

Bransby *Life*

SPRING/SUMMER 2026 • BransbyHorses.co.uk • 01427 788 464

Olive

Olive was
discovered
abandoned and
alone, dumped
by the roadside -
read her story
inside.

BRANSBY
— HORSES —

Reduce our carbon hoofprint

In addition to sharing Bransby Life with you to showcase the vital and transformative work taking place across our charity, we may also need to update you quickly on time-sensitive matters—such as the impact of severe weather or other environmental challenges.

By providing us with your email address, you can help us communicate with you more efficiently whilst also reducing our print and postage costs. This simple step enables us to direct more of our resources to the equines who need us, while also reducing our impact on the environment.

Your email address is a powerful donation



If you'd like to receive these updates by email, and help us keep you informed more quickly and cost-effectively, please complete the enclosed form or scan the QR code.



Welcome to the latest issue of Bransby Life

Welcome to the Spring/Summer edition of Bransby Life. As we prepare this newsletter, the first signs of spring are beginning to appear. After an exceptionally wet winter, new growth and drying grazing land are welcome reminders of how closely equine wellbeing is tied to the environment around us.

This edition focuses on the crucial role of nutrition and weight management in equine health. When not carefully monitored, the consequences can be serious. On pages 12–13, you'll find clear guidance on good weight management. In 2025, our Welfare Team visited almost 4,000 equines in the community—proactive work that helps prevent welfare issues before they develop.

You'll also meet equines like Nico, Florence and our cover star, Olive, who arrived with no known owner and complex medical needs. Thanks to your support and our team's dedication, they now have the chance to thrive. Together, we can turn lives around.

We also highlight key collaborative work with fellow equine welfare charities. On pages 14–15, you'll read about a major multi-agency effort involving 455 animals, and on pages 20–21 we follow Iris' journey from Appleby Horse Fair to her new chapter with us.

None of this—community support, rescues, recoveries, or transformations—would be possible without you. Your generosity and belief in our mission make every success story possible.

Thank you, sincerely, from all of us at Bransby Horses.

With very best wishes
Jo Snell, CEO

BRANSBY
— HORSES —

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Olive

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Young Abandonments

In late 2025, over a one-month period, three young ponies had been separately abandoned and taken into the care of Bransby Horses.



Nico

When little Nico was found abandoned on a public footpath, near a busy road, members of the public knew something was wrong and called our welfare line. At just 18 months old, he was in a terrible state — severely overgrown hooves, crawling with lice and so undernourished, his bones could be easily felt.

Thank goodness for the call, Kris, our Field Officer, attended quickly and immediately knew what he needed to do to help Nico. A vet and authorities were contacted to follow the legal steps to remove him. The vet's initial assessment confirmed he required substantial veterinary care but could be safely travelled. Kris arranged for the Bransby Horses team to transport Nico carefully to our Animal Reception Centre, where a warm bed, and supportive staff waited so that urgent treatment could begin.

Lead vet clinician Lara admitted she was worried about whether he would survive or not due to the severity of his issues. Alongside being dangerously underweight, blood tests

Nico was in a very poor state when he arrived

revealed his liver was in failure. Internal worms had damaged his guts and he had severe diarrhoea.

But despite everything, Nico wasn't ready to give up — and neither were we.

"He defied the odds," said Equine Welfare Assistant Ayla.

Nico was given medicines for his liver, treat the worms and gut inflammation. He was put on a careful feeding plan, as malnourished horses can get a life-threatening refeeding syndrome if reintroduced to food too quickly. His matted fur was removed and warm baths helped to clear lice and dirt.

No owner came forwards, Nico was officially signed over to us - now proudly Bransby Nico.

With care and support, slowly, he began to transform. The fragile, abandoned youngster blossomed into a cheeky, spirited cob.

"He was such a character," said Deputy Team Leader Mia. "He would whinny at us constantly — we were like his dinner ladies. Everyone adored him."

In just four weeks with our care and attention, Nico gained almost half of his original body weight putting on 40kg. His liver and intestines began to slowly recover. He became playful and full of life, zooming around the field and putting smiles on everyone's faces.

Nico has now moved to Main Yard, where he's now settling in with new field mates and will soon be assessed for rehoming.

From abandoned and overlooked to full of energy and hope, Nico's journey shows just how much your support can change a life - and it all starts with a call.

Florence

The RSPCA reached out to us for help with Florence, a four-month-old foal who urgently needed a young, friendly companion to support her mental wellbeing as she continued her treatment and recovery. Barely old enough to be weaned from her mother, Florence had been found abandoned in a field, tied up with an old seatbelt and unable to move freely. She was severely underweight and suffering from a painful eye injury.



Nico will soon be assessed for his rehoming potential

Nico was dangerously underweight. Your call makes the difference



Florence was tethered with a seatbelt

Florence soon made a full recovery, leaving the ARC to start the next part of her journey at the Main Yard



Knowing we could offer her the care and companionship she needed, Florence was quickly brought to Bransby Horses. She had a long road to recovery ahead of her. Due to her lack of movement and poor nutrition, her legs were extremely weak and she struggled to move faster than a walk. Our team created a tailored nutritional plan for her growing body as foals needs differ. The farrier worked gently on her overgrown hooves to improve her posture, comfort and tendon strength alongside the exercise programme to strengthen her limbs.

Over the next three months, Florence made steady progress. With regular farrier visits and careful rehabilitation, her legs strengthened and she became far more stable. While at the ARC, she grew significantly and almost doubled her bodyweight as her health improved.

Her character soon began to shine. "When we first started turning Flo out into the field, she used to buck. She was really cheeky and playful; she just craved a friend," explained Mia.

Olive

Around the same time as Florence's rescue, seven month-old Welsh filly Olive was dumped on a road in County Durham, with a shockingly deep wound at the withers (the highest point of a horse's back above the shoulders). An abandonment notice was served through the RSPCA and Olive was taken to The Veterinary Team at Bearl Equine Clinic. Equine Veterinary Nurse Abby was heavily involved in her care. "Caring for Olive was both a challenge and a privilege. The severity of her initial injury was concerning,

She found that friendship in Olive, who arrived at the same time. The pair continue to live together now on Main Yard, exploring new experiences side by side.



Photograph courtesy of Bearl Equine Clinic

"Being part of Olive's recovery journey was a powerful reminder of why I do this job. I am incredibly grateful to Bransby Horses for taking her under their care, and it means a great deal to know she will have the best possible future. We are so glad she has been given a chance to thrive. She captured all of our hearts here." - Abby Stavers

with standing surgery to remove bone fragments from her fractured withers followed by intensive and extensive wound management." Olive's wound still required careful ongoing treatment. Healing would take time, patience and committed care to help her recover. With her recovery expected to take many months, Bransby Horses was contacted, knowing we could give Olive the time, specialist care and safe environment she needed to make the best recovery possible. "At first sight, Olive's wound was a shock to us all." Said Mia. "It was the worst we had seen." There was no simple solution for Olive's recovery, and it required a great deal of effort from various teams to come up with the right care strategy for her. The vets started by surgically removing unhealthy tissue and placing sterilised gauze into the wound, with cotton swabs tied to the sutures to keep the hole covered. Olive's dressings were changed every day for weeks and over time her treatment plan was adapted as she began to heal, and the previously large open wound became smaller

and shallower. She also needed to eat with her head as low as possible to prevent the top part of her wound from healing too tight.

