



DEFRA Finally Act After Pressure From SWEP and the Media:

- 19 ponies are removed from the Bodmin Common on welfare grounds

SWEP is very pleased to announce that their calls for a full round-up and

inspection of the ponies on the Bodmin Common where 5 dead ponies were found in 3 weeks have finally been acted on by Defra. A press release issued by Defra on 24th February 2011 states that:

“Nineteen ponies identified as being in **urgent need of care** have been removed from Bodmin Moor since Friday February 18. Close co-operation between a number of groups and agencies - including commoners, Animal Health, Redwings Horse Sanctuary, Cornwall Council, the RSPCA, and local police - ensured that all animals were removed safely and with the minimum of distress”.

This is such a wonderful result for the ponies – it has been weeks since our initial email to the Cornish authorities on 28th January 2011 stating that there was a serious equine welfare problem on this common that required a round-up and inspection. All of our attempts to communicate this were blocked or dismissed by the local authorities...until now. A full scale operation has been able to extend into the furthest reaches of the common where our Welfare Officer was not able to reach on foot.

SWEP would like to take this opportunity to thank all our supporters and members of the press for their help and valuable contribution in putting pressure on the authorities to take action to help the ponies on Bodmin Moor. Our actions have saved the lives of these ponies and we will continue to respond to reports of dead and neglected ponies on other parts of the Moor, and give updates of their plight to the media. We hope that the authorities will continue their investigations to other areas of the moor, including the dead pony that SWEP reported to them on 23rd February (pictured below).

We look forward to liaising with Defra to find a way to ensure that future SWEP reports about equine welfare cases in Cornwall are taken seriously and given due consideration by the authorities. We both have a role to play in the continuing fight against animal neglect

and cruelty, and it is important that we are able to communicate with each other and work effectively.



All of the ponies living on Bodmin Moor are owned. Some farmers have a responsible attitude to their animals. The ones that don't are not bothering to microchip, they are not checking on their ponies, or providing extra feed. It has been all too easy for them to deny ownership and avoid prosecution for neglect.

This case has really highlighted the fact that pony owners on Bodmin Moor have been successfully evading their responsibility to microchip their ponies, which they have been required to do by law since 2009.

SWEP would like to see the implementation of a compulsory collar identification scheme, such as that which is likely to be implemented in South Wales (see the following link:

[http://www.horsemagazine.co.uk/news/Iden](http://www.horsemagazine.co.uk/news/Identification_collars_for_semiferal_ponies_in_Wales_article_304829.html)

[tification_collars_for_semiferal_ponies_in_Wales_article_304829.html](http://www.horsemagazine.co.uk/news/Identification_collars_for_semiferal_ponies_in_Wales_article_304829.html)). Faye Stacey states that *“Collar schemes have already worked well in other areas with semi-feral ponies. Not only do they provide direct identification to owners, but the collars are also fluorescent which benefits ponies living alongside roads, making them more visible to drivers in the dark and bad weather. It would also make ponies that have been dumped or abandoned on the moor readily distinguishable”*.

Thank you again for all your support. We now await an update from Redwings on the 3 mares that featured in our SWEP press releases (which highlighted the plight of the ponies) to let us know how they are progressing:

