



## PROMOTING DARTMOOR PONIES THROUGH INNOVATIVE EDUCATION



'Jubilee Challenge 2010'

### **ANNUAL REPORT**

**April 2010 – March 2011**

DARTMOOR PONY HERITAGE TRUST

Registered Charity No: 1109196

(A Private Limited Company By Guarantee)

Company No: 5400159

Registered 21/03/2005

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# **1. CHARITY INFORMATION**

## **BACKGROUND**

Dartmoor ponies are an integral part of the Dartmoor landscape. In addition to drawing in visitors, they play a vital role in grazing the moor and maintaining its character. But in recent years, their numbers have been in decline.

The Dartmoor Pony Heritage Trust (Registered Charity No. 1109196) was established in 2005 in response to widespread concern about the viability and long-term survival of the traditional Dartmoor pony. We are based at Bovey Tracey on the outskirts of Dartmoor where we operate a purpose-built, all-weather visitor and education centre.

## **DPHT MISSION STATEMENT**

- To preserve the indigenous Dartmoor Pony from extinction and to maintain its presence on Dartmoor, thus protecting our heritage for future generations.

## **DPHT OBJECTS**

- The Objects are to protect and preserve as a species for the benefit of the public the native ponies of Dartmoor and to promote such other charitable purposes as the Trustees from time to time think fit.

## **DPHT AIMS**

- To protect and preserve the Dartmoor Pony as one of the recognised emblems of Dartmoor and for its value to tourism.
- To utilise the Dartmoor Pony's superb temperament as a platform for learning through innovative and socially inclusive programmes.
- To provide the general public with education, awareness and information of the special heritage of the Dartmoor Pony.
- To increase opportunities for visitors to develop an appreciation of Dartmoor's cultural heritage by providing practical experiences in conservation.
- To encourage the use of the native Dartmoor Pony for conservation management.
- To seek public support and financial sponsorship to ensure the survival of the Dartmoor Pony and its future welfare.
- To work with all statutory / advisory bodies and the Moorland Farmers, to make the Dartmoor Pony more valued and valuable.
- To monitor and support the control of the number of indigenous Dartmoor ponies.

## **TRUSTEES**

Trustees and officers of The Dartmoor Pony Heritage Trust are as follows:

<b>Chairman</b>	Clare Stanton Beechlands Chagford Devon TQ13 8HF	D.O.B. 01/10/60	<b>Director &amp; Trustee</b>
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Clare Stanton, resident in Devon for 12 years has lived in Chagford on Dartmoor for all this time. Passionate about Dartmoor, its history, culture and future. She has ridden and owned horses and ponies since a child, so involvement in DPHT brings together both interests - along with using Clare's business and PR skills.

Clare previously ran her own PR, marketing and media relations business, providing skills to support a broad range of business across the UK. Now she runs a small farm livery business, holiday cottages and spends considerable time organising her two teenage children and their sporting interests, particularly football, running and horse riding!

Clare has provided her own venue for Ponies Inspiring People sessions with the West of England School for children with Little or No Sight.

She has also used her writing skills to assist with the development of business plans for the DPHT and has been heavily involved in putting together bids for funding for the Trust's activities.

<b>Chairman – retired 09/01/2011</b>	Stuart Shawcross 46 Skylark Rise Woolwell Plymouth Devon, PL6 7SN	D.O.B. 01/10/45
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A retired Building Society Executive.

A career spanning 40 years in the world of finance, including the accountancy profession, industry, retail, insurance & latterly Building Societies. Became Retail Controller responsible for the financial control of the branch network, then as Area Manager responsible for Nationwide's branch operation in Devon & Cornwall.

A committed Rotarian of 25 years service, largely fundraising for the benefit & support of local children & young people. For several years was Programme Director of RYLA (Rotary Youth Leadership Awards) - an outward-bound styled development course held annually on Dartmoor.

Former Trustee of a large cancer charity based in Plymouth.

Chairman of 1<sup>st</sup> Roborough Scout Group in Plymouth.

Keen golfer with a dubious handicap of 15!!

Became Trustee & Treasurer of DPHT upon its formation in 2005. Became Chairman in 2008. Stuart, although no longer a trustee or Director, remains active and continues to be an ardent supporter of the DPHT and its work.

**Treasurer** Donald Agnew  
Laughter Hole House  
Bellevier  
Postbridge  
Devon PL20 6TT D.O.B. 31/07/42 **Director & Trustee**

Don joined the DPHT as treasurer in 2008 . After a career as a Customs and Excise Officer he retired to Dartmoor with his wife Sylvia. Don has a great interest in Dartmoor and is involved in a number of local projects. Don keeps an eye on the DPHT herd of Dartmoor Ponies as he lives within the DPHT holding at Bellevier.