The progression of the wound from her arrival has been immense. You can scan the QR code below to view more photos of this journey, but please note we haven't included these in Bransby Life as they are very graphic in nature. Viewer discretion is advised.

Both the yard and the Veterinary Team did an incredible job of caring for Olive, with many hours dedicated to her rehabilitation. "We were very concerned if she would be able to recover from this, but despite all odds her wound healed very well." Explained Mia. "She was such a good patient to treat for a young horse. Towards the end of her time at the ARC, her cheeky side came out, and she started to play in the field. She was a firm yard favourite."

Olive has since graduated from the ARC and is spending time with Florence on the Main Yard. After months of care, there is now little indication

that the wound ever existed, which is testament to the excellent level of care she received, both at the start of her journey and ongoing.

Youngsters like Florence and Olive had only ever known pain and suffering before their arrival at Bransby Horses, but thanks to supporters like you, we can provide them, and Nico, with the second chance they all deserve.



Healing Olive's wound alone amounted to almost

£3000

not including the ongoing care she needed from our dedicated teams.

If you'd like to make a one off, or regular donation to help other equines like Olive, you can do so by giving us a call on 01427 788464 or completing the form enclosed.



There is little indication that Olive's wound ever existed



TWO DONKEYS, Two Decades, and One Perfect Match

Twenty years ago exactly, in April 2006, couple Hayley and Nick had approached Bransby Horses with the intention of fostering a horse, after their mare had sadly passed away. What they didn't know was that this would be the start of a two-decade long journey, with an unexpected pairing at their side.

"I contacted Bransby Horses, and at the time, they didn't have any horses available for rehoming," said Hayley. "But they said, we've got donkeys."

Two pairs of donkeys were up for rehoming, but as soon as Hayley and Nick met each one, it was clear which pair they would be taking home. "River came up to me, and Flipper came up to Nick, which is really

unusual, because she's still, and always has been, really, really quite nervous and sensitive.

And so River said hello to me. Flipper said hello to Nick, and we said, well, they've chosen us."

Then seven-year-old Flipper and four-year-old River had formed a strong bond during their time at Bransby Horses, as most donkeys do, and could only be rehomed together. Though they had arrived a few years apart, they had become inseparable.

Flipper arrived at the charity in 1999 with very overgrown and twisted feet which needed intensive remedial treatment. Whereas River's rescue took place in 2005, found on a riverbank and stranded in the

water, she would have drowned if the Bransby Horses team hadn't got there in time.

Their life now is a far cry from those rough starts, and they are a permanent fixture in their fosterer's lives, as they have been since their arrival. "They did settle in quite quickly. I think we left the headcollars on initially, but it wasn't long before we felt confident enough to take them off," said Hayley.

And while it's obvious the lives of River and Flipper have been changed for the better, they've also had quite a significant impact on their fosterers.

"You know, I've never got up in the morning and thought, 'Oh god, I've got to go out to

see the donkeys. Because I always enjoy that.

I always look forward to that. They brighten my day up, you know, more often than not, I leave my phone in the house, and I just go out and be with them. And there's mucking out and stuff like that that a lot of people wouldn't like, but I quite enjoy it. I just like being around them and caring for them." She explained.

The past 20 years have been filled with wonderful moments and memories. It's safe to say, the pair have been well and truly spoiled and will continue to be for the rest of their lives. We wouldn't want it any other way.



Flipper and River had formed a strong bond during their time at Bransby Horses, as most donkeys do

LIVING A LIFE *of Honour*

We caught up with Sponsorship Star Honour and her fosterer Jennifer, to see what they've been up to over the past few years.

Many of you will be familiar with Honour, a gorgeous black Shire mare who has been under the care of Bransby Horses since her rescue back in 2017. Two-year-old Honour arrived with fellow Shire Passchendaele, following a multi-agency round up operation to rescue 19 shire horses who were abandoned on land in the Kidderminster area.

Honour later made her way onto the Sponsorship Star scheme, becoming a popular addition and gaining quite a following. Due to her size and

needs, Honour was on the rehoming scheme but instead of being advertised, she was



Honour is a home bird who loves spending time in her field or her stable.



Helen, Rehoming Officer (left) pictured with River and Flipper and their fosterer, Hayley

Honour has the perfect family, complete with Jennifer, Kevin and their dog Tilly.



in a situation of 'right horse right home'. This meant that should the right application come along, that ticked all the boxes and met all of Honour's requirements, she could be rehomed. In spring 2022, that application appeared.

Jennifer had experience with heavy breeds, she learned to ride in her mid 30's and soon after decided to buy her first horse. After losing her last mare, Lottie, Jennifer was left with a rather large horse shaped hole in her heart.

"Sadly, I only had Lottie for two years, pretty much two years on the dot, but she just had the best time with me. So, and I thought after that, I'd love to rescue another huge horse." Explained Jennifer. "I approached lots of rescue places, rescue centres, and I

suppose it was excellent that really nobody had a huge heavy horse available to for me to rescue."

Initially, Bransby Horses had nothing to match her needs, but it wasn't long before a certain equine came into their mind.

"We were just days away from actually going down to Somerset for me to go and buy and try out a shire mare. And fortuitously, I had another phone call from Bransby Horses to say, we've had a look at your situation, and we've had a think, and think that Honour would be your Perfect Partner."

After a few visits and walks in-hand around Bransby Horses, Honour was ready to move to her new home, where she's resided for the past few years.

Honour is now thoroughly

loving life with fosterer Jennifer. "She's just enjoying herself. She's out with her friend, most of the time. And when she's back in for sort of late autumn and winter, she's got that massive stable. She's got friends to groom right next door because they can reach each other over the partition. So, yes, she's never on her own."

Honour is a home bird who loves spending time in her field or her stable. She loves a scratch and has even managed to destroy some of the posts in her field.

Honour has the perfect family, complete with Jennifer's husband Kevin and their dog Tilly. We're so pleased to see her thriving and hope Honour's supporters have enjoyed reading this update.

Dorothy's Legacy

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



In 2025, Dorothy Walker passed away at the incredible age of 102. In her Will, she left almost all of her estate to charities, including Bransby Horses and fellow equine charities. Dorothy's kindness meant Bransby Horses was the recipient of £20,000, a legacy we were extremely grateful to receive. Her legacy will ensure equines, which Dorothy so clearly loved throughout her life, continue to be cared for as part of her lasting legacy.

