

Redwings

Horse Sanctuary



NEWSLETTER
SPRING 2025

Ready to rescue

Read more about how we're ready to help horses in need, thanks to your support

Keeping horses in mind

Our new campaign for tighter fireworks regulations

PLUS

Fantastic fundraisers

Hear about all the ways our #RedwingsAngels have been raising money

Spotlight on enrichment

Helping our horses' wellbeing

And much more inside...

Welcome to your spring newsletter 2025

It's my pleasure to introduce this edition of the Redwings newsletter, which seems to be even more jam-packed than usual with stories about the fantastic work our teams do across the Sanctuary.

This time around we want to focus on a crucial element of our core work, our rescues. On pages 4 and 5 you can meet our newest residents and on 6 to 9 you can find out all about the incredibly multi-layered work involved in putting together a large-scale rescue, from planning to operation to after care, and how you can help us continue this vital work into the future.

Then on pages 10 and 11 you can see some of the wonderful success stories – the happy endings if you will – from our rehoming scheme to the work the team do offering enrichment to our residents. I will admit to having a soft spot for Redwings Brina and her Guardian Eliana!

On pages 12 and 13 there's more about how you can get involved, as we update you on our work on fireworks and their profound impact on horses and other animals, and then we share all the news from a Redwings centre near you. Finally on pages 18 and 19 there's a special spotlight on some of our incredible fundraisers, huge thanks to you all for all the inventive ways you help our horses and ponies!

I do have some important news to share with you all. The cost-of-living crisis has impacted charities as well as individuals and even though we are extremely careful with the funds you kindly donate towards our work, it has still been a very challenging year for us, with costs of feed and other essentials rising sometimes by more than a third. We have to make some difficult decisions to prioritise caring for horses in need.

The Trustees have therefore conducted a comprehensive financial review and sadly one of their recommendations was the closure of our site at Chepstow in Monmouthshire. Although the centre has served us well, providing housing for the horses from the SWHP charity following our merger, unfortunately with building costs rising the way they have since we took it on, we had to face the fact that we would never be able to get it to the standard we needed it to be without extra investment. The horses and ponies have now been moved to other sites including our Oxhill centre in Warwickshire and they are settling in well.

These are challenging times for us all, but we will continue to review what we do to make sure we continue to use your kind donations in the best and most effective way possible, both for our wonderful, rescued horses and for those beyond our paddock fences. Thank you so much for your faithfulness in support during this time and always, we are forever grateful.

Very best wishes,



Lynn Cutress
Chief Executive

Lynn, helping with a rescue operation on Gelligaer in 2023



Rescuing horses calls on us to be thoroughly prepared and able to react in a situation that can suddenly change, while making sure that the welfare of the animals involved always comes first.

Turn to page 6 to find out how the team from across Redwings works together and with other organisations to reach the horses who so desperately need us.

Please donate today:

- 01508 505246
- www.redwings.org.uk
- Text SAFETY 10 to 70470 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 from us, please text SAFETYNOINFO instead.)

News update...

Redwings and the UEA launch free Black Beauty resources for teachers



Are you a teacher or home educator or know someone who is? Redwings has teamed up with the University of East Anglia again to create some free downloadable resources about Black Beauty and Anna Sewell, author of this world-famous novel.

The educational presentations focus on Norfolk, where Anna was born and spent most of her life; horses, including amazing facts about these incredible creatures and their relationship with humans; how to use writing for social justice and more inspiring works to explore, to foster budding writers.



SCAN ME

They're available to download now from the Redwings website!

Hello Joe!

We're delighted to announce that showjumper Joe Stockdale is now an ambassador for Redwings!

Joe, whose father was the late Olympic showjumper Tim Stockdale, has a life-long love of horses, and travelled to the Paris Olympics in 2024 with the British team. Joe began working with Redwings for Strangles Awareness Week, helping to raise awareness of the infectious disease, and he will be donating his time for free to help support our work.

He has already decided to adopt The Gangsters, as he said their cheeky personalities reminded him of his own horses!



Thank you Norwich Lower School



NORWICH SCHOOL

The pupils and staff of Norwich Lower School raised a fantastic £2,673.30 for Redwings at their Christmas Fair. They also invited our Education Officer Charlotte to join them for an assembly so they could hear more about the work we do, and how their money would help transform the lives of horses and donkeys.

Thank you Norwich Lower School, you are all **#RedwingsAngels!**

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Our cover photo features Mason and vet nurse Phoebe.

Mason was rescued in 2023 from Gelligaer common in Wales. He was an orphaned foal, struggling with life on the common without his mum. He was very weak, underweight and received lifesaving plasma transfusions at Redwings.



Look for this icon and read how we're ready to rescue.

On pages 6-9 we explain more about how we are always prepared to help horses who need us, all thanks to your support. Keep an eye out for this logo throughout the newsletter to read more about our rescue work, and the happy ever afters we know you love to see!

Redwings to the rescue!



News of our frontline work from around the UK

Meet our miracle mare



Glorious before

A young Thoroughbred mare, who was so badly injured during a journey from Ireland to the continent on a lorry that she was thought

dead, has been brought back to health in Redwings' care.

Glorious' story is shocking. Now legally signed over to us, and physically recovered, we're able to share it with you.