**Trustee** Jean Green  
Pennycomequick  
Moor Town  
Tavistock, PL19 9JY D.O.B. 12/12/42 **Director**

Jean moved from Hampshire to live on Dartmoor in 2005. She is a retired teacher, having spent her career working with children and young people with special educational needs. Following a visit to the DPHT Brimpts Centre she expressed a wish to help in some capacity as a volunteer, although she stressed she had no experience of working with or handling ponies. There was, at the time, a vacancy for the office of Secretary and Jean agreed to become a trustee and to take on this role. She also volunteered to increase the range of DPHT merchandise and to organise it and is the Merchandise Secretary as well.

She has been, for about 45 years, and still is, an active fundraiser for Guide Dogs, holding the offices of Branch Chairman or Secretary throughout that time. She actively supports a number of local and global, wildlife trusts and charities involved in environmental, cruelty-free and compassion in world farming concerns.

Jean and her husband Richard enjoy walking on the moor with their Flat Coated Retriever, Raven. Bellevier has always been a favourite haunt, so they were especially pleased when the DPHT secured the Conservation Grazing Project at Bellevier. The most recent charity Jean has become involved in is P.A.T. (Pets As Therapy).

**Secretary** Emma Baker  
Sonas  
Churchfields Drive  
Bovey Tracey  
Devon D.O.B 26.04.67 **Director & Trustee**

I was born in Lewdown on Cholwell stud farm. I was bought up in a horse world, with my dad teaching and playing polo and mum helping show stallions. I trained as a nurse in Cornwall in 1985 and moved to Scotland in 1992, where I completed a degree in community health and district nursing.

I had both my children whilst living there, Rebecca now 14 and AJ 12 years.  
We then moved to Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, before finally moving back to Devon in 2004 to be near to my mum who was unwell.  
I am very much a country girl so feel that I am very much 'at home' in Bovey!  
Rebecca is horse mad one in our family now, so I became involved in the DPHT when she wanted to volunteer. I am full of admiration for the Charities work and feel by supporting it in the role of secretary I am doing my 'bit ' both for my daughter as well as for the great work DPHT does.  
I still ride when I can (not often enough due to the cost) but Rebecca rides more often!  
I have worked full time as a Nursing Services Manager for Marie Curie Cancer Care for the past 7 years, so I enjoy my 'time out' whatever it may be!

**Trustee – retired 04/02/2011**

Andrew Bradford  
Brimpts Farm  
Dartmeet  
Devon, PL20 6SG

D.O.B. 15/11/61

Andy Bradford Second generation tenant at Brimpts Farm.  
Dartmoor Pony Moorland Scheme Committee Member

Having been lucky enough to live and grow up on a Dartmoor farm with all creatures great small, one including a registered Dartmoor pony" Twinkle Toes". At an early age entering shows such as Widecombe Fair; this began my introduction to the Dartmoor pony and this has stayed with me.

So when I inherited my mother's small herd of Dartmoors I was up for the challenge in keeping this type of pony on Dartmoor. I bred Charlie & George, who are two of the original adoption ponies with DPHT.

Other interests

Committee member of the Dartmoor Farmers Association (DFA) collaboration of Dartmoor farmers.

Director of the Dartmoor Farmers Ltd (the meat sector of the DFA).

Director of The Dartmoor Woodfuel Co-operative developing & supplying bio mass to local boilers.

Farm awards:-

2002 Duke of Cornwall Habitat Award

2005 Bath & West- Farm Diversification Award Winner, Devon Life Best Food Producer of the Year

2007 Natural England The Future of Farming Award - Regional Winner South West

Andy retired from the DPHT earlier in the year due to work commitments; but has agreed to help and support the Trust and now takes on the role of Ambassador.

**Trustee** Elizabeth Newbolt-Young  
Shilstone Rocks Stud  
Widecombe-In-The-Moor  
Devon, TQ13 7TF D.O.B. 08/03/35 **Director**

Born in Devon and after travelling the world came back to settle on a Dartmoor hill farm some 50 years ago. A life long interest in the indigenous Dartmoor pony on the Moor having spent my childhood among them. A past council member of the Dartmoor Pony Society for 30 odd years and ran the Moorland Duchy scheme for 15 years. A Dartmoor Pony Society A panel judge. Married to Rod with five daughters who are all interested in the farm. We run the "Shilstone Rocks Stud and Riding Centre" (established 1962). We breed registered Dartmoor ponies many of which have been used as the foundation stock of Dartmoor studs all over the world. We also run a small herd of Dexter Cattle, the youngstock of which we sell as beef.

**Trustee** John Born  
11 St Bernard's Close  
Buckfast  
Devon  
TQ11 0EL D.O.B. 18/08/43 **Director**

I grew up in North Devon and , after studying French and German at university , was a teacher for 15 years , which included a year in Niger, before returning to Devon to complete my training as a solicitor . Since qualifying in 1983 I have specialised in wills trusts and probate with WBW Solicitors at Newton Abbot .

