

Redwings

Horse Sanctuary



NEWSLETTER
SPRING 2024

Redwings is 40!

Find out how we plan to celebrate with you

Dinky donkeys

We've offered a home to three miniature donkeys

PLUS

Black Beauty lives on

The Redwings special edition is on sale now

Best behaviour

Read more about how behaviour training changes lives

And much more inside...

Welcome to your spring newsletter 2024

And a very special year it is too, as Redwings officially turns 40 years old in 2024. Our Ruby Anniversary is here at last, although it seems like seconds since we were celebrating Silver!

Turn to pages 10 and 11 to find out about all the exciting things we have planned this year to commemorate this incredible milestone. Forty years of caring for horses, thousands of horses and donkeys rescued and rehabilitated, many hundreds rehomed to loving Guardian homes and many more supported in their own homes through our education and campaigns work – all made possible by your wonderful support. Thank you!

But first, we should take a moment to look back over everything that happened in 2023. Another difficult year both in the UK and around the world and for Redwings we had our own challenges in terms of our own costs rising, floods hitting our centres, and the loss of some beloved Adoption Stars which has been incredibly hard both for the teams here and their loyal adopters of course.

But 2023 also had its highlights and in particular it will live long in the memory as the year when we welcomed Her Majesty Queen Camilla to Redwings. In my more than 20 years at Redwings this was our first-ever Royal visit, and it was such an honour for me to be able to introduce Her Majesty to our staff, supporters, Guardians and volunteers, to showcase our work and highlight our partnership work with the University of East Anglia. Needless to say, I was incredibly proud.

2023 was also the year we rescued some very special individuals like little Alfie, the pony attacked by a dog, and Mason the orphaned foal found on the Welsh Commons – and some new donkey arrivals too! We launched a brand-new website, published our own edition of Black Beauty, coordinated a successful Strangles Awareness Week, met TV personality Suzie Fletcher, added two new Adoption Stars to the Scheme, saw one of our ponies go Champion at the Royal Norfolk Show, received an award from the Fire Service, worked with Dame Joanna Lumley on a new animation, and cheered on amazing fundraiser Izzy as she cycled between all our visitor centres – now that's commitment!

Read on to find out more about everything your support has contributed to over the last few months and our plans for the future. We do hope you can join us in celebrating – and here's to the next 40 years!

Very best wishes,



Lynn Cutress
Chief Executive



Lynn and Mercury



In February 2021 Kiwi was suddenly taken ill and needed urgent colic surgery. Kiwi was in very poor health when she was rescued by Redwings almost a decade earlier and once again she was facing a battle to survive.

Turn to pages 18 & 19 to read about the life that Kiwi leads at Redwings Horse Sanctuary and – thanks to your support – the amazing team who saved her life.

Please donate today:

- 01508 505246
- www.redwings.org.uk
- Text **KIWI** to **70085** to donate **£10***

(*You can give any amount – whole £s only – up to £20. Texts will cost the donation amount plus one standard network rate message, and you'll be opting in to hearing more from us. If you would like to donate but don't wish to hear more from us, please text KIWINOINFO instead.)

News update...

Working together on fireworks



In December, Helen from our Campaigns team attended an MPs' Reception at the House of Commons. The drop-in event was hosted by the Fireworks Working Group (pictured) which unites 16 charities including Redwings, British Horse Society, Dogs Trust, British Veterinary Association, Cats Protection, Combat Stress, PTSD UK and the Children's Burns Trust, to highlight the harmful effects of fireworks on animals

and people. Horses die or are injured in firework-related incidents every year, and tragically, three horses have died here at the Sanctuary in recent years because of fireworks being set off near our centres. The Working Group is now calling on the UK government to conduct a review of existing legislation and for the introduction of further restrictions on where and when fireworks can be used. Find out more about our work on this and other issues on page 6.

Partnership honoured

In November we were honoured to receive an award from Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) for our partnership working with the organisation.

We have been working with NFRS since 2017 to help the service be prepared for rescues involving horses and ponies, with practical training in equine behaviour from our Behaviour team.

Michelle Lowe, NFRS Crew Manager-Trainer, said: "Redwings provide us with eight days of training to allow our staff to practice their animal rescue techniques, they also include hands-on training with their horses, supervised by their team, and a lecture delivered by a qualified vet.

"In addition, they organise a vet to attend our initial animal rescue courses as well as donating microchip scanners and they have also supplied a trailer to allow us to transport our horse mannequin 'Brandy' around the county for further training."



2023 Best at Appleby People's Champion – Sundance Kid

Appleby Equine Welfare Project goes to Traveller Movement Conference

A group of National Equine Welfare Council (NEWC) representatives from Redwings, Blue Cross and the RSPCA attended the Traveller Movement Conference in October on behalf of the Appleby Horse Fair Equine Welfare Project. >

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*Our cover photo is Ruby donkey!
We couldn't think of a more fitting star.*

> cont.

Nine NEWC-member charities are involved with the project and send staff to the annual Fair, which takes place in the Cumbrian town in June, to work with the Gypsy Roma and Traveller community on horse welfare and coordinate the Best at Appleby Awards, developed by Redwings, which celebrate and reward the very best examples of horse health, happiness and horsemanship at the Fair.

The conference, held in London, was a valuable opportunity to talk to attendees about plans for the next five years and hear ideas and suggestions for the project too.



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 505246 info@redwings.co.uk

Horse Care Advice and Welfare

01508 481008
welfare@redwings.co.uk

Visitor Information

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



Pretty Poppy!

Tiny Shetland pony Poppy arrived at Redwings in September 2023 after another animal welfare organisation approached us for help. They had very sadly been forced to find another site for their base and were struggling to find somewhere suited to Poppy's needs.

We soon set about finding a suitable herd for Poppy to join and based on her small stature, and her care needs, the Gangsters were the obvious candidates. As well as these cheeky boys she also joins Aleia, Aurora and Mariah - so the girls now rival the boys in numbers!

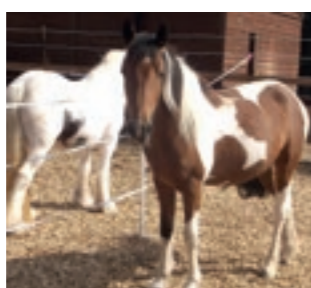
Dinky donkeys

They say good things come in small packages, and that is certainly the case with this handsome trio! Meet Wedgewood, Dudley and Jack, three miniature donkeys who found a home here at Redwings in late December 2023. The Donkey Sanctuary and the RSPCA asked us if we could offer them a secure future after their owners had been struggling with their care.

