World Horse Welfare News  
Spring 2012

Helping the working horses of Nicaragua

Celebrating 85 years of helping horses

Rehome a Horse Month

Our Field Officers at work
Celebrating 85 years of helping horses

We have been helping horses since 1927, and we hope you enjoy our special 85th anniversary feature. If you can, please display the enclosed flyer, info card and carsticker somewhere prominent to show your support and help spread the word about our work.
Welcome

Your generosity in helping horses is making a world of difference across the UK and internationally, as demonstrated throughout this edition of World Horse Welfare news.

As we celebrate our 85th anniversary, we are especially grateful to you for your support and hope you will share in our collective achievements (see pages 10-11).

The challenges horses still face are evident in Nicaragua, where your support has allowed us to start an exciting new programme to make lasting improvements to the lives of working horses through community engagement and education.

In the UK, our field officers are busy, and our farms are at bursting point, leading us to deem March Rehome a Horse Month. Will you rehome one of our horses? Will you ask your friends? The more we rehome, the more we can help. Thank you.

Roly Owers
Chief Executive

2 million and counting...Are you watching?

Our YouTube channel has now had over two and a half million views! There are currently 123 films on our channel covering the wide range of our work in the UK and internationally. The films include stories ranging from welfare and prosecution cases and our transportation campaign, to this year’s annual conference on the theme of horse welfare in sport.

Ever since our first film appeared in February 2007, all the production work has been done in-house at World Horse Welfare’s Head Office in Snetterton, Norfolk. We have always tried to keep the films interesting, informative and educational, and it’s great to see so many people appreciating and sharing the work we do for horses through our videos.

Discover our work through film now by scanning this icon with your smartphone or going to www.youtube.com/horsecharity
Former Chairman recieves OBE

We are very pleased to share the news that recently our retired Chairman, Christopher Hall, was recognised in the New Year’s Honours List. Christopher has been awarded an OBE by The Queen, recognising his work to help horses. He said: “I feel extremely honoured to have received this award. I have worked closely with horses in a number of different ways for many years. I have been lucky enough to meet many wonderful people along the way and have much appreciated the help of excellent Trustees. I have been very privileged in my time working with horses as I have visited so many interesting countries and met such a diverse range of people while doing what I love. I feel very grateful indeed for the opportunities that I have been given.”

Christopher joined World Horse Welfare in 2005 and became Chairman in 2006. During Christopher’s time with our charity he was instrumental in bringing about significant improvements to horse welfare both in the United Kingdom and internationally.

New Chairman takes the helm

We are delighted to welcome Barry Johnson BVSc DVSc MRCVS as the new Chairman of World Horse Welfare. Barry has enjoyed a successful career as a vet, having set up his own practice in 1973 and practiced in his home county of Lancashire for 40 years. He also held the position of President of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons in 1993 and has been the chairman of various veterinary bodies. Barry joined the World Horse Welfare Council in July 2007, and succeeded former Chairman Christopher Hall OBE following an open recruitment and formal selection process. He said of his new post: "I am extremely pleased to be undertaking the role of Chairman at World Horse Welfare. I have thoroughly enjoyed my four years on the Council and the last three years as Vice Chairman, and look forward to the new challenges which lie ahead. Christopher has been successful in leading the charity through a great deal of change over the years and I hope that I can continue with, and build on, that success."

Keeping the threat of disease at bay

We have been working with the Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency (AHVLA) to train their staff on how they could be best prepared for an equine disease outbreak in the UK. Our Deputy Head of UK Welfare Support Samantha Chubbock, Campaigns Officer for Research and Education Hannah Westen and a team from Hall Farm Rescue and Rehoming Centre gave lectures and practical demonstrations to 75 veterinary and technical staff from the AHVLA over two days in December. The sessions were held at Hall Farm, and covered a wide range of topics including passports, general horse handling and the symptoms of notifiable diseases. The aim was to highlight any specific problems an equine disease outbreak would pose to the AHVLA, and how our organisations could work together to find solutions. World Horse Welfare’s Samantha Chubbock said: “We were extremely pleased to be asked to carry out the training and received very positive feedback from those who took part. There is a real difference regarding the movement of horses, and the regulations in place for them, compared to animals within the agricultural industry. We hope we have clearly set out those differences and hope to work in collaboration with the AHVLA again in the future.”

We offer a free ‘Keep your horse healthy’ disease prevention information pack to help UK horse owners protect their horses against the ever-present and increasing threat from a number of infectious diseases. Request your copy on our website today or by calling 01953 497232.

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Banned from keeping horses for life

Field Officer Doug Howie visited a field in Aberdeenshire in May 2009, following a call to our UK Welfare Hotline from a member of the public who was concerned about a large number of horses that looked underweight.

On arrival, Doug Howie found a foal which had been still-born that morning along with a herd of more than 20 semi-feral horses consisting of stallions, mares and foals. They were in a poached field with several areas of marshland, little grass and no shelter. One of the fillies, a two-year old, could not get to her feet, was sweating and her eyes were rolling. A vet was requested and shortly afterwards the horse was put to sleep.

Several visits were needed to assess the situation and determine the best course of action. On one of these visits Doug Howie and Eileen Gillen, who is the World Horse Welfare Centre Manager at Belwade Farm, detected a strong smell of decaying flesh from one of the sheds and 12 to 15 horse carcasses were found. The remaining 23 horses, which were all underweight, had poor feet and were covered in lice, were taken to our Belwade Farm Rescue and Rehoming Centre in Aberdeenshire. Here they received the vital care they needed, and most have now been found loving new homes through our rehoming scheme. The owner, Valerie Pritchard, 65, of Cuminestown, Turriff, Aberdeenshire, was sentenced on five offences under the Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act for causing unnecessary suffering to the horses. She was banned from keeping horses for life.

