



# PONY EXPRESS

## **News from the Chairman**

Happy New Year!

December has come and gone, and all the ponies have now been relocated to their winter grazing sites at Pippingford, Chailey, Birling Gap and Castle Hill.

As always, my thanks go to all of you for your continued support of the Trust and its aims. Special thanks to everyone on the Looker rota for your continued efforts in overseeing the wellbeing of the ponies, in all weathers, throughout the year. We also very much appreciate the practical and physical help given to Monty by Anna, Mick and Richard during pony gatherings and moves.

The grazing requirement at Chailey has expanded significantly, resulting in the need to acquire more ponies. I am pleased to say that, at no cost to the Trust (except transportation), we have taken on six additional ponies on permanent loan from the Moorland Mousie Trust. These six are true representatives of the breed originating from four different moorland herds. One of them, along with several of our existing ponies, is from the famous Anchor herd, as seen at their annual gathering, on BBC's Countryfile programme on 1st December.

The Moorland Mousie Trust is a charity based at the Exmoor Pony Centre in Dulverton and they take a number of Exmoor foals from the moorland breeders every year. The foals are handled, socialised and then moved onto foster homes, for further work, or onto conservation grazing schemes throughout the UK. The Exmoor Pony Centre is also a showcase for the breed, giving people the opportunity to get to know this wonderful breed close up, including the opportunity to ride an Exmoor pony on Exmoor!

We may also have a further opportunity to increase our pony numbers over the next couple of months. We have, potentially, additional grazing sites lined up to accommodate up to fifteen more ponies. The financial viability and grazing agreements are still to be agreed and ratified by the committee before anything is finalised.

The financial situation for the Trust continues to be an area of focus for myself and the Committee.

Our key concern is the age and reliability of the Trust's pick-up truck, without which, it would be difficult for Monty to function. Several applications for funding have been made to various charitable trusts but, as yet, we have had no positive outcomes. The numbers of charities, of all sizes, seeking financial support continues to grow, so it is becoming much harder to secure a slice of any monies available. However, we will carry on with our efforts, in the hope that we will succeed. Any support, help or advice in our fundraising efforts would be much appreciated.

Since the last newsletter, we have welcomed Anna Bogg to the committee. Anna has also taken on managing the revamp of the Trust website and moving us into the realms of social media by creating a Facebook page.

Hopefully the revamped website will be soon with us, so keep looking and feedback any suggestions or comments that will help us to make best use of it as a showcase for the Trust. I will also publish details and pricing of Trust branded clothing items in the next few weeks.

I am also pleased to announce that Krystyna Weinstein has agreed to join the committee.

Susan Suleski is soon to retire as Secretary, so we will be looking for someone to fill this role. If you are interested, please contact us.

The date and location of the AGM will be agreed in the next month, I look forward to seeing some of you there. In the meantime, please keep up the good work and keep warm!!!

Tony Clarke

## **Additional pony cover**

With further expansion of the number of ponies that the Trust has within its care, now would seem a good time to look into creating a 'third level of cover' to bolster all eventualities in the event of a problem arising. It could happen, for a variety of reasons, that Monty and Anna might not be immediately available to deal in person with a break-out, possible health issue, water supply problem, etc.

The idea is to create and train-up a small number of persons who could respond to such a situation (or to assist Monty or Anna should they need

additional help in a situation). Helpers would ideally respond to a call-out local to where they live, for example someone living in Eastbourne responds to a call-out on the eastern Downs; a problem at Broadwater would call upon people in Crowborough or Tunbridge Wells area. These persons would need to be fairly practically minded, reasonably fit and have an 'eye' as to what appears to be a healthy pony or not; another consideration would be how available would they be – in full-time or part-time employment, or retired.

We are only at the early stage of formulating this idea but if you consider you could help and would

like to be kept 'in the loop' on this, please telephone or e-mail Monty to register your interest

### ***Trust website and social media***

The new and improved website is currently under construction and we hope that it will be launching early in the new year. In the meantime, if you are a Facebook user, you can follow us at <https://www.facebook.com/SussexPonyGrazing>

If you have any comments, suggestions or questions about the website or social media you can contact Anna at [bog24@hotmail.com](mailto:bog24@hotmail.com).

## ***The effect of grazing on Ashdown Forest***

The same area at the same time of year, but five years apart.

Before



After



## **Sussex Pony Grazing & Conservation Trust**

### **PATRONS**

Gary Bushell   David Dimpleby   Beverley Thompson   Alan Wells

### **TRUSTEES & COMMITTEE**

Neil Baker   Tony Clarke   Michael Squires

### **TREASURER**

Alison Smith

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