Did you know, donkeys are classed as miniature if they are less than 91cm at the withers (shoulders)? That's less than 9hh! Whilst these donkeys might be dinky that doesn't mean they require any less specialist care or facilities to ensure they stay happy and healthy.



The future is secure for Redwings Maddison



Maddison came into our care in 2023 after the RSPCA reached out to us to ask if we would take her on. The three-year-old cob cross had been at the RSPCA since November 2022 after she was found with a severe wire injury to her hind leg. Due to the nature of her injury, and what that could mean for her going forwards, Redwings was approached to offer her a safe and secure future.

Charlie's transformation



Charlie before

Charlie, a 26-year-old miniature Shetland pony, was so thin when he arrived at Redwings that you could see his spine, hips and ribs painfully protruding.

He has been in our care since August 2022, and the RSPCA has successfully prosecuted his owner.

Redwings' Senior Field Officer, Jo Franklin, said: "Charlie was a shocking sight, he was about as thin as an animal gets. Since coming to us here at Redwings we've seen him totally transform into a healthy, happy pony. Charlie will never have to go without anything ever again thanks to our brilliant staff and the generosity of our amazing supporters, the Redwings angels."



Charlie now



20 years of work on Gelligaer common

Last year we were involved in several operations on Gelligaer in South Wales, working with other agencies to assist with the rescue of ponies who were struggling to cope in the harsh environment of the commons.

Redwings has been formally involved with helping the horses on the commons in the area since the winter of 2003, working with local agencies and residents on issues arising from illegal grazing and indiscriminate breeding. Today we continue this work, as well as pushing for better equine ID regulations so, in the future, owners can be held accountable in such situations.

Redwings CEO Lynn attended these early operations, at the time in the role as Head of Fundraising and Education. She also joined the welfare team in 2023 on one of our latest rescue operations, and she wasn't the only one who is still involved 20 years on, as the team still comprised veterinary surgeon Nic (now our Head of Welfare and Behaviour) plus Senior Field Officer Julie, horsebox drivers (and rescue round-up experts!) Alan and Clair, and Justin, who is now Centre Manager at Redwings SWHP.

Lynn recalls: "In 2003, my role was to support the welfare team. I would catalogue and photograph the horses (in the days where the photos had to be developed in Boots when we returned to Norfolk!) or I would monitor ponies who had been flagged as a cause for concern, until the rest of the team could safely contain them in our pen sections. Ponies just like Onia, who is now an incredible 34 years old (pictured)."

It was at these rescues that Lynn first met Jenny McGregor, the founder of the Society for the Welfare of Horses and Ponies (SWHP), and we worked alongside them on the commons for many years before our merger in 2019.

Lynn has reflected further on how two decades of dedication to the ponies of Gelligaer has shaped Redwings, and the nature of our rescue work with



Onia

semi-feral ponies. You can read more on our website.

Our work in South Wales continues today, and last year we welcomed Honey, Bumble, and Mason to Redwings after they were rescued from Gelligaer in February.

Bumble was very underweight, despite being pregnant, and her foal Honey had a swelling on her leg and was clearly lame. You may have read about Mason in our most recent appeal, he was a young pony, sadly orphaned on the common, and was very weak. They were all brought to Redwings so they could receive the treatment they desperately needed, and later Bumble gave birth to another filly foal - who we called Bee.



Little Mason was weak on arrival



Bee and Bumble at Redwings

Bang to rights

In November we shared footage of our own horses and ponies on fireworks night to try and emphasise the distress that can be caused by displays close to where animals live. We could not have predicted the reaction it would receive – the video has had over 98,000 views on our social channels and nearly 2,000 comments and shares. You can watch it by scanning the QR code (right).

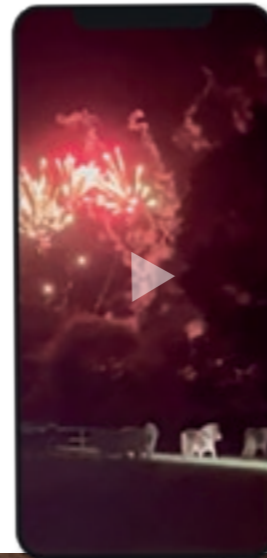


Fortunately, none of our residents were physically harmed this time (although we may never know the level of emotional distress they experienced) but we know other sanctuaries were not so lucky. Every year at Redwings we spend an extra £300 a night on additional staffing for checks and forage like hay and haylage to help keep our horses calm during the fireworks season. And over the last few years, despite putting these measures in place, we have sadly lost three of our residents to fireworks-related injuries.



Fireworks debris found amongst the ponies on Gelligaer common

This is why we are calling on the government to review the legislation around fireworks use. A petition on this issue has already received more than a million signatures and we know from the letters and emails we receive that many of you feel very strongly on this issue. Some progress has already been made in Scotland where regulations have been tightened and local authorities can set up 'fireworks control zones', although this is still a lengthy process. We hope Westminster will soon follow suit. If you would like to get involved in supporting our fireworks campaign, please visit our website to find out how you can help.



Needles are no bother for Ruby now!

Our cover-star donkey Ruby has recently been under the care of Senior Equine Behaviour Coordinator Felicity, after she was becoming increasingly needle-shy – meaning she was stressed when our vets were trying to inject her with the sedation needed for her routine dental exam.



Vet Nicky prepares to inject Ruby

So, together with pal Rodney, Ruby has moved to our Hapton HQ, where our Behaviour team are close by to help. Her training, made up of a series of short regular sessions, saw Felicity simulate the process of a vet doing an injection. Felicity said: "To begin with, this meant introducing Ruby to the clicker, and the link between the noise it makes and the food reward we use in our positive reinforcement training.

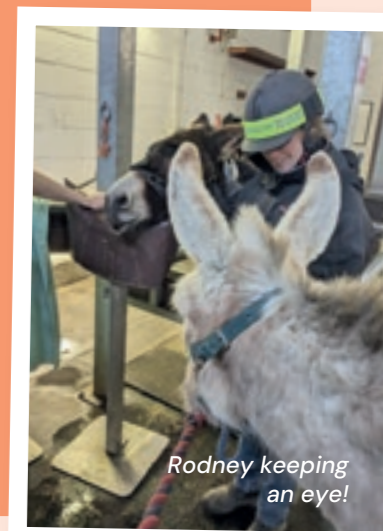
"She picked this up really quickly. Then we start with me (a second person) approaching her when she is being held by her handler. Ruby was initially quite reactive to this, so we worked through this and up to me stroking her on the neck.