The horses included Belwade Farm’s current adoption horse Spencer, pictured left after undergoing rehabilitation in our care. He had the worst body condition score of the case, and was so malnourished and dehydrated he had to be put on a drip and kept in intensive care on arrival. We really thought that he was not going to survive, and our staff sat up with him through the night. Visit our website to find out how you can adopt Spencer, or make a donation today to help us continue our work with horses like these.
At the end of October last year World Horse Welfare handed its latest Dossier of Evidence to the European Commission to press for change to the laws governing the transportation of horses to slaughter in Europe. Up to 80,000 horses make these journeys each year, often covering thousands of miles and several countries, and we have documented compelling scientific evidence of the suffering inflicted. Campaigns Consultant Jo White and Chief Executive Roly Owers travelled to Brussels and presented the Dossier of Evidence to Harry Vassallo, Commissioner Dalli’s representative.

We were dismayed that despite recognising that “severe animal welfare problems persist” and scientific evidence supports our call for change, the long-awaited European Commission report on the protection of animals during transport, published in November, proposed more effective enforcement, rather than change of existing laws. This is of grave concern as journey times and space allowances have not changed since 1991.

We support better enforcement, but only as part of a package of measures including shortened journey times. A maximum journey limit would be simpler to enforce and is totally feasible with the existing infrastructure of slaughterhouses licensed to slaughter horses. It is possible to reach such a slaughterhouse from anywhere in the EU within 9-12 hours.

Read more about how, with your help, our campaign continues to progress on page 12. See the evidence for yourself by downloading the latest Dossier of Evidence from our website today—www.worldhorsewelfare.org/takeaction.

Tack donation from Pony Club founder

This year Hall Farm Rescue and Rehoming Centre, Norfolk, have kindly been given a large quantity of tack, rugs and other horse equipment by the children of the late Diana Martin-Bird, one of the founding members of the Pony Club. Diana Martin-Bird, who passed away at the age of 91 last year, devoted her life to equestrianism and was the first Chair of the Pony Club’s National Committee. She took her Riding and Road Safety Test when in her 70’s and some of her fluorescent equipment is amongst the donated items.

All of our four farms have second hand tack shops where you can donate or buy tack. All proceeds go towards helping our vital work. Please contact your local farm direct for more information, or alternatively why not sell your unwanted items and donate the takings to us? We are always grateful for any contribution you can give.

Summer Grand Prize Draw 2012

Following the success of our Christmas Grand Prize Draw we are pleased to announce the launch of our Summer Draw 2012. Buying raffle tickets for yourself and selling them to friends and family is a really great way to raise money and help the horses in our care, plus you get a chance to win one of our great prizes too! Jenny Gordon of Leatherhead was the lucky winner of the Christmas Grand Prize Draw first prize of £7,500. She is pictured with her horse, and you can see how delighted they were with their winnings.

If you do not have raffle tickets enclosed with this newsletter or would like to order more please call 01953 497239.

Thank you and good luck!

How does taking part in the raffle help horse welfare?

In 2011 we raised £168,806 through raffle ticket sales and a further £127,429 in donations. This means World Horse Welfare was able to provide:

• Rescue and rehabilitation for twenty horses who had suffered neglect and cruelty.

• Improved welfare for working horses in Guatemala by providing training to the poorest communities overseas.

• A field trip for our continued campaign to end the long-distance transportation of horses across Europe to slaughter.
Our Conference brings together leading names in horse sport to debate horse welfare in the 2012 Olympics and beyond

Famous faces from the world of equestrian sport debated the burning issues of horse welfare in sport at World Horse Welfare’s annual conference. The event was sponsored by Betfair and was on the theme of ‘Olympics 2012: What legacy for horse welfare?’. Held on 17th November at the Royal Geographical Society, London, the day attracted a record attendance with speakers and panellists including World Horse Welfare’s president HRH The Princess Royal, Minister for Sport and the Olympics Hugh Robertson MP, racing broadcaster and journalist Alastair Down, founder of the Soweto Equestrian Foundation Enos Mafokate, equine reproduction specialist Dr Jonathan Pycock and eventer Pippa Funnell MBE.

The importance of welfare in horse sport:

World Horse Welfare’s Chief Executive Roly Owers opened the day with an impassioned speech on why the charity supports the responsible use of horses in sport, and the importance of the charity’s continual work in that field, saying:

“Our support for equestrian sports is a matter of principle and goes right to the heart of what World Horse Welfare is about. So long as we accept a heavy burden of responsibility on our shoulders for their welfare, and give their welfare priority over all other considerations, we believe that involving horses in sport is right and mutually beneficial... We are proud to play a role, through the FEI, to ensure sport horses enjoy welfare standards among the highest in the world... (However) The sport industry also understands that wherever we find bad practices, we will challenge them.”

Opening equestrian sports to all, and reconnecting the public with horses:

Hugh Robertson MP, Minister for Sport and the Olympics, gave an insightful presentation on the Olympic Legacy, in particular what it will mean for horse sport. He emphasised the importance of legacy to this year’s Olympics, with equestrian sport being no exception.

This was a sentiment echoed by Alastair Down during his presentation on ‘The duty of care to horses in sport’, describing how “Red Rum reconnected the general public to the horse”. He spoke of how the disconnect of people from the countryside during the industrial revolution has meant that we now exist in a society where the majority of people have never come close to a horse.

The day took an emotional turn when the audience heard from Enos Mafokate, founder of World Horse Welfare’s affiliate the Soweto Equestrian Foundation and South Africa’s first black international show jumping champion. He spoke frankly of his experiences as an aspiring equestrian competitor during apartheid, an unheard of ambition. The Soweto Equestrian Foundation aims to open the elite world of equestrian sports to people who would never otherwise have this chance.

Sport welfare issues we don’t always see:

Dr Jonathan Pycock MRCVS gave a presentation on ‘Overbreeding in the equine industry’, which echoed World Horse Welfare’s view that “from Thoroughbreds to Shetland ponies, overbreeding is a critical issue facing horse welfare today.” He summed up the issue: “Overproduction of poor-quality low value foals is the root cause of many health and welfare problems...purchase prices decreasing and costs of keep increasing are going to lead to increasing welfare problems.”

“You can watch videos of what was discussed on our YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/horsecharity

“We won’t see the highest standards of equestrianism next year unless we subscribe to the highest standards of care.” – Hugh Robertson MP, Minister for Sport and the Olympics

“As riders we definitely have to take the opportunity to get the media onside. I would open my yard up, and I know many other riders would like to open their yards up, running up to the games to get the media to show what we do in a positive light.” – Pippa Funnell MBE, eventer

“The BHA has made an excellent stab at [the whip rules]...the races already look infinitely better ... I also would enforce it more vigorously ... I would take the race off the jockey if he broke the rules.” – Sir Mark Prescott Bt, racehorse trainer

“I have a dream that one day a black child will compete for South Africa in the Olympics.” – Enos Mafokate, founder of the Soweto Equestrian Foundation

“With the Olympics next year we have a chance, and an international stage, on which to showcase all of the good that sport brings to horses in the UK and overseas. Let’s grasp this opportunity with both hands.” Roly Owers, Chief Executive World Horse Welfare
World Horse Welfare overseas

Honduras

February - We have successfully secured the expertise of a group of US vets, known as the Equitarians, to help alleviate the suffering of working horses here. They are providing veterinary treatment and skills to reinforce the work we already carry out to train local farriers and saddlers. Over just three days the Equitarians treated 149 horses at various locations around San Pedro Sula as well as giving lectures on lameness, colic and equine dentistry. The World Horse Welfare farriery students managed to shoe 95 of these horses, an amazing achievement. The saddlery students have fitted new harness to six horses and repaired or improved another twenty horses’ harness. We were supported by the Agricultural University of Honduras who brought along ten Veterinary students so that they could gain valuable experience working alongside the vet team. We have also been joined on these field trips by local vets from around San Pedro Sula, so they can learn more about equine medicine.

Guatemala

December - December saw the students from our fifth training course in Guatemala complete their final module and take their practical and theory exams. The saddlery students showed a great sense of pride and urgency preparing their saddles for marking, the culmination of nine weeks’ intense training. Meanwhile the farriery students were kept busy on field trips shoeing local horses until their assessment day. We are delighted to say that the nine saddlery students and nine farriery students passed their final assessments.

January - At the start of 2012 module one of World Horse Welfare’s sixth course in Guatemala got underway. A total of 20 students are taking part – 10 saddlers and 10 farriers. The local Assistant Trainers we have trained over the last four years will get the chance to take greater responsibility teaching new students on the course in 2012, meaning in the future we can support these locally trained trainers in continuing our work here in Guatemala, leaving a legacy of better horse knowledge.

Guatemala and Honduras are just two of the seven countries where we currently run our practical, five-year programmes – teaching farriery, saddlery, nutrition and business skills, with the long-term goal of alleviating equine suffering through education. Thank you for supporting our work in Honduras last year. Watch a video at www.youtube.com/horsecharity. Read about our new project in Nicaragua on pages 14-17

Rogue traders

We are urging horse owners to think twice before loaning or giving their horse away to a supposedly good home, as we hear about more and more cases where they have been sold on, or even slaughtered.

In just one example, last month Trading Standards successfully tackled a case of animal fraud in North Yorkshire involving a woman who acquired other people’s horses, pretending they would be given a loving permanent home, but then sold them on for slaughter.

One of the victims was Hazel Walker. She bought her horse Joe for her partner to ride but when he became increasingly lame and the vets bills and medication costs were increasing, Hazel thought she would loan him out as a companion as she couldn’t bear the thought of having him put to sleep. After putting Joe on a free ads website she was contacted by the woman who said she was interested in taking Joe as a companion for one of her horses. Hazel inspected the field and made it clear that if Joe was no longer wanted she was to be let know. However she heard that Joe was subsequently seen at a horse sale, and when she went back to the field Joe was gone. She eventually tracked him to a dealer but he had been sold to a slaughter house. When she eventually got through to the slaughter house she was told Joe had been shot the day before. Hazel says:

“It has been the worst experience of my life and would just ask that horse owners think twice before loaning out their horses. I know now I should have had Joe put to sleep, but I thought I was doing the best thing by allowing him to live.”

Buyers too should beware of rogue traders who may be selling unsuitable animals. In one case last year a mare someone bought over the internet eventually had to be put down in our care. Despite all the information describing the mare as a family horse that was much loved, she arrived considerably lame. The new owner tried her best to help the horse and sought advice from vets and farriers all over the country. Unable to help the mare herself, she contacted us to see if we could do anything for her. We discovered the mare was suffering from canker in all four feet, an incredibly rare infection most farriers have never seen, and unfortunately she had to be put to sleep on humane grounds.

To read or download World Horse Welfare’s top 10 tips for buying a horse please visit our website: www.worldhorsewelfare.org/tentoptips

We also hope that people will consider rehoming over buying. Read more about the benefits and Rehome a Horse Month 2012 on pages 20-21
Death of Stella Baum

We were deeply saddened to hear that Mrs Stella Baum passed away on Tuesday 18th October, aged 95. Stella Baum was married to John Baum, brother of Anne Colvin. Like many family members Stella initially began helping the ILPH during busy periods, but her administrative skills soon became invaluable, and she was employed officially by the charity in 1972.

In his book ‘Debt of Honour’, which explores the story of the ILPH, Jeremy James paints a picture of Mrs Baum, an integral member of our charity in its earliest years:

“In any organisation the work done behind desks and in the office is no less vital than the work of those who are, so to speak, in the front line, and the ILPH is no exception. The ILPH was for many years steered by the cool head and able administration of Stella Baum.

It was she who took on the burden of the office work and the correspondence, and she who helped Anne Colvin reorganize her complex and sometimes archaic card-index systems. And it was she who kept the day-to-day business of the charity on an even keel throughout occasionally troubled times.”

We would like to give our thanks on behalf of the charity and the many horses she helped save from suffering for her enormous contribution.

Horses in service

With the film War Horse having hit cinemas, we have been paying tribute to World Horse Welfare horses past and present that have played a vital role serving with the forces.

These include Marley, who served with Greater Manchester Constabulary for seven years. The youngster arrived at our Belwade Farm Rescue and Rehoming Centre in Aberdeenshire in 2002 after his owners couldn’t look after him anymore. After nursing his confidence and transforming his personality, it was agreed he had the potential to be an ideal police horse, and soon joined the mounted branch. Marley has now retired from the police and has been rehomed to a loving new family.

