

Essex Police Mounted Unit have raised £255 for Redwings Horse Sanctuary by opening their doors to the public during a training day.

On Sunday 24th July over 500 people attended the event, which included all eight horses, Tilbury, Maldon, Harwich, Stebbing, Shoeburyness, Chigwell, Coggeshall and Blackheath being put through their paces at the Unit's Stables in Roxwell Road, Writtle.

The event was one of 14 training days the horses and riders must carry out every year to enable them to patrol. Eight police constables, one sergeant and the commander of the mounted and dog sections, Inspector Louise Beattie, took part. The day included an inspection of all the officers and horses by the Unit Commander before all of the officers were put through their paces, taking their horses through obstacles as part of a "best trained" challenge. The unit then carried out "troop drill" and public order training in the arena.

A collection on the day was held in aid of Redwings Horse Sanctuary, whose Ada Cole centre is situated just down the road, on the outskirts of Harlow. Over £255 was raised on the day for the charity.

Inspector Louise Beattie said: "We were thrilled with the turnout for the day. We selected Redwings to be our chosen charity as they continue to assist Essex Police taking in unwanted horses and ponies and we enjoy working with them. The day was an opportunity for members of the public to see the hard work that goes on behind the scenes in the mounted section. It was also a chance for them to talk to the officers and ask any questions about the horses and training."

Communications Manager for Redwings, Nicola Markwell, said: "We were delighted to be chosen as the nominated charity for the day, and we'd like to thank everyone who took part, horses and humans both! It was wonderful to see such beautifully trained and well behaved horses; they are just so brave, and completely trusting of their riders. We must of course mention all the visitors to the day too, who were kind enough to donate to help fund our work with rescued horses, thank you!"

To learn more about the work of Redwings Horse Sanctuary, please visit www.redwings.co.uk or call 01508 481000.