

KESTEVEN RIDEABILITY

Annual Report

2021



2022

Reg. Charity No. 1074079



Group Information

Sessions

Between September 1st 2021 and August 31st 2022 Kesteven RDA provided 743 riding/driving sessions to 39 riding participants (22 children and 17 adults) with the help of 22 volunteers. This is a significant increase over 2020-21. We also delivered 13 non-riding sessions to 40 participants largely through the Silver Hour (Tea with a pony) and Listening Horse programmes.

Riders

With the ongoing increase in our client numbers we now run sessions all day on Tuesdays and Thursdays and Saturday mornings.

Sully, our simulator, is working well and enables us to give therapy sessions to those not able to ride as well as providing an alternative when bad weather means outdoor sessions cannot take place.

The "Silver Hour" and "The Listening Horse" sessions allow older and less advantaged people with disabilities to enjoy the company of our horses and beautiful surroundings free of charge. The sessions involve meeting and grooming, simple groundwork such as leading and lunging the horses plus a chance for a chat over tea and cake.

Our Carriage Driving sessions are proving popular for those clients who can no longer ride or who want an alternative equine challenge. The sessions run on a Tuesday and we hope to increase their number when we are able to source another pony.

Whilst by August 2022 most Covid19 protocols had been lifted we have been mindful of our vulnerable clients and over the year have taken our lead from them as to what protective measures they wish to continue making, such as mask wearing.

Volunteers

The number of volunteers actively involved in the group at present is 22 and we welcomed 2 new volunteers this year. Many of our volunteers are young people and we like to encourage this as it helps us to ensure succession planning and helps secure a healthy future for the charity.

Our Trustees

Kesteven RiDeAbility is supported by a board of Trustees who lead the charity and decide how it will be run. We must comply with all relevant charity laws as well as our own governing document. All of our Trustees are voluntary with some having specific responsibilities. Each person uses their individual skills and experience to support KR and help it to achieve its aims.

Present Trustees are:

Nicola Webber [Chair]

Sharon Watson [Secretary]

Gay Hatton [Treasurer]

Karen Thompson [Group Organiser]

Claire Honeywood

Elizabeth Jones [Safeguarding]

Clare Brown

Emily Johnson [Rider representative]

Susan Jane Ashton [Rider representative]

Gill Smith [Horse and pony welfare]

Our Activities

Normal sessions resumed September 2021 and we were once again able to welcome back some of our elderly clients to our Silver Hour 'Tea with a Pony' and to our "Listening Horse" programme. Whilst the weather was fine we were also able to resume riding sessions for those clients happy to come over the early winter months but closed before Christmas, reopening in April 2022.

April 2022 onwards was extremely busy as we had many new riding clients to accommodate. For a short period over the summer we had the use of a loan pony from Bransby Horses. Bransby Mushu (Mu) enabled us to take on more clients for this short period of good weather. We also saw an increase in the number of clients wanting to try out Carriage Driving but at the present we are limited in how often we can offer this discipline as we only have a loan pony at present. We are hoping to raise the funds in 2023 to purchase our own Driving/Riding pony which will enable us to expand this activity to more clients.

In November it was announced that our Senior Coach and Proprietor, Karen Thompson, had been selected to be a Coach Mentor at the RDA Princess Royal Academy. To mark the achievement at a special day at RDA Central in Warwickshire she was presented with a special coat by the Princess Royal. We are so proud of her.



To create variety in our riding and driving activities we set up some trails through our meadows. This enabled our clients to experience riding outside of our arena in a safe space. Mown pathways created a number of "loops" through which clients could ride or carriage drive. The variety also gives our ponies a different perspective on their RDA activities and they enjoy getting out of the arena as much as our clients.

Rider Achievements



Each year we present awards to our adult and junior riders. This year the winner of the Fronerthig Delyn Aur Trophy for the Most Improved Junior Rider was Victoria Neasham one of our youngest riders.

Our most improved adult rider was Shanny Farrow who was presented with the Kesteven RiDeAbility Most Improved Adult Rider shield.

Additionally many of our riders passed their riding proficiency tests and gained their Endeavour Awards.



Here are some of our riders with their riding certificate and endeavour awards

Regional Competitions 2022

RDA Regional Qualifiers 2022

The RDA North Midlands Regional Dressage Qualifiers for the RDA National Championships were back to normal this year and held at Scropton Riding and Driving Centre. This year we only entered riders for the Countryside Challenge all of whom gained top places with two qualifying for the National Championships at Hartpury in July. We did not enter the Carriage Driving this year deciding instead to enter the virtual competition scheduled for October.

All three of our current drivers will take part in this with a view to working towards qualifying for the RDA National Championships next year.



RDA National Championships: Hartpury, Summer 2021

In the Countryside Challenge our riders were very successful bringing home a 2nd place and two 3rd places.