In January last year, a driver who was headed to the continent loaded with horses for slaughter alerted lairage facilities – an authorised stopping place – that there was a dead mare on board his lorry and requested removal before crossing at Dover. The poor horse was not in fact dead, but badly injured and in need of urgent vet treatment, so the RSPCA was alerted and they asked us to help.

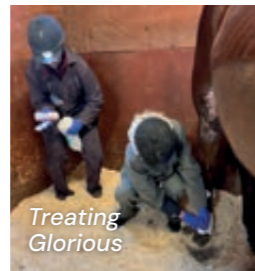
Glorious had multiple wounds all over her body including a head wound that needed to be stapled, caused by being trampled by other horses on

board the grossly overloaded vehicle. Once in our care, X-rays confirmed she had a fractured skull. Her recovery involved many months of treatment by our welfare vets and experts we approached for help.

Now physically healed, she has been integrated into a herd and is especially bonded to Saskia (pictured with her below), and work to undo the psychological damage, which affects her behaviour around humans, is underway.

Sarah Hallsworth, Redwings' Equine Behaviour Manager, said: "Whilst Glorious loves her herd mates, she doesn't always enjoy too much interaction with people, likely due to her history, so we're working on that.

"For now, she is enjoying just being a horse in a safe environment where, thanks to our supporters, her future is secure and we can progress as steadily as she is comfortable with."



Treating Glorious



Saskia and Glorious now



Smokey's twilight years are secure thanks to Redwings

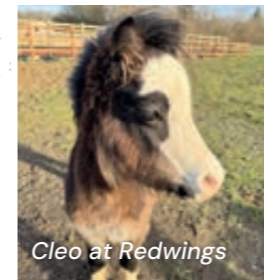
Redwings has offered a forever home to a 22-year-old Trotter stallion, whose owner realised they couldn't provide the care he needed to keep him happy and healthy in his twilight years.

Smokey came into sanctuary care in November after concerns were raised for his body condition.

His teeth were very worn, and he had a chronic eye condition that needed ongoing veterinary care, not easily managed in a private home.

Jo Franklin, our Senior Field Officer, said: "I'm glad Smokey's owner was able to work with us to ensure that he got everything he needed going forwards. Now on a special diet, with his eyes being closely monitored by our vets, Smokey has already gained weight and he will get all the TLC he needs through the later years of his life here at Redwings."

'Best Friends Forever'



Cleo at Redwings

A tiny, abandoned foal called Cleo, who had to have an eye removed due to a painful condition, is settling into her new life at Redwings with her new 'BFF'.

Redwings was contacted by Abbey Vets in South Wales in October. They had treated Cleo and were desperate to find a suitable home for her, and we knew we had the perfect best friend and foster mum for her in foal Ruby and mare Cilla!

If you've been following Ruby's story, you'll know that she came into

sanctuary care in June 2024 after being found beside the body of her mother, who had already passed away.

Nic de Brauwere, Redwings' Head of Welfare and Behaviour, said: "It's very important for young horses' development to have friends their own age. These two really needed each other, and we are so happy that we got this call and were able to help."



Cilla, Cleo and Ruby at Redwings in December



Pixie, Jasper and Monty at Redwings Caldecott

A specialist home

Last summer we welcomed 21 ponies and donkeys to Redwings. Many of the group, made up of Shetlands, native ponies, four donkeys and a mule, had previously come from rescue backgrounds or were elderly, and needed continued specialist care, so their owner reached out for our help.

Julie Harding, Redwings' Senior Field Officer, said: "The ponies and donkeys had not travelled on a horsebox for many years, but using the knowledge and patience of our team and our rescue equipment (read more about this on page 6) we were able to bring the group to Redwings and ensure their trip was a comfy and positive one!

"As with all our new arrivals, we thoroughly assessed the group and determined which Redwings centre was best placed to manage their ongoing needs. Friendly Miniature Shetlands Pixie, Jasper and Monty have been enjoying getting to meet our supporters at Redwings Caldecott.



"Others, like Lucy Little Legs, a 9hh Shetland pony with dwarfism, and her mum Daisy live at our Norfolk HQ, and some of the ponies and donkeys are being supported by our Behaviour team as we work on improving their familiarity with loading on a horsebox, or having their legs handled – crucial to making sure they are happy with the farrier."

Pregnant pony given safe home at Redwings

A five-year-old pony, who we called Bunny because of her short tail, came into our care after a local council removed her from public land under the Control of Horses Act.

In foal, with a sarcoid on her chest and suffering from leg mites, Bunny needed a safe home where she could get the treatment she needed.

When we are contacted about a horse in need, their circumstances are considered by a small team whose job it is to decide what help we, as a charity reliant entirely on your kind donations, can offer at the time. Thanks to your support, Redwings was able to help her and secure a future for her and her unborn foal.



Bunny before she arrived at Redwings



What makes a rescue happen?

As well as the cases you have read about on our 'Redwings to the Rescue' pages, in 2024 Redwings attended several large-scale rescues, some of which we can't share details about yet due to ongoing investigations.

In November and early January, we were also back helping the ponies on Gelligaer common in South Wales, as part of our ongoing commitment to them. Working with other organisations we helped identify and catch youngsters that were mature enough to go to different welfare organisations to be rehomed in the future. This is crucial to get the herds to a number that the land can sustain, and we were also on-hand to respond if any ponies looked underweight, sick or injured.

