

BRANSBY

— HORSES —



Your Exclusive
2023 Reflection

BRANSBY

— HORSES —

It's the time of year again to look back and reflect on some of the work and events that have taken place over the past 12 months. None of this would've been possible without the continued support from people like you.

At the start of 2023 we saw a significant rise in strangles cases and urged equine owners nationwide to keep an eye out for the signs of this disease. With the rate of infection at an all-time high, our stringent biosecurity and isolation measures in our quarantine unit for new arrivals were put to the test.

Three of our foals born on-site reached 'yearling' status, becoming more independent as they grew. Their first birthdays were ones to celebrate as we reminisced about their surprise arrival back in April 2022. We saw Sponsorship Star Matilda undergo life-saving surgery in March after a cluster of cancerous lumps (also known as sarcoids) were found on her ear. Matilda made a full recovery and was quickly reunited with the rest of her herd.

We teamed up with Bequeathed to provide a new free Will writing service to our supporters and their families – you can take advantage of this service on our website and if you would like to remember Bransby Horses when creating your Will or Codicil, our four-legged friends will be forever grateful. We also joined forces with other animal welfare organisations and the police to monitor equine health and well-being at one of the biggest editions of Appleby Horse Fair in June.

We sadly had to say goodbye to some of Bransby's most popular residents, Coral, Apache and Saratoga. We know how much our supporters loved them and know you'll remember them as fondly as we will.

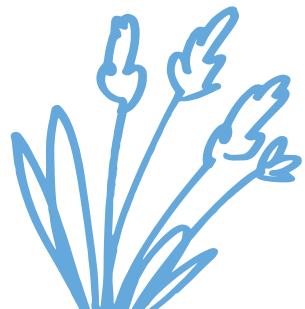
There are stories in this update that may be familiar to you, such as the impact Storm Babet had on the charity, but we hope you enjoy them nonetheless.

Once again, thank you. We could not help equines in need without your support.

Best Wishes

Sally Crawford

Director of Engagement & Income Generation



Storms from B to H

Following Storm Babet in October 2023 that caused us to lose over 250 acres of land for almost two weeks (with most of this still unusable for grazing), we launched our Emergency Flood Crisis fundraiser to help us recover from the impact. We didn't know it at the time but there were plenty of storms to come and Henk brought in the new year with another bout of high winds and flooding.

With the help of our wonderful supporters, we received donations to help us through this difficult period. These donations will go towards recovering the flooded land and the cost of additional care for any equines affected. With almost 300 horses, ponies, donkeys and mules in our care, it's so important we have the necessary funds to care for every animal no matter what hits us. If you can spare a contribution to help us through the flooding's aftermath, please add this to your donation form or call us directly on 01427 788 464. Alternatively, you can donate and discover more about the impact on the charity at BransbyHorses.co.uk/efc23



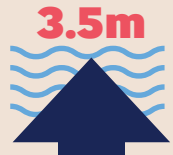
100
horses
moved
to safety



**EMERGENCY
FLOOD CRISIS**



A months' worth of rain
fell in 24 hours



3.5m

The River Eau
at Barlings
reached the
highest levels
recorded



4 flood warnings
have been
issued for
the charity's
land in just as
many months



203 acres
at Barlings flooded
- 44 were being used
for grazing



257 acres
of grazing land was
flooded across our
two sites



10 large bales
of hay used to
divert water
could not be
used for feed

Four-legged Friends We Have Lost

Whilst there's plenty of happy memories to look back on from 2023, there's also a few heartbreaking ones, such as the loss of much-loved residents Saratoga, Apache, and Coral.

Known as the little donkey with a big personality, we announced the very sad loss of our beloved Apache in November. At 22 years of age, Apache was one of our greatest characters and was a popular donkey with visitors. He loved nothing more than being the centre of attention by posing for photos with them. He lived with us for almost six years, which was made possible only by the kind donations of those who support our work. Apache was suffering from extremely painful dental problems that could no longer

be managed and was euthanised under the advice of a veterinary surgeon. His loss will be greatly felt by both staff and supporters, but his legendary personality will never be forgotten.

