

Like many of us, Redwings Smartie and his Guardian Jen decided lockdown was the perfect time to dust off their running shoes (or hooves!). The pair started running together as an opportunity to keep Smartie fit, and then Jen decided to keep them on track she would set the challenge that they would run (or trot!) the distance of two marathons over a period of six weeks, finishing at Redwings Aylsham as a special tribute to him being a Redwings pony. Jen credits Smartie, who she rehomed in 2011, with helping her daughter Jessica with her mental health problems when she was younger, and combined with the surge in demand for mental health support during the pandemic, she decided she would use



Jen and Smartie

their fitness challenge as an opportunity to raise money for the mental health charity MIND. So far they have raised more than £250 – we're so proud of this super pair!

Super Supporters!

We want to say a special thank you to all those supporters who have gone 'the extra mile' to help fundraise for us during the coronavirus outbreak. Every penny of your fundraising makes a difference as we all pull together to help our horses and donkeys. If you are inspired by the stories below, why not organise your own fundraising event for Redwings? Visit www.redwings.org.uk for more information or email fundraising@redwings.co.uk for tips on getting started. Thank you.



Inspiring young Guardians

First up, big thanks to Poppy and Millie, aged eight, who are the Guardians of Redwings Strawberry Shortcake. Together with their friends Claudia and Sophie, the girls wanted to raise money to support charities during the coronavirus outbreak.

Before their school closed as part of the lockdown measures, they gave a speech in assembly to explain that they wanted to raise money for those who might be struggling, including Redwings to help us continue caring for our rescued horses and donkeys.

Poppy, Millie and their friends collected donations from fellow pupils and their families, raising an amazing £100! The donations will be split between Redwings and a local foodbank. Thank you, girls, for your fantastic fundraising!

Garden fundraising!

Many of you have taken on your own 'stay at home' fundraising challenges, including those who took part in our Redwings Show Online. We would like to say a special thank you to Katie Magill and her family, who raised £135 for Redwings with their '2.6 challenge' on JustGiving. Whilst remaining at home due to lockdown measures, they

completed a 2.6km walk in their own garden. Katie said: "My mum and sister both work at Redwings Ada Cole and I used to have my own horse, so Redwings is a charity that we wanted to support, especially during this difficult time."

To set up your own online fundraising page for Redwings, visit www.justgiving.com/redwingshs



The Mane Event

donate the cost of a haircut. In return, and for a bit of fun, we matched your hairdo with one of our equine friends. Nearly 100 of you of you have participated so far, raising an amazing £1,700 to help us care for our horse residents during the

pandemic. It even got as far as Fox News in the States! The Mane Event is still running so if you haven't paid a visit to Sampson's Salon yet, pop along to our JustGiving page www.justgiving.com/campaign/the-mane-event and book an appointment today to see who you'll be matched with! We'd love to see your post-lockdown hair cuts too!



With many of you unable to participate in your usual fundraising challenges, we launched The Mane Event, so you could fundraise from the safety of your own home. With hairdressers shut for over three months, we asked you to send us a picture of your lockdown look and



We're still pulling together for our horses and donkeys. And we still need you.

By now, you will have read how daily life at Redwings has been affected by the coronavirus outbreak. Over the last six months, we have had to continually adapt and change the way we work. But one thing that hasn't changed is our responsibility and commitment to every rescued resident in the Sanctuary. Thankfully, our horses and donkeys know nothing of the changing world beyond their paddock fences. **Please help us continue giving them everything they deserve.**

We have been amazed by the generosity of our supporters over the last few months. Your response to our emergency Covid-19 appeal has helped to raise much-needed funding when our income from other sources has fallen. And your donations of supplies and treats for our horses – even as you face your own challenges – have been a constant reminder of the love and kindness of our supporters. Thank you.

Now, many may feel that 'normal' life is starting to return. But here at Redwings, we will be counting the cost of the pandemic for many months – and even years – to come. This is one of the greatest challenges we've ever faced, and we still need your help.

Please will you continue to stand by us?

Sanctuary star Audrey (see pages 8 and 9) was an obvious choice to become the face of our appeal this autumn. Her amazing story of triumph over adversity and defying the odds has been a great inspiration to us all over the last few months.