"Then we build up to stopping my hand on the neck before then gently pinching the skin, as the vets do before an injection, and replicating the 'poke' of a needle. Then we will introduce a needle (with the cap on) so Ruby is accustomed to that being part of the process.

"Ruby has worked through all of this, to the point where she is now able to show signs of relaxation throughout her training. We also mark these with the clicker, to reward these moments and show her that needles don't need to be something to be frightened of.

"The final step is when other trainers work through the process – in preparation for when the vet will be the one doing the injecting."

Ruby has undergone 24 training sessions so far with Felicity, culminating in her successfully having her dental and vaccination in January this year, with 'emotional-support' donkey Rodney there to hold her hoof. Well done Ruby!



Rodney keeping an eye!

Strangles in the spotlight

The positive and effective campaigning approach of Strangles Awareness Week has won national and international respect and in 2023 Redwings was invited to present on the campaign at the prestigious British Equine Veterinary Association Congress in Birmingham. The event is attended by more than 1,500 equine vets from around the globe and was a wonderful opportunity to discuss some of the challenges and considerations involved in helping people improve their biosecurity habits.

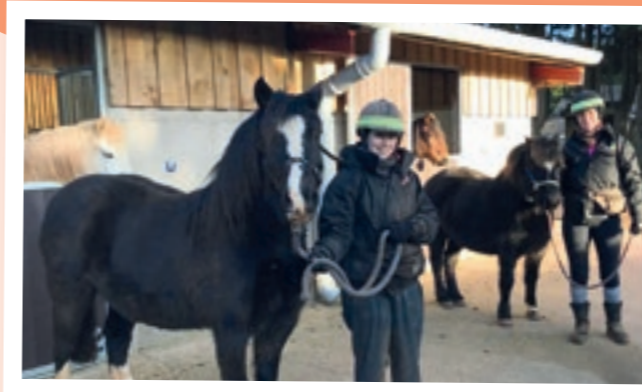
Now in its fifth year, Strangles Awareness Week 2024 will take place between 6-12th May and is set to be our BEST yet! A unique collaboration, led by Redwings, brings together leading equine organisations, vets, and researchers to provide up-to-date and practical guidance, which cuts through the myths and misunderstandings that still often surround strangles.



This year, with the help of some familiar faces from the equestrian world we will spread the word about steps that any owner or yard can take to reduce the risk of an outbreak – with the added bonus of there being fantastic prizes to be won!

To get involved, simply follow the SAW social media channels and share our content across the week. Every click, comment and share really makes a difference as we spread the word and help reduce cases of this life-threatening illness.

Follow our SAW social media channels here:



Danni and Rhys, two ponies from Redwings SWHP, have had their lives transformed thanks to the handling training they have received from team members Tracie and Michaela.

Both Danni and Rhys were 'semi-feral' when the team at the Society for the Welfare of Horses and Ponies (SWHP) rescued them – meaning they had had very limited handling experience with humans. When Redwings merged with SWHP in 2019 the pair moved, along with the rest of the SWHP herds, to the new Redwings SWHP site near Chepstow.

Training transforming lives

Since then, Tracie and Michaela, with support from our Behaviour team in Norfolk, have set about a life-changing training programme. They can now be caught with a headcollar, led into a stable, groomed and have their hooves and legs handled for the farrier – whereas before this would have required sedation. Tracie said: "They are almost like completely different ponies. Instead of being unsure, they now choose to interact with us. Danni will follow me around as we poo-pick and call to me when she sees me, and if she sees the bum-bag we use for holding food for training she is so excited!

"Rhys adores Michaela and trusts her implicitly. We are so proud of them both, and the happier lives they get to lead now."

In the 40 years of Redwings, we have constantly improved our understanding of equine behaviour and training practices. Thanks to your support we can offer bespoke and specialist training to the equines in our care who need our help to live happy and stress-free lives





Whitney's transformation



Whitney before

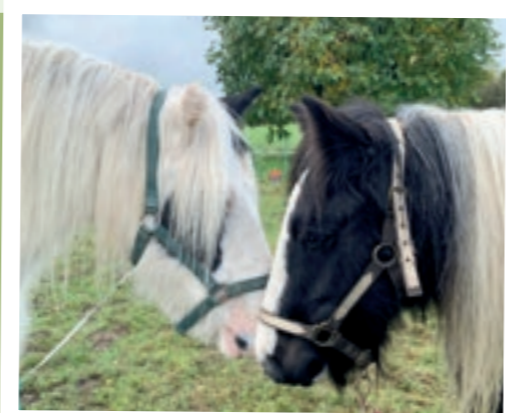
When Senior Field Officer Julie first met Whitney in 2015, at a site in Suffolk, she was an extremely emaciated youngster. On arrival at Redwings, she was so weak that she laid down in the stable and was unable to stand again on her own. The team manually lifted her, and then she

was placed in our specialist Anderson sling to support her bodyweight as she recovered. Julie remembers: "She was one of the most poorly ponies we had ever come across, and I genuinely don't think she would have survived much longer where she was."

In the days following her rescue, Whitney's prognosis was guarded but, thanks to the efforts of the veterinary team, she steadily began to recover, before enjoying herd life at

Redwings. In 2023, she was rehomed to her new Guardian Sarah in Norfolk. Julie's role as Field Officer also includes carrying out rehoming home checks and last year she was reunited with a very different-looking Whitney from when they first met! Living with Guardian Sarah (as well as fellow rehomed Redwings pony Rusty!) Whitney now enjoys life as a ridden pony. Sarah told us: "It breaks my heart to see where she came from, but I am so pleased she's come to live with us. She and I have absolutely hit it off and we enjoy hacking out together."

Julie has been a Field Officer for Redwings since 2003 and has responded to countless reports of neglect and mistreatment. But, with home-check reunions like this she also gets to witness the 'happily-ever-afters' she helps make happen, saying: "It's so rewarding to see our horses out in homes where they are so loved and such a far cry from how we found them – it really makes it all worthwhile!"



A new 'Pally' for Molly

In October 2023, Guardian Penny approached Redwings looking for a companion for her pony Molly after her horse Banjo sadly passed away.

Penny had rehomed Molly from SWHP nine years ago – prior to the merger between SWHP and Redwings. Molly had originally been rescued by SWHP after she was burnt in a fire and had injuries to her ear and face. Just eight days after Penny contacted us, Redwings Palau (or Pally as she is now known!) was dropped off in her new home.