Nic de Brauwere (pictured right) is our Head of Welfare and Behaviour. He heads up the team who plan, coordinate and carry out rescues of horses and donkeys in need across the UK. Here he explains the crucial process behind every rescue, and how we help horses in desperate need.



Receiving the call

We can be alerted to horses who need our help in several ways. Redwings may receive a welfare call directly, or a call from another organisation needing our help.

Large-scale rescues most often involve multiple charities – often members of the National Equine Welfare Council – as well as other organisations such as the Police, or the local authorities, so coordination is key.

We will be asking questions such as: How many horses does it involve? Have any actions already been taken? Who is involved, and who will do what? Do we have enough information, or do we need to find out more about the situation or location?

If the situation allows us time, members of our Welfare team will meet their counterparts in the other organisations to discuss plans for the operation including the legal considerations, veterinary needs for the horses, plans to transport them, and who will offer the horses a home.

In emergencies, we can organise all of this on the move, to help the horses as quickly as possible. But for larger and more complex cases, these steps to plan make sure we are setting up a successful and safe operation.



Prepare, prepare, prepare

It is then action stations to make sure the team is ready, and any resources we need are in place.

We often take our rescue pen sections. These metal, mesh panels attach to one-another to make temporary corrals for ponies, enabling us to safely catch and contain them, and to have somewhere to separate and safely administer any emergency care they need. They are transported on large trailers, so checks are carried out to make sure the vehicles are ready to go.

As vets, we will make sure we are equipped with anything we may need to treat the ponies, and take any important samples. Many rescues we are called to help with involve unhandled or semi-feral ponies, so we make sure to take



plenty of sedation – which helps calm nervous horses and allows us to handle and treat them safely. We also have 'injection poles' which allow us to administer this sedation from a greater distance, reducing any stress for the ponies who are too frightened to let us near them.

There are also practical things to think of, like arranging food, buckets and canisters so we can provide water, and taking headcollars and leadropes. Our kit even includes sheep marker spray – key to ensuring we can identify each individual pony and tell them apart.



The team at any rescue brings together expertise from across the organisation. The core team is made up of my colleagues from the Welfare department. Our Field Officers are experienced in coordinating rescues, which is often as much about organising people as ponies! Plus, we have experienced horse handlers. Horses at rescues are often frightened, and sometimes in pain, so our team must be adept at reading equine body language so we can choose the right approach to help them.

Our Maintenance team might not be the first team you would picture at a rescue, but they bring a practical and technical mindset that is key to using our equipment safely and looking after it well so we will have it for years to come. Rescues can

Who attends a rescue?

attract attention either from the public, or the media, and we are careful about the details which we share, especially if a rescue could be the subject of a prosecution case, so we are often supported by colleagues from our Communications team too.

Our colleagues back at HQ also help us be prepared to deal with the unexpected! One of the large rescues we attended in 2024, which ended up being especially complex and took longer than originally planned, saw our team need an extra night's accommodation. Our colleagues arranging things like this for us means we can concentrate on the job in hand – helping horses – but still know we have somewhere to sleep! They can also help us find out any information needed to help the operation on the ground, crucial as things are often changing. The most important part of this team is knowing we are all looking out for one another. Rescues can mean long, difficult hours and sadly we do see upsetting things. It is a testament to life at Redwings that colleagues from across the Sanctuary come together to help horses, and each other too.

Travelling to the rescue

Redwings works nationwide, and so our rescue work can take us anywhere in the UK, just like our trips to Gelligaer common. Our vets and most of the team tend to travel from our Norfolk HQ, the central hub for many of our resources, but often teams from our nearest site will support with horse handling, equipment and transport.



Helping horses – our role at a rescue

Part of helping horses at a rescue may be offering them a home in the Sanctuary, but Redwings' role is more than that. As you have seen, Redwings brings unique expertise to many rescue scenarios, especially in our understanding of equine behaviour and herd dynamics.

Equine charities, including Redwings, are facing a reality where we are working at near capacity. The different organisations involved in rescues will all have their own areas of expertise, so working together we share the responsibility of finding the most suitable homes for the horses we rescue.

Redwings often offers homes to the horses in need of the most veterinary care. If our vets have been present at the rescue we can offer a continuity of care, meaning from the moment they step off the horsebox we can continue working on making them feel better.



Our welfare vets, Nicola, Chloe and Alex (and myself!) are experienced in undoing the damage of neglect. Through all the cases we have seen before, we have learnt so much about how to treat ponies in distress – when to push for intensive treatment, and when to let them have the time to heal without potentially stressful veterinary interventions.

Part of our responsibility as welfare vets may also see us be called to give evidence in court. This is a great responsibility, as we must present the evidence in a way that will be understood by people who don't necessarily have equine experience, as well as be prepared to be robustly challenged in court.



After arrival

After the rescue, the equines need to be assessed, so we can determine what further treatment they may need. For example, many horses will require starting on a worming protocol or they may need farriery attention for overgrown hooves, or urgent dental care to ensure they can eat comfortably.

More complex cases may need round-the-clock care, treatment for wounds or even supporting them with a sling to help them stand.

