

Blue Cross Open Day Report

August 2022

The Blue Cross Rehoming Centre in Burford kindly opened its doors to RDA groups for a tour around the fabulous facilities and have the chance to meet some of the equine inhabitants looking for a new home. The equine team were also on hand to answer all the queries about the rehoming process and the types of equines that generally come through their doors.



Our day started off with a tour around the facilities at Burford. We visited the isolation block where all new equines spend the first 12 weeks of their stay. They then progress to the fields and stable blocks dependant on the level of care that they need once they have been assessed by the Vets. The staff knew each and every equine personally and the story behind them being placed with the Blue Cross. Hoarding seemed to be quite a prominent problem with the aftereffects of the pandemic and a cost of living crisis looming in the next 18 months.

The latter two make the Blue Cross team think that they will have a surge in more equines using their 'home2home' scheme. This is where equines go directly from a private home to new owners. This is generally used in none-welfare cases where the equines don't require care at the centre. They anticipate the cost-of-living crisis seeing many owners have to give up their equines which is where RDA groups may find many horses and ponies that can be useful in their groups.



The rehoming team stressed that many equines don't make it as far as the website as they already have people who have registered an interest in a certain type of horse, so groups mustn't be disheartened by only seeing companion horses available online. If this is something that your group is interested in, then please go on to the Blue Cross website and fill in the appropriate paperwork.

We then watched a routine weighbridge session with Dodson and Horrell weighing many different types of horse. It was interesting trying to guess weights and showed how important it is to know your horse's weight particularly when you are matching horse/rider weight combinations in your group.

After lunch we watched their Head of Training, Grace Shaylor, go through some of their training techniques with two different types of horse in the school. One was a freshly broken traditional cob and the other an 18hh horse that had been out of work. The team like to utilise the skills that Andrew McLean teaches in his demonstrations. Andrew McLean developed and manages the Australian Equine Behaviour Centre, specialising in horse training and behaviour modification. He also holds a PhD in equine cognition and learning and has written numerous books. The team did stress that help and advice would always be available to groups taking on Blue Cross equines who are going through any kind of training process.



The main 'take home' piece of information during the day was to get your group registered with the Blue Cross so they know exactly what kind of equine you require. This allows them to be able to contact you in the first instance as soon as something suitable becomes available. They can also rehome horses from your group if they need an alternative home or have retired but still healthy enough to live out their years as a companion.

There are many benefits to rehoming from the Blue Cross:

- The horse will be individually matched to you
- They will give you an honest history of the horse
- Each horse has had a comprehensive health and training assessment
- It's value for money; the rehoming fee is much cheaper than buying a horse or pony
- They offer support and advice if you have any issues with your horse
- After a successful loan period, ownership of the horse can be transferred to the borrower
- If your circumstances change, they will help you find a new home for your horse, even if you have taken ownership
- There are fewer risks than buying privately
- You are giving a second chance to a horse looking for a new start in life
- You're supporting a charity and enabling them to help more horses in need
- You will become part of a large group of Blue Cross borrowers who support each other

For more info on the Blue Cross, to see rehoming fee's and to fill in an application form please follow the link [Giving a horse a home | Horse Rehoming | Blue Cross](#)