Penny said: "Pally is settling in well and she is very sweet – even following me around the field like a little dog. I take her for walks with my friend riding Molly and she has enjoyed seeing a bit of the world. Molly and Pally are getting along well, and I am grateful for how quickly the team were able to arrange her arrival."

Redwings began rehoming in 2005, and it all started with a horse named Seamus – the first horse to leave Redwings for a new home. Our Parklands Rehoming Centre, at Hapton HQ, was also opened in July that year and we merged with Ada Cole Memorial Stables in Essex in the September, who already rehomed horses too. Since then, rehoming has gone from strength to strength – with over 700 horses now in Guardian homes, rehoming centres now at Redwings Caldecott and Redwings Oxhill and a dedicated rehoming team in place to help our horses to find loving new homes.



Redwings fundraising edition of Black Beauty out now!

Redwings' new fundraising edition of Black Beauty, produced in partnership with the University of East Anglia (UEA) Publishing Project, is out now with half of all profits going towards the horses, ponies, donkeys and mules in our care. It's the first time the world-famous novel has directly raised funds for the animals that author Anna Sewell loved so much. A special launch was held on 24th November, the anniversary of its original publication date, in Great Yarmouth, Norfolk – where Anna Sewell was born. Guests included fans of the book from the literary and animal welfare world, and supporters of Redwings.

To purchase a copy visit the Redwings website or scan the QR code. If you already own a treasured copy of the novel, we're sure there is room on your bookshelf for this very special edition too!



TV personality and author Suzie Fletcher at the book launch



SCAN ME



The life and legacy of Black Beauty author Anna Sewell has been celebrated in our new animation, including a voiceover by none other than Dame Joanna Lumley. The actor,

Telling Anna's story

presenter, author and campaigner donated her services to the project, which is a collaboration between Redwings and the UEA with funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Nicola Knight, Redwings' Head of Communications and Campaigns, said: "Dame Joanna Lumley's support on our animation is something we could only have dreamed of, and we're so grateful for the generous gift of her time. We hope this animation – produced for us by Meantime Media –

will educate those who weren't aware of the impact that Anna's work had, and continues to have, hundreds of years later, on the welfare of horses."



SCAN ME

You can watch the animation on our website or by scanning the QR code.

Heritage Week is a huge success!

A record number of visitors enjoyed a look around Anna Sewell House as part of the nationwide Heritage Open Days Week event in September. Our wonderful volunteers welcomed over 280 people through the door during the three days we were open which, given the small space inside the house, was quite a feat! At some points, we even had a queue! We also received some lovely comments from visitors:

"Having lived in Great Yarmouth all my life, I have never had the opportunity to go inside Anna Sewell's House. It was lovely to be able to actually step inside where she was born. The ladies who staffed it were very helpful and answered all our questions."

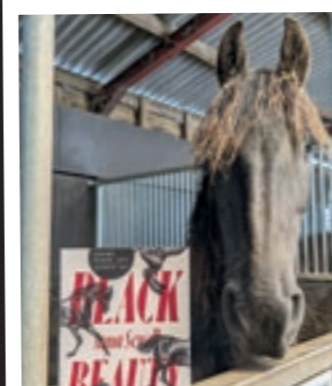
"Visiting the house brought the story of Black Beauty to life and made me feel connected to its author."



Teaching the next generation

As part of their work on Anna Sewell and Black Beauty, we were delighted to welcome IntoUniversity to Redwings Aylsham to find out more about our connections with the author, and to meet our very own Black Beauty Maya! The group enjoyed a tour of the centre and games and activities in Red's Shed, before the children bravely took turns to read their creative writing pieces inspired by Black Beauty.

If you'd be interested in an educational visit to Redwings, email education@redwings.co.uk to find out more. We also offer virtual visits and talks if a trip to one of our centres is too far!





Celebrate our Ruby Anniversary with us!

Did you know Redwings began following the rescue of a single pony called Sheba in 1984?

From small beginnings, we have become the largest horse welfare charity in the UK, responsible for over 2,000 rescued horses, ponies, donkeys and mules and using our extensive knowledge and experience to benefit the lives of many more outside our sanctuary gates every year.

Of course, nothing we have achieved over the last 40 years would have been possible without you, our kind supporters. Everything we do is 100% funded by donations and we simply can't thank you enough. That is why we are delighted to invite you to join in our year of special anniversary celebrations! Please keep these dates in your diary and be sure to visit the Redwings website for the latest details on all upcoming events!

The Great Big Ruby Tea Party – Wednesday 24th April

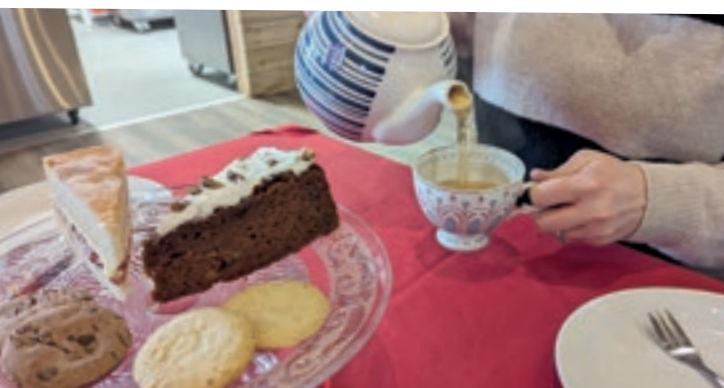
Invite your friends and loved ones over for a slice of cake and a cuppa, and raise funds for Redwings at the same time! Whether it's at home, in the garden, at work or the local village hall, we would love for everyone to come together on **Wednesday 24th April** for the Great Big Ruby Tea Party! Anyone joining in is welcome to simply make a donation, or perhaps you can make some delicious bakes to sell?

You can download your FREE Great Big Ruby Tea Party pack, including bunting and posters to print at home, from our website at redwings.org.uk/rubyanniversary or scan the QR code (top right). We would also love to see photos from your party so please upload them to social media with the hashtag **#greatbigrubyteaparty** so we can share them!

On the day, three of our visitor centres – Redwings Caldecott and Redwings Aylsham, both in Norfolk, and Redwings Oxhill in Warwickshire – will be throwing their own exclusive events for supporters. The visitor centres will be serving up delicious pastries, sandwiches, scrummy scones and plenty of cake during a special Great Big Ruby Tea Party in their cafes and you can buy your tickets now!