Coral was born on site, and we got the chance to see her grow into a beautiful yearling, until her medical needs became too complicated; she was born prematurely and with a hole in her heart that worsened as she grew. Other health factors, such as diseased teeth, severely affected her quality of life. Though the difficult decision was made to euthanise her, we take comfort in knowing she received the very best care and love from everyone here at Bransby Horses. Her tiny hoof prints have left a permanent

Apache



mark on all our hearts. Rest in peace Coral.

In February, we were extremely sad to say goodbye to our Sponsorship Star, Saratoga. After retiring from the Metropolitan Police in 2017, Saratoga retired with Bransby Horses, and his sweet nature made him a firm favourite with our team and visitors. He had been retired early due to multiple causes of lameness, with his hocks, stifles and back affected, and unfortunately this became unmanageable. Due to the supporter-funded veterinary care he received at Bransby Horses, he was given many additional years in comfortable retirement and we all have very fond memories of him. He will be missed.



Coral

Saratoga



Though we are always devastated by the loss of a Bransby Horses' resident, we know each and every equine was given the best possible care, right till the end. None of which would be possible without your membership donation.



Little Bert Finds *His Perfect Partner*

A pony who came close to death on more than one occasion, and was one of our worst cases of 2022, found a new home just in time for Christmas.

Little Bert, a blue and white Falabella Shetland stallion, was very thin and had a wound with maggots growing inside it when he was discovered by Bransby Horses in the summer of 2022. He was suffering from a serious disease called strangles and had terrible wounds which needed immediate attention.

Despite an appeal by the RSPCA to find who was responsible for Bert, no one came

forward and so his only chance of survival lay in the hands of our expert teams.

It took over a year of intensive care and veterinary treatment to get young Bert back to health. But eventually he was barely recognisable from the pony we first rescued, his wounds healed, and he became virus free.

Due to the nature of Bert's illnesses, his lifelong needs were complex, making the possibility of finding him a long-term foster home extra challenging. However, it turned out miracles do happen and following a short appeal detailing the horrific ordeal little Bert

had been through and his determination to survive, he found a special foster home where he would be with other equines and showered with love and affection from his 'Perfect Partner' who understands his needs.

Welfare Manager, Rachel Jenkinson, who was instrumental in Bert's rescue and rehoming, said: "We all kept everything crossed that little Bert would find a foster home, as he needs quite a lot of specialist care. He has been rehomed with an owner who works for the RSPCA and understands the complexities involved in his daily routine, which is just fantastic. I have it on good authority he has settled in very well and has everyone wrapped around his little hooves.

"Bert was unusual in that his microchip details had not been kept up to date, so we were unable to trace his most recent owners or anyone willing to take care of him and provide the medical treatment he needed."

His veterinary care alone ran into thousands of pounds, and it is only thanks to the generous support of people like you that we were able to provide Bert with the extensive care he deserved. The road to recovery was a bumpy one, but Bert is now loving his new home and we're so grateful we got to give this little pony a second chance.

Bert's story is one that will never be forgotten by all of the teams who worked tirelessly to restore his health and trust in humans, and is a stark reminder of the need for charities like us.



ALL THANKS TO YOU

It's hard to know what the future might hold, and being prepared for it financially is even more challenging. We know there will always be situations throughout the year that we can't predict, but still have to deal with as best we can. The storms and floods hit us hard, we dealt with rising numbers of hoof neglect, and 2023 ended as the warmest year on record.

But we got through these challenging times, all thanks to you.

Last year, the Friends membership alone raised just short of £26,000 for the charity. This is huge, and we can't thank you enough for the support you provide. It would be impossible to care for the number of horses, ponies, donkeys and mules we do on-site, in foster homes and those we visit nationwide without your donations.

So from the bottom of hearts, thank you.

£26,000 could pay for...

- 1 years' worth of bedding
- 6 months of hay for 300 equines
- Farrier costs for 4 months

*2023 prices used to calculate these figures

We also got to meet over 70 of you in person during our VIP Day last summer. With around 35 supporters across both days, our guests enjoyed five individually tailored sessions, showcasing the work we do and of course, the very special equines your donations help. Temperatures were high, but so were spirits, as we talked through everything from day-to-day tasks to large scale rescues.