Thank you Dorothy

To find out more information on how and why to leave a gift to Bransby Horses in your will, contact us on 01427 788 464 or visit BransbyHorses.co.uk/legacies

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**FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**

You can change the lives of equines like River & Flipper and Honour by becoming a Bransby Horses Fosterer. Please visit our website BransbyHorses.co.uk/rehoming for more information and to view our available equines.

WATCHING YOUR WEIGHT

Welcome to our new Welfare Section. Here, and in future editions of Bransby Life, we'll be taking a closer look

at fundamental aspects of equine care and the welfare concerns that go alongside them.

In this edition, our key focus is equine weight. Both underweight and overweight horses are at risk of serious health problems, and recognising these signs early is vital for their wellbeing.

Why Weight Matters

At Bransby Horses, we assess an equine's weight using a simple Body Condition Score (BCS). This is a scale from 0 (emaciated) to 5 (obese), based on three main areas of the body:

- Hip to tail head
- Withers to last rib
- Neck and shoulders

A score of 3 is considered ideal. Small seasonal changes are normal, but a score below 2.5 or above 3.5 usually

means the horse needs closer monitoring and possibly changes to their care.

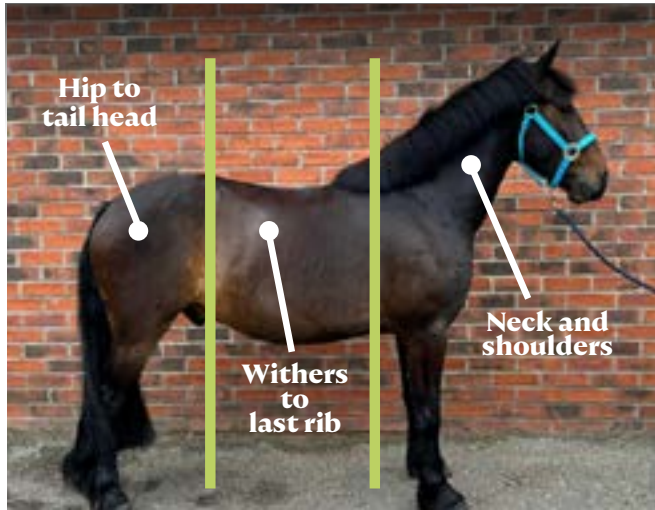
Spotting a Problem

You don't need specialist knowledge to notice when something looks wrong. Underweight equines may show:

- Ribs, hips or spine becoming clearly visible
- Sunken areas around the neck, rump or shoulders

Overweight equines may show:

- Fat pads along the crest of the neck
 - A widened, flat back with no definition
 - A rounded rump with deep fat deposits
- If something looks concerning, it probably is.



Underweight
Clearly visible

Ribs



Overweight
Not visible

Ribs



Underweight
Prominent bones

Spine



Overweight
Deep gutter along the spine

Spine



Underweight
Ewe-shaped or 'upside down' neck, bending upwards instead of down in the normal arch.

Neck



Overweight
Cresty neck, an abnormal accumulation of fat along the top of an equine's neck, creating a 'crest-like' appearance.

Neck



Underweight
Sunken with cavity under the tail

Rump



Overweight
Bulging rump – apple shaped from behind.

Rump

It's important to recognise the signs of an unhealthy body condition score and know what you can do if you identify them. If you are concerned about the weight of an equine, please don't hesitate to get in touch with our Welfare Team on 01427 787 369, or by emailing welfare@bransbyhorses.co.uk. Similarly, you can report a welfare concern on our website by scanning the QR code.

If you are an equine owner who is struggling to manage the weight of their equine(s), we offer free non-judgemental advice and encourage you to contact us as soon as possible.



Pablo

Pablo arrived at Bransby Horses after a member of the public approached Field Officer Kris with concerns over his weight. Kris could feel how skinny Pablo was, even with a rug covering him. He contacted the owner who was unable to provide the care that Pablo needed and subsequently the equine was signed over into our care. Pablo had a body condition score of 1.5, with clearly visible ribs. His feet were overgrown and had started to crack, and he was clearly experiencing discomfort. After a hoof trim and a set of shoes, Pablo's lameness improved significantly, along with his prognosis. The team provided him with the right routine care and food according to his needs, something he hadn't received in a long time. After three weeks of arriving at the ARC, Pablo gained 32kg. He is now appearing much brighter in his demeanour and is considerably more comfortable than when he first arrived.

455 Animals Seized in Multi-Agency Rescue



Courtesy of RSPCA

The search for a missing pet led to the discovery of 455 neglected animals living in “abhorrent conditions”



Yorkie with Equine Welfare Assitant, Imogen

With their gentle nature, curious personalities and those irresistibly oversized ears, donkeys have a way of winning hearts instantly. This was certainly true of Buttons, Bueno, Malteser and Yorkie – affectionately known as the Chocolate Group. Today they are thriving, playful and full of life thanks to Bransby Horses.

Watching them relax in the paddock, it’s hard to imagine how their story began. The four youngsters were discovered alongside 451 other animals living in shocking conditions. Following a tip-off, officers arrived to find equines, dogs, birds, goats and small animals all suffering severe neglect. More than 70 horses, ponies and donkeys needed urgent intervention, and along with many organisations, Bransby

Horses’ Rescue Team helped safely remove them all from the property.

“Everywhere we looked were animals living in squalor,” recalled Welfare and Rescue Officer Nadine. “The conditions and sheer number of animals were truly overwhelming.”

Just a year old and frightened of people, the donkeys had never even stepped into a paddock before. Yet despite everything they had endured, the Chocolate Group soon settled into their new surroundings and quickly became firm favourites with staff and visitors. Yorkie, the tallest with her unmistakably large ears, stands out instantly – towering not only over her companions but many of the donkeys already at the centre.

Now, two years on, they have fully joined the main donkey herd and continue to flourish.

“They’ve all got bold personalities... very quirky, and they definitely keep us on our toes,” said Equine Welfare Assistant Imogen. “They’re living with older female donkeys who are teaching

them how to ‘donkey properly!’”

Yorkie and Buttons have now entered the Bransby Horses Rehoming Scheme as a bonded pair and are hoping to find their Perfect Partners. With a little luck, they’ll soon begin their next chapter together.

In September 2025, the individual responsible received a custodial sentence and a lifelong ban on keeping animals. Thanks to Bransby Horses and the supporters who make this work possible, donkeys like Buttons, Bueno, Yorkie and Malteser will never face neglect again. They will be protected for life – but many more still need help.

Buttons



All had just reached their first birthday and were an instant hit with staff members and visitors alike



Malteser and Bueno

To make a one off, or regular donation to help more equines like the Chocolate Group, please complete the enclosed form, get in touch with our Supporter Relations team on 01427 788 464 or email mail@bransbyhorses.co.uk



10 years of caring for Phantom: WHY YOUR SUPPORT MATTERS



10 years ago, the Welfare Team made a 16-hour round trip to collect a group of neglected and starving ponies from Bodmin moor in Cornwall. 160 ponies in total had been left to fend for themselves, with some needing urgent veterinary care. Eight ponies were taken into the care of Bransby Horses, including one-year-old Phantom.

