

HOOF PRINT

HOW YOUR SUPPORT MAKES ITS MARK



Issue 08

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Summer 2025

Welcome to your Summer 2025 edition of Hoof Print

I'm excited to share with you more inspiring stories highlighting just what your support is achieving for working horses, donkeys and mules worldwide.

You can read about our work with young donkey owners in Kenya, helping them develop understanding about how to treat their animals with care and compassion.

There's a story about Sandra Newcombe, a Brooke supporter for over 50 years. Lichfield Brooke Supporters Group, which she leads, have raised over £185,000 for working animals over the past 24 years.

Sadly, we recently lost our dear friend and colleague, César Urquizo. César made a huge contribution to our work and culture. An incredibly warm, kind and caring person, he will be sorely missed in our Brooke family.

Thank you so much for all your support,



Chris Wainwright
Chief Executive, Brooke



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Donkey skin trade: update

In June 2025, the second Pan African Donkey Conference takes place. The first, in 2022, led to the Africa-wide ban on the donkey skin trade that we celebrated in 2024. This time, the conference, organised by the African Union and supported by Brooke, will focus on helping countries to implement the ban. A further aim is showing policymakers in Africa how important donkeys are to livelihoods and development.

A fresh start

In Kenya, our teams are springing into action to help donkeys who have been illegally traded then rescued by the police. We're working with our partners to make sure the donkeys are fit, healthy and microchipped before rehoming them.

Sadly, we don't know the identity of the donkeys' original owners but their new owners have often been the victims of donkey theft themselves.



Brooke wins again!

We've earned a second plaudit at the Smiley Charity Film Awards with a people's choice award for our film, *Brooke at 90*. Voiced by actor and Brooke celebrity supporter Annette Badland, the film was made to commemorate our 90th anniversary in 2024.

Brooke at 90 features archive and present-day footage showcasing our journey and the far-reaching legacy of our founder, Dorothy Brooke. The winner was the film with the most votes, so big thanks to all who voted.



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If you would like to read more about how your support has helped around the world, please scan the QR code or visit:
thebrooke.org/news

Working with horses by the sea

Horses play a crucial role in the Kutch district in western India, transporting fish around the coastal villages. Standing in the sea, they are loaded with fish from the boat, caught by the men of the village, then carry the bags to the shore. Before, the women used to carry the fish in baskets on their heads, so the horses have now freed them up for other work.

The communities live at the beach for up to nine months during the fishing season before returning home, the men working as fishermen and the women taking care of the animals.

Improving horse welfare

Before we started working with the community by the sea, it lacked access to water and electricity. This meant horses had to travel 5km every day, attached to a cart, to fetch water. We were able to connect the community to government schemes which provided electricity and water and reduced the distances horses and people travel.

While the community are careful not to overload their horses, we did encounter poor harnessing.

One of our Brooke India vets, Dr Anita, suggested replacing the old canvas material with softer, more durable synthetic fabric. This is lighter, withstands salt water better and helps prevent wounds.



Ashwasakhi (female) {ash-wa-saki}
Ashwamitra (male) {ash-wa-mi-tra}



'Horse friend' – a designated individual in a community who provides support for equine owners and is a point of contact for veterinary and other equine needs.



Training to be an Ashwasakhi

We trained village member Safura to be an Ashwasakhi, covering horse care, dietary needs and how to administer medication.

Safura explains why she wanted to learn to care for the horses: "We had no knowledge. Everyone was worried that he was suffering. When the horse fell sick, everyone felt sick."

Following her training, Safura gained confidence in treating horses. She now holds one-on-one sessions with members of her community, teaching them how to look after their animals and treat illness.

“

Brooke India has provided many benefits. Our horses are healthy. We have received proper knowledge and now, when a horse is sick, we know how to administer medicine so they can recover. Now, horses don't fall ill frequently."