You can choose between three sittings during the day with their own unique menus; brunch at 10am – 11.30am, lunch at 12pm – 1.30pm and afternoon tea at 2pm – 3.30pm. All dietary requirements catered for upon request. Tickets cost £20 per person and can also be purchased at redwings.org.uk/rubyanniversary, through scanning the QR code on this page or calling **01508 505246**.

For those celebrating at home, there is also the chance to purchase one of our limited Tea & Treats boxes, priced at £20 for one person or £40 for two, to be delivered to your door full of local tasty produce including Norfolk Tea, our exclusive Ruby Anniversary jam, marmalade and chutney, and shortbread.



Redwings Book Festival – Saturday 18th May

Having dipped our toes in the publishing world with the success of our special edition of Black Beauty, released in November in collaboration with the UEA Publishing Project, we thought 'Why not host our own book festival?!'

Redwings Caldecott, in Norfolk, will host the first ever Redwings Book Festival on **Saturday 18th May** celebrating an array of local and national authors, from non-fiction, fiction and children's literature, who all tell moving and inspiring stories about animals, and especially horses.

Those attending include best-selling author Elly Griffiths, television personality Suzie Fletcher, writer and Anna Sewell expert Celia Brayfield, celebrated children's author Joyce Dunbar and specialist in 19th century literature Thomas Ruys Smith, among many others!

The festival is open to all ages, and tickets will cost £10 for adults with free entry for children aged 16 and under. Every adult ticket includes a free Redwings Book Festival tote bag.



For further information and to book your place, visit redwings.org.uk/rubyanniversary or scan the QR code.

Meet Monarch at Hainford June

Hainford is one of our private sanctuary sites in Norfolk and is not normally open to the public. But as part of our celebrations, we will be hosting a special day where you can find out more about the site, which is home to over 200 of our rescued residents, and the specialist sanctuary care our Hainford team provide. Plus, you could journey on to Redwings Aylsham and enjoy our facilities there.

Hainford is also home to Adoption Star Monarch! If you already sponsor Monarch, or do so by the end of April, you will also receive more information about the chance to meet him on the day in the post soon!

Tickets will be free, but limited, keep an eye on our website and social media for details.

Over to you throughout August

Our supporters are fantastic at coming up with fun and inspiring ways to raise funds for Redwings. This month we would love for you to pick an activity – be it a sponsored run, cycle or hike, bake sale, car wash or even skydive – to help horses in need. In the run-up to the summer, we'll be offering lots of ideas online and through our social media channels, plus we have a brand-new fundraising pack which offers plenty of support and top tips for organising your own event.

To request a copy and start your planning now, visit redwings.org.uk/support-us/fundraise-for-us or call **01508 505246**.

Redwings Show Online Entries open Monday 1st July

During the pandemic we launched our first Redwings Show Online, open not just to horses but all your beloved and crazy pets! It proved so popular we thought we would bring it back again! There will be a wide range of fun classes to enter, in exchange for a donation, with rosettes going to all those that place. And there's no need to travel to a venue – all you'll need to do is submit a photo or a video online.

Entries will open on Monday 1st July. Pop the date in your diary and check our website nearer the time for all the details on how to take part!

Behind-the-scenes at Hapton Saturday 21st September

We couldn't let such a special year go by without opening the doors to our headquarters in Hapton, Norfolk. Normally closed to the public, this site is home to almost 300 rescued horses and donkeys as well as our Horse Hospital and largest Rehoming Centre. On Saturday 21st September, we'll be welcoming supporters for the first time since the pandemic, offering exclusive tours showcasing what goes on behind-the-scenes and what we are able to achieve every day thanks to your donations.

Places will be limited and must be booked in advance. Keep an eye on our website over the summer for details on how to secure your entry! We can't wait to see you!

News from around 'Your Redwings' the Sanctuary –



Visit www.redwings.org.uk for our latest opening times and information to make the most of your visit!

REDWINGS

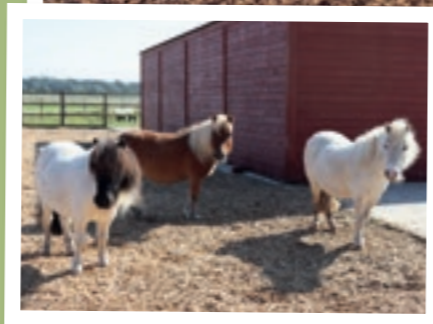
Aylsham

North Norfolk, NR11 6UE

More than just a treat for sore feet

Redwings Aylsham recently welcomed the addition of their first woodchip paddock, which was all thanks to the hard work of the Redwings Maintenance team and funding from a supportive Trust. Woodchip paddocks are beneficial to equines in many ways, allowing those who have lameness or other hoof issues to recover with their friends on a soft, mud-free surface. They are also perfect for our residents whose food intake needs to be regulated, and for those receiving veterinary treatment who may become stressed if stabled.

The important role of a woodchip paddock was highlighted last year when Adoption Stars, The Gangsters, suffered from colic caused by sand-impaction and were temporarily moved to a woodchip paddock at Redwings Caldecott. Their relocation meant their diets could be controlled while still living happily in their herd. Thankfully with lots of TLC from their carers and our vet team, their health quickly improved, and we were able to welcome them back to Redwings Aylsham at the start of the year.



Pickle was rescued in 2022 from a site in Norfolk after a member of the public contacted Redwings, concerned about a young pony with an injured eye. Pickle was offered a home at the Sanctuary so the eye could be treated

A hearty party for our newest Adoption Star!

urgently, but due to the severity of the injury, surgery was carried out to remove her eye so it would no longer cause her any pain.

Fortunately, Pickle went on to make a full recovery, and this friendly mare joined the Adoption Scheme in October. This was also the same month as her birthday, and so a party was held in honour of this special girl! And what an event it was! Her celebration was attended by many adoring fans

who enjoyed the rather messy spectacle of watching Pickle and her friend eat cake, specially prepared for her by her carers – with a little help from her guests!

You can adopt Pickle by visiting our website. By sponsoring this lovely mare or her Adoption Star friends, you are helping to save more horses and donkeys who desperately need our help.

