

newsletter

MANE CHANCE SANCTUARY



MCS Summer Newsletter - August 2019

Visit Us!

Join the legendary entertainer, Michael Crawford CBE, for a wonderful day at Mane Chance Sanctuary on Sunday 18th August 2019.

August is already here which means so are the school summer holidays and for us, our annual Family Fun Day.

The site is buzzing with preparations for this wonderful event and it looks set to be one of the best ever. We have live music, a variety of external stallholders, our legendary BBQ and this year, we introduce a beer and Pimms tent! There will be the usual fun and games, including our tombolas, tractor trails, have-a-go dog agility, nature trail and much more.

The highlight of the event is the opening of our Shetland Project which has been two years in the making.

We are therefore thrilled and honoured that the legendary entertainer, Michael Crawford CBE, is joining us to lead the celebrations – a uniquely talented man opening an equally unique project at Mane Chance – can you believe it?! Let's just hope that we give as much enjoyment to our horses and visitors as Michael has to so many of us! And that we can become a centre of excellence and advice for anyone else that would like to create something similar for their own Shetland herds.

The Family Fun Day is open between 12noon and 5pm – we would love you to join us and dogs are welcome too – something for everyone!



If you book early, there is an early bird discount, otherwise prices on the gate are: Families (two adults and two children/seniors) £15, Adults £6, Children and Seniors £5.

Advance tickets can be booked by emailing:
tickets@manechancesanctuary.org

We all hope to see you there!



Inside the issue

Our horses
People's Project Campaign
Welcome to Minnie & Barnaby
The Shetland Project
Calling all runners, joggers or enthusiastic walkers!
Save the Date
Meet the Team
Poppy Appeal

Charity number: 1144144

Our horses

What are we like? In the middle of winter, in the snow and the pouring rain, we dream of sunny days at Mane Chance. When we have to wear so many layers of clothing that we all resemble artc explorers, the thoughts of t-shirts and sunglasses seem a world away.

Then the sun finally arrives - and boy, has it come with a vengeance over the last few weeks. Quite quickly, the chatter around the coffee table becomes about how uncomfortable the heat is, how we are blinded by the bright orange thing in the sky, and how we long not to be dripping with sweat every time we move! How fickle are we?

Seriously, the strong weather has been a challenge, mainly because the welcome little bursts of rain have caused the grass to stress as it hasn't known what to do – whether to grow or whether to protect itself against the heat. Consequently, the little bursts of growth have been full of sugar and the enemy of horses that are prone to laminitis. Our tracks and fields started green, then went yellow in the sun, green again after the storms and no doubt will soon be yellow again!

The horses are equally confused – sometimes there is lovely sweet grass beneath their feet and other times, it is coarser food that resembles the hay in their winter nets! Overall, they have coped well and we have been topping the grass and moving them around to try and eke the best of the food we can for them. Our usual laminitis prone horses were brought in early to prevent any discomfort and we did manage to stay one step ahead of the weather for them. Whilst they do resent being taken off the grass a little, we did keep the heat in their feet down and therefore the pain away – phew!

Our one little blip the past few months has been with Timmy, our robust and mischievous gelding. He suddenly had a bout of laminitis for the first time and

was very out of sorts. The usual cheeky, food-obsessed horse was off-colour and subdued. We called the vet and did some tests to work out the cause. Timmy has been diagnosed with Equine Metabolic Syndrome, a condition that we have suspected he has had for a while, but was not seeming to cause any problem for him. Sadly, the condition had unexpectedly taken hold, had quickly tipped the balance for him and he needed some help. He came into the stable and was put on a strict diet (poor thing) and was treated both with conventional and homeopathic remedies. EMS is a bit like diabetes and a difficult one to manage as there is no cure; but there is much that can be done to control the effect of the condition – keeping weight down, sugar reduction etc. After a few months in the stable, we felt that Timmy was ready to come back outside, but to put him back on grass with its high sugar content would compromise him health-wise and he would probably end up right back inside again. So we scratched our heads to know what was best for him. Then the answer came to us – by creating an area of the site (near the Shetland project) with very little grass where he could be outside with others, feeling the warmth of the sun on his back, but where we

could also control his sugar intake with hay feeds, we could give him a quality of life far superior than the confines of a stable which for a free spirit such as Timmy was not great. So that's what we have done – sprayed off the rich summer grass and created 'Timmy's track' – a laminitis/EMS recovery track. He is out with his pals (who come to visit him boot camp style as it means they lose a bit of weight too whilst in the grass-free area with him) where he can continue to roam and cause trouble! We have had to have very robust electric fencing put in as he is the Chief escape artist when there is grass to be had!!!!