Safura



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If you would like to support more community projects like this, please scan the QR code or visit our website:
thebrooke.org/donate

Estrella's road to recovery

In late 2023, we held a veterinary care day with the Nicaraguan Institute of Agricultural Protection and Animal Health at one of their mobile clinics in Santa Teresa, Masaya, Nicaragua. Here, we met Estrella, a five-year-old mare and her owner Juan.

Estrella was in a critical condition – she had multiple injuries including visible wounds on her nose, back, spine and shoulder blade. She was very skinny and her ribs were showing.



We recognised the need for intervention and, with Juan, committed to improving Estrella's health, working closely together.



A way forward

We implemented a treatment plan that included wound care, nutritional support and rehabilitation exercises.

We then set about providing support and advice that Juan could use to keep Estrella in the long term. He faced personal issues that were rooted in poverty, and the team were able to help him address these.

Harnessing tips

The team in Nicaragua also sought advice from Jackie Hickman, Brooke Global Harness Adviser, who you may remember

reading about in the summer 2024 edition of *Hoof Print*. Jackie shared several pictures, showing how to improve Estrella's harness system.

When the team caught up with Juan in 2024, they worked with him to replace Estrella's cart with a smaller one. They also made sure her harness was well fitted, reducing the risk of further injury, assuring her comfort and making the best use of the harness and cart.

Juan also built Estrella a tarpaulin shelter to shield her from the sun and rain, ensuring she is safe and comfortable.

Estrella's future

The new diet improved Estrella's energy levels and body condition. Regular check-ups allowed us to monitor her healing process and, with improved care, Estrella became more active. Before long, she was able to do light work again.

Due to this work together, Juan now understands Estrella's needs. With Juan's continuing commitment to Estrella's welfare, his horse is thriving.

Working with Juan in this way helped us empower him to care for Estrella – not just as a source of income but as a living being who deserves a good life.

A key moment came when we encouraged Juan to visualise Estrella's recovery. He drew a picture of Estrella as she was then and how he thought she'd look in three months' time, and wrote down steps of action.



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If you would like to support more horses like Estrella, please scan the QR code or visit our website:
thebrooke.org/donate

A half century of support

Sandra Newcombe, Group Leader of the Lichfield Brooke Supporters Group, has been a supporter for over 50 years, first reading about our work in *Pony* magazine as a child. The group, set up 24 years ago, has raised **over £185,000** for Brooke.

The group has hosted a variety of events from tack sales, coffee mornings and school talks to quiz nights, bucket collections and murder mystery evenings. Thank you to Sandra and the group.



I feel that we are one big family, all passionate about improving equine welfare."

Sandra Newcombe
(Pictured above, far left.)



Brooke's work to improve [working animals'] welfare means the world to me."

Half-marathon heroics

When the Hastings Half Marathon was postponed earlier this year, Jenny Lee laced up her trainers and set off on her own 13.1 mile journey through Bedgebury Forest. In the process, she raised **over £600** for Brooke.

A Masterson Method[®] equine bodyworker and massage therapist, Jenny sees first-hand the pain horses can endure from ill-fitting tack, neglected hooves and exhausted muscles.

Feel inspired? See all available challenge events
thebrooke.org/get-involved/fundraise/challenge-events



Save the date:

8 December 2025

The Brooke Carol Service at Guards' Chapel, London SW1E 6HQ



If you would like to get involved with fundraising at Brooke, email the team: community@thebrooke.org or visit thebrooke.org/find-an-event



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Will you support working animals for generations to come?



50%

Over **50%** of Brooke's income, which funds our work around the world, comes from gifts in Wills.

That's the equivalent of **1 in every 2 donkeys** having a much more positive experience working with their owners thanks to training in donkey welfare.



Catherine, a Brooke supporter, wants to continue to change working animals' lives long after she has gone.



“The main reason I want to reflect Brooke in my Will is because it means generation after generation will benefit from the last, as what they know is passed on to others.”