In prosecution cases we also document their health and condition, plus the work needed to bring them back to health, as it is a vital part of the legal evidence. Our vets will also support investigations at rescues led by other organisations or charities, especially when many horses need to be assessed.

The work continues...

Once we get back to HQ, our work isn't over! Firstly, all the equipment and vehicles used at the rescue must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. This is important for biosecurity, making sure we do not bring any infectious disease into the Sanctuary. We're often tired, after the hard work of a rescue, but this must be done as soon as we return.

This is also the time when the team will check all the equipment – making any repairs if needed – and store it carefully so that it's ready to go whenever it is needed next.



It's vital that we're ready to rescue



Our Welfare team will be called to respond to vulnerable horses, ponies and donkeys in the months ahead. While each rescue has unique challenges, there are some similarities between cases which explain – at least in part – how horses come to be in a situation that threatens their welfare. Increasingly we see at first-hand how the rising cost-of-living is impacting horse owners as much as anyone else, and sadly that impact is sometimes felt by the animals in their care.

Who we're here to help

We specialise in caring for horses with the most complex needs. It is thanks to our supporters that we have gained years of experience in undoing the damage of physical neglect and mental suffering, **providing so many rescued horses with a future that they could not enjoy anywhere else.**

Latest arrival



At the time we are writing this newsletter, our team received a report of an underweight mare at a site in Norfolk. Our Senior Field Officer Julie attended and found an abandoned mare, who was severely emaciated and sick, suffering from life threatening diarrhoea. Straight away, our team assembled and, with our pen sections because she was extremely fearful of people and could not be caught, went to bring her to the safety of Redwings.

Within 24 hours she had received emergency treatment to stabilise her condition and after a few days she received thorough dental treatment, which immediately helped her eat hay comfortably. We are monitoring her closely, but her condition is very serious. Your support means we can give her a fighting chance at life.

During these economically difficult times we remain committed to every horse who needs our help and to spending every donation as effectively as possible. **By supporting our work, you are directly helping those most vulnerable horses, those with declining health or with little prospect of their situation improving, and giving them a secure, caring home.**

Your gift could help us reach a vulnerable horse, rescue them and bring them to a home of safety.*

Please donate today

- 01508 505246 • www.redwings.org.uk
- Text SAFETY 10 to 70470 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 SAFETYNOINFO instead.



Thank you!



Gelligaer 2024



Zeus is a model patient

Teaching the next generation of vets

Last year we were approached by the team at the University of Cambridge's Department of Veterinary Medicine, looking for a friendly, safe-to-handle pony with a heart murmur to join their teaching herd, to help students learn how to detect the heart condition, as well as about equine behaviour. Whilst we may not usually rehome a horse with the condition, we knew their vets would monitor it closely, and we could think of just the pony for them!

Zeus was rescued in 2014 as part of an RSPCA prosecution case, with his donkey friend Rio. Zeus had a large untreated sarcoid, and Rio's hooves were so overgrown that he could barely walk a few strides.

We're so proud that Zeus now plays such a valuable role educating vets of the future, and were delighted when the team told us: "Zeus has settled in really well and he won us over quickly with his cheeky and kind personality! He has helped students learn how to perform a clinical examination and a 'trot-up' (used to assess for possible lameness), as well as crucial elements of equine behaviour."



Best Friends Forever, whatever the weather!

We regularly share details of our continued work on Gelligaer common, and our commitment to the ponies there, and we are delighted to share an update on Brina who came from the common in 2016.

Brina went to her new Guardian home with Lisa and her 10-year-old daughter Eliana in 2023.



Brina with Guardian Lisa and daughter Eliana

Lisa said: "We were invited to a trial with Brina, and honestly it was love at first sight, for both of them! They leaned in and had a little 'cwtch', and the Rehoming team looked at us and it was like we all acknowledged it must be love!"

In their first winter together, not deterred by the weather or lack of daylight, Eliana and Brina took part in an online course – taking on 77 training challenges and bonding exercises together (whatever the weather!) and working on their groundwork and partnership.

"That course was the best thing they could have done together, and now their relationship is so special. Brina whinnies to Ellie whenever she sees her, and I would say that 90% of Eliana's Christmas presents were in fact for Brina. Brina is without doubt her best friend."



Handsome Redwings Graham (right) came from the same rescue – and look at him now! Together with Guardian Jeanette, he has been turning a hoof to in-hand showing, winning second place for Best Condition, as well as being a super companion to Jeanette's other horses.



Redwings Graham

Spotlight on enrichment

We often talk about 'enrichment' for our residents. You might have seen our residents enjoying 'welly-wanging' or enrichment boxes (investigating welly boots or boxes filled with hay or ginger biscuits!) or being offered branches or other novel objects in their paddock to explore.

Here at Redwings, we are committed to the mental wellbeing of our residents. The crucial things we offer are 'Friends, Forage and Freedom'. As herd animals it's key that horses have the company of others, for playing, socialising and feeling safe. Horses are grazing animals, evolved to eat forage-based diets (meaning grass or hay) 'little and often'. In fact, they can graze for around 18 hours a day. Horses at Redwings also 'live out' meaning that, unless there is a veterinary reason for them to spend time in a stable, they will be living in their paddocks 24/7, with the freedom to do all that grazing, socialising, or just mooching about!