I am married to Clare, formerly also a solicitor , and we have two sons , Chris and Andrew. Being now semi-retired has enabled me to take on voluntary work and , besides my involvement with DPHT , I am chairman of the trustees of Tindal House , which provides flats for the elderly in Newton Abbot , and a governor of South Dartmoor Community College .My hobbies include travel , golf , playing the piano , reading and exploring Dartmoor and the coastal footpath with a local walking group .

**Trustee** Andrew Taylor  
3 Maple Avenue  
New Park  
Bovey Tracey  
Devon  
TQ13 9FR D.O.B. 13/08/45 **Director**

I was born in the Black Country at a time when all the big manufacturers and steelworks were still there. One of my first recollections of ponies was in a local deep seam colliery, when, on a school visit to the area of the coal face I saw the pit-ponies at work. After thirty years working as a police officer in the West Midlands a life changing illness brought my wife Joy and me to live in Devon. We have both always loved open spaces and the moor gave us great peace. We began observing the ponies and their behaviour and noting their lears.

We became involved with the Dartmoor Pony Heritage Trust in its early days and have never regretted a moment. Many of the farmers and the people who live and work on the moor we consider to be our friends.

We care for the ponies and the centre at Parke and write the newsletter which is produced every fourth month. Joy sends out the adoptions and I keep the database of adopters up to date. We used to have a hall but it is now an office.

**Trustee**

Sue Parrott  
Round Ash, Old Walls  
Chagford  
Newton Abbot  
Devon  
TQ13 8ES

D.O.B. 21/01/61      **Director**

I live in Chagford with my husband Andy (who runs his own IT business and is a Parish Councillor) and children, Tiffany (16) and Anthony (15).

I have a degree in Environmental Science and work as a writer and editor for Green Ink, a small publishing company specialising in writing scientific reports and public interest materials on agricultural development and natural resources management. Our clients include the UK's Department for International Development, international agricultural research centres and development charities such as FarmAfrica.

I have ridden and kept ponies/horses since I was 4 and I used to compete at riding club level. I now have a homebred horse and two heritage ponies, Skylark and Stonechat. I have done all the training myself for all 3 with the help of my daughter, Tiffany.

I became involved with DPHT because I love seeing the ponies on the moor and appreciate their conservation grazing value, so want to help ensure they have a sustainable future.

My ponies are involved in the Natural England Bellever project, and have already done some work pulling out Christmas trees. Next spring we will have them ready to do some harrowing of the molinia grass around the archaeology. They also did some of the Ponies Inspiring People work at Occombe and are working with the disabled groups from West of England School.

## **MANAGEMENT**

**DRU BUTTERFIELD**

**CONSULTANT**

**DOB 22/01/1971**

Dru has been with the DPHT since its conception in 2005. She has a passion for wild, open spaces and National Park values which she shares with her husband and two sons. From 14yrs Dru was working on farms and after leaving school spent a memorable year on a mixed farm with Dartmoor Commoners Rights. Sadly, in her early 20's she suffered a life changing accident and had to leave the physically demanding life of farming and moved into the highly competitive world of media sales. After two years in newspaper sales she was headhunted by a local radio group, an environment in which she flourished. Dru thrived on smashing targets for many years. But after the birth of her second son Henry, she had a strong desire to slow down a bit, spend more time based at home and to return to Dartmoor and the world of farming. Having taken up the position of Development Officer for the Dartmoor Preservation Association, the old urges to fly came back and she was soon back to building and creating - she had great success in encouraging teams of volunteers to work on Dartmoor with a new Bracken Control programme. Whilst working at the DPA she worked closely with some of the Dartmoor Commoners Associations and Dartmoor National Park Authority. In 2004, Dru met Elizabeth Newbolt-Young; by 2005 the DPHT had been created. Dru leads a dedicated team and together they have created innovative educational programmes which have helped promote the Dartmoor Ponies superb temperament and versatility.

**Mark Ridley**

**Consultant**

**DOB 24 July 1963**

Mark grew up in Devon before joining the army at 16. He served for 27 years both as a soldier and an officer. He spent most of his career with the Royal Signals before he was commissioned into the Educational and Training Services branch. He served in a variety of challenging roles around the world during his service but latterly in the field of education and training inspection and development. He retired from the army in 2006 to return to his roots and joined the West of England School and College as the Director of Quality.

He now runs his own business as a training and development consultant. Mark has a close affinity with Dartmoor, his wife Jackie works for the Dartmoor National Park Authority, and he spent a considerable amount of time 'tabbing' across it as a soldier, although nowadays enjoys strolling at a more leisurely pace with his golden retriever, Barney.

