

newsletter

MANE CHANCE SANCTUARY



MCS Winter Newsletter - December 2020

Welcome to our Winter newsletter!

So, things are not quite going as planned, are they? Despite every effort that was made by so many of us in the summer, this virus is sticking around and we find ourselves coming out of a second lockdown into a tier system. It's such a shame as we were really starting to get back on track at the Sanctuary – our volunteers had returned, our community work had restarted, we had begun to bring back some small groups of visitors and even had plans for running a covid-secure Christmas event on site at the start of December.

But it was not to be.....The second lockdown meant that we had to shut to visitors and volunteers again. We were able to continue some of the community work in line with schools remaining open, but once again, it all fell terribly quiet on site.....

It's not until a change is forced on you that you are able to find time to stand still and take stock of your situation. We are very lucky with our team of staff and volunteers and when we are not able to welcome them on site, the volunteers are sorely missed (and not just because of the number of poos they pick up for us each morning!!!! 😊)- the site really comes alive when we have visitors around and when they are not with us, it has a sense of emptiness about it! But let's turn to the positive – the news of a vaccine and the hope that this lockdown will break some of the virus cycle means that we can soon be looking to the

new year and saying goodbye to 2020 – one of the most challenging and testing twelve months any of us have known in a long time!

We hope that all of you, our wider Mane Chance family, are keeping well and safe – we continue to send our very best wishes to you all – particularly those who have suffered personally, whether it's because you have had the virus itself or whether it's because you have been separated from loved ones at this difficult time, or worse, lost a loved one – we are thinking of you.

Thank you also for the support that you have given us throughout – both emotionally and physically. We have been so touched by the messages that we have received and they have really picked us up when it all started to become a bit overwhelming – the responsibility of caring for our animals when everything was closed and unavailable was sometimes quite daunting. We were hugely supported by our veterinary team and barefoot trimmers, and together with the hard work of our amazing staff, we did come out of the first lockdown well, but it wasn't always an easy task! We entered the second lockdown with a little more experience but with added mud and hay feeding (my goodness, what a difference the glorious summer weather made) so it will bring new challenges to us – but we are determined to ensure that the animals are not affected!



It became apparent a little while ago that the ongoing situation would mean that our usual Christmas events would not be able to go ahead – the ability to sit together in a church for our Carol evening or dine with friends at our lunch was obviously not going to be possible this year. We were so disappointed as they are both firm fixtures in our diary and the Carols event, in particular, really signifies the start of Christmas for us all! For an enchanting few weeks in October, we then started to make plans for an on-site Christmas special event (covid-secure of course) for a smaller number of visitors, but this second lockdown has put paid to that too – it's just not possible to do now. Back to the drawing board! We find ourselves facing a frightening shortfall of funds, so in a bid to bring some joy over the festive season, we have launched a Christmas Appeal that hopefully will enable you to have some fun whilst also supporting us – please do have a look at the virtual events, shopping and donating opportunities on offer – we would really appreciate it!



Our Christmas Appeal 2020



Arrange a Special Personalised Message

...from Santa for a child in your family!

Keep the magic of Christmas alive this year for your little ones. Imagine how surprised your child will be to receive a personalised video message from the one and only Santa!

As so many Christmas grottos are not able to open this year, we bring Santa to your child at home via a unique video message.

Santa will say your child's name, age and where they live. He will also mention a best friend or sibling and something significant that will create a true moment of wonderment for your child. Santa will talk about his reindeer, how busy the elves have been and of course the naughty or nice list will make an appearance!

Personalised messages are just £15 per child.

Santa will be filming the messages at the beginning of December which will be sent to you electronically no later than Tuesday 22nd December.

When you place an order, we will also require additional information for Santa so that the message can be personalised for each child.



What a lovely way to bring wonderment to the child in your family – videos are limited **so book now to avoid disappointment!** The last date for booking is Saturday 5th December – don't delay!

Take part in a virtual Eco-Balloon race

- starting Christmas Day

With absolutely no risk of any harm to the environment, we have teamed up with Ecoracing to take part in a virtual balloon race, starting on Christmas Day. The virtual balloon race will 'launch' from Santa's Village, Lapland at 12 noon on Friday 25th December and they will travel just like a real balloon would with their progress affected by the weather conditions at the time.

Having designed and decorated your own balloon, you can follow its progress online and see where it is in the race at any time. It's a fun way to experience the excitement of a balloon

race but, as they are virtual, this is a completely eco-friendly event.

You can **[purchase your balloon online for just £3](#)** then design it choosing the shape, weight, colour and even add your name. Sit back, relax and wait for launch day and keep track of your balloon online following its course over race week.