These are the cornerstones of the sanctuary care we provide, but enrichment is something we can do on top of that to stimulate their natural instincts. These activities often involve searching for or sniffing out food, encouraging the horses to explore new things.



Basil



Wiggins



Ruby

Ruby

Felicity and Catherine, members of our Behaviour team who have been responsible for training Ruby, our little orphaned foal, have been trialling different enrichment activities for her and foster-mum Cilla.

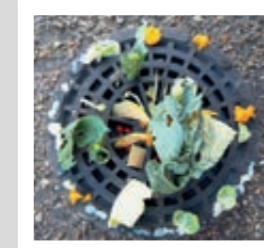
As well as wellies, and knotted leadropes to investigate, they have also been preparing branches for Ruby, covered with soft foods such as banana and pumpkin puree, for her to lick and investigate!

Felicity said: "Foals like Ruby are naturally inquisitive, and enrichment activities mean she encounters novel things at a young age, especially smells and tastes. This is then excellent preparation for if she needs any medications, which will obviously taste different to her normal food!"

Sourdough

We introduced you to Sourdough last year, when we shared her story in our appeal. Since her rescue in August 2022, our Veterinary team has been treating a bacterial infection in her hooves, known as canker. In October last year, Sourdough underwent surgery to remove the damaged tissue in her hooves, and her recovery involves a long-term period of box rest in our Horse Hospital.

Box rest is necessary but isn't natural for horses. So, Felicity and her team have been working on enrichment for Sourdough during her hospital stay, including this 'snuffle mat' of sorts (made out of the base of a plastic post!) filled with tasty treats, or using treat balls filled with grass and other horse-friendly fresh forage!



Sourdough with daughter Doughball

Keeping Horses In Mind

– campaigning for tighter fireworks regulations



We're delighted that our efforts to raise awareness of the impact of fireworks on horses took another big step forward in October 2024, with the launch of Redwings' Keep Horses In Mind campaign. The campaign is designed to bring together the growing number of ways we work to show that firework use within current regulations is simply incompatible with sensitive, easily frightened and potentially dangerous animals like horses.

Launching the Keep Horses in Mind campaign was just one of our many activities on the issue of fireworks we took on in the last few months. Our team has been busier than ever on the topic – here are just some of the highlights!



Petition handover

A petition calling for tighter regulation of fireworks that was signed by more than a million people was handed in to No.10 Downing Street on 5th November. Redwings was one of the five charities invited to attend the handover by petitioner Julie Doorne. Coverage of the handover was shared by more than 500 media outlets, including the Independent, the Daily Express and BBC News! Helen Whitelegg, our Campaigns Manager, was also interviewed on local radio station BBC Radio Norfolk, and national station LBC – a huge achievement in highlighting the distress fireworks can cause for horses and their owners to audiences who might not otherwise be familiar.



Drop in event for MPs

As part of the Fireworks Working Group, Redwings helped to organise a drop-in event for MPs on 30th October. The Westminster event was sponsored by Dr Neil Hudson MP, who was a veterinary surgeon before entering parliament, giving him extensive experience of the impact of fireworks on horses and other animals. Despite the event coinciding with the autumn budget, 15 MPs from across the political spectrum attended to show their support and meet members of the Fireworks Working Group, including fabulous assistance dog Nieve!

Researching fireworks and horses



Lack of data is one of the biggest challenges when it comes to persuading Westminster that change to fireworks regulations is needed. To help fill that gap, Redwings surveyed horse owners who visited our stand at Your Horse Live in November. More than 170 horse owners took part and the results were striking, with more than 97% of respondents saying they wanted to see more regulation of fireworks and more than 80% saying they worry about the impact of fireworks on their horse.

To cast our data net more widely, Redwings launched the same survey online in December and when it closed on 19th January 2025, more than 5,000 owners had shared their thoughts and experiences, creating a comprehensive dataset to showcase the reality of the issues fireworks present for horses and their owners.

Strangles Awareness Week

Redwings continues to lead the annual Strangles Awareness Week in May and plans for this year's week began way back in August 2024! Focusing on the BEST ways to protect horses from Strangles, look out for our eye-catching yellow branding this spring as we help more people take simple but effective actions to prevent the spread of infection and save lives.



Government meeting

Fireworks regulations are the responsibility of the Department for Business and Trade and Redwings was one of five members of the Fireworks Working Group invited to meet with Under Secretary of State for Business and Trade Justin Madders in February this year. The meeting was a chance to present a range of concerns from both animal and human charities about the many negative impacts of fireworks and propose practical solutions that we feel could prevent much of the widespread distress and harm they cause.

To support Redwings' Keep Horses In Mind campaign, access our free digital action pack by scanning the QR code, or visiting our website. We will keep this updated with useful resources to read and share, and all the ways you can voice your support. You can also sign up on our website to join our campaign mailing list – to receive emails about the campaign and ways you can help.



Focus on horse behaviour

Redwings is an active member of the National Equine Welfare Council (NEWC) and we particularly enjoy collaborating with colleagues from other charities at key events such as Appleby Horse Fair and British Farrier and Blacksmiths Association (BFBA)'s Farrier Focus.

At Farrier Focus last September, NEWC wanted to find out more about the impact unwanted horse behaviour can have on a farrier's safety and ability to carry out essential hoof care work. The team used a 'tin can alley' activity to encourage farriers to share their experiences, and more than 100 farriers took up the challenge, sharing their views about horse behaviour as they did so.