Digger, pictured, is in training to become a drum horse with the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment. The ‘gentle giant’ came to Belwade in 2010 as his previous owners couldn’t look after him anymore. His talents were soon realised though, and he was quickly rehomed by the regiment, where he continues to do well with his training.

Penny is used by the King’s Troop Royal Horse Artillery after being rehomed by the regiment from World Horse Welfare in 2001. Penny was taken into Penny Farm Rescue and Rehoming Centre, near Blackpool, after being found extremely underweight and covered in lice.

After successful rehabilitation and a real transformation she now takes part in many high-profile ceremonial parades and events.

“It is easy to forget that horses continue to play a fundamental role in the services today and are relied upon in many ways.”

- Chief Executive of World Horse Welfare Roly Owers

One of the more famous horses that we have cared for is Copenhagen. The black gelding joined the Household Cavalry, based in Knightsbridge, London, in 1975. He was present during the notorious IRA attack in Hyde Park on the men and horses of The Queen’s Life Guard in 1982. Copenhagen suffered serious injuries but survived the blast, and eventually returned to his duties. After 14 years in the Household Cavalry he was retired to World Horse Welfare, where he spent the rest of his days at our headquarters, Hall Farm in Snettisham, Norfolk.

See more photos by searching for World Horse Welfare on Facebook
Celebrating 85 years of helping horses

If all these animals could cry aloud with one voice, it would stir the world to do something about it all. One of the most dreadful things about this traffic is that thousands of horses go to doom and agony, trudging along willingly and trustfully and in mute silence. We must be their voice.

Ada Cole, ILPH Founding Member, 1927

It is our 85th anniversary year and we hope you will help us celebrate. World Horse Welfare has been helping horses since 1927, and we are looking forward to sharing some of our past and current work with you this year.

Horses exist with man in a unique relationship spanning thousands of years, and we are proud to strive to ensure that horses never suffer from this partnership. We must always remember that our relationship with the horse - be it in sport, agriculture, pleasure riding or performing a service such as policing our streets - places a great responsibility on our shoulders for their welfare. We are proud of what you, our supporters, have helped us to achieve over our 85 years. There is still much more to do, and for that we need to raise awareness. We hope you can display the included flyer, info card and carsticker somewhere prominent to show your support and help spread the word.

Just some of our history:

1927 – After seeing work worn horses being disembarked on the docks in Antwerp for slaughter, Ada Cole founds the International League Against the Export of Horses for Butchery, which later becomes the International League for the Protection of Horses (ILPH).

1937 – The ILPH-driven Exportation of Horses Act is introduced which effectively stops the export of live horses for slaughter from Great Britain.

1939 – Introduction of the Riding Establishment Act, thanks in large part to the ILPH, in response to rise in popularity of horse riding for leisure

1949 – Our first horse rehabilitation centre opens in Britain, Cherry Tree Farm

1952–4 – Introduction of Acts protecting horses transported by sea and at slaughterhouses thanks in large part to the ILPH

1950-1965 – ILPH engages in activities to improve horse welfare in France, Italy, the Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Greece and South Africa.

1978 – ILPH rehomes scores of old police horses and pit ponies, emerging as the largest equine rehoming charity in Britain

1980 – ILPH works with Eastern Bloc countries and Soviet Union to improve journeys for transported horses

1985 – Our first international training course is launched in Morocco after encouragement from Sir Peter O’Sullevan.

1986 – ILPH buys Hall Farm, Norfolk, and develops Anne Colvin House as its head office.

1990 – Our first Scottish rescue and rehoming centre, Belwade Farm, opens in Aberdeenshire.

1991 – Our international training teams begin working in Mexico.


HRH The Princess Royal becomes our president.

2001 – Penny Farm Rescue and Rehoming Centre opens near Blackpool

2006 – Training programme started in Guatemala covering farriery, saddlery, nutrition and business skills

Project Romania commences, providing veterinary education and improving legislation.

2007 – On 1st January, Regulation (EC) No 1/2005, incorporating some of our recommendations, comes into force improving conditions for horses transported long distance to slaughter in Europe. However this legislation still does not go far enough
2008 – ILPH is re-branded as **World Horse Welfare**. World Horse Welfare becomes associate member of the **International Equestrian Federation (FEI)** after almost three decades as their welfare advisors.

- Training course established in **Lesotho**.

2009 - **Petition of 132,565 signatures** in support of ending the long distance transportation of horses to slaughter in Europe is handed to the **European Commission**.

- Training programme started in **Soweto**.

2010 - **Written Declaration** to stop the long distance transportation of horses to slaughter in Europe is signed by 55% of MEPs.

- Training programme started in **Honduras**.
- More than 1,900 cases of horses in distress were investigated by our **Field Officers**.

2011 – Seven training programmes in place, including a new programme in **Nicaragua**.

- Our four farms accommodate 330 horses; around 230 horses are **rehomed** each year.
- Second **Dossier of evidence** of suffering endured during the long-distance journeys is submitted to the European Commission.
- We continue to campaign for the introduction of a **maximum journey limit of 9-12 hours**, and further improvement of welfare standards.

See more photos from our archives by searching for World Horse Welfare on Facebook.
We remain undaunted in our efforts to stop the needless long-distance journeys of horses across Europe to slaughter, despite the fact that the European Commission has missed two recent opportunities to respond to the calls of its citizens and Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) on this important issue. So we have taken the campaign back to Brussels to keep the pressure on.

We are already submitting our response to the Commission’s November report, in which they chose to propose no changes to existing transportation legislation despite admitting that ‘severe animal welfare problems persist’ and that the current laws do not reflect current scientific knowledge of horses. Similarly, we are also working on a response to the Commission’s Animal Welfare Strategy which fails to address the key issues affecting horses. While this isn’t great news, it all helps to build our case for the dire need for change for horses.

