

FOLLOW US ON 



LATEST NEWS

- > Irregularities in Animal welfare and what you can do to help!
- > Is Horse Agility the next big thing to hit the UK?

Animal Welfare Outrage—are we really living in the 21st Century?



How can it be that it is illegal in the United Kingdom to brand cattle on welfare grounds, yet it isn't illegal for horses or ponies?

Every year foals weaned (or not), will be branded in the New Forest, Dart moor and Exmore. They will be rounded up, captured (their first experience of being handled by humans), wrestled to the floor, legs tied, or dragged by their tails by several grown men. Then they are hot iron branded all in the name of 'ease of identification' for farmers/ owners alike. Some people then try to pass these ponies off as untouched! Who are we kidding?



Even today, people maintain the ponies "hardly feel a thing" going on to argue that they carry no lasting negative effect. Yet, the reality is very different. Such animals suffer great emotional trauma from such an experience resulting in a natural fear of humans, especially men and even fear wax coats (the chosen attire of branders in the winter) - such is the strength of association.

Cold freezing offers no real alternative and is believed by vets, to cause pain for up to an hour

after impact with the skin. AS if that isn't bad enough, jigsaw equine recently learnt about a practice in some parts of the UK where foals have the top of their ears physically cut off. Or, several wholes called 'notches' cut through and into their ear.

These horses and ponies are so traumatized by this practice that some never allow humans to touch their ears or heads again, so that simple tasks like putting on and off a halter become totally impossible.

Thankfully wise and kind and sensitive charities are trying to help such animals overcome their trauma. Ponies4people based in Devon is one such organization. Run by Celia and Paul they take in up to so Exmore ponies spend months or longer, establishing trust so that they can have a chance of re-homing and a normal life.

To pledge your support for such a worthwhile and heartbreaking cause contact Paul or Celia directly on **01884 860252** or via their web page address which is www.people4ponies.co.uk. Thank you!

Hoops, rings of fire & see-saws ... Is horse agility the next 'big thing'?

I recently spent a weekend with Vanessa Bee and her horses outside Exeter. Vanessa has been instrumental in setting up a new equine discipline that replicates Dog Agility classes: horse agility!

Not for the faint hearted she has had to battle to get insurance cover, physically make the obstacles., train her own horses to navigate a course loose by verbal command only, and find other like minded souls willing to have a go! It seems she has hit upon something potentially huge! Within 24 hours of launching a face book page she had over 300

"I realized we were onto something" she admits.

Now, less than one year later she is running and managing many events up and down the country with four entry levels and degree of difficulty.

To find out more contact Vanessa at www.horseagilitygb.com