On a positive note, the benefits of the brighter, warmer weather mean that the horses positively glisten in the sunshine and they look the picture of health. The shine of glossy coats reminds us how far these horses have come in physical health as well as emotional stability and we thank all of our staff and volunteers for giving them the care they deserve.

So long may this weather continue for our animals who calmly and contentedly mooch and graze around the tracks, but may someone just turn the thermostat of the sun down a little please, so that the team are enjoying it too!

Happy, summer days!



People's Project Campaign

THANK YOU! WE DID IT!

In the last newsletter, we asked you for help. We had been chosen as one of the five finalists in our area for a People's Project award. This collaboration between the National Lottery Community Fund and ITV was a huge opportunity for Mane Chance to win an amazing £50,000 prize but also we would have some money can't buy promotion, as a video of our work was to be shown on ITV news.

The two weeks of voting was frenetic for us – we worked so hard to canvass support – not only did you all vote for us and encourage your friends to do so too, but we had a volunteer getting postal votes by visiting and spending time at our local animal feed store, we visited numerous groups to do presentations and talks and we asked any and all of our celebrity and professional friends who are active on social media to join the mission too by tweeting and posting throughout!

However you helped - whether you voted yourself, encouraged others to vote, shared our social media posts – please give yourself a huge pat on the back.

Together we did it! We got the second highest number of votes in our region and were surprised with a visit from the news presenter, Sangeeta Bhabra, with a rather large cheque in her hands!

Our £50,000 award is going to be used for two purposes. Firstly, to purchase a minibus – as those of you who have visited the Sanctuary know, we are a little out of the way and are not served well by public transport. We have long wished to get an accessible minibus so that we can reach some of those people who can't otherwise get to us by offering to provide transport for them too! With this award, we can fulfil this wish! Our minibus is on order and looks set to join us in October.

Secondly, we are secure in the knowledge that our Chance2Be courses are funded for another year. This course is proving to have some amazing effects on the young people that participate – many are showing increased confidence and resilience and decreased anxiety and disruptive behaviour. All because of our horses and the team that work on the programme to teach skills of coping with the ups and downs of daily life! It's so rewarding to provide this programme and it is safely funded for another year, because of this win!

So, from all of us, thank you, thank you, thank you.

We truly couldn't have done this without every single vote, every single post or tweet or every single spreading of the word. We know that so many of you jumped on board and helped with this campaign and we hope you share the pride in winning. We are still a small charity in the scheme of things and we 'punched well above our weight' with this achievement. What a team we all are!!

If you didn't see the video of the campaign, you can still **watch it here!**

And if you wish to see the moment we learned we had won, please **watch it here!** We are part of the second video on the page!





Welcome to Minnie & Barnaby

We are pleased to introduce you to Minnie and Barnaby, two Shetland ponies that have joined our herd.

Minnie and Barnaby have had a life of service, working for a family that took animals to events for parties, fetes, shows etc. Unfortunately, their owners' circumstances changed and they needed to find all of their animals a home, but were desperate for these two to stay together. Mane Chance became the only lifeline for Minnie and Barnaby as the family had run out of options, funds were dwindling rapidly and the date of their own relocation to France had passed. So we stepped in to help. Minnie is the oldest at 21 years and has equine skeletal dwarfism. The condition in horses is similar to that of the human condition – her legs are shorter than usual and therefore she is tiny! In fact, she is so small that we have had to change the height of our bottom line of

electric fencing as she demonstrated quite soon after her arrival that she could get right underneath it, without a shock and to the better grass! Barnaby is younger at 11 years but has been with Minnie since a very young age, so knows no other companion. They are a great partnership - whilst Minnie is no pushover, her little legs do sometimes mean that her confidence to exert authority is not matched by her physical abilities to stand up for herself and sometimes Barnaby has to be her protector – but she is definitely still the boss!