On a recent visit to Brussels, Chief Executive Roly Owers, Campaigns Officer Hannah Lynch and Campaigns Consultant Jo White met with MEPs, officials and other animal welfare and industry groups to state our concerns and discuss the next steps in the campaign. Campaigns Officer Hannah Lynch describes how it went:

It’s an accepted fact that horses tend to lead to early starts, but getting up at 4.15am called for two alarm clocks! The rude awakening was definitely made worthwhile though, when Jo and I bumped into one of our colleagues from Eurogroup, an animal welfare group based in Brussels, only minutes after arriving: sometimes there really is no substitute for being on the spot. Roly was already in Brussels meeting MEPs and fellow animal welfare groups, while our first meeting of the day was with Polish MEP Sidonia Jedrzejewska. Sidonia was one of the MEPs who tabled our successful Written Declaration, and has been a great supporter ever since. It was great to be able to catch up with her, and discuss how to push the campaign forwards another step – it’s always useful to get the perspective of MEPs and others on our work.

After another meeting we met up with Roly and headed over to the Finnish Permanent Representation. Every Member State has a Permanent Representation – a group of officials who act as a mini-embassy to the European Union. We sent our Dossier of Evidence to every Permanent Representation, and as a result had secured a meeting with the Finnish veterinary attaché. This was a great chance to talk about the scientific research that underpins our recommendations and to find out the Finnish government’s view. We have had similar meetings with the Danish and UK Permanent Representations.

The next day Jo and I had a meeting with an official from the European Commission. Later that day we were able to catch up with several more MEPs, including Julie Girling MEP, another long-time supporter of the campaign.

There is still an appetite for change among MEPs, and still opportunities to make a difference. The European Parliament is currently drafting two key reports (see above) and we will be making your voice heard in both of those.

Watch out for details on how you can get involved on our website, Facebook and Twitter!

Hannah
Let your love of horses live on

Easter week, April 2nd - 9th, will be an ideal time to visit one of our four Rescue and Rehoming Centres to see the work funded through the generosity of our supporters. Some of the most personal and heartfelt donations we receive each year come in the form of gifts left to us in Wills, and these legacies make up around 60% of our annual income. This makes all the difference to our work helping horses. Quite simply, legacies are the future gifts that allow us to increase our impact on horses’ lives in the UK and worldwide each year.

Some ways we help horses...

A simple Will, drawn up by a solicitor, costs very little but gives you the wonderful feeling of knowing that your loved ones are protected and your love of horses will continue to live on through the gift you leave. Your generosity and foresight today will enable us to continue to help twice as many horses around the world for years to come.

If you are considering making your Will and would like more information about how about to support World Horse Welfare, a member of our Legacy Team would be very pleased to talk you in confidence. Please call 01953 497225 today, or visit our website for more information on legacies and our work.

We advise anyone considering making a Will to speak to a Solicitor or other suitably qualified professional.
World Horse Welfare begin new project in Nicaragua

In 2011 our International team started work to re-establish a World Horse Welfare project in Nicaragua.

Nicaragua

Nicaragua is the largest country in Central America and also one of the poorest, with high levels of poverty and unemployment. The country contains an estimated 400,000 working horses, which communities depend upon for vital income and services.

Starting out in a new country

Throughout last year we conducted research in Nicaragua to assess the conditions of working horses and to gain an in-depth understanding of horse owners’ needs. Working closely on the ground with the local community, interviewing horse owners and traveling throughout the region to assess horses, we wanted to investigate the exact problems facing working horses and their owners and how we might help.

We focused our initial efforts on an area on the south eastern boundary of Nicaragua’s capital city, Managua. This area contains rural, semi-rural and urban communities where working horses are widely used in a variety of tasks to earn money for the communities that depend upon them, most of which are focused around the three major wholesale markets in the region.

Vital workers

Working horses in this area provide many different services to their communities, producing income by distributing goods from markets, transporting waste, milk, drinking water and construction materials, and ploughing and cultivation during the rainy season.

Our research found that a typical working horse owner is responsible for providing income for five family members. The money they earn from the activities of their horses averages US$2.66 per day, the equivalent of £1.67, meaning a working horse owner in Nicaragua has an income of just US$44 cents or 28 pence a day per family member to pay for clothing, food, basic services, health and education.
Footcare

We found that footcare knowledge is virtually non-existent within the horse owning population. Professional farriers do not exist in Nicaragua and the skill level of self-taught farriers is extremely poor. The majority of owners shoe their own horses, with the rest using self-taught farriers. We found that owners purchase unsuitable ready-made horseshoes from two local shoemakers in the area, made from reinforced steel bars and available in four standard sizes, meaning that the hoof is fitted to the shoe rather than the shoe to the hoof.

Harness and tack

All the owners told us that the harnesses they use are homemade. We saw many injuries on horses resulting from the type, material and ill-sizing of harnesses and equipment. Half of the horses had nose injuries of varying severity, three quarters had collar rubs resulting from harness sharing and poor maintenance, and half had wither and crest injuries resulting from poor collars.

Basic health

Wounds are not properly treated leading to on-going suffering. Another concern we documented was the lack of nutrition for working horses, with over eighty percent of horses assessed scoring below the ideal body condition. In addition, only half of the owners we talked to wormed their horses, and of these it was unclear how many used a recognised wormer. With no vaccination programme in the area, no one owner we questioned vaccinated their horses to protect from disease.

Security

Owners told us they were deeply worried for the security of their animals. Thousands of horses and cattle are stolen in Nicaragua each year and cases are rarely resolved. The majority of owners told us that there was no police presence in their communities, and nearly a third we met had at some point had a horse or horses stolen— one man alone had lost six horses to theft. Unfortunately it is commonly understood that stolen horses are butchered, with the meat being introduced into the food chain, supplying small eateries, vendors and sausage makers in the markets of Managua.

Horses are also common causes of traffic accidents, especially at night, due to the lack of lighting and reflective equipment on carts and loose animals on the road. Animal-related traffic accidents are the fourth largest cause of accidents in Nicaragua, and a large proportion of these incidents involve horse carts or loose horses.