Ada Cole Essex, EN9 2DH

REDWINGS

Opening hours

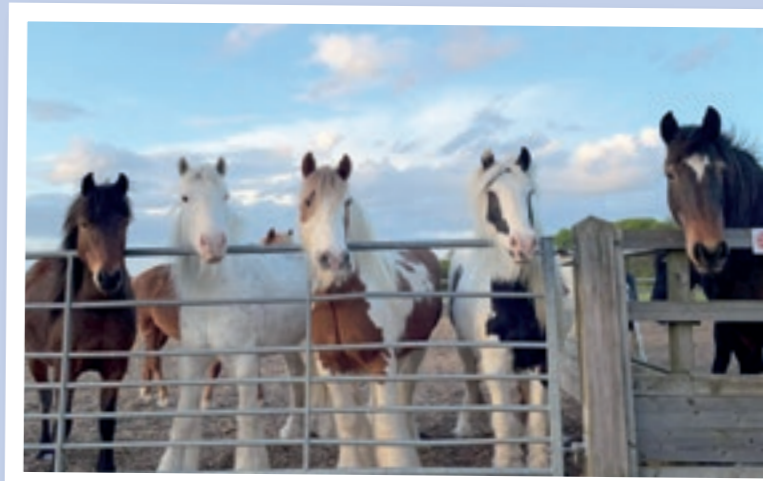
For those of you wishing to visit the Ada Cole Adoption Stars, Dotty, Elvis, Tinkerbell or Zippy, or any of the other equally wonderful equines – or even goats Frappe, Billy and Barbara – at the visitor centre this year, please make a note of our new regular opening hours.

From the beginning of April, we are extending our opening hours to match our other visitor centres.

Redwings Ada Cole will open every **Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday 10am – 4pm. Last entry to the site is 3:30pm.**

Whilst you are there you could pop along to Dolly's Café for a yummy slice of cake, a tasty snack or hot drink to takeaway.

Don't forget the gift shop too, where you can purchase a gift for yourself or a loved one. We can't wait to see you!



Redwings is on the road this summer too. Keep an eye out for us at events such as the Royal Norfolk Show, Suffolk Show and Your Horse Live – amongst others! Follow us on social media for the latest updates.



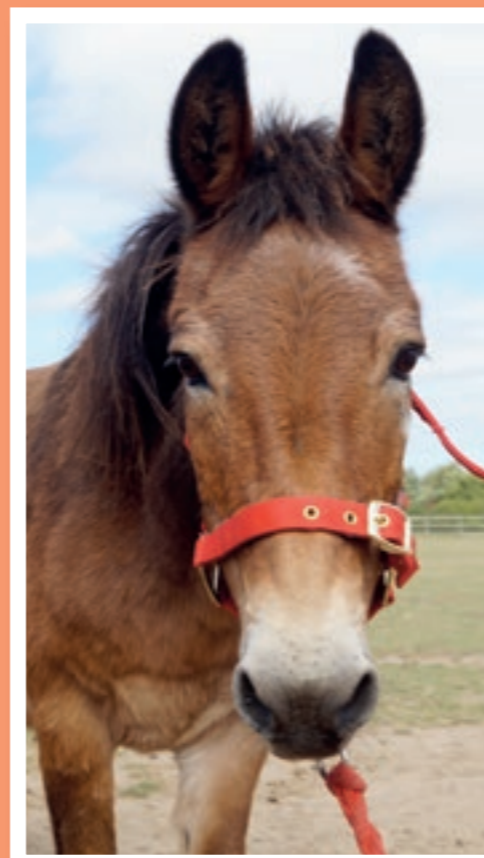
REDWINGS

Caldecott

Gt. Yarmouth, NR31 9EY

WELCOME

A jewel of a mule



Last year, we said a fond farewell to Muffin, who sadly passed away in September 2023. The legendary mule, who was saved from slaughter when he was just a foal, became a Redwings Adoption Star in 1987, shortly after his arrival at the Sanctuary.

At 36, Muffin was an elderly boy, who lived with Cushing's disease, a condition affecting his hormones. This also made him prone to a painful hoof condition called laminitis, and his comfort was becoming harder to manage without him spending time away from his herd group. He also became reluctant to take his medication, despite his carers disguising it in his favourite treats. Sadly, Muffin's happy demeanour changed,

and so we felt it was the kindest thing for him to be put to sleep to prevent his health and comfort from deteriorating.

Muffin truly was a star in every sense of the word, adored by his carers and families who have sponsored him for generations. Thank you, Muffin, for being such a wonderful ambassador for Redwings and to all his fantastic adopters for your support throughout the years.

You can read more about Muffin by visiting his memoriam page on the Redwings website, and as a tribute to this wonderful mule, we have developed a beautiful range of gifts which will be coming soon. Look out for these in our summer catalogue, and on the website.



Rumpel's new friend Chicago

Adoption Star Rumpel had a bittersweet year in 2023, losing his long-term girlfriend Faith in August. Faith had been ill for a while, periodically improving under the care of our vets, but when she took a sudden downturn it was clear the difficult decision had to be made to put her to sleep.

Understandably, this was tough on Rumpel and all those who cared for Faith, who was very much loved, but no one wanted her to be in any more pain.

Despite this loss, Rumpel has found new purpose and direction by making a new best friend. This lovely skewbald cob is called Chicago and Rumpel has been helping him to settle into life at Oxhill.

Rumpel did not waste any time introducing Chicago to his best mates, Cowslip and Snuffles, and the four of them have been getting on famously. It made a very happy end to a difficult year for Rumpel and we are excited to see their friendship blossom further this year!



the café kitchen has been doubled in size which means more choices on the menu, always a bonus!

We couldn't have done any of this without your generous support – thank you everyone for your kindness and patience. The centre is open every weekend, Friday to Monday, 10am to 4pm and all the horses, ponies and donkeys are excited to see you again so please do come along!

Redwings Oxhill – Under development!

We've been working hard behind the scenes at Oxhill over the last few months as you may have guessed if you've tried to visit! We are have now almost completely reopened to visitors, with some limited access in areas that are still to be finished off in the drier months. But we hope you will be able to see why when you come along as some of the original works took place two decades ago!

We've had our woodchips and fences redone, which was essential work to keep our horses and ponies safe and to provide them with a place where we can manage their diets and keep big hooves and little feet dry. But – a bit like the Forth Bridge – it's almost a never-ending job and extra challenging in an economic environment where supplies cost more and contractors are harder to get hold of. There are now two brand-new barns on site, and we have reconfigured the area around the visitor centre, as the old stable block we inherited when we moved into the site had become unsafe.

Once finished, visitors will have better access to the horses and donkeys and crucially our special care residents will have all-weather facilities to stave off some of the challenging

weather conditions we've faced over the last few years. And last but by no means least, the rather tired visitor centre building which has served us well for nearly 20 years has had a makeover and



Mountains weathers the storm!

Redwings Mountains was literally in the eye of the storm last winter, with a very unwelcome visit from Storm Babet (and then several storms after that!).