Phantom had been born into a circumstance of abandonment and never known human contact. He was suffering from colic, ulcers, worms, a lice infestation and overgrown hooves. His rehabilitation journey was a long one, and after years of perseverance from the team, that breakthrough moment finally came.

Phantom was a great candidate for ridden training as he had a nice, calm temperament. The work that had been put into his rehabilitation made him proficient at basic handling and he also showed a great natural ability towards being ridden.

Phantom later joined our rehoming scheme and in 2021 found his Perfect Partner.

"We originally looked to foster for my eldest daughter." Said fosterer Amanda. "Phantom has had a good education, and my daughter has enjoyed attending Burghley Pony Club camp and rallies with him. She

also had a number of private jumping lessons with him; our instructor was impressed with Phantom and his jumping ability.

"He really is a pleasure to work with. He is wonderful with the farrier and dentist and loves a fuss."

Phantom had been born into a circumstance of abandonment and never known human contact

Phantom's story is one we've shared with many people over the past decade, showing supporters what their kind donations can do and illustrating the journey our equines take. We're thrilled Phantom is now thriving with the human contact and companionship he deserves.



To set up a direct debit today, please complete the enclosed form or get in touch with our Supporter Relations team on 01427 788 464 or email mail@bransbyhorses.co.uk.

From the archives

On 2nd of September 2009, a concerned member of the public posted pictures of two emaciated horses on the Horse and Hound online forum, sparking a rapid response by the online community. In under 24 hours, thanks to the incredible work done by the online community, local charities and local authorities, Carrot and Spud, named by their rescuers, were removed from their location by the BHS and safely placed under the care of Bransby Horses.

Carrot was one of the thinnest horses the charity had ever seen and amazed staff with his fighting spirit. Both geldings, estimated to be in their 30's, required intensive rehabilitation and dedicated nursing, helping them make a surprising recovery despite their previous neglect.

This rescue sparked interest from another Horse and Hound forum user, Karen Thompson, who had been writing the infamous Hovis' Friday Diaries on the forum since 2008.

Karen's readers encouraged her to turn Hovis' Friday Diaries into a series of books, which she decided to tribute to Bransby Horses, after the rescue of Carrot and Spud. Over a period of 15 years, Hovis and his team raised over £150,000 for Bransby Horses, helping us rescue, rehabilitate and care for



Carrot

Carrot was one of the thinnest horses the charity had ever seen and amazed staff with his fighting spirit



Spud

hundreds of equines.

Carrot and Spud spent two years living life to the fullest, before they passed away in December 2011 and May 2011, respectively. But their legacy

lived for much longer thanks to Karen Thompson and the amazing Hovis.

Now Hovis has a legacy of his own, and we're proud to carry it on through our work.

Send us your memories of Hovis or Carrot and Spud by emailing memories@bransbyhorses.co.uk.

Answering Your Questions WITH THE BRANSBY HORSES VETS

We asked the Veterinary Team some burning questions from our supporters. Discover the most rewarding part of their job, what a typical day looks like, and much more in the answers below.

What does a typical day look like for the Veterinary Team?

Each morning begins in the veterinary office, where the team comes together to review the day ahead. We check our appointment diaries, catch up on any overnight developments, and look over

urgent lab results that may need immediate action. From there, we head out to our yard clinics, usually visiting one or two yards a day to carry out planned and routine

veterinary work. Throughout the day we work closely with the equine care teams, performing examinations, writing prescriptions and clinical notes, and making sure everyone has the information they need to support each horse's wellbeing.

But our days are rarely predictable. Emergencies can arise at any moment, and new rescue arrivals often need urgent assessment and care. Being ready to respond swiftly is all part of the job, going where the need is greatest.

What are the standard checks for equines when they first arrive at Bransby Horses?

Each equine arriving at Bransby Horses begins their journey at the ARC, where they usually stay between four and eight weeks, depending on their needs. While our routine checks are broadly the same for every intake, how and when we carry them out is tailored to each horse. Some arrive very unwell and need urgent attention, others benefit from a quiet settling-in period, and

Did you know?
Each equine that arrives receives a full clinical exam including blood tests, tests for infectious diseases and worm burdens which costs a minimum of £300.60 per equine



those with little or no handling require an individual approach.

We begin by checking for a microchip and confirming vaccination status. If an equine is unchipped or lacks a valid passport, we complete this as required by law. If vaccinations are overdue, we restart their programme to protect both them and our wider herd.

Every intake receives a full clinical examination, if needed with blood tests and diagnostics such as X-rays or ultrasound. Mares are routinely checked for pregnancy, so we can plan appropriate nutrition and care. Behavioural assessments help us understand each equine their preferences and any essential information for their future yard.

Preventing infectious disease is a major priority, so all arrivals undergo strangles testing, including bloods and endoscopy. Teeth, feet and movement are assessed by our vet dentist and farriers, and we test for roundworm and tapeworm to manage internal health.

Our aim is always to ensure each equine is healthy, safe and ready for the next stage of their journey.

When you have rescued an equine, how do you go about finding the best care plan for each one?

Each equine that comes in as a rescue case arrives with as much history as it's possible to obtain of their living conditions and health status. Each equine goes through the standard checks, and we use various test results and our extensive experience with rescue cases to formulate a treatment plan. Treating them thoroughly as soon as they are stable, is essential. Each equine is weighed and body condition scored regularly so that a feeding plan can be made and updated to suit their needs.

What are the most rewarding and challenging parts of your job?

The most rewarding aspect of our job is our ability to see cases through from start to finish and see the progress they are making day to day. The challenges come when, for whatever reason, they don't respond well enough to our care and medical treatments. This can be a horrible feeling for all involved but making a euthanasia

decision to alleviate suffering before further deterioration occurs is something that we can do for the horse in our care and is of course discussed to ensure everyone is on board with each outcome.

How does the team recover when dealing with difficult welfare cases?

Luckily, we have a really supportive Veterinary Team here at the Bransby Horses practice who look after each other and share the burden of the difficult cases. Emotional fatigue and burnout are big topics in the veterinary world at the moment, so we're very mindful of what we've been exposed to. We talk things through in our monthly one-to-one meetings with our manager, but also check in with each other daily—just small conversations that really make a difference. For all the challenging and sometimes heartbreaking cases we deal with, there are just as many good moments that remind us why we do this work.

Which equine's journey has been the most rewarding to see?

Probably little Bert.

Bert arrived in 2022 as one of the worst cases of neglect we'd ever seen. He was close to death, and it was difficult to know whether he was going to make it. Bert made a miraculous recovery and is now in a loving foster home. You can read about Bert's journey here.