Solving the problem

Poor standards of basic care mean that these working horses are suffering from numerous but preventable injuries, poor body condition and challenging working conditions. There is a real need to educate the working horse owners in many areas of basic horse health and routine husbandry. It is also vital to sustainably improve the skills of local horse service providers such as farriers, saddlers and shoemakers, so that owners can have access to affordable good quality care for their horses for years to come.
Our objectives

Our research has allowed us to develop and tailor a project to bring essential skills to communities in the area that will alleviate the horse suffering we have seen. This has built a firm groundwork for the programme we have launched, and these are our main objectives:

Working with communities

We have organised 13 community groups within the area who we are meeting with on a monthly basis. These meetings are open to all and cover the aspects of basic horse care our research showed was most needed: raising awareness among owners on basic farriery, harness sizing and repair, health, nutrition, road safety and security. Through these groups we have established on-going relationships with 350 horse owners, allowing us to reach over 500 working horses. Indirectly this will impact on the wider horse care practices of these owners’ families, expanding the influence of our training to up to 2000 more people who have contact with horses in a short time.

Providing affordable services

Improving the skills of local horse service providers such as farriers, harness-makers and shoemakers will provide horse owners with sustainable and lasting access to affordable, good quality horse care within their community. This year we will train six harness-makers and seven farriers to improve the services they can offer to local working horses and have established a central training venue for them to work from. Since the project commenced, we have trained three shoemakers in how to produce improved higher quality horseshoes. By equipping these local service providers with specialised skills on our training courses, we will impact on the welfare of all the horses they serve. We have focussed on acquiring locally sourced tools and materials and provide continued support to those completing the courses, so that their skills are sustainable. We aim for our work in the wider community to increase horse owners’ knowledge and awareness of these services, meaning that more owners will use them, improving welfare and nurturing employment and business opportunities for those we train.

Relationship building

We want to develop collaborative relationships with in-country organisations and institutions such as the veterinary faculties, the Government and NGOs to achieve greater long-term impact. In addition we aim to develop a working relationship with the National Police for a road safety and security programme.

Exciting opportunities lie ahead in Nicaragua for us to address the suffering of working horses in a holistic manner, achieving long term welfare improvements by building services and empowering communities with the knowledge to care for their horses better.

To support this programme by making a donation to our Nicaragua appeal please go to www.worldhorsewelfare.org/breakthechain
Will you Care to Share?

Our team in Nicaragua have made an urgent appeal for basic tools to support their work teaching owners how to care for their horses better. These horses are in desperate need of daily care using items that we take for granted. World Horse Welfare would like to put together a ‘Care Pack’ of these items for each of the 500 working horses we’ll work with directly in the country this year. Will you send a care pack to a working horse in Nicaragua?

Why do they need them?

Every day in Nicaragua we see working horses suffering from parasites, lameness, recurring rub wounds, untreated injuries and infections. While we do what we can for these horses’ immediate needs, we are committed to leaving a lasting legacy of better horse care in these communities. That is why part of our programme in Nicaragua focuses on raising awareness among horse owners about horse care basics.

Why a care pack?

Our daily care pack is full of items requested by our training team to help support the educational programme they are running with the local community. Brushes, hoof picks, sponges and fly fringes will make a huge difference to the daily life of a working horse. Many working horse owners lack the knowledge and the necessary tools to meet the daily needs of their horses. Getting people closer to their horses by teaching them how to look after them each day will help prevent many of the major problems we see before they arise.

How can I help?

Thanks to generous support from Shires Equestrian, each pack contains a dandy brush, hoof pick, sponge, fly fringe and a step by step reminder guide on how to use them. You can buy a care pack for a Nicaraguan horse for £4.99 on our website or by calling 01953 497239. We will give your pack to a working horse in Nicaragua, providing their owner with the means to give them the basic daily care they deserve.

Can’t afford a pack?

You can send us your clean, spare hoofpicks, which we will take to Nicaragua. Find out more on our website or call 01953 497239.

Buy a horse care pack today for just £4.99 by visiting www.worldhorsewelfare.org/caretoshare
In the field

Our team of 16 UK Field Officers cover nearly 90,000 square miles between them. It is the only team of its kind working nationwide and funded solely by supporters’ donations. We admit around 200 vulnerable horses to our Rescue and Rehoming Centres each year and help many more by tracing owners and advising them on the urgent care their animal needs. Below is just a flavour of some of the things our Field Officers have been up to over the Winter.

Jeff Herrington - As well as hands-on welfare work we Field Officers often get involved on an advisory and legislative level to improve horse welfare. For me this winter this has included helping form a committee, headed by the police, for traveller’s ponies in Cornwall, and helping the Quantock ponies receive passports and microchips. I have also been involved in the formation of a commoner’s council on Bodmin. Bodmin is problematic because it is made up of over 20 smaller moors all separated by private land – we are trying to get one person responsible for the moorland and give them legislative powers to make decisions, as there are currently none at all. I have been involved with the pony sales on Dartmoor – attending with our then Chairman Christopher Hall. The sales went reasonably well. Owners bring all ponies off the moor – between two and three thousand of them! The ponies play an important ecological role on the moor but it is important that owners are breeding suitable animals that will have some value when sold.

John Cunningham - "I have been very busy dealing with concerns regarding horses in wet and muddy conditions, some are resolved easily and others are posing a problem when the owners have no other alternative accommodation. I do hope the weather dries out soon, I would ask all horse owners to try to have a plan for an alternative place to go to should their accommodation flood or become unusable due to the very wet conditions."

Phil Jones

"It has been very busy on my patch this winter, particularly with the issue of fly grazing. It is a major problem and I have been trying to work with local authorities and other agencies to liaise with the owners of these horses to work with them to resolve the situation. I would also say that the current economic climate seems to be hitting horse owners harder than last winter, and indiscriminate breeding is only adding to the problem."

Jimmy Maxwell - "A lot of our work involves giving advice to horse owners: One example is that I have been monitoring an on-going case of a trek centre which was reported to us on our welfare line. The centre is in the Scottish Highlands many miles from the nearest tarmac road. On my last visit the ponies, about twenty in total, were thin but not from the lack of supplies, which was puzzling. With the owners’ cooperation I put them in touch with Dodson and Horrell who visited them and gave them a nutritional programme to follow: The situation has improved vastly."