The Met Office confirmed that on 19th October 2023, the county of Angus, where Redwings Mountains is located, had the wettest day on record since 1891, with up to 200mm rain falling.

Babet also brought some very strong winds, gusting at over 58mph.

The Met Office also issued a very rare 'Red Weather Warning' which highlights danger to life from flood water.

Despite this, the incredible Mountains team rallied, going above and beyond to make sure all the residents were safe and dry (either leading them to higher ground



with plenty of forage and shelter or stabling the most vulnerable before the storm hit) regardless of the desperate conditions they were faced with.

Despite extensive flooding, repair work began as soon as it was safe

to do so, which included installing a pipe to guide the runoff waters, repairing shelters, shoring up the banks and rebuilding a pivotal footbridge that had become unusable.

A testament to the determined and passionate spirit of our Mountains team who continued to work hard for the sake of our rescued residents, despite further adverse weather leading into and over the New Year. Thank you to them all!

New digs for donkeys



Meanwhile, Mountains' smallest donk Neddy has moved herds to find some similarly pint-sized pals! When Neddy arrived at Redwings, he had only lived with horses.

After some attempts at donkey dating it was clear to the team he was much happier in the company of ponies, so now he has formed a terrific trio with Shetland ponies Gunner and Blackie.



The team at Redwings Mountains have been showing their continued dedication to their long-eared residents by upgrading their field with a newly built forage and feeding shelter – made by our fabulous Mountains Maintenance duo Tony and Kevin.

The shelter means they can enjoy their forage under cover and on hard standing to protect their delicate feet, shielded from the prevailing wind and rain – and, as you have read, the poor Mountains team have had to deal with a lot of that!!



Dory's story

Redwings has been caring for rescued horses and donkeys for 40 years, funded entirely by public donations. During that time thoughtful gifts in Wills have meant we can open our centre in Aylsham, provide life-changing veterinary facilities at our Horse Hospital and fund vital equipment for our in-house vet team.

Recently rescued cob Dory was just two years old when he became seriously ill with cyathostomiasis, a disease caused by parasites that injure the intestines and cause inflammation. Treatment began immediately with fluid

therapy, plasma transfusions and round-the-clock care from the vets, nurses and nursing assistants. Despite this, Dory required surgery to remove a section of bowel known as the caecum which had been damaged and made his painful condition even less stable.

Dory survived surgery and remarkably started to show signs of recovery from cyathostomiasis. He continued to require intensive treatment day and night, calling on the commitment of the veterinary and hospital yard teams.



Moving on

Almost three years later, in the summer of 2023, Dory left the Sanctuary to begin a new life in a wonderful Guardian home. Without the hospital facilities at Redwings and our amazing veterinary team who work there every day, Dory would not have had this opportunity to look forward to a bright future.

In one way or another, almost every horse who lives at the Sanctuary has benefited from someone who kindly remembered them when making their Will.

Redwings has written a guide to making or updating a Will and our website contains a lot of advice and information.

To receive a copy of our Gifts in Wills information pack, please contact us on 01508 481030 or email us at legacies@redwings.co.uk – we are here to help you.

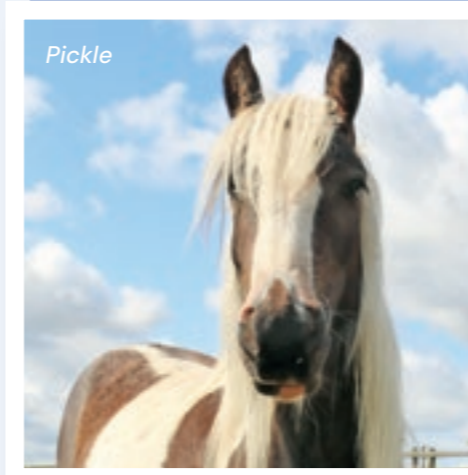
Adopt a Redwings resident and put a spring in their step!



Pickle in vet care

Have you met the two newest members of the Redwings Adoption Scheme? Pickle and Monarch joined the adoption roster last year and their characters and backgrounds have helped to make them

popular with our wonderful supporters. You may have read about Pickle on page 12 – her Redwings story began when our Welfare Support Line received a call from a member of the public concerned about a young pony with an injured



Pickle

eye. A Redwings Field Officer investigated and advised the pony's owner to seek veterinary care straight away. Sadly, the pony's owner was not able to provide the help she needed so agreed to sign her over to our care.

Pickle, as she was named by the team, was successfully treated for a heavy parasitic worm burden but it wasn't possible to alleviate the pain that her injured eye was causing her. Removing her eye was the most effective way to end the discomfort and she has adapted well to life at Redwings Aylsham without it.

Monarch was born in the Sanctuary after his mum was brought into our care in early 2022. Majesty was in foal when she was struck by a lorry in a nasty accident. Happily, Majesty made a full recovery and a few months later gave birth to a handsome boy who is currently growing at an amazing rate! He was named in honour of the late Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee and we even wrote to Her Majesty to tell her all about him! Last year Monarch was announced as a new Adoption Star to mark the Coronation of King Charles in May. Surely you can't get more grand than that?! Monarch currently lives at one of our sites that is closed to the public – adopting him helps contribute to the specialist care and training as he grows up. See pages 10 and 11 to find out how you can have an opportunity to meet him in 'person'!



Monarch

A wonderful way to make a new friend

Sponsoring Pickle, Monarch or any of their friends is a fantastic way to support our charity. From £2 a month, an adoption makes a great purchase as sponsors can receive regular updates by post and by email to keep up to date with their chosen Redwings resident. A wonderful adoption pack contains each Adoption Star's rescue story and a colour photo and in the run-up to their big day each year, we'll send you an invitation to their birthday party. By sponsoring stunning Shire cross Fox, cheeky donkey Arya or cuddly Shetland pony Tinkerbelle, your gift will play a vital role in supporting those in our care.

A regular gift such as an adoption helps the team at Redwings make long-term plans as well as respond to horses who need us in an emergency.

Visit www.redwings.org.uk to find out more or call us on 01508 505246 (Mon – Fri).



Monarch and his mum Majesty

Time to celebrate

To mark 40 years of Redwings, we are inviting every supporter to join us at the Great Big Ruby Tea Party this spring. Later in the year we'll be holding the Redwings Show Online – and we'd love you to join in by taking part in a class or two.