The statistics recorded from the activity showed that farriers are most frustrated by horses simply not standing still during hoof care visits, a basic training requirement that has wider implications for other professionals such as vets and equine physiotherapists, as well as horse owners themselves.

Here at Redwings, we have produced a behaviour edition of our 'Field Notes' publication, featuring how we can work with our horses to both prevent and overcome handling issues, and sharing insights from our Behaviour team, and from the ever-growing range of scientific research that is available.



News from around 'Your Redwings' the Sanctuary –



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

REDWINGS

Aylsham

North Norfolk, NR11 6UE



Handsome Harley reunites with young friends

Harley arrived at Redwings last year with a very interesting past! He had lived at the Ebony Horse Club, a charity situated in Brixton, London, providing an opportunity for young people to build on their life skills by giving them access to horses and riding!

Unfortunately, Harley was diagnosed with osteoarthritis in his hind fetlocks and could no longer be ridden. The Club was unable to provide him with a place

to retire so, after doing so much to help young people, Redwings was glad to offer Harley a home for a well-earned rest.

His positive impact on young people at the Club was evident when they made a special visit to Redwings Aylsham to see him in his new home, where he enjoyed plenty of attention and affection from his many adoring fans!

Snap happy!

The residents of Redwings Aylsham have been pulling their best poses for photographers recently! We were delighted to welcome Rose from 'Daydream Equine Art and Photography' to the centre, and we asked her to take photos to show off the personalities of our wonderful horses and donkeys – and gosh didn't she just?!

We are also grateful to our volunteer photographers for their time spent snapping too! Photos are a huge part of how we share the stories of our residents, and the difference your support makes. From here in the newsletter, to our website and social media, their photos help bring our residents' stories to life, and to you!

Why not visit one of our centres and see what shots you can capture too?



Iris, captured by Rose

Stablemates

In our last newsletter we introduced you to Rafi, who joined our donkey herd at Redwings Aylsham as a special friend for Harry. A boost in donkey numbers meant that we needed an expansion in their living quarters! Donkeys have evolved

from desert-dwellers, so their coats and hooves are not big fans of our wet winters. Therefore, the team at Aylsham will bring them into their stable block, if they need some relief from the weather.

Maintenance team members Chris and Jade therefore constructed an extra stable for our long-eared friends and Adoption Star Wiggins was delighted to be chosen to try it out for size (and photos!)



Ada Cole Essex, EN9 2DH

REDWINGS



A year of special care for Marjorie



We told you about how she was rescued by police in December 2023 when she was spotted loose and roaming close to a busy area of Harlow in Essex.

She was very nervous, had injuries from improper tethering – the scars from which she still bears today – and a painful mouth caused by problems with

her teeth which needed immediate veterinary attention.

In her time at Redwings, Marjorie has had a tricky tooth extracted, and treatment for an infected sinus at our Horse Hospital in Norfolk. Happily, she has made a full recovery (and won the hearts of lots of our nurses!) and she is now settling back into life at Redwings Ada Cole.

Redwings becomes charity of the year!

We're incredibly grateful to vets House and Jackson, who have chosen Redwings to be one of their charities of the year!

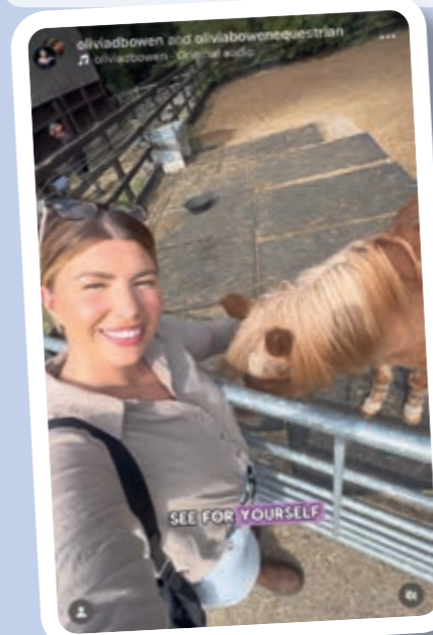
We have worked closely with House and Jackson, whose horse clinic is just up the road from Redwings Ada Cole, for many years, and they have

helped provide initial emergency treatment for rescued horses in local cases, before they have come to Redwings.

As well as spreading the word to their clients about how they can donate towards our work, they also held a



charity day in the run-up to Christmas, donning their best festive clothing to raise further vital funds. Thank you so much!



A successful year

This Easter marks one year since Redwings Ada Cole reopened its doors every weekend since the pandemic. We're incredibly thankful to everyone who has taken the time to say hello to our rescued horses, including a very special visit from TV personality, social media blogger and horse owner Olivia Bowen.

Olivia spent the day with us at Redwings Ada Cole and kindly shared her experience and support of our work with her three million followers.

We look forward to welcoming Olivia and her family back to the centre soon.