Catherine



Over 5,000 supporters like Catherine have told us they've left a gift in their Will to Brooke. **Will you join them?**

Find out more from our expert legacy team

If you'd like to transform the lives of working horses, donkeys and mules forever with a gift in your Will, please get in touch. Call us on **020 7470 9343**, email us at legacies@thebrooke.org or visit thebrooke.org/legacies

Free Will Service

With Brooke's Free Will Service, you can write your Will online, over the phone or in person with a local solicitor at no cost to you. To get started, please contact our Legacy team today or visit our website: thebrooke.org/fws or scan the QR code.



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NATIONAL
FREE WILLS
NETWORK

Farewill

Working with young people and donkeys

In many urban areas of Kenya, communities involved in commercial donkey work, particularly young people, face a number of social challenges. These include low self-esteem, stigma around their work, poor interpersonal relationships and stress. This not only affects how they feel about themselves but how they treat their donkeys.

With our training partner, Lifeskills Promoters, we worked with two groups of young people in Kenya to improve both their lives and that of their donkeys.

Problems with perception

Before we started working with the groups in Kiserian and Githungiri, the young people told us about the problems they faced.



David is learning the importance of donkey welfare.

For example, some people in their communities despised them for their jobs with the donkeys, thinking the work was lesser than other roles.

Charles, a young donkey owner from Kiserian explains, "We used to believe people working with donkeys were unwanted, and that working with donkeys was not a respectable job."

This led to problems in how many of the young people perceived themselves and how they responded to their animals.

James, also from Kiserian, admits, "Before meeting Brooke East Africa and Lifeskills Promoters, I'd mistreat my donkeys when I couldn't handle my emotions."

Some of the young people also had issues around drug and alcohol abuse, and others struggled with personal hygiene.

A new way of thinking

Thanks to support like yours, we were able to step in with our partner and train 40 young people on essential life skills and donkey welfare.



“ After I was taught about stress management, how to communicate with people, financial literacy and donkey welfare, I'm leading a better life, treating my donkeys better, and saving up for a motorbike to grow my business.”

James (left)

Through this training, the donkeys' welfare has vastly improved, alongside young people's self-esteem, interpersonal relationships and skills around saving money.

Linet (right), a young donkey owner from Githungiri, says:

“ Since Brooke East Africa and Lifeskills Promoters stepped in, I'm now stress free. I know how to handle my life. Just as we learned to care for our donkeys, the way I eat is the same way a donkey should eat.”



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If you would like to support more urban communities like Kisierian and Githungiri, please scan the QR code or visit: **thebrooke.org/donate**

In memory of César Urquizo



We were all deeply sorry to learn of the passing of César Urquizo, who worked as a Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning Advisor at Brooke for almost nine years. In this time, he delivered training in this area to teams across all our locations.

César played a vital role in assessing the impact of our projects aimed at improving the lives of working horses, donkeys, mules and the communities that rely on them. He ensured our programmes remained relevant, efficient and effective, grounded in strong evidence and committed to continuous accountability and improvement.

He also carried out independent evaluations of our projects in Nicaragua, Ethiopia, Nepal, and Pakistan, which included our work in the brick kilns.

César's dedication to working animals was evident in all he did. We are so grateful for César's crucial contribution, expertise and commitment and will miss him greatly.

A colleague remembers César

“ I had the privilege of working with César since 2016, and over the years came to admire him deeply – not just for his technical brilliance and work ethic, but for his humility, kindness, and quiet strength.

In December 2019, I had the special honour of hosting him during his visit to Pakistan. His warmth, openness, and genuine curiosity made a deep impression on everyone he met here.

César played a vital role in Brooke Pakistan's growth and systems. He

was always there, behind the scenes, offering advice, encouragement, and support that made all the difference.

Though he is no longer with us, his legacy continues. His values – humility, excellence, service – are woven into the fabric of our work. We remember him not just as a colleague, but as a dear friend whose presence enriched our lives.