Audrey is an important reminder that, while we face ongoing challenges because of the pandemic, our horses and donkeys rely on us as much as ever.

By donating to Redwings today, you can help change the lives of more horses like Audrey.



Counting the cost of a pandemic

Being 100% funded by public donations and **responsible for 1,500 horses and donkeys every day**, Redwings has always been careful to plan for extraordinary situations. Even so, few could have predicted the **far-reaching consequences of a human pandemic** for our Sanctuary. For example:

- Having to close our visitor centres, gift shops and cafes over the spring and summer meant **we lost income of over £300,000**. This is the equivalent of a year's care for all the donkeys at the Sanctuary.
- **Our internal welfare costs have risen by 11%**. Spending on internal welfare is one of our greatest direct charitable costs and includes feed, forage, and the running of our Horse Hospital.
- The slowdown of the property market and the financial uncertainty across the country **impacted on many areas of our income, including legacies**. This may continue to affect us for many years to come.
- **Having to suspend our Guardianship Scheme** meant we had to retain and pay for the care of even more horses who we would otherwise expect to be in loving new homes.
- Even while we faced these challenges, we continued our important welfare work. **Between March and June alone, we took in 60 horses and ponies needing our help**. Although their rescues were not a result of the pandemic, **the additional cost of caring for these horses comes at a time when our resources were already stretched**.
- As we approach the change in seasons, we will once again need to purchase feed and forage to see our herds through the colder months – usually **costing us more than £300,000 each winter – putting an even greater strain on our finances**.

Our greatest time of need isn't over yet.

Please help us today:

- **01508 481000 • www.redwings.org.uk**
- **Text AUDREY 20 to 70085 to donate £20**

(You can also opt to give any amount – whole £s only – up to £20. All texts cost the donation amount plus a standard rate message).

* Thank you for your gift. We will use your donation wherever it is needed the most including funding the daily care of our horse and donkey herds.



Thank you!



Save and protect thousands of horses and donkeys across the UK with a monthly gift.

Horses like Audrey (our cover star) and donkeys like Yogi (pictured left) only have the lives they deserve thanks to donations from people like you.

If you already make a regular monthly donation, thank you. You are helping to care for 1,500 resident horses and donkeys like Audrey and Yogi and aiding the rescue of around 150 new arrivals who have suffered abuse, abandonment or neglect each year. Your donations fund our Horse Hospital, feed and hay, bedding, paddock maintenance and our horse care teams who check each resident every day to ensure they are happy and healthy. In fact, your donations fund everything we do, as Redwings receives no government funding.

If you love horses, and don't already do so, please consider a monthly donation to Redwings. Just £5 a month, or whatever you can give, will ensure we are there to save and protect horses and donkeys like Audrey and Yogi across the UK this year and for many more years to come.

To set up a monthly donation today visit www.redwings.org.uk or call us on 01508 481000.

Thank you!

And if you are thinking about the future, please think of Redwings...

We hope you have been inspired and uplifted by the stories in this issue of our newsletter. Although we have faced many challenges over the last few months, we have been inspired by the many supporters who have helped us pull together for the love of our horses and donkeys.

Now, as we continue looking to the future, it is special gifts from people like you that will ensure our Sanctuary is a safe and caring place for rescued horses and donkeys for many years to come. We know that you too may be thinking about your own future and providing for loved ones and the causes you care about. When you do, please consider leaving a gift in your Will to Redwings.

How can a gift in my Will help Redwings?

If you are thinking about leaving a legacy to Redwings, we can provide advice and information to help you. No legacy is too small, and every gift helps to provide for the future of our rescued horses and donkeys. Past legacy gifts have helped Redwings to:

- Develop our Horse Hospital to allow our veterinary team to perform life-saving procedures
- Fund vital veterinary equipment so we are ready to respond to medical emergencies
- Equip our paddocks with fencing, gates and water troughs
- Fund the day to day care of our horse and donkey herds.

To find out more about the difference you can make by leaving a gift in your Will to Redwings, please contact our Legacy Officer, Katie, on 01508 481030 or email legacies@redwings.co.uk.

Thank you!