The integration has gone surprisingly well with our other Shetlands and they are already very settled in their new home. Having spent so much of their lives working with people, they have stepped up to the challenge of our community work very well and are happy to be groomed and walked, which is lovely. So our Shetland herd grows a little more – thank goodness for the new space of the Shetland Project as they will have plenty of room to live together – and with more ponies to help us share the community work, they have a wonderfully healthy ratio of community work and rest, with the latter being the majority – just as we wish it to be.



The Shetland Project

We are all systems go with the Shetland project and we head rapidly towards the day of reckoning as we are officially opening the area at the Family Fun Day.

The meet and greet shelter has most of its roof on now and the grooming paddock has been fenced and the surface laid. Along the ramp leading up to the entrance of the project, we have planted 200 plants specially chosen to attract butterflies and bees that will mature over the coming months and provide a haven for wildlife. Our laminitis paddock is also complete for when our ponies need some time away from the grass and the equine shelters are being delivered and installed in a couple of weeks.

The heathers that we have been nurturing for eighteen months have been planted in some sections yet will remain fenced off to the horses for a little bit longer whilst we allow them to establish fully and grow so that they cannot be eaten in one mouthful! The hay feeding zone is nearly ready too and the celebratory plaque has been ordered!

The only thing that is causing us a little anxiety is the grass – we have found some great varieties of seeds that contain less sugar than the normal grass found in this area, but consequently it takes a little longer for these to grow. We have sown the seeds as planned,

but the recent weather has rather scuppered the growth spurt we were hoping for. So fingers are tightly crossed at the moment that the scattered storms over the past few weeks have given the seeds enough of a boost to put in an appearance as grass and not just a green hue, in time for the opening.

But if it's not quite there, never mind. It might not be the perfect situation for the photos, but underneath it all, we know that we will soon have a place for our Shetlands that will serve them well – somewhere that will give them the forage and the environment that they are built for and that will hopefully increase their health and wellbeing, reduce their tendency to obesity and laminitis and allow us to improve Mane Chance even more. We never stop learning and finding ways to take another step forward....

We are immensely grateful to all of the financial support that we have received for this project and we will proudly display all the contributors on the plaque. We are also touched and extremely appreciative for the many, many hours that many of our team have put into the creations – from watering and weeding the heathers over the past months, to planting and building too. Those who have helped not only include our regular volunteers, but also our corporate volunteers, Duke of Edinburgh students and our whole community team too.

Thank you all so much and we hope you will be with us at the Family Fun Day to see it all come to fruition and feel a huge sense of achievement and pride in what you have helped us to create!



Calling all runners, joggers or enthusiastic walkers!

We are lucky enough to have six places for the Royal Parks Half Marathon on Sunday 13th October 2019 and are looking for people to take part and raise money for us! The half marathon route takes in four of the Royal Parks in London as well as many other sights of the capital and is a truly unique atmosphere as everyone taking part is doing it for their own wonderful cause.

Starting and finishing in Hyde Park, it is 13 tough, but spectacular miles with thousands of people cheering you along the way.

We would be thrilled if you would run for us or if you know anyone else who might enjoy the experience, please pass this on – the entry is just £15 and we ask that you commit to trying to raise £350 for our horses. We will help you by promoting your endeavour on our social media, by creating a fundraising page for you, providing you with a Mane Chance running vest and (whether you like it or not) we will be there cheering you along the way!

If you would like to take part, we need to get you registered by the end of August, so please let us know if you are interested by contacting office@manechancesanctuary.org. We would love to hear from you and for you to join our Mane Chance team!

Save the Date

Christmas Events 2019:

Please pop a couple of dates in your diaries – it's hard to believe that we are already starting to think about Christmas, but if the second half of the year goes as quickly as the first half has, then we need to get our preparations going!!