Rio looking thoughtful ahead of his competition



Our successful riders with their rosettes



RDA Bronze Level proficiency test

In May Emily achieved her Bronze level proficiency test riding our loan pony, the wonderful Bransby Mushu. (Mu) Emily is one of the first riders in the UK to achieve Bronze level using the new tests. RDA Riding Proficiency Tests have been designed to provide a progressive learning platform for riders. The current Bronze, Silver and Gold tests have been created with the National Championships and Regional Qualifier level riders in mind so that the assessor can get to know the rider and pony and how they are involved with the preparations leading up to the competitions. The Bronze award has an emphasis upon the accuracy of transitions and the effect of the rider's aides on the horse.

Success in this means Emily can now go on and try to achieve her Silver and Gold awards. Good Luck Emily!

British Dressage Intro Test

In August three of our riders took part in their first British Dressage Intro Test. The ponies were taken up to our local riding school where the test was taking place. All three riders placed, winning all top three places! Congratulations to Thomas, Timmy and Ali.

“Have a go shows”

Later in the year some of our younger riders took part in a number of “Have a Go” shows. These involved both jumping and dressage. They thoroughly enjoyed taking part and each time we came home with lots of rosettes. What a result! Getting the ponies used to moving away from the yard and experiencing different places is good practice for when they attend the National Championships in Hartpury which can be daunting for a pony first time around.



Rio preparing to jump the poles



Tim and his 1st place rosette

Silver Hour and Equine Therapy

In April 2021 we introduced our new programme called ‘The Listening Horse’ which offers a similar approach to our “Silver Hour” (Tea with a Pony) in that small groups or individuals can come along and spend time with one or more of our ponies to help develop mental well-being and confidence. In May the “Silver Hour” resumed and we welcomed back many of our regular clients. Both programmes offer isolated or marginalised clients the chance to benefit from interaction with horses. This helps to reduce stress and anxiety but it also offers an ideal opportunity for older people to rekindle their love of equines or to experience a connection with a horse for the first time.



As a result of these programmes and under the umbrella of RDA UK we are now registered with the Human and Equine Interaction Register (HEIR) and can display their kitemark on our promotional literature and social media postings.

Meeting Bob at Silver Hour



Meeting Rio at Silver Hour

At present we continue to provide regular sessions for two care homes in our locality as well as a number of mental health charities and individuals. These take place on a Thursday when the participants are introduced to our ponies and given time to interact with them before tea and cakes are served. The groups are all very appreciative of the chance to visit and throughout the summer, weather permitting, many of them build bonds with one or more of our ponies.

Carriage Driving

By April 2022 we were able to begin running our Carriage Driving sessions in full. During Covid19 restrictions sessions were limited to only ten minutes so it was really nice to be able to run full sessions of 30 minutes. Sessions run on Tuesdays



This new activity has proved popular so we are hoping to purchase our own Driving pony and are currently exploring funding options.

Fundraising Events

Because of the in-out nature of Covid19 and the restrictions we have not yet resumed our fundraising events preferring to wait until we are sure that such events can be run Covid19 safely. We plan to look at resuming sometime in 2023.

Social Media

Currently we have 813 Likes on our Facebook page and 855 Following, both of which represent a rise from last year. The page is linked to our Twitter account. Despite the constraints of Covid19 we continued to engage with our clients and supporters and never lost touch with them meaning we came out of the situation in a healthy situation which has enabled us to pick up and move on quickly and positively. All of this has helped us to retain and attract new clients. Our media profile also shows potential funders and sponsors what we do and how we might fit their criteria.

Pony Angel party

In September we held our annual Pony Angel Party which is intended to thank all those who sponsor our RDA ponies: Rio, Fudge and Bob. With fundraising curtailed over the Covid19 period they provided a much needed injection of funds to enable us to keep them all fit and able.

Each party is also an opportunity to showcase our activities. This year we introduced our Angels to how our younger riders take part in something called "The Countryside Challenge". This is an obstacle course for

horse and rider which needs a mix of good riding skills as well as balance and coordination. After the display in the arena tea and cake was provided before all three ponies were introduced to their sponsors.

Pony Angels

The group own three ponies: Bob, Fudge and Rio and hire other ponies from The Paddocks Livery Centre to help run the sessions. At present we have 19 supporters, 4 of whom are businesses, contributing toward our ponies' board and lodgings through the Pony Angel Scheme. This guarantees a set monthly donation or a discount on services provided.



Our RDA Ponies: Bob, Fudge and Rio

Our Pony Angels

Marie Ashton	Sue Ashton	Kathy Blake	Chandlers
Mark Frazer	Gay Hatton	J & V Heslop	Hills Polyprint
Andy & Claire Honeywood	Iris Halliday	Lincs Rug Wash	Sue Hesketh
Suzanne Sanders	Sarah Shelbourne	Stephanie Smith-Maxwell	Rachel Stothert
Rachel & Lee Williams	Michael Jones	Paul & Gill Johnson	

Donations have also been received from:-

Grantham Kesteven	Rotary Club	Rotary Club of Grantham	Grantham Lions	
Maggie Smith	Hon. Mrs C Sacks	Kerry Fletcher	Skylark Endowment Fund	
Karen Moore	Tryac	Mike Clark	Kathy Blake	Grace Moore
K. Perry	Gill Smith	Janette Beckett	E. Richards	
	Liz Briggs			
	Melton Mowbray B/Society Charitable Foundation			