Alana Chapman

"This winter I have been very busy dealing with on-going welfare concerns, especially in the Kent area. The majority of my calls involve large numbers of underweight horses and ponies, on fields with very little grazing and usually no supplementary feed. Due to a dry summer the grass has been very sparse and these horses have gone into winter in a poor bodily condition. As winter has been relatively mild, worm burdens in the ground and subsequently in the horses are high and they are just not coping. I have also been dealing with many hoof complaints, as people appear to be trying to save a bit of money by not getting the farrier as frequently as they should be."

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In addition to my role as a Field Officer I have been working together with Hertfordshire Constabulary to both successfully reduce injury to horses and officers, and help cut their equine-related costs by thousands of pounds.

I joined World Horse Welfare in 2007, and at that time the constabulary were spending a great deal of time and as much as £60,000 a year dealing with stray horses on the roads and illegal grazing. I was asked by the constabulary to help advise them. Following the introduction of a ‘Greenyard Procedure’ the equine-related costs for Hertfordshire Constabulary have been reduced to around £2,000. Hertfordshire has the largest population of horses per square mile compared to any other county in the country, and the Greenyard Procedure not only saves money, but reduces the amount of time spent recovering stray horses, allowing officers to move on quickly to deal with other incidents.

It has been extremely rewarding to play an instrumental role in improving the way the constabulary deals with horse-related issues which has also lead to a huge reduction in their costs. One of the key changes as a result of the Greenyard Procedure has been the increased awareness and training of officers, so they know how to deal with a horse if they come across one. Stray horses on the roads are a real danger: Often very frightened, they sometimes resort to their flight instinct. They may cause accidents, close major highways for hours and put both their own and public lives in danger. Horses on the public highways are a police matter, but if a horse is injured or suffering then the relevant welfare organisations such as World Horse Welfare would be contacted to assist.

The Greenyard Procedure has been recognised for its success, as Hertfordshire Police have been nominated for a Tilley Award 2011, which recognise successful and innovative crime fighting projects, for their efforts. I am now working with other police forces to encourage them to adopt similar procedures.

How the procedure works:

• An incident where horses are loose and straying on the public Highways is reported to Hertfordshire Constabulary.

• Call takers will clarify the location and relevant dangers.

• Units are dispatched to the scene.

• When the horses are located and have been contained safely, as soon as the location has been made safe, officers will attempt to contact the owners or persons responsible for them to arrange removal.

• Owners who allow their horses to stray onto the public highway may be liable to prosecution under The Highways Act 1980, depending on the circumstances.

• If owner or persons responsible cannot be traced, horses on the public highway will be removed to a place of safety i.e. a greenyard.

• The Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) will lead enquiries to trace the owner.

• If the animal is not claimed within 15 days then the rights of ownership will pass to the greenyard, and they have authorisation to sell or rehome the horse/s as appropriate.

• If the horse is not claimed, then Hertfordshire Constabulary is only liable for costs up to the 15 days.

Remember, if you would like to report a horse in distress, you can call our UK welfare line. All calls are strictly confidential:

08000 480 180
March is Rehome A Horse Month!

This March we are celebrating Rehome a Horse Month. Last year’s inaugural event, held in July and launched by our President, HRH The Princess Royal, was a tremendous success, with a record number of horses finding new homes. A fantastic 31 horses and ponies in total were rehomed, almost three times more than in July of the previous year. We are hoping that this year’s Rehome a Horse Month will be just as successful, and throw a spotlight on some of the fantastic horses and ponies we have ready for rehoming or that have gone on to do amazing things in their new homes.

If you can offer a horse a home or know someone who can, please spread the word this month, and don’t forget you can see all the horses and ponies that are ready for rehoming on our website today:

www.worldhorsewelfare.org/rehoming

You know exactly what you are getting

All of our horses are fully MOT’d and come with a passport, microchip and the honest facts about their health, temperament and abilities.

Helping other horses

By giving a horse a home you make space at our Rescue and Rehoming Centres for us to take in more needy horses.

A lifetime of advice and support

We will put our 85 years of expertise at your disposal, from an advice line you can call to annual visits from your knowledgeable local Field Officer.

Our horses come with a safety net

We rehome a horse for life, and want it to stay with you as long as it lives, but in these uncertain times it is reassuring to know that you can return your horse to us if your circumstances change or if your child has outgrown it.

An immensely rewarding experience

From the moment you welcome your horse home you can enjoy knowing that you are giving them a second chance in life.

Not all our youngsters need to be returned to us to be broken in when they are ready. If you have the expertise, rehoming a youngster from us and bringing them on yourself can be a really rewarding project. Youngsters are a great blank canvas and we always have a number looking for new homes with the potential to excel in a variety of spheres. These include Maddie (pictured below), who is a very pretty mare with the potential to make a cracking ridden pony in the future. We also look for youngster handling homes for some horses so that they can get lots of TLC and new experiences while they grow up, before returning to us to continue their education. If you think you could play the very valuable role of giving one of our younger horses a youngster handling home please go to our website today.

www.worldhorsewelfare.org/rehoming

Some of our rehomed horses- Keep in touch about your rehomed horse by e-mailing rehoming @worldhorsewelfare.org

Maddie on arrival at World Horse Welfare (inset) and after our care

Some of our rehomed horses - Keep in touch about your rehomed horse by e-mailing rehoming @worldhorsewelfare.org

Maddie on arrival at World Horse Welfare (inset) and after our care

The benefits of rehoming

Spotlight on youngsters...
Another happy ending

Wilma, above, is a 14.0hh seven-year-old black Cob who arrived at our Hall Farm Rescue and Rehoming Centre in 2008 as part of the high profile Amersham case, where over 100 horses were living in appalling conditions. Wilma was emaciated, lice infested and suffering from strangles. On arrival she was given the care she needed and, after rehabilitation and lots of TLC, was backed by our staff. She was rehomed last summer as part of Rehome a Horse month by Jan Cooper, and is now taking part in showing classes and dressage.