ONE EYE ON THE FUTURE: Iris' Journey from Appleby to Lincoln

Every year, tens of thousands of people visit the small town of Appleby-in-Westmorland as part of an annual gathering of the Gypsy, Romany and Traveler community, known as Appleby Horse Fair. For the past 10 years, members of the Bransby Horses Welfare Team have attended this event to promote good equine care and provide support to the veterinary team.

In 2025, a two-year-old Trotter was found running loose in a field with a severe injury to her right eye. After being assessed by a vet, the young mare, now named Iris, was taken straight to Liverpool Equine Hospital from Appleby Horse Fair to receive further treatment.

Whilst in hospital an investigation and abandonment notice was issued by the RSPCA. No owner could be located and after the notice expired, Iris was signed

The team decided removing the eye was the best course of treatment and necessary for her to recover



over into the care of Bransby Horses.

During her time in hospital, examinations revealed the eye was causing her significant pain and she could no longer see through it. The team decided removing the eye was the best course of treatment and necessary for her to recover. Once the operation had successfully taken place and Iris was fit to travel, she made the journey from Liverpool to Lincoln and arrived at the Animal Reception Centre at Bransby Horses.

As the start of summer was kicking in, Iris wore a facemask to protect the surgery site as it healed and keep the pesky flies away. When asked how Iris adjusted to her new environment and to life, now she was partially sighted, Equine Welfare Deputy Team Leader Mia said "She coped really well with it.

"She stayed in the same field, so she knew her surroundings and had another equine next door almost as emotional support. Sometimes she'd bump into the wheelbarrow or jump a bit at us, but other than that she coped fine."

Iris also arrived slightly underweight, so she was placed on a feeding plan and was soon at an ideal body condition score. The team remembered her time at the ARC fondly, expressing how lovely and well behaved she was. "She was a really good patient to bandage, she was good for the farrier, we all said she'll be perfect for rehoming."

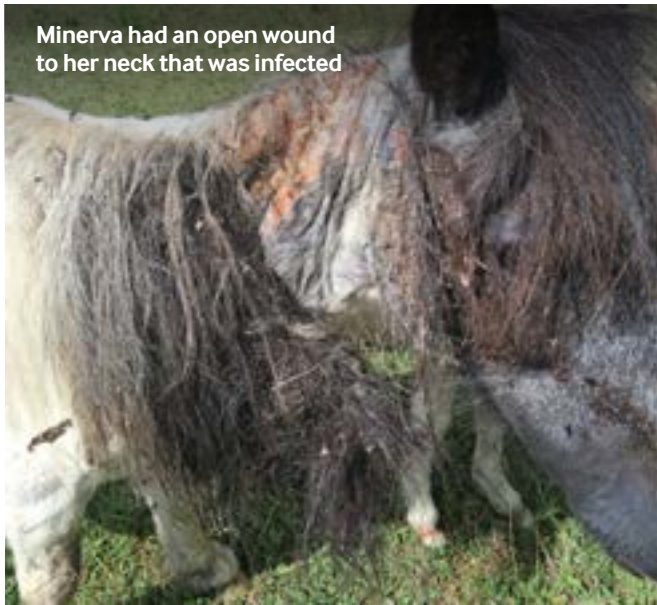
Iris graduated from the ARC at the end of August to our Main Yard, where she is now spending time with familiar equines like Beverley and Eider, two mares who were born at the charity in 2024. The Main Yard team are continuing her training, introducing her to all aspects of equine care helping to prepare her for a future home in our Perfect Partner scheme.



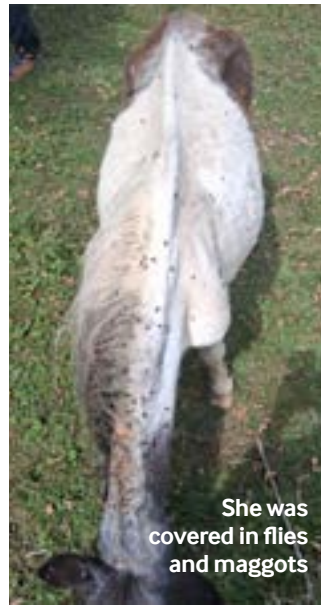
The Bransby Horses Welfare Team were recognised for their work at Appleby Horse Fair last year, through the National Equine Welfare Council (NEWC) Annual Awards. Winning Team of the Year, joint with the Blue Cross and the Mare and Foal Sanctuary. We're so proud of the team and the work they do to promote good equine care at Appleby Horse Fair.



A New Chapter for the Harry Potter Group



Minerva had an open wound to her neck that was infected



She was covered in flies and maggots

In our last issue of Bransby Life, we introduced you to the story of Shetland family trio, Miriam, Remus and Tonks. Mum Miriam and her son Remus had been signed over into our care due to concerns over their health. They were sent to Oakham Veterinary Hospital for an emergency referral, where Miriam quickly gave birth to Tonks, a tiny Shetland foal weighing just 7.6kg.

After they were safely under our care, Field Officer Kris, continued his work on this case, as there were ongoing concerns surrounding more equines at the same location.

In late July, the poor condition of two mares with foals at foot caught the attention of Kris once

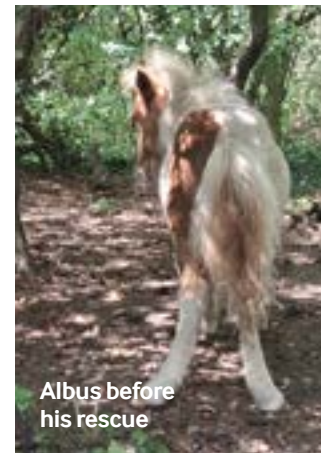
again. With support from the RSPCA and an attending Vet, Kris worked with the owner, who agreed to sign the four Shetlands over to Bransby Horses.

Minerva and her foal Albus were immediately taken to Oakham Veterinary Hospital, with Petunia and her foal Fleur journeying to our site in Lincoln. Minerva had a body condition score of 0.5 and an open wound to her neck that was infected, covered with flies and maggots. She was in a great deal of discomfort, struggling to stand because of a dislocated hip. Sadly, her quality of life was very poor, and the kindest option was to put her to sleep to prevent any further suffering.

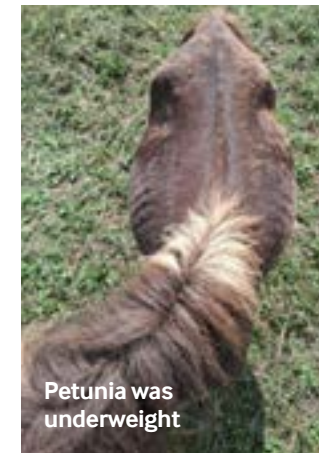
Three-month-old Albus travelled back to Bransby Horses on his own but was reunited with Petunia and her foal Fleur.

Following the removal of the four Shetlands, Kris left advice regarding the remaining equines in the herd but continued monitoring their progress. The herd was moved but Kris managed to locate them again a few weeks later and was concerned about the weight of a further three mares, again all with foals at foot.