You can purchase as many balloons as you wish to increase your chances of winning the prizes! The balloons will travel for a week and there are prizes for Mane Chance balloons that travel the furthest as well as overall winner prizes!

Involve your whole family too!

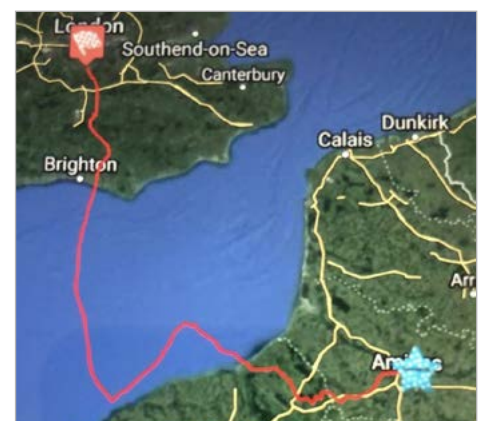
In this difficult year, when we may not all be together in reality, why not bring the family together for Christmas virtually!

Whether your family are in different counties, countries or continents, they can come together for the race.

Every family member can purchase a balloon or you can send them as gifts before the day. They can take time to create their own design and on Christmas Day, your family race can begin - you could even have little prizes for the winning family balloon!

To join the race, please **[purchase your virtual balloons here!](#)**

Happy Flying.....!



Introducing our Sanctuary Gift Vouchers

As you know, all of our horses are available for sponsorship. This year, we have introduced gift vouchers for our basic and enhanced sponsorship packages, Share a Shettie experience and Sanctuary private tours. These are a lovely way to treat a family member or friend, allowing them to choose their own horse to sponsor or date to attend the site to spend some special time with our horses. For any animal lover, this are super gifts which will really immerse them in Mane Chance, learning about our horses, why they came to be with us and how we rehabilitate them and work alongside us in the community.

When you purchase a voucher, you will receive a gift card to give to recipient, which will tell them more about how to activate their membership or book their visit. Why not give a gift of sponsorship or a Mane Chance experience?

Please visit the voucher section of our shop to find out more.



Shop local with our online shop!

We have a lovely selection of gifts and cards in our online shop – and lots of new items that we have recently introduced to the range! Whether it's a birthday or Christmas present you need – give our shop a try and shop local with us, supporting the charity as you buy!

Our Christmas cards are on sale right now, as are our 2021 calendars. Each month features a heart-warming and inspirational quote accompanying a picture of one of our animals – after the year we have had, we trust it will bring hope and positivity to a new year as we say goodbye to a most challenging 2020!

Please visit our shop here!

And that's not all!

Following our hugely successful virtual gin tasting evening last week, Pinkster Gin have given us a fantastic opportunity - a donation of 10% of any purchases made by our supporters up until 31st December 2020 using the code **Manechance10** will be made to us! Pinkster has a variety of great Christmas gifts and hampers or perhaps you just want to treat yourself and stock up your own drinks cabinet! Either way, we will benefit from your purchases! All those who were online for the tasting will verify – this gin is a really special treat. Why not treat yourself, your friends or family – and at the same time, you will be treating us too!

Visit the Pinkster Gin website here to see what is on offer!



Mane Chance Big Summer Virtual Open Day

- still available to watch!

Thank you so much for all the comments of support that we received following the airing of our virtual open day – bringing the Sanctuary to your homes this year.

Since that date, we have welcomed a number of new supporters to our

Mane Chance family so it seems a good time to remind you that the open day is still available to watch online if you would like to see it.

Join Jenny and many of our staff and Patrons as we tell you more about what we do and how we do it!

If you are stuck indoors it will be a lovely hark back to warm summer days – and hopefully, it will feel like we are sharing more about the Sanctuary with you too! It was our way of compensating for the loss of the real Summer open day and we hope you enjoy it!

[Click here to watch our show!](#)



Mane Chance on BBC1 Sunday Morning Live

– still available on BBC iPlayer!



And if that's not Mane Chance overload, we have one more treat for you. We were thrilled to be filmed as part of BBC1s Sunday Morning series, "Sunday Morning Live". The acclaimed actress and host, Sally Phillips (who also just happens to be starring alongside Jenny in a new film, due to be released next year!) visited Mane Chance with her son, Olly, to discuss our community work, amongst other things! We were included in the episode which aired back in October and the segment is still available on the BBC iPlayer (series 11, episode 17). It's a lovely piece which you can [access here](#) but you may wish to skip through to our bit of the programme (!) – we appear at 33 minutes and 33 seconds!