Mark was introduced to the DPHT whilst working at the West of England School and College where he met Dru through the Jubilee Challenge event on Ten Tors. Whilst he has no real experience of ponies he is very keen to support the Trust in his professional capacity by making a contribution to its management practices and work with children and young people.

**Mandy Medcraft****Consultant**

My husband Geoff and I relocated to the South West in 2004, drawn to Dartmoor by the 'great outdoors'. Our Tavistock farm is residence to a menagerie of cats, dogs and chickens as well as 3 Shetland ponies and our beloved Arab horses. We run a small livery yard from home along with several holiday and residential properties.

Trained as an Accountant, I have worked in Finance and IT for many years in both the Public and Private sector, currently a major shareholder and Financial Director to a National Healthcare Recruitment Company.

I became involved with DPHT after reading the shocking headlines about hundreds of Dartmoor pony foals being slaughtered due to over breeding and deteriorating market demand, at the end of 2010.

My contribution as a Consultant is primarily focused on information systems. Firstly, assisting with the development of a bespoke Database, to provide a more efficient and user friendly application for storing and retrieving charity records. Secondly, managing the strategic planning and implementation of a virus protected hosting facility incorporating automated scheduled backup. This will provide a safe and secure environment to facilitate the sharing and dissemination of information between key people.

**Sue Eberle****Consultant**

Sue has lived on Dartmoor for over 40 years and has worked for Dartmoor National Park Authority for over 30 years.

During that time Sue has been an Information Assistant, Area Ranger, Project Officer and a specialist Ranger dealing with problems of erosion. It was during her time as a ranger that Sue first met the DPHT founder Elizabeth Newbolt-Young.

Over the years the two kept in touch, and for the last 17 years as Head of Land Management Sue had responsibility for promoting ponies on Dartmoor, working closely with all the different pony groups.

Sue and Elizabeth had many conversations on how to support the Dartmoor Pony and following Elizabeth's lead Sue helped facilitate the setting up of the Trust and secured early funding to ensure that the Trust got off to a successful start.

Since being made redundant in November 2010 Sue is now able to bring some of her expertise in Land Management (including grant funding) to help the Trust go forward.

## 2. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Since the formation of the Dartmoor Pony Heritage Trust, there could not have been a more important, more stressful, yet ultimately more successful year for our organisation!

I write as Chairman only since October 2010. Until that time, Stuart Shawcross led the Charity through all the decisions that had to be made in order to safeguard its long term viability, with a level of diligence and professionalism, as well as a truly caring and supportive approach that has enabled the DPHT to become as highly regarded as it now is. May I take this opportunity to reiterate the thanks of all our volunteers and supporters and in particular the other Trustees and our Charity Manager, for Stuart's hard work, but also for his friendship and encouragement to each and every one of us. We wish him well for the future and appreciate his ongoing support for the Trust.

There is no doubt that while we needed to 'grasp the nettle' (an understatement perhaps!) and go ahead with the creation of our superb new Centre, in order to enable us to expand our role and increase our income potential longer term, we could not have chosen a tougher economic climate in which to do so. But in just a few months, and thanks primarily to the continued enormous dedication and working hours dedicated by Dru Butterfield, the Centre has become well established in the Community, within the Education world across Devon and as a new focus for volunteering in the region. In addition, DPHT has become a vital partner for both the Dartmoor National Park Authority and the National Trust; and I must record the gratitude of the Trustees and all our supporters, for their huge vote of confidence shown by offering us the chance to create our Centre at the National Trust's Parke site. We greatly appreciate the benefit of the skills and expertise, as well as the encouragement, of both organisations.

Yet in order to continue, our challenge continues to be the one of finding the right skills and resources within our volunteer base. We could not open the Centre, provide the services we offer to pony keepers, or open for the public, without them. Many more are needed, so please do encourage friends, family, work colleagues, old and young alike; all sorts of skills are needed and very welcome!

Financially we have held our own, with Dru bringing the building of the new Centre in ahead of time and in budget. This has meant that our income has been devoted to providing the resources and services we were created to deliver and our partnership with the pony keepers has strengthened. But for 2011, we have lost some £25,000 of grants from which we benefited in the last 3 years. Our reserves will have to be used to see us through 2011, which is why bringing new revenue streams in and maximising the opportunities provided by the Centre, is so vital.

The equine assisted learning programme, PIP, launched in 2009, is now growing into a major part of our work, benefiting the lives of many young people with special needs, autism and challenging behaviour – and ultimately demonstrating the ponies' suitability as family ponies and their superb temperament.

Perhaps as big a challenge this year has been achieving much success with helping pony keepers to sell their ponies. In previous years we have sold over 100 ponies a year for them; in 2010/11 it was about 30, but to a good value of some £8000. It is likely to be worse for 2011/12. In addition to the extremely tough economic climate both nationally and internationally, there are many other critical factors affecting sales, that are very difficult to change. These include a fundamental over-breeding of ponies on the Moor, many of the non-native type, and of poor

quality. Then there is the impact of the passporting and microchipping laws and the changes in the transport laws. Together, these add up to a very, very hard situation on Dartmoor. However, many pony keepers on our moor produce ponies that are wonderfully representative of the Dartmoor type, and those people do so with integrity and passion that is second to none.