For more details see pages 10 & 11 or visit www.redwings.org.uk/rubyanniversary



Kiwi and the team who care for her

During early morning checks in late November last year, Kiwi's carers found her rolling on the ground in discomfort and showing signs of stomach pain. The miniature Shetland mare was brought to a stable in the Redwings Horse Hospital straight away for treatment and close observation. Sadly, this was not the first time Kiwi had been suddenly taken ill, but she has shown just how brave she can be on more than one occasion in the past.

Why Kiwi came to Redwings



Kiwi when she was rescued

Tiny pony Kiwi and her friend Plum were rescued from a horse sale in Cumbria in the early summer of 2012. Both were very underweight and suffering from the highly infectious disease strangles. The two friends were brought to our quarantine centre where they could be given the care they needed without posing

the risk of spreading infection to any other residents.

Strangles is caused by bacteria that infect the upper respiratory tract. The symptoms include swollen glands that can become painful abscesses that burst, a high temperature, lethargy, and a loss of appetite. It affects horses, donkeys and ponies of all ages.

Kiwi was given medication to reduce the inflammation caused by the infection and to relieve her pain. Three days after she arrived one of the abscesses that had formed under Kiwi's jaw burst, followed by the second two days later. Although



this caused some nasty wounds to the underside of her jaw, Kiwi appeared brighter and more interested in her new surroundings almost immediately.

With the round-the-clock care and dedication from the care team, Kiwi made a good recovery. She stayed in quarantine for several more weeks until the infection had cleared. While she was there, Kiwi's feet and teeth were also checked and tended to, and she was given flu and tetanus vaccinations as we do for all our new arrivals. Once Kiwi was given the all-clear, she moved to a home within the Sanctuary, where she settled into a life with new routines and made new friends.



Kiwi and friends

Admitted to the Horse Hospital

One morning in early February 2021, Kiwi's carers noticed she was much quieter than normal and reluctant to finish her feed. Suspecting Kiwi had mild signs of colic (abdominal pain) they contacted the on-call vet who brought Kiwi into the hospital for further examination, pain relief and monitoring.

For the first few days Kiwi responded well to treatment but then she suddenly developed a high temperature and heart rate. This was a very worrying development, so the team carried out more examinations, including X-rays and blood samples, which suggested that a build-up of sand and the resulting inflammation in her intestines was the likely cause of her discomfort. Sand colic can happen to any horse at any age and while many cases respond to medical treatment, fluids and pain relief, Kiwi's condition began to deteriorate despite round-the-clock care and the team decided to operate.



Thanks to our in-house vet team and the facilities we have at the Redwings Horse Hospital, Kiwi was able to have immediate emergency surgery to clear her system of sand and reduce the gas build up. Kiwi's abdomen was then bandaged and dressed with a belly band, which provided support to her muscles while they recovered, and helped keep the surgical site clean.

Over the course of the next week Kiwi remained in intensive care in the Horse Hospital. Her heart rate gradually returned to normal and her tummy began to heal well from surgery. After a lot of patient care (and cuddles!), Kiwi's appetite returned and she was once again the bright, friendly pony who we have all come to know and love.



Kiwi today

Kiwi does like to worry us! But thankfully although she had another occurrence of colic last November, this time it was mild and could be treated with fluids and pain relief. Today, Kiwi enjoys life at Redwings' headquarters in Norfolk where she is a big favourite with lots of members of the care team because of her easy-going, friendly personality. And having her here at Redwings HQ means our vet team can keep an extra close eye on her!

We can only provide the high level of care and emergency treatment for residents like Kiwi thanks to your generous donations, which keep our Horse Hospital running.

Your donation could help ensure a pony like Kiwi receives vital, expert veterinary care.

Please donate today

- 01508 505246 • www.redwings.org.uk
- Text KIWI to 70085 to donate £10**

*Your donation is used wherever it is needed most in the Sanctuary and will help to fund the ongoing care of all our residents, including those you read about here.

(**You can give any amount - whole £s only - up to £20. Texts will cost the donation amount plus one standard network rate message, and you'll be opting in to hearing more from us. If you would like to donate but don't wish to hear from us, please text KIWINOINFO instead.)



Thank you!



Isabel's 'wheely' good total!

Last year, 13-year-old Redwings supporter Isabel raised over £2,000 for Redwings by taking on a mammoth 12-day cycling challenge! Isabel's challenge saw her cycle to each of our five visitor centres across England and Scotland. With a little help from her father Rich, and his friend Dave, Isabel cycled over 700 miles on a tandem bike. Her challenge finished at Redwings Oxhill, near her home in Rugby and the place where she first fell in love with Redwings.

Izzy said: "My Grandma took me to Oxhill to visit when I was eight and it made me really want to raise money to

help Redwings. It was really hard at times, but it was also really fun."

This wasn't the first time the trio had challenged themselves to raise money for Redwings. Isabel, Rich and Dave walked 100 miles across the Shetland Islands in 2021 and the father and daughter did two of the three highest peaks in Wales in 2022 before their trip had to be cut short. The £2,495 raised for the cycling challenge brings their fundraising efforts to almost £6,000 so far.

What an incredible effort – thank you Isabel!

Firefighters take on four-day Coast Path challenge in aid of Redwings

Firefighters from Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service have raised £800 for Redwings by walking 101 miles along the county coastline.

The team from White Watch at Kings Lynn Fire Station – Becky, Jamie, Doug and Simon – completed the four-day hike along the Norfolk Coast Path at the beginning of December – staying overnight at fire stations along the way.

Becky said: "We all have our own reasons for fundraising for Redwings

– all of us are animal lovers and some of us have horses ourselves or connections to horses in our past and present. Many of the horses we work with at Redwings for our training have found themselves in hardship, but thanks to the work of the charity are now recovered and even helping educate firefighters like us to help other horses and animals."

Thank you so much!



A different kind of 'horse'power!



In what we think might be a first for Redwings, the team at FA Classics Auctioneers fundraised for Redwings by taking part in a charity driving endurance challenge, known as the Fireball Rally.

Travelling across eight countries in Europe in four days, the team upped the challenge by setting a series of fun dares to encourage their followers to donate even more – including sporting just a swimsuit on an icy glacier! Bravo team!

Summer, from the team, said: "We chose to fundraise for Redwings, as I have been an equestrian my whole life and wanted to choose a charity that was close to home and give something back for horses who have had a bad start in life."

Their efforts helped raise almost £300 – thank you to them and their clients and customers!

Have the FA Classics team inspired you to take on a unique fundraising challenge?

You can email fundraising@redwings.co.uk or head to redwings.org.uk to request our Fundraising Pack for everything you need to get started!