Cobalt





Guests were updated on some of the challenges the charity will continue to face, including the increasingly worrying Cost of Living Crisis and the impact this will have on our services as we come into winter, even though the concept of colder months was probably quite difficult to imagine back in September.

Guests were also given a field sweeper demonstration, helping them understand how invaluable these pieces of equipment are, allowing our teams more time to focus on rehabilitating and training our rescued equines. We talked through these processes in the Riding Barn, with handler Evie and the wonderful Tarbert demonstrating a series of exercises that has been recommended by our visiting physiotherapist.

Our guests had the chance to meet the Rescue Support Team, Field Officers, Rider Trainers, the Estates Team, and members of the Welfare Team. All the work that goes on behind the scenes was brought into the spotlight, and our VIPs were able to better understand how the charity operates. Plenty of educational talks throughout the day also gave them the opportunity to enhance their equine knowledge, from the difference between donkeys and horses, to the importance of keeping paddocks clear of droppings.

The feedback was positive all around, and we were thrilled everyone enjoyed their day at Bransby Horses (we've even got the photos to prove it!). We will be hosting the VIP Day again in 2024 and if you'd like to attend, please keep an eye out for more information in future Friends of Bransby Horses updates.



Simmy's Story

Tied-up and abandoned by owners on busy industrial estate

A pony found tied to the front gates of a busy industrial unit in Doncaster is doing well, now he is forever safe in our care at Bransby Horses. Workers arrived at S.I.M Warehouse and Logistics Company on Shaw Lane Industrial Estate to find the pony looking bewildered but otherwise calm. They created a holding pen and gave him a bucket of water before calling our Welfare Line, which they found on our website, for advice.

Welfare Manager, Rachel Jenkinson, said: "When we arrived, we knew we would have to remove him from where he was as it was not a safe environment for him to remain in, mainly due to the high volume of lorries and trucks entering and leaving the facility.

"As we are not allowed by law to take any animal without the owner's consent, we issued an Abandonment Notice, which meant the police were then able to grant us the authority to take the pony to our main Bransby site for the duration of the notice, in the hope an owner would come forward and claim him."

An Abandonment Notice is part of the Control of Horses Act and involves a notice being clearly displayed where a horse has been taken from, informing the owner where their animal is and how they can get it back. This notice runs for four working days and if no one comes forward in that time the horse then becomes the responsibility of the landowner who then has several choices as to what they do next. In this case, the pony was not microchipped, and his owner could not be traced. As the two-year-old pony was in the best place, he was immediately signed over to us as we were able to provide him with the care and attention he needed.

Since being at Bransby Horses, the pony, who has been named Simmy after the company that found him, has received veterinary and farrier treatment and is now enjoying life in a grass paddock with a herd of equines with backgrounds just like his – a far cry from the dangerous environment he was found in.

Simmy stands around 12hh high, is dark grey and has a very friendly nature despite being neglected and abandoned by his former owners. He has settled well into life here at Bransby Horses and it is hoped he may be rehomed through our Perfect Partner rehoming scheme once he is ready – keep an eye on our website.



The Welfare Team

Working Wonders

The past 12 months have been another busy period for members of the Welfare Team. Whilst levels of private rescue requests, welfare concerns and calls for equine advice remained steady, there was still plenty of work to be done.

175 welfare concerns were reported to us in 2023, resulting in 124 Field Officer assessments taking place. Some of these concerns come straight from members of the public, whilst others come from different animal welfare organisations, but all are monitored until a

conclusion has been reached. We also took part in collaborative operations with other animal charities, such as the Gelligaer Common rescue in April where 23 ponies were removed as part of ongoing support and work with the common owners to improve the welfare of the common herds.