“The more I know about the charity the more I enjoy it, and the more I think they do fantastic work. Anyone should come along, take a look, and even take a horse home with them. It would just make such a huge, huge difference to other horses who are waiting to come into the charity’s farms.”

— Lee McKenzie, BBC Presenter.
Farm round up

Successful events
We are delighted to announce that Horseman’s Sunday will now become an annual event at the farm. The service was held in October and led by Canon Godfrey Hirst, preaching to a congregation on horseback and blessing all of the horses in attendance. Our December Festive Fun Day also raised over £1000 to support our work.

Easter Eggstravaganza and more
From 6th-9th April you can come and enjoy the fun at our Easter Eggstravaganza, 11am till 4pm. There will be an Easter Egg Hunt, games, competitions and much, much more! Also on 7th May we are holding a fun dog show. For more information please contact Zoe on 01253 766 983 or email zoeclifford@worldhorsewelfare.org

Ready and waiting for a new rider
Bockmer Beau has been looking for a new home since being returned to us by his rehomener last year, and we simply cannot understand why he has not been snapped up! He is a cracking little pony who has done it all and is just waiting for his next child to teach and look after.

Easter Fun Day
We look forward to welcoming supporters on Saturday 7th April for our Easter Fun Day. Activities will include an Easter egg hunt, egg rolling, colouring competition, guided farm tours and of course the chance to meet some of our horses!

Walking tall
We now have our new horse walker fitted, replacing the old sand round pen. This will be extremely useful for us in helping to gradually increase our horses’ strength and fitness and helping overweight horses lose weight.

Potential
Freddie came to Penny Farm last year as part of a welfare case. After daily handling he is now ready to be rehomed to continue his education in an experienced home. He has the potential to make a very smart lead rein pony.

Ready for a new start
Hebe is one of the horses from the Pritchard case (read the full report on page 5). After a fantastic transformation she is now looking for a new life as a companion in a quiet, experienced home with someone who can build her confidence.

Battle of the rasps!
We will be holding our 15th Annual Farriery competition and one-day clinic between Friday 25th and Sunday 27th May. Six-time World Champion in Farriery, Grant Moon AWCF, is running the clinic on the Friday and will be judging the classes over the weekend. The farriery event is open to all farriers and members of the public are welcome to come along and watch. For more information please call Donald Nicol on 07785 745956 or email donald@nicolfarriers.com

A great allrounder
Homer is a cheeky little chap with a real zest for life. He will make a fantastic pony for a more experienced, confident rider who is looking for a forward going, really good fun pony. Capable of participating in all disciplines, he has just started some small jumps which he approaches in his usual bold manner!

Improve your dressage
Learn from the best with international dressage rider Andrew Gould’s lecture demo, at Hall Farm, Snetterton, Norfolk on Thursday 22 March. Andrew will use three of his own horses to teach people about all aspects of dressage in a fun and interesting way. For information and to pre-book tickets please call Maxine on 01953 499100

Candlelit carols a success
Eden the donkey was the star guest of our Candlelit Carol Concert. The annual event was held at All Saints Church, Snetterton, Norfolk, and the church was specially decorated with candles. Eden headed the procession down the aisle of the church.

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Please note that these horses were available at the time of going to print and may already have been rehomed! See our wide variety of horses and ponies looking for new homes at www.worldhorsewelfare.org/rehoming
Supporter fundraising news

April is marathon month! On Sunday 15th and Sunday 22nd April our intrepid runners will attempt 26.2 miles through the streets and past the landmarks of London and Brighton. Undertaking a marathon is no mean feat – our supporters not only have to be prepared for the most gruelling sporting event they may ever attempt on the day itself, but they have also trained and dedicated themselves to it for months beforehand. World Horse Welfare wishes its fantastic running teams all the very best of luck, we are truly grateful to you.

If running is your thing, but you don’t want to try a full marathon, how about joining a World Horse Welfare team taking part in two events later in the year? On July 8th we have places in the British 10K London Run which is a really fun event through the centre of London – come and enjoy your run and star spot at the same time! Then on October 7th we have places in the Royal Parks Half Marathon. This is a new event for us and is one of the most scenic city runs in the world with a beautiful 13.1 mile autumnal route through four of London’s magnificent Royal Parks and past some of the city’s most iconic landmarks. For information on any of the above events contact Fran on 01953 497210 or email her at francesplume@worldhorsewelfare.org.

2013 Challenge rides

In case you missed it, don’t forget to see the back of this newsletter’s covering letter for information on our amazing 2013 Challenge Rides.

Sponsored ride

At Easter 2012 World Horse Welfare is planning a sponsored ride at a country estate close to its head office in Norfolk. There will be fully-marshalled routes of approximately 5 and 10 miles through some great countryside – so come along and enjoy a fantastic day out with your horse, while raising money for a great cause at the same time. More information will be available on our website or call Fran on 01953 497210 or email francesplume@worldhorsewelfare.org to register.

Loes Knopper raised more than £2,000 after organising an ‘On Horses For Horses’ round the world challenge ride. The unique ride on a day in September last year saw 245 riders from 10 different countries ride a combined 3390.75 miles. She is now organising a repeat event for 2012.

Ceri Jayes raised £386.39 by holding her 5th Annual Horseman’s Quiz and collecting at Tesco, Kingsbridge. The horse was kindly lent by Cornwall Farmers.

Erica Godman raised £80 by delivering Christmas cards in her village.

Friends from Fishers Farm, Euxton held a slave auction raising £300.

Ruby Wyld, pictured on her pony Polly, kindly sent us her £50 Christmas money to help horses.

Emily Burgess who raised £81 for us at her school fair, collecting soft toys and selling them on a stall.

Natalie Smith, Dawn Simmons and Trudie Pilkington from Blackpool took part in a sponsored half marathon and raised £126.13.
Put yourself in the picture to help a horse in need...

www.worldhorsewelfare.org/rehoming

Candy, pictured, is ready for rehoming at Hall Farm Rescue and Rehoming Centre, Norfolk