Our horses:

The horses were as delighted as the team were to see the return of the volunteers and community sessions at the end of the first lockdown. They had been extremely well-cared for, yet even the team we have at the Sanctuary couldn't quite give the number of scratches and cuddles that additional hands can. So, the horses too welcomed the opening of the Sanctuary once more and it was a welcome sight to see more people out in the fields and tracks working alongside our animals.

Considering the weather that we have had, and the added complications, of course, of Covid, we have come through the summer well – the heat led to a lot of grass and pasture jiggling as the dryness meant it couldn't regrow at any speed and many of our horses moved between fields and tracks regularly, munching the best of the grass and postponing the onset of hay diets for as long as possible.

We had a little hiccup with Diamond as she developed an ulcer in her eye, but that didn't phase our team. We even had to insert a catheter into her eyelid so that the medication could be placed right where we needed it, hence Diamond had a little holiday in the stable. She knew we were helping her as she didn't complain once, even when she had to wear a fly mask all the time to ensure we could keep the catheter site clean. The entire process lasted a few weeks and involved treatment every couple of hours, including through the nights. Beaky and her team were amazing and a couple

of weeks of horribly disturbed sleep ensued but with amazing results. We have cleared the ulcer and there is no lasting damage to the eye. But, always looking for the silver lining, at the same time, we were able to use the situation to do some training with the other horses. Whenever we bring a horse into the stable, we bring a pal too, into the next-door stable, so that they are not alone and have a companion by their side throughout. It means that others in Diamond's herd also spent the odd day and night in the stable (on a rota!) which is very good training to make sure that if they ever need treatment then they are comfortable with the surroundings. What could have been a very difficult situation was made easier by the increased confidence of all of our horses and the stable time was as positive as it could have been, testament to how far the horses have come.

Otherwise the herds are in fine fettle – each year we have to remember that they are getting older and like humans, some of our oldies finish the year with a few less teeth than they started it and some more creaking and cracking of bones! But we are used to giving some of them additional feeds, using supplements and oils to give all the nutrients that are needed by the ageing equine body. A few more rugs are used to keep the bodies warm and as long as they are comfortable, we tackle the winter together. It's an equine/human collaboration all the time at Mane Chance – each of us helping each other and communicating to know what is needed, and it works well, allowing the horses to retire gracefully.



Now that winter is upon us, the horses are back in winter pastures and our extra field has come into its own – rested over the summer, it provides a lovely amount of winter grass that keeps about a third of our herd nibbling for many weeks longer than you would expect. Our older herd are kept close, always in our sight for safety and the tracks are rested, ready for the Spring – the cycle begins again. Whilst all around us has been chaotic, the Sanctuary of Mane Chance continues, with our horses at the centre, reminding us that all will be well again! Thank goodness for their consistency!



Our community



The gradual lifting of restrictions following the first lockdown allowed us to restart our volunteering and community work but not without some significant changes, as I am sure you can imagine.

We had to revisit everything that we do to maintain the increased health and safety processes that we had introduced to ensure compliance with the restrictions. Increased sterilising of equipment, smaller numbers in groups, increased hand washing and of course, planning activities which could allow for social distancing whilst also making sure everyone was safe. We unpicked everything that we do and put it back together again with the changes in place.

It was therefore a very welcome sight when we could welcome a few volunteers back in July, all carefully rostered to keep the number of interactions down. Then a few of our community volunteers that could come over the summer started to return and finally our schools when they returned in September.

We were able to run three Chance2Be courses with school referrals, working with them in 'bubbles' and some small community sessions began again. We had been in contact with children's services since the start of the pandemic and were aware of how much mental health issues had been affecting everyone, including many of the children that we work with. It was therefore such a relief to be able to open the gates again, knowing that more than ever before, the work that we are doing with young people is something we just have to protect and maintain.

But the same was true for our volunteers – opening-up again was a great reminder of the community that we are at the Sanctuary and to have everyone back together was uplifting for us all.

The other positive that we managed to glean from the first lockdown was the fact that we were able to prepare for the launch of the AQA Unit Awards at the Sanctuary. Over that time we wrote over 80 achievement units that we could deliver to the young people, teaching about our animal care and what it takes to look after their home too, but all with an underpinning theme of calm, kindness and patience. The young people work towards the units and are awarded a certificate from AQA (the central body that we are affiliated to) which can be presented to them, perhaps at school assemblies and which recognise what they have been able to do with us. The notion of the AQA unit is to celebrate an achievement, whatever the level, and so they are accessible to all, irrespective of age or ability, and they are a wonderful addition to our community provision. Already this term, we have enrolled a number of students with AQA and look forward to the first batch of certificates being awarded!