The team also spent a lot of time last year promoting the importance of hoof care and weight management for equines. With the UK experiencing the warmest year and also the eleventh wettest since records began,

there were concerns surrounding natural weight loss for equines. As temperatures did not hit normal lows, grass that would usually disappear during the winter is still growing and providing calories for grazing equines, meaning they might not be losing the same amount of weight over the colder months as they usually would, potentially leading to increased equine obesity come spring.

Not only this, but we saw a considerable amount of hoof neglect incidents. Welfare Manager, Rachel Jenkinson,

2022 *in numbers*

131

Advice calls
/emails

175

Private intake
requests

64

Private intake
request due
to financial
circumstances

188

Total welfare
contacts

136

Field Officer
assessments

92

Repeat visits

576

New
equines seen

785

Repeat
equines seen

said: "We've seen about 18 cases (of neglected hoof care) this year, which is unprecedented for us." Even the first welfare call of the year involved two young cobs abandoned in a field with extremely overgrown hooves. Rachel went on to say: "This winter has hit all of the equine community hard, so we are expecting an increase in calls for support and welfare concerns as we head into 2024."

2024 will also see a return of the successful Make a Difference events hosted by the Welfare Team throughout last year, featuring talks on track systems and grazing systems, to name a few. These events are designed to positively impact the lives of equines by sharing the

charity's knowledge with horse owners.

Overall, 2023 was an eventful year for equine welfare, with more to come in 2024. We're so grateful for your support to allow us to continue with this important work and transform the lives of equines

together. Thanks to you, we were able to rescue 95* equines last year from varying circumstances of mistreatment, neglect and abandonment.

You are amazing!

*Figures correct as of December 2023.



2023 *in numbers*

133

Advice calls
/emails

162

Private intake
requests

56

Private intake
Request due
to financial
circumstances

175

Total welfare
contacts

124

Field Officer
assessments

146

Repeat visits

517

New
equines seen

1105

Repeat
equines seen



Barlings

News from across the pond

Opened in 2019, Barlings is our second-site in Lincolnshire that is home to a number of equines in our care. Despite being closed to the public, there are still plenty of updates we can tell you about.

As Storm Babet hit in October, Barlings was exposed to an unprecedented amount of rainfall, saturating the land and causing River Eau to reach record levels (3.5m). The site flooded for the first time, and we lost around 200 acres for almost two weeks, 44 of those were being used for grazing. And that wouldn't be the only time Barlings had to deal with flooded land, with the last few months of 2023 proving a challenge for our staff.

Despite this, we still had great moments, such as the fields laid to grass in 2022 being cut and baled for hay. This is a great way for us to reduce the cost of forage and we hope we can keep doing this in upcoming years. We've also had great success with equines undergoing handling plans for needle phobias. Some of our equines struggle with routine veterinary appointments due to this phobia, so we're very pleased to be making progress.

The fields at Barlings are also a great space to trial new grazing track systems. Whilst one of our recent experiments, a zigzag track, didn't quite work as we'd hoped, there are future plans to adapt this, and we hope to have more success in spring this year.

The site became home to 45 equines by the end of the year, with an increase of 17 equines compared to 2022 and nearing its capacity. We were also able to find perfect partners for six Barlings residents including Tahmina (see left), who is loving her new home.

Tahmina's Story

This sweet mare arrived at the charity with a group of ponies in March 2021, as part of a larger multi-agency intervention. The rescue wasn't straightforward, and we were all very glad when the owner signed Tahmina and several other equines over to us.

Tahmina had long feet and had been kept in poor living conditions, so we instantly provided a safe place for her to recover, helping her turn into the pony she is today. Now Tahmina is very happy in her new home as a companion, living with a little Welsh mare who is almost a mirror image of her. She goes for regular walks, which she very much enjoys, and has quickly become part of the family.



Will you *remember* us?



**3 in 4 of our rescued horses
are cared for by generous people
creating a gift in their Will.**

Remember us in your Will to help us relieve their suffering and provide a safe and secure future for horses that need our help.

**Take advantage of our
FREE Will service and
create your legacy today**



Call 01427 788 464, visit BransbyHorses.co.uk/legacies
or email legacyofficer@bransbyhorses.co.uk



THANK
you!



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— HORSES —

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**FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**

