



A Note from our Chairman

Since this time last year, we have weathered the wettest winter and the hottest, driest summer for many years! Whilst we have coped, it has been a struggle at times!

The pony care team have continued, no matter what was thrown at them, to give the best possible care to our lovely ponies. Due to the wet weather we had to have the ponies in the stables much more last winter and due to the hot, dry weather this summer the ponies have been munching through what should have been the hay for winter! So, the good news is the equines all look great! They didn't get too fat due to too much grass or suffer with Laminitis; the bad news is it cost a small fortune. The end isn't in sight yet, the hay is now at a premium price for next winter.

Our fundraising is none stop throughout the year. The food and livery bill is mostly met by the money you pay for the rides and drives, which is why we ask that you pay in advance for the rides you are booked on. This ensures the money is there for the pony care and expenses. Other funds raised and donated have not only paid for the simulator but recently, new saddles for Cracker and Danny and refitting the others. Don't get me started on all the other stuff...shoeing. vets, teeth check...it goes on and on! Please never think that what you do or could do to raise funds is not important, every single penny is needed!

We are about to start on a new way of training our Riding and Driving coaches. If there is anyone who has the time to give and able to commit themselves to regular sessions and would like to enlist to become a trainee coach, please do speak to Binnie. We are often struggling to have a coach in the arena every week, so, the more the merrier!

The Simulator will be in full action very soon. Rides and lessons on the simulator will become part and parcel of RDA at our group. The benefits of being able to practise moves on the sim. Before trying it one the real pony will be very beneficial to both the ponies and the riders (and the volunteers!)

In the interest of safety and a professional approach we would like all volunteers in the arena to please wear a hard hat, it could save your life and it will be warmer! There are many helmets in the tack room, many brand new, you are welcome to use these. Should you wish to buy your own, please make sure that its is the current kite mark spec for RDA. (This can be found inside any of our hats) With immediate effect we are asking that anyone under 18 will have to wear a hard hat at all rda sessions whilst in the arena. Other volunteers, we hope that you will wear a hard hat by half-term. *See further on in Newsletter for hat info.*

One last reminder to not feed the ponies any titbits....not even the odd polo mint, they very soon start to nip and bite because they are looking for one! (It's the pony care squad that have to suffer this mostly)

Thankyou for all your support!
Janet

Coaches Voice Riding

Well what a summer it has been lots of riding, lots of fun and lots of sunshine, maybe a little too much sun for our ponies during summer camp, but what a fun time everyone had. During the week our participants took part in a variety of activities including one to one riding sessions, a countryside challenge, driving with Danny and Cracker, a new experience for many, mucking out, grooming the ponies, camp fire building, toasting marshmallows and pigeon racing to name a few. Great fun was had by all.

Many personal goals have been achieved, grade tests passed and horse care skills learnt. We now have many participants riding independently in walk and trot which is a great achievement. Mastering rising trot seems to have been a theme over the last few months and so many participants have now achieved this, some of them with no reins!!



All participants have gained so much confidence in their own abilities; this can only be achieved with the help of our volunteers, so many thanks to you all for your continued support.

Binnie

Carriage Driving

The hot summer proved perfect for carriage driving with the wooded tracks providing welcome shade and the chance of a refreshing breeze. In the arena, drivers practised steering through a grid of cones and weaving round bending poles. Several drivers including Keith Harmsworth, Rebecca Doughty, Stephanie Perkins and Carol Hewson have been practising a dressage test. The test can be filmed for assessment at RDA headquarters and leads to certification. We wish our drivers good luck with the test.



A welcome boost to funds followed a joint activity day with Back 2 Bear in August. Fifteen members of O'Hana, a group of young people with disabilities from Grimsby, enjoyed meeting the ponies, grooming them and learning about stable management. A highlight for many was a drive around the arena with Cracker or Danny and finding that saying "walk", "trot" or "whoa" meant they did exactly that! "Magic", "cool" and "I love this" were just some of the comments from the enthusiastic drivers. After their RDA activities together with orienteering, survival skills, team building and a barbecue in the woods with Back 2 Bear, the group returned home buzzing, And they weren't the only ones buzzing: the RDA volunteers were delighted with the achievements of the group, especially as some had initially been very reluctant to go anywhere near a horse. We hope to welcome the group back again at a future date.

Jane

Coordinator's Notes



Congratulations to all our riders who have worked hard towards their Grades and have now received Certificates and Badges. