

## REPORTER'S NOTES

**How was Ginger badly treated?**

**What was good in Ginger's life?**

**Any extra information**

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# ‘Terrifying’ number of horses arriving at sanctuary

An equine charity is having to deal with a “terrifying” number of horses, with record numbers of animals arriving.



Bransby Horses is now caring for 400 horses, donkeys and mules at its Lincolnshire centre, the highest in the charity’s 48-year-old history.

More than 80 horses, including mares in foal and three Shetlands, have been rescued in the last six months including Joey (pictured, below).

“The fact that we’re still seeing record numbers arriving going into the summer is terrifying,” said Ryan Rouse, the charity’s head of external welfare. “With the wet spring and summer so far, the grass is in abundance and we shouldn’t be seeing such numbers of horses arriving.”

Lack of equine knowledge is blamed for the influx.



“Parasite control is one of the biggest problems; the basics of feet and teeth are also being ignored,” said Mr. Rouse. “The media has highlighted the growing equine crisis, but those who have little knowledge of horses can still buy three or four at a time.”

In previous years most of the arrivals at Bransby’s Lincolnshire and Herefordshire centres were colts and youngsters but this year it is seeing more mares in foal coming in and the age of horses now varies.

One of the worst cases seen this year was the so-called Lion King group.

The charity took 11 of 21 horses rescued from Norfolk in April, many of which were mares and foals, all of which were in poor condition. They were later named after characters in the Disney film.

The horses were in poor condition but are now recovering at the charity’s 600-acre Lincolnshire centre.

*By Caroline Bankes*

# RSPCA warning of horse cruelty

**RSPCA inspectors today warned cases of neglect and cruelty involving horses could soar as hot weather continues and hay prices rise.**

They say many people who buy an animal do not realise the cost of keeping it properly and will face extra problems in the coming months.

The comments came as the charity launched a national Horse Care Campaign after a survey revealed the number of rescues it made rose from 165 in 1993 to 241 in 1994.

## Cruelty

Lincoln Inspector Bob Ellison said: "There has been an increase of neglect in the county and we get regular weekly calls of new cases, some of which stick out in your mind as particularly nasty. Cases tend to be a combination of malnutrition, neglect and cruelty."

Mr Ellison said the charity was expecting a rise in the number of calls in the next few months.

"What we are now finding is that the lack of rain means horses are really suffering because of the shortage of grazing," he explained.

"I am certain we are going to see an increase in neglect in the Autumn as hay prices increase and people just can't afford all the expense of keeping an animal properly."

\*Bransby Home of Rest for Horses, near Saxilby, is currently looking after six horses brought in by the RSPCA.

## Expenses

And charity honorary secretary, Peter Hunt told your Echo last week that the sanctuary was refusing places for an average of eight homeless horses a day because of lack of space.

Mr Hunt said: "The cost of keeping a pony runs into thousands of pounds when feeding, shoeing, vet and stabling expenses are added up. People don't realise what they're taking on."

He said the rising cost of hay was already affecting the home and was bound to make an impact on the budget of other horse and pony owners.

"There has been an increase in cases of neglect and I can see that continuing this year and into 1996," Mr Hunt warned.

*By Sarah Moore*

*\*Now called: Bransby Horses – Rescue and Welfare*