

Public Petition – Shy Lowen Horse and Pony Sanctuary

In accordance with the Council's Petition Scheme, a petition containing in excess of 2000 signatures has been submitted in relation to Shy Lowen Horse and Pony Sanctuary.

Reasons for the Petition and action petitioned for are:

“In 1999 we were granted a lease by the land owner Sefton MBC on an 8.5 acre piece of wasteland which had been subject to illegal tipping of demolition waste. The granting of the lease was subject to the clearance of the demolition waste and reinstatement of the land. 800 tons of rubble was removed. As that lease ended we were granted a 10 year lease following the building of new purpose built stabling and an Education Centre to support the alternative curriculum education programme, the mental health therapeutic interventions and the behaviour coaching which we do alongside the rescued horses and ponies. This intervention is known as Equine Assisted Therapy and we assist all ages of people, military veterans, people in recovery from addiction and homeless people. The cost of all of this was borne by our founding trustees who are not and were never wealthy people. The very foundation and development of this project has been built upon their personal sacrifice. Over 270 horses and ponies have come through our gates along with many hundreds of people. Many young people have gained successful careers in various equine roles following their engagement with Shy Lowen.

As the lease passed the half way point it became difficult to secure funding as there was no guarantee of longevity so on 2nd January 2017 an email was sent to the Manor Ward councillors to request support in gaining a new long lease. Following strong negotiation Sefton MBC eventually agreed in Summer 2019 that a 99 year lease could be granted at marginally below the commercial rate. We agreed although we are aware that the council could legally gift the site in the light of the investment made both financially and in public benefit as has been the case with other organisations. We have still not received a formal agreement and we now occupy a site for which we have no lease at all and so are rendered unable to obtain realistic funding to fund and further develop our offering.

Many lives are affected both equine and human by the nurturing nature of our organisation. Our methodology of Equine Assisted Therapy built on emotion and communication through 'horse whispering' is award winning and has been the subject of Mainstream Television documentaries. We now have an accredited course to teach people to become Equine Assisted Therapy Facilitators.

We want Sefton MBC to recognise the work we do and treat us with the respect we have earned over 21 years and grant us the permanence of occupancy we need to make Shy Lowen the place it really can be, bringing all the greatness of the outdoors to the Sefton community and beyond.”

In accordance with the Procedure Rules for Remote Meetings of Council, the Lead Petitioner has been advised of her right to submit a written statement, not lasting more than 5 minutes, that will be read out by the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer at the Meeting. The petition will then be discussed by Councillors for a maximum of 15 minutes and the Council will decide how to respond to the petition at the meeting.

Link to the petition:

https://www.change.org/p/sefton-metropolitan-borough-council-give-shy-lowen-horse-and-pony-sanctuary-the-security-they-deserve?recruiter=false&utm_source=share_petition&utm_medium=facebook&utm_campaign=psf_co_mbo_share_initial&utm_term=share_petition&recruited_by_id=a9cd9e60-1e1a-11eb-a05a-5f33f35c0fb4&utm_content=fht-25646841-en-gb%3A4