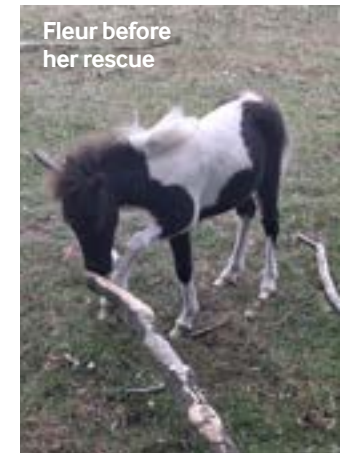
Kris tried to contact the owner, but with no response and the equines continuing to lose weight, he contacted the RSPCA and local authorities got involved, with all six equines subsequently removed under



Albus before his rescue



Petunia was underweight



Fleur before her rescue

the Animal Welfare Act and signed over into the care of Bransby Horses. Mares Dolores, Mrs Norris and Sybil, and their foals Myrtle, Sprout and Hedwig, respectively, brought the total number of Harry Potter Shetlands up to 13. All, including Petunia, Albus and Fleur, had lice, poor skin, and were underweight, with the body condition of some scored at 0.5. For most, their hooves were also overgrown and hadn't received any routine care. They needed remedial work from a farrier, and the foals were in danger of growing with deformed limbs if the balance of their hooves was not attended to urgently.

The nine Shetlands were placed on a feeding plan to help increase their weight, received treatment to remove any lice, and had several visits from the farrier to bring their hooves back into good shape. The team had also identified issues with their hips, a sign of poor conformation among the herd, likely due to the inbreeding that had taken place. Poor

Did you know?

The average farrier visit costs £25, with an equine's hooves needing to be trimmed every six to eight weeks, overgrown hooves can cause lameness, chronic pain and long-term damage to an equine's body



Mrs Norris and her foal Sprout, like the other shetlands, had overgrown hooves and hadn't received any routine care. They needed remedial work from a farrier, and the foals were in danger of growing with deformed limbs if the balance of their hooves was not attended to urgently

conformation often leads to discomfort and arthritis in later life, with ongoing veterinary treatment needed to improve their quality of life.

Despite best efforts, Petunia was experiencing worsening lameness, and her outlook was sadly not positive. The decision was made to begin the gradual weaning process for all the mares and foals, helping Fleur adjust gently should Petunia continue to decline.

"We started with feeding them separately" said Equine Welfare Deputy Team Leader Mia. "We did that for a week and then separated them while we poo picked the field, before releasing them back together. And then we started doing it for

an hour and just built it up from there."

Mia explained how the two groups were integrated into one herd to encourage natural weaning with the foals. "They were turned out in a big field that was full of grass so in the day, all the mares and foals would be separate while they grazed."

Just after the New Year, Petunia's quality of life had deteriorated significantly. She was no longer coping, and we couldn't make her comfortable any longer, so we made the difficult but necessary decision to euthanase her. Fleur adapted well to the rest of the group, having formed close bonds with the other foals, which

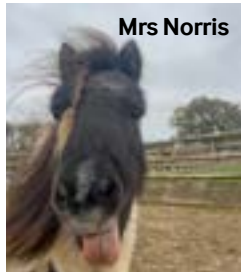
helped her adjust.

She also had the ARC team at her every beck and call, who described themselves as "housemaids" to the Harry Potter group. And while caring for them was difficult at times, Equine Welfare Assistants Ayla, Abbie and Sarah-Leigh stated how much they've enjoyed caring for the group, "It's been like heaven".

For the now three mares and five foals, graduation is on the horizon, and they'll soon find themselves at our Visitor Centre Yard, hopefully providing other Harry Potter group member Tonks with a much-needed playmate. We look forward to updating you on their progress soon.



Dolores



Mrs Norris



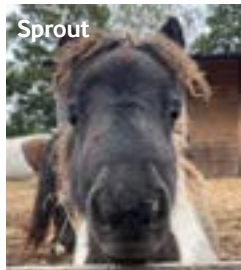
Sybil



Myrtle



Fleur



Sprout



Hedwig and Albus

All eleven remaining Harry Potter Shetlands will carry the consequences of neglect, no routine care, and their needs not being met for the rest of their lives. It's only thanks to our amazing supporters that we can provide them, and other equines with the best possible life. To donate towards their care, please use the enclosed form or scan the QR code



Spring/Summer GIFT GUIDE



More new products to see online at BransbyHorses.co.uk



Embossed Biscuit Tins

A delicious selection of Stem Ginger & Lemon and Clotted Cream Chocolate Chip shortbread.160g.

£10.95

Cats in Jumpers - Code: 21100327

Dogs in Jumpers - Code: 21100326



Sugar Free Travel Sweets

Sugar free sweets in a handy travel tin. 150g.

£5.95

Forest Fruits

Code: 21100332

Mixed Fruits

Code: 21100331



Travel Sweets

In a re-useable silver coloured travel tin. 200g.

£5.25

Citrus Selection

Code: 21100333

Barley Sugars

Code: 21100238



Pocket Mint Imperials

Fresh mints in a handy sized tin to slip into your pocket or bag.

£3.95 - Code: 21100334



Complete the enclosed order form and return to us or shop online. All profits from your purchases help us provide rescue, rehabilitation, and lifelong homes for those in desperate need, so you can be confident that you are helping to make a difference to so many lives.



Garden Flower Design Biscuit Tin

Emma Bridgewater designed floral biscuit assortment tin. 300g.
£18.75 - Code: 21100328

Garden Flower Design Fudge Caddy

Emma Bridgewater designed clotted cream fudge filled caddy. 80g.
£8.95
Code: 21100329



Pocket Fudge Tin

Emma Bridgewater floral design pocket sized tins of clotted cream fudge. You will receive a randomly selected design. 55g.
£6.95 - Code: 21100330

Cotton Shopper Bag
Made from natural cotton.
£4.95
Code: 20300335



Insulated Stainless Steel Bottle

Keeps drinks hot or cold for several hours. Bransby Horses design. 500ml.
£17.95 - Code: 20500464



Sports Bottle

Lightweight handy plastic bottle with Bransby Horses design. 500ml.
£6.25 - Code: 20500466



Double Wall Tumbler

Stainless steel travel mug with Bransby Horses design. 300ml.
£18.95 - Code: 20500465



Bransby Horses Yard Essentials

Bale Buster, Bucket Cover, Weigh Tape and Feed Stirrer. Everything you need for an organised stable.