Rest in peace, César. You are deeply missed and fondly remembered."

Love Ahmad



OUR REACH

**During
2023 to
2024, we
reached
more
animals
than ever**

Over
1.5 million
horses, donkeys and
mules reached by our
direct services.

Almost
30 million
working animals helped
indirectly through policy
change.



Scholarship news

We are delighted to announce our recipients for the Sir Peter O'Sullivan Equine Education Scholarship. They are Irfan Maqsood from Brooke Pakistan, and Maria-Luisa Sandoval Castro from Brooke Latin America and the Caribbean. Congratulations to both!

The scholarship provides colleagues in our Animal Health, Welfare and Farriery teams with an incredible learning opportunity. Our scholars then go on to share this knowledge and expertise locally and regionally.

New Brooke ambassador

TV vet Dr Scott Miller, who regularly appears on ITV's *This Morning*, has been announced as an official ambassador for Brooke, and we couldn't be more delighted.

Dr Scott, who recently marked World Donkey Day by visiting our work in Kenya, says, "I have worked with Brooke since 2005, and am honoured to become an ambassador. Brooke helps more donkeys than any other charity and delivers sustainable, life-saving care for donkeys and the people who rely on them every day."



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Nutrition is key

The right nutrition is so important for working horses, donkeys and mules, helping them keep strong, nourished and energised. It also enables communities to thrive thanks to the animals' improved health and capabilities. Support like yours means we can be there for working animals with nutritional advice for their owners that benefits the whole community.

Balanced feed

A balanced feed unit is where maize, rice bran, Indian bengal gram and minerals are mixed together, then bagged up and sold by equine welfare groups. Working animals get the food they need and their owners add to their livelihoods.

You may remember reading about Shamal (pictured below) and the women of her Ambabai Self-help Group in the winter issue.



Azolla pits



Azolla is a green fodder rich in vitamins and minerals that's beneficial to donkeys.

Because owners' income can be unpredictable, they struggle to buy Azolla consistently for their animals. We help owners build their own Azolla pits to provide a sustainable food source.

We also run sessions on keeping animals hydrated. Azolla helps with this too being 80-90% water.

Dakshaben's story

Before Dakshaben realised the importance of a proper, balanced diet, her donkeys, who work in the brick kiln, often looked gaunt and tired easily. Within months of our setting up a balanced feed unit in Sundalpur, India, Dakshaben saw a huge difference in her donkeys' health, with shinier coats and increased energy.



Balanced feed is now a permanent part of their diet, which they eagerly eat after a day's work while Dakshaben brushes their coats. She feels confident she's giving her donkeys the best care possible.



Want to learn more about animal behaviour and welfare?

Enrol on this free, seven-week online course offered by the University of Edinburgh. Designed for complete beginners, it will take up two to three hours a week.

Learning is conveniently hosted on Coursera, the online learning platform, and includes modules on practical animal welfare for companion, farm and captive wild animals.

To find out more the course, scan the QR code or visit:

coursera.org/learn/animal-welfare



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Recycling envelope included with this edition

In recent editions of Hoof Print, we've sent you envelopes to include anything that could be recycled to raise money for working animals.

We've enclosed an envelope – please fill it up with your unwanted jewellery, gold, silver, costume jewellery, watches, and bank notes (out of date, UK and foreign too). It's worth including broken or damaged items too to help raise more money for our work.

Larger items?

Find out how to recycle them at:
thebrooke.org/get-involved/recycle-cars-cartridges-stamps



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Your response has been incredible.

In the 18 months since we started sending envelopes, you've raised

£17,437

for Brooke with your donated items.

THANK YOU!

**Thank you
so much for
the support
you show my
friends and me,
wherever we
are in the world.**



BROOKE ACTION FOR WORKING HORSES AND DONKEYS



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FOUNDED BY DOROTHY BROOKE IN 1934. PLEASE REMEMBER BROOKE IN YOUR WILL.