**NEGLECTED EQUINE GUIDE**

If you believe a horse to be either neglected or abused we have drawn up some guidelines to help you decide what steps you can take to help the animal.

If the animal is obviously suffering from **a recent serious injury** you should contact a local vet and ask them to intervene – if they are unable to do so, **they** should contact the local DDETSPP -SPA (Departmental Veterinary Services  (Services Vétèrinaires Departmental) and request immediate intervention.

Should you see an equine you believe to be neglected or in need, please consider the following points:-

* **Are the hooves well maintained?**

If yes then the owner is probably aware of their responsibilities, but if there are other issues, we can certainly raise them with the owner.

* **Is there sufficient grass and/or hay?**
* **Are there signs of illness or recent injuries?**
* **Is there any kind of shelter?**

(N.B. this can be ‘natural’ shelter such as trees or woods)  Is the animal kept in inappropriate conditions?

* **What is the general condition of the equine?**

Please note that in our experience, if a horse is thin but there is plenty of food, it could just mean they are very old.

Once you’ve established that the equine **is** in need of help, please send an email to equinehelpline@gmail.com. Please state in your message what the problem is and provide the following information:

* The name and postcode of the village including the location of the animal. If possible provide the email address of the Mairie in that commune or contact details of the nearest Mairie.
* Attach photographic evidence - take full body shots and zoom in for close ups.  (N.B. As a private individual, you are not entitled to enter on to private property uninvited, or to remove an animal in distress)

A Phoenix volunteer will contact you and then approach the local Maire officially regarding the equine. The Maire is responsible under the Code Rural for the welfare of all animals in his commune. When the Maire is informed of the neglect or abuse the DDETSPP - SPA for the department will also be copied into the email - if it is felt necessary.

For your further information, the following extracts indicate the requirements of the Law regarding animal husbandry in France:

**The law** defines an animal as a sentient being and requires the owner to keep it in conditions consistent with the “biological requirements of its species” and ensuring that the living conditions are compatible with the animals’ welfare needs in several respects:

**Food and Water:**
The owner must make available:

* appropriate food in sufficient quantity to maintain the animal’s well-being
* a supply of fresh water, refreshed regularly, and protected from freezing, in a properly maintained, clean container.

**Shelter:**
Adequate space with shelter against the weather should be provided.

**Veterinary Care:**
In case of illness or injury to an animal, the owner is obliged to ensure the animal is given the appropriate veterinary treatment.

**What are the sanctions for abuse of an animal?**
The abuse of animals, whether through negligence, ignorance or premeditated intent, is forbidden by Law. Under the Articles of the Criminal Code there are varying degrees of severity for penalties, from a fine of 450€ for unintentional injury or negligence, to 30,000€, with a temporary or permanent disqualification from owning pets and a prison sentence of up to 2 years for in cases of deliberate and premeditated cruelty.

**Please Note:** Animal Welfare Associations only have the same rights as a private individual – they may not enter property or remove an animal without the consent of the owner. However, they have great expertise in persuading the local Mairie to take action, in negotiating with owners of animals which are being kept in poor conditions in order to improve those conditions or to remove an animal to a place of safety.