Bucket Cover (red or blue) £7.95 - Code: 20900016

Bale Buster £4.95 - Code: 20900015

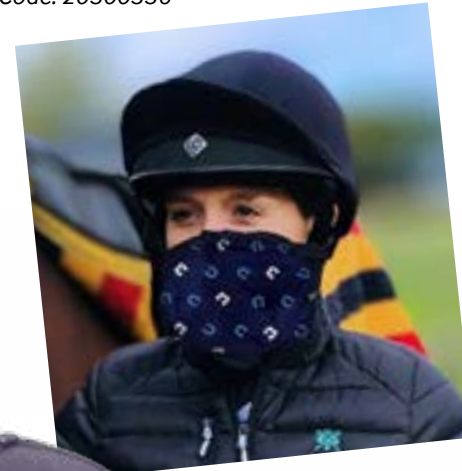
Weigh Tape £6.95 - Code: 20900018

Feed Stirrer £5.95 - Code: 20900017



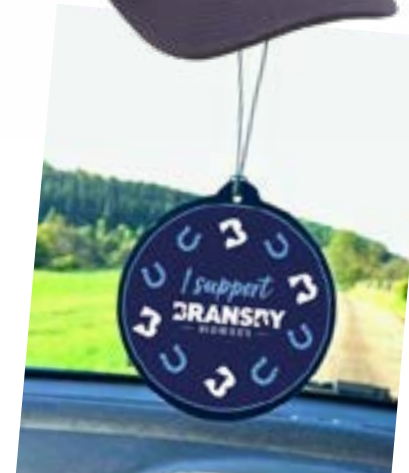
Bransby Horses Snood

Keep cosy on chilly mornings with our one size snood.
£7.50 - Code: 20300336



Bransby Horses Baseball Cap

Perfect for sunny days, French navy cotton embroidered adjustable cap.
£10.95
Code: 20300337



Bransby Horses Air Freshener

Fresh, long-lasting fragrance, perfect for cars and tack rooms.
£2.95
Code: 20500463



'Off Road' Notebook

Soft backed notebook featuring a printed cover and containing 80 blank pages.

12.5 x 9cm.

£4.25 - Code: 21000419

'Off Road' Ballpoint Pen

Finished with gold effect trim and presented in a matching gift box.

£9.95 - Code: 21000415



Bransby Horses Softfeel Ball Pen

Soft-touch rubberised finish with a recycled aluminium trim, this pen is both elegant and eco-friendly.

£4.95 - Code: 21000423

Wrendale Bookmark

Illustrated bookmark printed on extra thick card, with gold foil detail and featuring 'Field of Flowers' hare design.

£2.50

Code: 21000406



A5 Hard Cover Notebook

Featuring Sponsorship Star, Pecan.

£11.95 - Code: 21000422



Wrendale Sticky Notes

Charming 'Busy as a Bee' design. Includes 250 sheets per block.

£4.95

Code: 21000409



Wrendale Shopping Pad

'Piggy in the Middle' design. Lined pages for notes and lists with a handy magnet on the back.

£6.50

Code: 21000404

Bransby Horses Jigsaw

120 piece jigsaw featuring Sponsorship Stars Gnasha and Marlene.

£8.95

Code: 20700061



Lap Tray

Featuring a wood effect trim with a dark green, fabric covered bean bag base.

44 x 34cm.

£24.95

Dog - Code: 20500458

Cat - Code: 20500457



Melamine Tray

A delightful small tray perfect for your cup of tea, biscuits or as decorative piece in your home.

20 x 14cm.

£6.50

Donkey - Code: 20500459

Horse - Code: 20500460



Foldable Tote Bag

With a handy button clasp. Approximately 61 x 46cm.

£6.50

Petals & Prose - Code: 20300332

Time to Grow - Code: 20300333

Time to Grow

Gardening Jobs



Tea Towel

Cotton 74 x 48cm

£9.25

Gardening Jobs

Code: 20500462

Time to Grow

Code: 20500461



Time to Grow



Visit Us

Events Calendar

There's plenty to get involved in over Spring and Summer at Bransby Horses, from insightful talks about the equines in our care to exciting activity trails. To register for these events, please visit our website BransbyHorses.co.uk/events or scan the QR code on the opposite page.

*Please note that events are subject to change. For the most up to date information, please check our online events calendar, get in touch with our Supporter Relations team on 01427 788 464, or email mail@bransbyhorses.co.uk.

A guide to our talks

The Road to Rehoming – Experience a behind-the-scenes view of our training and rehabilitation yard and discover how our rescued equines are prepared for rehoming.

Donkey Tales – Meet and greet these amazing equines, all while learning about their habits, behaviours and personalities.

Sanctuary Stories – For those equines who can't be rehomed, we provide a safe haven for life. Learn more about Sanctuary Care at Bransby Horses and how we care for these unique beings.

Meet The Stars – Would you love to learn more about your sponsored equine? Attend one of our sponsorship talks for a special insight into one of our stars.

The Path to Recovery – Discover how we transform the lives of our equines through trust-based training and learn all about the rehabilitation process.

Activity Trails

Our Visitor Centre activity trails are fun for the whole family and a great way to support Bransby Horses. We host various trails throughout the year, including over the upcoming summer holidays, and we can't wait to welcome you all to our site. For more information on our current activity trails, please visit BransbyHorses.co.uk/family-activities



MAY

- Saturday 2nd May – Rehoming Talk
- Wednesday 6th May – Donkey Tales
- Sunday 10th May – Rehoming Talk
- Friday 15th May – Sanctuary Care
- Saturday 16th May - Sanctuary Care
- Wednesday 20th May – Donkey Tales
- Sunday 24th May – Sanctuary Talk
- Thursday 28th May – Sponsorship Talk – Master Imp
- Saturday 30th May – Sponsorship Talk – Master Imp



JUNE

- Wednesday 3rd June – Donkey Tales
- Sunday 7th June – Sponsorship Star – Master Imp
- Friday 12th June – Rehab Talk
- Saturday 13th June – Rehab Talk
- Wednesday 17th June – Donkey Tales
- Sunday 21st June – Rehab Talk
- Thursday 25th June – Rehoming Talk
- Saturday 27th June – Rehoming Talk



JULY

- Wednesday 1st July – Donkey Tales
- Sunday 5th July – The Road to Rehoming
- Friday 10th July – Sanctuary Stories
- Saturday 11th July – Sanctuary Stories
- Wednesday 15th July – Donkey Tales
- Sunday 19th July – Sanctuary Stories
- Thursday 23rd July – Sponsorship Star Talk –Pecan
- Saturday 25th July – Sponsorship Star Talk –Pecan
- Wednesday 29th July – Donkey Tales

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REGISTER



THERE'S MORE THAN ONE WAY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Discover the different ways you can support us.



Help us increase our book sales!

Last year, the sale of donated books generated over £4,000 to support our work here at the charity; but we need your help to improve this. We're asking people to donate unwanted books for the following genres:

- Children's
- Adult Fiction
- Biographies
- Autobiographies
- Animals
- Cookbooks & Food
- True Crime
- History

Donate unwanted equestrian items

Have equine items to spare, or know someone who does? Why not send them our way! At Bransby Horses, we accept a wide range of used or new rugs, tack, equestrian clothing, training and stable care items, that are in good condition. Donate them to our second-hand shop and help us raise vital funds for the hundreds of equines in our care. **You can also visit our onsite Donated Goods shop or our eBay store for great deals on second-hand equestrian items.**

*Please note that we are no longer accepting bric-a-brac donations. We thank our supporters for their kind donations in the past and the funds they've helped us raise for the charity.