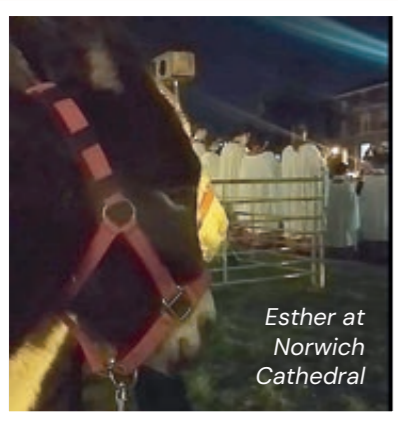
Caldecott

Gt. Yarmouth, NR31 9EY

WELCOME

Martha and Esther invited to Norwich Cathedral!

In December, Adoption Star Esther and her mother, Martha, visited Norwich Cathedral to attend the blessing of the crib service. The donkeys brought a touch of Christmas magic to the event and behaved very well, even contributing some 'helpful' braying to ensure that the significance of donkeys at Christmas was not forgotten throughout the service!



Esther at Norwich Cathedral

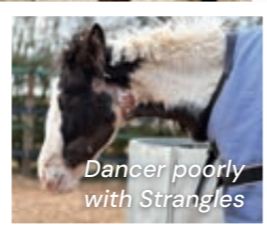
Redwings Caldecott welcomes Dancer and Frenchie!

Mum and daughter pair Frenchie and Dancer arrived at Redwings Caldecott towards the end of last year, where they were welcomed with open arms by staff and supporters alike!

The pair were part of a group of 12 horses that came to Redwings in 2015 from a site in Norfolk. Despite claiming to be a sanctuary, their owners had failed to provide even basic care for their horses, leading to multiple health issues that



Dancer and Frenchie



Dancer poorly with Strangles

required urgent care. Dancer spent weeks recovering from Strangles, an infectious respiratory disease. Because the rescue took place during the festive season, the horses were named after the "Twelve Days of Christmas" carol. Their former owners were successfully prosecuted for causing unnecessary suffering and banned from keeping equines for life.

You can read more about their story by searching 'Rainbow Meadows' on our website.

Sponsor a Star and help us be ready to rescue



Adoption Star Lady is a popular (and very beautiful!) face at Redwings Oxhill, but her future may once have looked very different if it was not for the teams that came together for her rescue in 2017.

In November of that year, we received a call to our welfare line from a landowner about a large group of Shire horses fly-grazing (grazing without permission) on his land. Notices were issued under the Control of Horses Act, but when no one came forward to claim them, ownership was transferred to the landowner, who asked for our help. With concerns about the



Lady's rescue

onset of winter and the fact the youngsters were completely unhandled, Redwings joined forces with several other charities to offer the horses

homes. During the 15-hour rescue operation, 19 horses were removed from the site, and Redwings offered a home to six, including Lady who was just a year old at the time.

Now you can sponsor Lady from just £2 a month and receive updates about her life at the Sanctuary. You will receive a wonderful adoption pack including three postal updates a year, as well as quarterly emails from your new friend, plus beautiful photographs, a certificate of adoption and a bookmark.

Crucially, by supporting our Adoption Stars you will be helping us be **ready to rescue**, ensuring we can be there for the next horses and donkeys who urgently need our help.

To sponsor Lady for yourself or as a gift for a loved one, visit redwings.org.uk/support-us/adopt-a-horse

Oxhill

Warwickshire, CV35 0RP

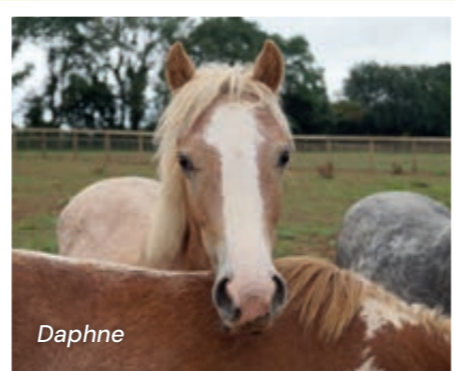
A new home for the horses of SWHP

As outlined on page 2, following our decision to close our Chepstow site, many of the horses who lived there were moved to their new home at Redwings Oxhill.

These include stunning Thoroughbred cross Arrow, adorable Shetland ponies Muffin and Joe, and Welsh pony trio Dot, Dash and Daphne. Thanks to the all the works upgrading the facilities at Oxhill, including new stables, barns and woodchip paddocks, (and your patience whilst the works have been ongoing!) we hope the new arrivals will give their new home at Casa del Oxhill five stars! Be sure to give them all a big welcoming cuddle when you next visit.



Muffin



Daphne



Chloe with Gibson and some of their wishlist goodies

Send a special gift to our horses and donkeys

This year, you can make a difference for the rescued horses and donkeys at Redwings Mountains, as well as our other visitor centres across the UK, by shopping from our amazing Amazon Wishlists!

As a charity funded 100% by donations, we rely on the generosity of our wonderful supporters. While monetary donations are always appreciated, we know many of you love the option of choosing specific items which will directly benefit our very special residents.

Our Wishlists are full of essential items that our teams need most,

including hoof picks, haynets, grooming brushes, headcollars, treat balls and more – plus there's something for every budget.

Search 'wishlists' on our website to find out more – thank you so much #RedwingsAngels

Minnie



Mountains

Scotland, DD8 3SQ



Fundraising with Rhi!

Rhiannon Davies, better known as [@ridingwithrhi](#), is an Instagram influencer. Last year she proudly became an ambassador for Redwings and has been raising money for us too!

