



# THE MOORLAND MOUSIE TRUST

PROTECTING EXMOOR PONIES

The Exmoor Pony Centre  
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Registered Charity No: 1116710

Company Registration No: 05861223

## HANDLING AND TRAINING

It is essential that all staff, volunteers and any members of the public interacting with the ponies follow a strict policy of preventing and ensuring at all times any pony handling does not involve violence or any methods likely to cause fear, injury or suffering. Anyone using such methods will be immediately removed from the premises.

### METHODS

It is the policy of the Moorland Mousie Trust to continuously improve, develop and adapt handling methods, with no subscription to any particular 'brand' of horsemanship but always striving for calm, quiet and positive methods to be utilised. Staff received training in Intelligent Horsemanship derived techniques that have been adapted over time to work specifically for the equines in our care and the moorland backgrounds the majority will come from.

To encourage the pony to WANT to be with us as opposed to HAVING to be with us!

- Young stock/semi-feral

Weanlings, yearling and those under 2 years old often arrive unhandled and frightened. Methods utilised include using advance and retreat, positive body language and patience! No one pony will be the same and no time limit is put onto a pony. Training and handling sessions must be recorded, noting date, length of session, contents of session and identity of handler.

Under no circumstance must anybody attempt to handle one of these ponies without the managers permission. Training will be given to staff and volunteers who will interact with the ponies at varied stages in their training dependent on experience, skill and safety.

- Domesticated Ponies

Treat all ponies with respect, understand body language and work to the skill, ability of the pony. NEVER over face a pony or put either the pony or handler in danger. The use of riding whips is not prohibited however is restricted to staff only and by discussion and approval from the manager. Riding training will follow similar ethics to ensure the mental and physical health of the pony. At all times rewards should be verbal and/or contact based ie; scratching and not food based. Where food is used this must be restricted and reduced to encourage the removal of this reward, food as a bribe is a last resort!

### EQUIPMENT

It is vital that equipment is well maintained, and staff are trained in the correct use of equipment which will include but is not limited to 12ft ropes, feather dusters, saddle/bridle/headcollar, long reins. It is important correct PPE is worn during handling which includes sturdy footwear, PAS015 helmet, and in particular GLOVES for all leading work. SAFETY IS PARAMOUNT DURING TRAINING AND HANDLING.

### ETHICS

The Moorland Mousie Trust is committed to reducing stress put onto our ponies (physical and mental) and will thus evaluate and care for each pony with individual plans based on their behaviour, temperament and handling ability. Ponies will not be kept separate for extended durations (apart from arrival quarantine). Ponies must be given rest, food and water in between handling sessions.