Please make sure all books are in good condition. You can also help us by visiting our site in Lincoln and purchasing our donated books. Prices start from as little as £1 and every penny made goes directly towards the care of the hundreds of equines at Bransby Horses.

Send in your stamps

Did you know in 2025 we raised over £10,000 purely from the sale of stamps? This is enough to cover the cost of bedding for an entire year.

Donating stamps is a perfect way to get involved with the charity, and it doesn't have to cost you anything. Simply save your stamps and post them to Stamp Appeal, Bransby Horses, Bransby, Lincoln, LN1 2PH or drop them off at our Visitor Centre.



For more information on donating stamps, please visit BransbyHorses.co.uk/support-us/donating-stamps

Meet our Sponsorship Stars



Woody

Woody arrived at Bransby Horses back in 2014. Due to his past, he can be fearful of people, but the team continue to spend many hours earning his trust.



Nipper

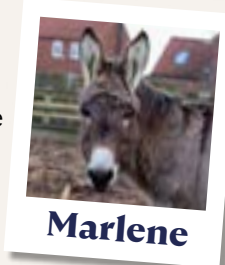
Nipper was the first donkey foal born at Bransby Horses in 13 years. He has since grown into a cheeky boy who loves stealing things out of the pockets of his handlers.



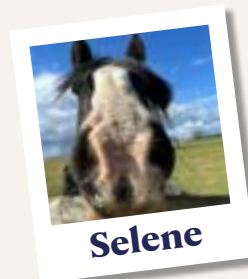
Pecan

Pecan was taken into our care at just one month old along with his mum and dad. He's a very sensible pony but still loves cuddles and scratches with his handlers.

Marlene is a gentle presence within the donkey herd and is best friends with other Sponsorship Star, Gnasha.



Marlene



Selene

Selene is a 14hh black and white cob who is very settled in her routine. She is a sweet, quiet mare who has become confident within herself since her arrival.



Gnasha

Gnasha is our oldest Sponsorship Star but is still living life to the fullest. Her white coat makes her stand out among the rest of her herd.



Frazzle

Nicknamed 'Labracob', **Frazzle** is a black and white cob who loves to be sociable. He is extremely friendly and enjoys playing with his herd mates.

Matilda arrived with her mum Gnasha and two other donkeys after they were abandoned on a roadside. She's grown up at Bransby Horses and loves being the centre of attention.



Matilda



Womble

From being completely unhandled to a pony that loves scratches, **Womble** has come a long way during his time at Bransby Horses. He's an 11hh Welsh pony who is inseparable from his best friend Rodney.



Master Imp

Master Imp has been under our care since 2012. He loves grabbing buckets and running away from handlers, showing off his cheeky but loveable side.

You can sponsor an equine for £3 a month. Complete the enclosed order form or visit BransbyHorses.co.uk/sponsor-an-equine. All funds raised through our sponsorship scheme help to care for all equines across the charity.

Born back in 2024, **Pika** holds the title as our youngest member. He's still got plenty to learn and is spending time with Pecan.



Pika

A Heartfelt Thank You FROM BRANSBY HORSES

We'd like to take this opportunity to say thank you to a few wonderful people who have given back and helped us rescue, rehabilitate and care for hundreds of equines every year.

Lottery Winners

Thank you to everyone who played our 2025 Autumn/Winter Lottery and congratulations to our lucky winners.

£2000	045039	Selby
£500	192918	Thame
£250	639480	Market Rasen
£50	397409	Lincoln
£50	120212	Camberley
£50	137833	Tadworth
£50	701833	Reigate
£50	103938	Maidstone
£50	039773	Scunthorpe
£50	045905	York
£50	096595	Stevenage
£50	037871	Harrogate
£50	130701	Sutton

A special thank you to the supporters who kindly donated their winnings back to Bransby Horses. If you'd like to take part in our Spring/Summer lottery*, please fill out the enclosed tickets and send them back to us using the return envelope.

**Unfortunately, those under 18 or who live outside of the UK cannot take part in our Spring/Summer lottery.*

Murphy's Army Purple Poppy Campaign

Bransby Horses was chosen as a beneficiary of the 2025 Murphy's Army Purple Poppy Campaign, an initiative to honour animals who have served alongside the Armed Forces and Emergency Services.

Through the sale of purple poppies, an incredible £12,117.10 was raised for the charity, allowing us to continue the exceptional care we provide to ex-service equines, giving them the peaceful, supported lives they deserve.



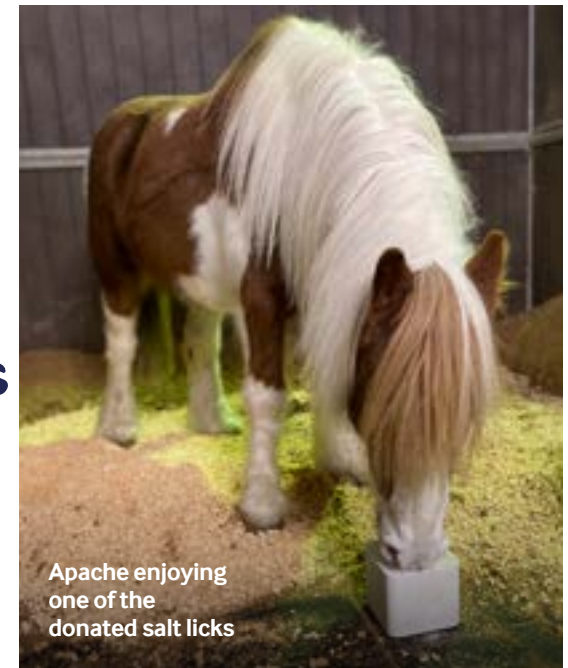
A Delicious Donation

A big thank you goes to TFM Country Store and their customers who chose to donate their loyalty points to Bransby Horses at the end of 2025, adding up to an amazing £460. **Because of their generosity, we were able to purchase 33 salt licks for our equines,** who will definitely make the most of them.

A Fundraising Shout Out



A huge thank you to one of our amazing supporters, who **raised a wonderful £1272.33** from her annual Bunnie Bingo fundraiser. We're extremely grateful for your continued support and to those people who took part in the event.



Apache enjoying one of the donated salt licks

Become a member, *become my friend*



For just
£5 a month

We love to welcome new friends into our herd!

By becoming a Friend of Bransby Horses you will receive:

- ✓ Invites to exclusive VIP events to meet our residents and the team
- ✓ Exclusive product offers from our online shop
- ✓ Updates throughout the year about our four-legged friends
- ✓ Our biannual magazine Bransby Life, packed with heart-warming stories and updates
- ✓ A dedicated area on the website to access exclusive content just for you!

Friends
of Bransby Horses 

Join us by
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code or adding to
your order form.