The DPHT is working hard with all the authorities on the Moor and the pony keepers, to encourage stallion removal - the easiest, cheapest and most sensible way to reduce the foal crop for the next few years. We don't want less ponies on the Moor, in fact we would like more – but of the older, bigger type, allowed to grow on to become more saleable animals for a market that clearly exists – for older ponies and handled youngstock. The DPHT can provide the skills and services to do this; the pony keepers make more return on their investment in the ponies; the culling of foals can be reduced); and by reducing the product going into the market, the value and demand should increase. The DPHT is best placed to preserve this icon of Dartmoor.

In conclusion, I should like to say that it is wonderful to have such strong partnerships with organisations such as National Trust, Dartmoor National Park, the Duchy of Cornwall, Natural England, the Dartmoor Pony Society and many others on the Moor. The DPHT has continued to grow in terms of stature and role on Dartmoor, through the very hard work of our Charity team, especially Dru Butterfield and our Trustees, our key volunteers and friends – as well as our great pony keepers. Thank you; we couldn't do it without you.

### 3. DARTMOOR PONY PRESERVATION SCHEME

The Dartmoor Pony Preservation Scheme (DPPS) was initially set up in 2004 by the Dartmoor Pony Society in collaboration with the DNPA and funded by the Dartmoor Sustainable Development Fund (DSDf). Due To the requirements of the DSDf grant the DPPS working party initiated the formation of a charity - The Dartmoor Pony Heritage Trust.

The DPPS has been funded by the DSDf and additional funding and management of the Scheme came from the Dartmoor Pony Heritage Trust.

For the first three years of the scheme (August 2004 – October 2007) pony keepers were paid an annual grant per mare / stallion if the keeper met the required criteria.

As the scheme had to be sustainable, the DSDf panel felt that annual payments alone would not rectify the problem of a falling marketplace. Headage payments were not the answer to the long term viability of the herds. The DSDf supported a further three year funding application (November 2007 – September 2010) to run an 'added value' campaign and to create a mechanism for Dartmoor type ponies to be recognised for their benefit to the gene pool.

During this period the DPHT ran a number of initiatives to establish how we could add value to the unregistered Dartmoor Ponies / Dartmoor type. We embarked on a major marketing campaign to raise awareness and immediately realised the term Dartmoor type / unregistered Dartmoor was negative and degrading. It was agreed to bring in the term **Dartmoor Heritage ponies**. In conjunction with the DPS and Natural England the Heritage Trust List (HTL) has been created.

**Any** pony keeper with unregistered Dartmoor stock can ask for their foals or ponies to be inspected and approved for an HTL passport. All animals on this list are eligible for the Higher

Level Stewardship Scheme Native Breeds At Risk Supplement. This can be of great value to the pony keeper and is one of the most successful achievements to securing the future of the Heritage Pony.

**In September 2010 the Dartmoor Sustainable Development Fund grant which provided funding for the Dartmoor Pony Preservation Scheme ceased.**

As a charity the DPHT has continued to look at funding available to help continue this area of work. The DPHT has been successful in creating a Dartmoor Pony Visitor and Education Centre. The DPHT in partnership with the National Trust has developed a purpose built facility at Parke, Bovey Tracey, which is leased to the DPHT. From this venue the DPHT will continue to raise awareness of the Dartmoor Pony, its versatility and temperament. The new centre provides the perfect 'shop window' from which farmers can sell their ponies.

Handling of young stock has been an area which the DPHT has concentrated on and has seen a premium on stock sold privately. The Trust has provided a free handling service and assistance with castrations and vasectomy. Help has also been given with the marketing of ponies, a fostering service and grazing at Bellever for ponies to mature on.

**In 2010 the DPHT helped Dartmoor Pony Keepers in the following areas:**

- Castrated 53 colts
- Sold 30 ponies worth £8075 to local pony keepers – no commission was taken
- Organised the loan of 25 ponies for conservation grazing
- Provided free grazing on Bellever for up to 26 ponies belonging to local Dartmoor Farmers
- Handled 80 ponies from untouched to ground started

## **4. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME**

### **PONIES INSPIRING PEOPLE**

The aim of PIP is to provide educational and inspirational interactive equine programmes for children and adults with mental and/or physical learning disabilities and young people with challenging behavior. There is no similar programme running in the West of England, but there is substantial proof worldwide that interaction with animals of all types is extremely beneficial to those with disabilities. Horses in particular provide a broad base of challenges, and have proved to be very successful in developing the emotional and physical capabilities of the participants. This work also strongly proves the suitability of Dartmoor ponies as calm, gentle animals, ideal for family environments or as 'part of the family' for those with disabilities.

**Key clients who took part in our Ponies Inspiring People Course:**

*Teign School - Dru and the work with the ponies continues to enable Teign school students who are on the point of exclusion to re-engage with learning through the concentrated and vital work on their social and emotional literacy. Judy Fawcett Assistant Headteacher TeignSchool*

**West of England School** *The work experience programme provided by DPHT is a unique resource that offers considerable benefits to our Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) and Profound Multi-*

*learning Difficulties (PMLD) learners, whom we would otherwise have difficulty placing in suitable programmes. The positive experience and welcoming reception our learners enjoy makes this a hugely valuable collaboration.*

*Paul Hannan, Head of Outreach Services, West of England School and College for young people with little or no sight.*

### **Mayfield School**

**Preston Primary** - *The children in the Enhanced Provision at Preston Primary School have difficulties with communication and interaction and working with the Ponies Inspiring People project has really benefited these children.*

*The children have made significant progress with language skills, confidence, independence and the ability to work together. We are very grateful to the staff for their expert teaching and support and we hope that we can continue to be involved in the project. Jonquil StapletonTeacher*

**Bishop Dunstan** - *I wanted to put on record my sincere thanks to you and your staff for the work you did with our children. It was a terrific experience for our children and I felt we as staff learnt much more about the children and their chosen behaviours. I enjoyed working with you and admired your thoughtfulness, caring and calmness in the sea of troubles we presented to you at times. Noel Gibb Headteacher*

### **4<sup>th</sup> March 2010 – PIP EVENT**



*“The powerful effect of working with the ponies was demonstrated by Dru in a workshop for teachers and other educationalists. It inspired the participants and has opened up more opportunities to develop this work with students who have social and/or emotional difficulties”*

**Judy Fawcett – Assistant Head teacher Teign School**

The DPHT and Teign School collaborated to bring together a day dedicated to promoting SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) and Equine Assisted Learning for young people with challenging behavior and or learning disabilities.

23 representatives from Devon schools joined us for what can only be termed a great success in launching this initiative to a wider audience. Our sincere thanks must be given to Teign School and particularly Judy Fawcett for her belief in PIP. The day would not have been the same without Shane Perry an ex Teign School student who came and talked to delegates about his own story and how a PIP course had helped him overcome a number of anger related issues.

### **TEN TORS 2010**

The Jubilee Challenge is a demanding one day event designed for around 400 young people with special needs. Held on the Saturday of Ten Tors weekend, the Jubilee Challenge entrants share the same pressures, achievements - and weather - as the Ten Tors Teams!



**For the fourth year, Dartmoor Pony Heritage Trust ponies were used to motivate and encourage students around the 8 mile route.** Three of the DPHT's adoption ponies - George, Rolo and Boss walked with students from Millford School in Plymouth and Mayfield School in Torbay, along with their carers and helpers.

Our ponies have such big hearts, gentle natures and are quick to learn. It's been easy to teach them to work with students with special needs. They are very loving and seem to know when students are struggling; they slow their own pace, cope with wheelchairs and are not upset by anything that happens around them. The Jubilee Challenge is the perfect showcase for the Dartmoor pony.

The special needs students who took part in the challenge trained with the ponies for some time, and grew very fond of their pony walks. The ponies displayed great gentleness and undoubtedly motivated and 'showed the way' for these youngsters, enabling them to complete a challenge which might otherwise have been beyond them.



## 5. BELLEVER



- The DPHT leases 82ha of moorland from the Forestry Commission at Bellever; home to some of the best heather heathland on Dartmoor and has an abundant supply of scheduled monuments.
- The Trust has a 10 year Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) agreement including a Native Breeds at Risk Supplement. The Trust runs a herd of 26 Dartmoor ponies on the site; all owned by local farmers. Ponies graze the site whilst they mature to a more saleable age at approximately 4yrs old. During the maturing process they graze the area; browsing for up to eighteen hours a day and trampling the rank grasses creating room and light for more sensitive plants to establish.
- The DPHT took the opportunity to re-new its HLS agreement whilst entering a new Upland Entry Level Scheme. We started a new 10 year agreement in both schemes providing the DPHT some security in its land management plans for Bellever. During these negotiations we also increased our Educational Access visits from 75 to 100 visits a year.
- Our great thanks go to Lorna Smerdon who looks after up to 26 ponies on site, carrying out daily checks and routine inspections.

### **BELLEVER - CONSERVATION PROJECT**

The moorland area at Bellever sits within a 1,000 acre holding, giving the herd a huge acreage to cover. When taking into account the additional area for the ponies to roam; the stocking density lowers to a level where a herd of 26 ponies struggle to keep up with an increase in annual growth, due to the increasingly wet summers which make ideal growing conditions for grass. In addition to pony grazing the site requires further

management to keep on top of the Sikla Spruce - Christmas Trees which do not form part of the pony's diet. Human intervention is required to remove the saplings and trees which have seeded on the open moorland.