Meet the Team

Earlier in the year, we had been given a grant for a fundraising post and Katy joined us in September as Fundraising Manager, with a focus on engaging more corporates with the charity. She comes with over 10 years fundraising experience working with small and large groups, organisations and companies so we were delighted when she came on board with us at this most challenging time!

This is an exciting time for Mane Chance as we expand our fundraising and events, with a view to making the charity more sustainable and raising the charity profile in the wider community. Katy has already made some positive changes for fundraising at Mane Chance, with the creation of the Amazon Wish List, partnering with Work for Good and helping to develop the Christmas Appeal.

Looking forward to next year, Katy is excited to reach out to companies and bring them on board to support Mane Chance. She is planning corporate days at the sanctuary in the summer, as well as fundraising around the 10th Birthday of Mane Chance in October 2021. If you know anyone who works in a company (small or large) in Surrey, West Sussex, Berkshire, North Hampshire or South London, and would be keen to nominate Mane Chance as their company charity of the year, please do put them in touch with Katy. She can be reached on katy@manechancesanctuary.org



New Year's Day Walk

– Wednesday 1st January 2021

Whilst all of our events may have been scuppered this year, we remain positive and hopeful that one event will still be able to go ahead. There may be a few changes due to the changed world we are living in, but the essence will remain intact – a chance to blow away the cobwebs of 2020 and walk around the Sanctuary, meeting our horses along the way!

The walk last year turned out to be the last time that we were able to welcome people on site for an event – who would have thought when we were chatting in the barn last year of what was in store! So, we are determined to start 2021 on a high and still hold the event! A quiz around the route will keep little people (and big people) entertained as you meander around our tracks and fields. Hot refreshments will be available in the barn at the end to reward your efforts too!

Come and join us and let's start 2021 as we mean to go on – in the company

of friends (socially distant of course) and looking forward to a more settled and positive twelve months ahead.

The gates open at 10am for early walkers but we can accept arrivals to start the route until 1:30pm – allowing you time to get round before the event closes at 2pm.

Tickets bought in advance cost just £2 for adults and £1 for children – youngsters under 5 years old come free! Dogs on leads are welcome too, so this is truly an event for all the family! Tickets will be available on the gate too but take advantage of our discount by booking your place now – and in case regulations mean that we have to restrict numbers!

Never more have we meant this – we look forward to seeing you many of you on site!



Amazon Wish List and Amazon Smile

Amazon remains the largest marketplace online - if you can't beat them, join them!

We have enrolled as one of the charities on the Amazon Smile list which means that we can benefit from all purchases made by our supporters. All you have to do is to move your amazon account to an amazon smile account (there is no charge for this!) and then choose us as the charity to benefit. For each purchase you make, we will receive a small donation – it's not a huge percentage but it really quickly adds up and for us and it's an easy way to raise money – all whilst you are doing your shopping! And the best bit about it – it doesn't cost you a penny!

Another initiative with Amazon is the creation of our Wish list. We know that some supporters like to give physical gifts and we have long been grateful for anything received. The beauty of the Wish List is that we can create our list (just like a Wedding list) and then you can purchase from the list, opting for it to be delivered straight to our door! From salt licks to wheelbarrows, puncture kits to stethoscopes, we have put a wide range of items on the list that we use everyday at the Sanctuary. Not only does it mean that you can choose what to gift us (and hence how your money is spent) but we have lovely surprises arriving at the Sanctuary that we haven't ordered but we always need!

Thank you so much to everyone that has already found and bought from our Wish List – we are so, so grateful and your gifts are already in use! We do wish to be able to thank you so if you purchase something that can be sent as a gift, please fill in your name so we know you sent it! Some items don't allow this option, so please do pop us an email so we know who to thank that way!

For more information, please see the [Wish List page](#) on our website.



Psst.....

For those of you who have missed their nights out this year, Jenny is defying the odds and hopefully (restrictions permitting) appearing with another of our Patrons, Martin Shaw, in a delightful production of 'Love Letters' at the Theatre Royal Haymarket. Covid-secure, this production is one of the few to open following the lockdowns being lifted, having played for a week in Windsor in October. Do try and catch it – it stars two of our best pals and is a welcome return towards some form of normality.

[Visit the Theatre website](#) for more information.



And finally.....

It's been such a challenging year for so many of us but thankfully we have been able to find moments of inspiration, friendship and kindness to keep us going and we hope you have too. As we look forward to next year and hope that it will bring some ease and some normality, we'd just like to leave you with this thought:

Life has two rules:

- #1. Never quit
- #2. Always remember Rule #1.

*Wishing you a very
Merry Christmas,
see you in 2021!*



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Thank you for being part of
the **Mane Chance Family**

