

Reducing the numbers of foals being born to die

The re-launched DEFRA inspected mare contraception scheme has now been running for 18 months, and we are excited to announce that at least 100 ponies have re-started the contraception course to date. Sadly, there was another delay whilst Friends waited for the Dartmoor National Park to formally agree a Licence to dart on Commons they own. This, even though they were kind enough to help fund the contraception project 5 years ago through the Dartmoor National Park sustainability fund, so yet again, we are faced with re-starts at further costs. We have also invested in a new piece of equipment, with thanks to Pet Plan Charitable Trust to enable us to locate spent darts quickly, even in areas of difficult vegetation.



Friends of the Dartmoor Hill Pony Display Team

We are delighted to have this opportunity to tell you a little about ourselves and our wonderful ponies who are battling against extinction. Friends of the Dartmoor Hill Pony has a Display Team started 20 years ago, which choreographs and performs a musical ride of a standard befitting the Household Cavalry! Local children of all ages and abilities ride their Dartmoor Hill Ponies in a complex routine of wheels, reels, cross-overs and tricks, showing what brilliant children's riding ponies our hill Ponies can become. Each year there is a theme with bright costumes, flags, bangs and puffs of smoke which the ponies take in their stride. There is always a theme - in the past, pirates have walked the plank, Dartmoor warriors yelping in war paint, cowboys shooting and driving wagons, this year they have chosen to create a circus. The team start practising in the depths of winter, in all weathers to bring you an entertaining show, which will help you understand why we are so passionate about our Hillies. Enjoy our show and please support us ensuring these wonderful ponies will be seen roaming free, grazing on Dartmoor for Generations to come.

To find out more about Ponies Friends and Pony Keepers

We love groups who are interested in the ponies and Dartmoor to come and see us and our work and how you can give practical support to the hill ponies. We can arrange a visiting speaker about the ponies on Dartmoor, explaining why they are so important to Dartmoor. Man and beast working out a survival strategy which benefits and enriches the flora and fauna of Dartmoor.

Foal Watch

This foal was born into the eye of the Mini beast from the east, the mother and foal have coped well in temperatures below freezing, snow and ice. These ponies have roamed Dartmoor for thousands of years and are well adapted to the Dartmoor weather. They know where to go to get out of the biting wind, find running water when all around is frozen, and even eat gorse which the ponies know is a valuable food source, grinding it with their feet first to make it palatable and remove the prickles. "THE DARTMOOR FOAL WATCH FACEBOOK PAGE" is running again. Last year many foals found homes even before they had come in from the moor on the annual pony drift in October. So take a picture of the mare and foal when you see them on the moor, no less than 15 yards away, as you do not want to disturb the ponies, once you have taken a photo, post it on the Dartmoor foal watch Facebook page. If you fall in love with one of the foals, please go to www.wildtowonderful.org and fill out the contact form.



Donations to the Friends

To make donations to the Friends and help us keep Dartmoor as we know and love it, by supporting the ponies at www.friendsofthedartmoorhillpony.co.uk and make your donation via the Charity Checkout button if you are a tax payer (to enable us to claim Gift Aid) or the Donate Button if not.

Registered Charity Number 1141045

Subscribe to our regular newsletter on our website www.wildtowonderful.org

Hillies at the 2019 British Indoor Driving Championships

We want to congratulate all the Hillies and of course their drivers who qualified for the British Indoor Driving Championships that took place at Keysoe, Bedford, on 5th to 7th April, flying the flag for our fabulous ponies.

Louise Kalhoum won the Tandem Class with Corndonford Indiana Jones and Corndonford Hedge Hunter. She is now National Indoor Tandem Champion. Jacquie Pilinger who came third in the tandem class with Sunny and Luke. Stephanie White competed in the Open Pony class with Runnage Lollipop.

Also competing were: Truelove Candy Mandy - with Sarah Gemie in the Novice Pony class - they were joint leaders after dressage and cones but dropped to 10 after the obstacles.

Footloose took Matthew Powell to 4th place in the Novice Junior class - a great achievement for a lad with additional needs.

Storm Faulkner competed with Pebble and Quite and did very well for their first National performance in the pony pairs.

To find out more about how they fared go to Indoordriving.co.uk and check out the pictures and results.



Helpful Head Collars – Sponsorships

A big thank you to all our sponsors this year, what a difference they have made helping us help those foals which we were unable to home either because of underlying physical problems or that they didn't look as pretty or cute.

It is fantastic that the sponsorship money, whether monthly or annually, allows us to take in big groups of foals as the cost of the hay, hard food, worming, and bedding would otherwise be prohibitive plus it enables us to add value to the ponies by head collar training them, and getting the colts gelded which makes a huge difference to us finding good homes for them.



Sponsored Gelding Dougie - found a lovely home at Woodbury near Exeter as a companion to a 5 year old Cob boy. Even better he went with another Hill pony called Picasso, so he had a friend to help settle him in as well.

Friends go International!

Since last October we have found good homes for over 400 ponies, with over 100 ponies having gone to overseas owners and we are getting our new foreign owners posting pictures, videos and stories about their new ponies onto our Facebook page. We are getting amazing support from our new friends abroad and the story about the value of our Dartmoor Hill Ponies is spreading. We even have a brilliant sponsor for one of our ponies from as far away as Australia.

One of our new overseas owners Sandra Parlow to whom we are so grateful for all her time and effort on the ponies behalf, has recently sent in some lovely photographs showing Hill Pony Honey winning her first dressage competition.



Foster Mum's

A big thank you must be given to the Foster Mum's who take on our ponies, as not only does this enable us to take in more foals & ponies, but the handling and love they give them makes it easier for us to find good homes for them. This year we have to thank Ali and her sister Marina in Cornwall who fostered 20 ponies and even found the time to give us written updates on each pony giving us excellent insights into their temperaments and quirks. We also thank Liz at Tavistock who fostered two ponies and gave them excellent grazing and lots of love and both have new homes. Last but not least we have a big thank you to Jackie Tye and her team at newlifehorsecaresanctuary who is now on her second pair of ponies this year after doing so well in their training we easily managed to find good homes for her first two fostered little ones. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/friendsofthedhp>