**They are more than capable of pulling a tree twice this size!**

### **BELLEVER GUIDED WALKS**

During the last financial year we delivered 75 free guided walks around our moorland site to schools, colleges and groups. 1125 visitors benefitted from the knowledge, humour and dedication our guides give to every walk they deliver. We are extremely proud of our talented team who do so much to making many young people's first experience on Dartmoor a very special one! Our ongoing thanks to Liz Mial, Tony Burgess, Tom Soby and Paul Rendell.



## 6. PUBLICITY

### Media

- April 2010 – Double page spread in Devon Life
- April 2010 - DPHT Newsletter sent to database
- May 2010 – Spotlight Ten Tors – evening round of Jubilee Challenge
- May 2010 – Herald Express – Jubilee Challenge – Mayfield School children
- May 2010 – Plymouth Evening Herald – Jubilee Challenge
- May 2010 – Radio Devon - Jubilee Challenge
- May 2010 – In house Army Services Magazine – Ten Tors and Jubilee Event
- May 2010 – 2 page feature in Native Pony Magazine - Ten Tors event
- July 2010 – article in WMN – Dartmoor Heritage ponies make perfect therapeutic partners.
- November 2010 – article in WMN - volunteer opportunities
- December 2010 – article in MDA family event at Parke
- December 2010 – article in MDA ponies and conservation work on Bellever
- January 2011 – article in the Cottage Magazine – recruited 9 new volunteers to work for the DPHT
- February 2011 – Launch of a new film about the Dartmoor Pony and the work of the DPHT – Sky Channel Horse and Country Television.
- March 2011 - Radio 4 -2 x Interviews regarding Ponies on Dartmoor and the current situation

**Compared to previous years we had a slightly quieter year on the media front. This may appear strange to some when the Dartmoor Pony situation received national attention. However, as we do not endorse the culling of ponies for meat or the continued over production of foals, the decision was taken to not enter the media debate and further fuel negative stories regarding the Dartmoor Pony.**

### Events held or attended

- April 4 x Colt Castration Days
- May 2010 - Paid and arranged for first stallion to be vasectomised
- May 2010 – Organised and paid for 10 pony keepers to attend a foot trimming course, how to improve welfare cost effectively.
- May 2010 – Pony Keepers visit to Exmoor to share experiences with Exmoor Pony Keepers.
- June - Contraception in Feral Mares and Foal Reduction Measures - meeting for farmers with Dartmoor Ponies.
- July – 2 x 20 minute Dartmoor Pony Main Ring Performances at Mid Devon Show – 15,000 spectators and presence at show all day. 9 Dartmoor Ponies, 5 Dartmoor Pony Keepers and 20 DPHT volunteers pulled together to promote the versatility and temperament of the Dartmoor Pony.

- July Devon SEAL Conference – Dru Keynote speaker
- September – Sibelco Open Day – Promoting Dartmoor Ponies at Teign School Farm Unit
- November – Transition Movement event in Cornwall - LANTRA event promoting Dartmoor Ponies for working on the land.
- February 2011 – Pony keepers meeting to discuss a marketing strategy and assistance the DPHT is able to provide
- March 2011 – DPHT Pony Keepers working Party – a meeting to implement a publicity campaign for 2011

## **7. CONSERVATION GRAZING**

The DPHT offers a fully comprehensive service for Land Managers, Wardens and Rangers interested in using ponies for conservation grazing. We advise on the most suitable ponies for sites, source and arrange delivery of hardy native ponies to clients. All ponies sold or loaned through the DPHT are handled to Conservation Grazing Level, enabling easier day-to-day management of the herd, but ponies still retain wariness making them ideal for public sites where interaction with the public can be avoided. The DPHT has run a number of ranger/warden courses and continues to build this area of our business.

### **Conservation Grazing Awareness**

- Ecolots website
- Countryside Jobs Service Magazine advert promoting training and ponies for con grazing
- April 2010 Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust – chased for Con Grazing ponies
- April 2010 Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust - discussed ponies and con grazing course
- April 2010 Dudley Council – discussed Dartmoors and training
- April 27<sup>th</sup> - NT and GAP meeting for Con grazing and Lantra training
- April 2010 – Con grazing article for GAP
- May 2010 – Butterfly Conservation – organised for 4 ponies to be used for small site on Dartmoor for 6 weeks from June to improve Rhos pasture.
- May 2010 – Organised Research Student Charlotte Miller to record findings at Vogwell Farm, new Butterfly Conservation site near Widecombe.
- May 2010 – Discussed 6 new ponies for site in Cornwall for NT tenant.
- May 2010 - [focus@countryside-jobs.com](mailto:focus@countryside-jobs.com) sent in an article
- June 2010 – Mike Bentley – Cumbria 11 acres of heath – talking about three moor bred ponies for his site. Mike will be attending a training course and visiting ponies for sale on 8<sup>th</sup> July.
- June 2010 – Essex Wildlife Trust – working with the Trust on a long-term plan to introduce Dartmoor Ponies to a 263ha nature reserve at Muckin. A new visitor centre is planned for 2012. DPHT will be selling trained Dartmoor Ponies and providing warden training, risk assessment for a large herd of ponies in 2011.