Our annual Christmas Carols service will be taking place at St Peter and St Paul's Church in Godalming on Sunday 8th December 2019. This is such a lovely start to the Christmas season each year and marks the beginning of the festivities for many of us. We will be joined by celebrity readers, some of our community team and our Shetland ponies (of course) will be attending and stealing the show – as usual! It's a wonderful family event – please do

put a note on your calendar to join us.

We will be holding our fundraising Christmas lunch in December and whilst the finer details are yet to be sorted, we hope to be running the event on Thursday 12th December 2019. Please do pencil this date in your diaries – more details will follow.

New Year's Day Walk

We also will be welcoming people to the Sanctuary to blow away the cobwebs of excesses after Christmas and New Year celebrations by opening the gates for a wander around our site and horses on New Years' Day. Bacon butties (and vegetarian equivalent) will be available at the end to reward you for your efforts – it's another wonderful family event where all are welcome to come and see our horses, including your canine friends on leads!

Anthrozoology so she is highly qualified and we are thrilled and very lucky to have her with us. Together with Jen, our other Equine Supervisor, they lead the grooming team at Mane Chance. They bring great ideas to the Sanctuary with regards to the care and rehabilitation of the horses and we know we are in good hands. Beaky lives on site at the Sanctuary and so takes more than her share of the out of hours work too – thank goodness. Therefore our horses have highly knowledgeable and reliable support 24 hours a day, 7 days a week! What more could they or we ask for?



Poppy Appeal

Just a few days after our family fun day, it is the first Purple Poppy Day on August 23rd. As you may know, the Purple Poppy Appeal is very close to our hearts, as it has been introduced by the team behind the War Horse Memorial in Ascot. The purple poppy pin is sold to honour the many hundreds of thousands of animals that have also given their lives in conflict. Those we remember do not only include the horses, donkeys and mules that were lost in WW1 who were used to carry munitions and wounded soldiers as well as in battle by the cavalry; but also the cats and dogs that were used to control the vermin in trenches, the pigeons that carried messages, the glowworms that gave light in the dark, the camels that carried weight and the foxes, dogs, cats, goats and birds that became mascots

for the soldiers, giving them something to care for and to love in the most difficult of conditions. Of course, many animals still serve for us today – search and rescue, sniffing out mines and explosives etc. and they continue to play a hugely important role for our country.

The Purple Poppy honours them all and the proceeds raised from the sale of the pins is donated to animal charities across the country and the world. We are thrilled to be one of those lucky charities too!

So if you see a purple poppy on sale, please buy one – not only to support us, but to honour all those animal friends that gave and continue to give so much! Thank you!

If you are coming to the family fun day, our nature trail has a purple poppy theme and we will be selling poppies throughout the day too.



PURPLE POPPY APPEAL



And finally...

As we contemplate the gentle steps that the year takes towards autumn and then the winter, we also find ourselves contemplating the weather and what seems to be happening on this beautiful planet that we call home. This hot summer doesn't seem to be an

aberration- there is a feeling amongst those who know that these hot summers will become the norm. So, we find ourselves looking at our horse care and planning for the possibility of future years where the grass sugars cause havoc – as we have been told by our vets is happening this year all over the UK. We also find ourselves looking at every single way that we can contribute

towards a world of less plastic and more recycling, a world where the environment and welfare of animals is as important as our human needs and comforts. Our horses and their care inspire us to think outside the box when necessary and we are proud to lead by example, where ever and whenever we can. Thank you for being on this journey with us.

YOU CAN HELP SUPPORT OUR HORSES BY BECOMING A SPONSOR.

Packages cost £2 or £5 per month. Please email our sponsorship team, Jackie and Maria, on office@manechancesanctuary.org for more information.

GET IN TOUCH

Head Office
Mane Chance Sanctuary
BKL House
1 Venice Walk
London, W2 1RR
T: +44 (0)20 7446 6200

The Sanctuary
Mane Chance Sanctuary
Monkshatch Garden Farm
Down Lane, GU3 1DL
T: +44 (0)1483 351526

Find us online at:
www.manechancesanctuary.org
For general enquiries please email us at:
office@manechancesanctuary.org

To become a Friend of MCS:
Please email us at:
friends@manechancesanctuary.org
or call us on +44 (0)1483 351526