Rhi said: "I had a lot of fun raising money for Redwings! My top fundraising tip would be that if you don't feel comfortable asking your community for direct donations, try a raffle or a second-hand sale instead."

"Equitex kindly agreed to give away one of their coveted saddle pads, and I set up a raffle at £2 a ticket. It was a huge success, and we raised over £500!"

"I also had a clear out of some of my horsey clothes, and shared photos on Instagram with details and the price. I sold everything within hours, leaving me with a tidier house, giving the clothes a second life and supporting Redwings. This is a really easy way for anyone to support a charity without feeling that you are simply asking for donations."

We're potty about plant sales!

Now that the worst of the winter weather is (hopefully) behind us, holding a plant sale can be a wonderful way to make your neighbourhood a little greener and to raise funds for Redwings.



Early variety tomatoes, peppers and broad beans are popular and easy to grow. Lavender and echinacea are not only bee-friendly, they're horse-friendly too. Asters and chrysanthmums can bring vibrant colour into the garden well into autumn.

For advice on holding a plant sale or any fundraising event, ask for one of our fundraising packs at redwings.org.uk or call us on 01508 505246.



Putting their best feet forward!

Next month, two runners will be completing the London Marathon for Redwings. Supporters Stephen Kennard and Steph Callen (who also used to work for Redwings) will be hitting the streets of the capital on Sunday 27th April, raising vital funds towards our work. In fact, we think it's the first time anyone has run the London Marathon for Redwings!

Steph said: "I used to run regularly before I had my daughter three years ago and have struggled to get back into running ever since. As an incentive, last year I entered my name into the marathon ballot on a bit of a whim and my name was pulled out! There was only a 2% chance of being selected so I took it as a sign! Having worked at Redwings and seen



first-hand the amazing work of the teams across the charity, I'm delighted to be one of the first to take on the challenge for Redwings."

Both Steph and Stephen have set up fundraising pages where people can leave donations and the pair have been documenting their training in a blog on our website.

Taking fundraising to new heights



Redwings supporter Lee raised a fantastic total of £500 by taking part in a skydive! You wouldn't believe it now, but Lee was actually frightened of horses until he was 65, when a colleague gifted him a taster riding lesson.

Now, Lee says: "I live for anything to do with horses, and I wanted to give something back to horses in need. Raising money for Redwings seemed an obvious choice!"

There was snow on the ground in November when Lee and his tandem partner jumped from 14,500ft, and it was a chilly -30°C when they left the plane! His riding school, Newfield Riding School, all came together to support Lee and help him get sponsorship, and we're so grateful for all their support!

Raising money is child's play!



It's not just plant sales that could raise money for Redwings. Our multi-talented HR Administrator Georgie has raised over £500 for Redwings by hosting 'Baby and Toddler' sales in her community.

Georgie said: "I hire the village hall and advertise the date, and people pay to hire a table to sell any baby or toddler toys, clothes or equipment. My kids also get involved and we have hosted games and cake stalls as well to raise some more money!"

"At the end of the sales, if sellers want, they can leave their unsold goods with me, and I sort those and sell them on to raise even more money. I only intended to run it once, but it was so popular, and everyone kept asking me when I would do another one – so I've now done three!"

A lifetime of changing lives

Celebrating our fantastic fundraisers wouldn't be complete without acknowledging a very special supporter of Redwings. Betty Watkins raised almost £50,000 for Redwings throughout her lifetime by attending car boot sales. Betty very sadly passed away in 2024, and we are so saddened for her family and loved ones.

Betty's support changed the lives of horses, ponies and donkeys, and we are forever grateful. A true [#RedwingsAngel](#)



Providing a home for life



Situated on the outskirts of the historic Norfolk market town, Redwings Aylsham provides a safe, caring home to resident horses, ponies and donkeys.



Amigo when rescued

Amigo was one of the earliest residents at Aylsham, moving to the site shortly after it opened in 2013. He needs long term care for a liver condition and, during the warmer months, we make sure he is protected from the sun because he is prone to sunburn. Having been abandoned in a disused coal mine in very poor condition when he was not yet a year old, today Amigo leads a happy life which at one time seemed very unlikely.

Redwings Aylsham is home to 70 residents, and sadly many have a story like Amigo's. The farm and visitor centre were created through donations made by people who remembered Redwings with a gift in their Will.



Meet Amigo



Red's Shed

Looking to the future

In the past decade the centre has become a hub for Redwings' educational work, hosting veterinary seminars and college visits. By creating 'Red's Shed' the dedicated team at Aylsham has introduced countless young people to the serious matters – as well as the joys – of caring for a horse. We believe giving the next generation the skills and understanding to care for horses will play a vital role in improving animal welfare in the future.

Redwings Aylsham is also home to two beautiful wildlife ponds which are a haven for animals, including herons,

kingfishers, butterflies and even otters! Spending time in such a peaceful place that helps our resident horses and local wildlife leads many people to visit us time and again, throughout the year.

If you would like to support Redwings by making a gift in your Will, please visit redwings.org.uk and search 'Remember Redwings'.

Alternatively, you can use the QR code on this page or call us on **01508 481030** for more details and help.



SCAN ME



Use our free Will service to make your Will online or over the phone with Farewill.

Use any of the above links to find out more.