- July 2010 – Two training courses for private people taking ponies on for conservation grazing.
- July 2010 – Alison James – Trengwainton Farm, Penzance – Discussed the benefits of ponies for con grazing

- July 2010 – **Jenny Plackett**

**Two Moors Threatened Butterfly Project Officer**

*Dear Dru*

*Just to say thanks so much for all your help in getting the conservation grazing organised at Vogwell Farm. The ponies have made a fantastic job of the site, changing it from overgrown and fairly rank grassland to a lovely diverse and structured grass sward in only a month! The varied height in the grass sward, and the tuftiness that is created when ponies graze, is so important for the Marsh Fritillary, which needs the warm and sheltered micro-climate which is created by this type of grazing activity. When I went to check on the site yesterday, I was delighted to see the impact they have had - and to spot a tiny Marsh Fritillary caterpillar web too - immediate results!!*

- August 2010 – Devon Wildlife Trust – arranged for a number of ponies to go on loan for John French
- August 2010 – National Trust Tenant Cornwall – arranged the sale of 6 Dartmoor Ponies for a con grazing site. David Powell's ponies.
- September 2010 – Cheshire Wildlife Trust – provided information on conservation grazing and benefits of Dartmoor Ponies and the services we offer.
- September 2010 – Norfolk Wildlife Trust – discussed additional ponies and training.
- September 2010 – Talking to Slapton Ley about taking some ponies on a 8ha improved grassland area which is in an HLS and needs to be restored.
- November 2010 – Sally Tripp – NT tenant looking at taking ponies on for coastal site. Price a current issue
- December 2010 - Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust providing advice - potential sale of a small moorland herd.
- January 2011 - The Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire & Peterborough
- January 2011 – Provided advice to Essex Wildlife Trust
- January 2011 – Organised 3 ponies for conservation grazing near Manaton, 6 week period to knock back vegetation.

## 8. VOLUNTEERS

The DPHT is reliant on its volunteer team to run the centre and to carry out its work both on and off Dartmoor. We currently have a team of 35 volunteers who give them time on a monthly basis to the trust. Without their support we would have been unable to achieve the many outputs contained within this report. However, since moving to the new centre at Parke, we are finding the need for an increase in volunteers to further assist with a range of tasks from administration to meeting and greeting. Our plan is to apply for funding to build an office and recruit a part-time Volunteer Coordinator to help manage, train and grow this incredibly important area.

During the last year we have run two induction programmes and are working with Dartmoor National Park Authority to further improve volunteering provision across Dartmoor.



### Volunteer Comments

**Carol Wheatley** “ I enjoy working with the ponies and client groups, in beautiful surroundings, it is the most fulfilling way to give something back to society, benefiting both myself and others.”

**Cherry Ashworth** “Fun, friendly and very fulfilling”.

**Jill Pullan** “I volunteer for the DPHT because I am concerned about the welfare and future of Dartmoor Ponies and feel that it is a worthwhile and enjoyable use of my spare time to help the trust when I can”.

## **9. INCOME GENERATION**

- Fee paying courses – In 2009 the DPHT carried out a project called Ponies Inspiring People at Ocombe Farm, in Torquay. This was an important project to establish the Dartmoor Pony as an animal with the perfect temperament for developing our equine assisted learning programmes. The project was funded by Awards For All and the Clare Milne Trust. A key aim for any charity is to become self supporting, not an easy task in such challenging economic times. Due to the success of the PIP Project and the clear demand for our unique courses we have been able to utilise the all weather facilities at Parke and sell courses to students from a wide range of local schools and groups.
- Legacies – Now the DPHT is becoming more established we have started receiving a number of legacies. We believe this is recognition of our work with the Dartmoor Pony and Education Programme.
- Adoptions – we will continue to run our Adoption Programme, although not a great money spinner, we feel it covers its costs and enables those not able to own their own pony the opportunity to follow the life of their chosen DPHT Pony.
- Grants – The DPHT could not have built the new facility at Parke without the support of a number of organizations. We would like to take the opportunity to thank the Clare Milne Trust, Dartmoor Leaf, Dartmoor National Park Authority, Baily Thomas Trust, The Sir Cliff Richard Charitable Trust, South West Water and The Norman Family Trust.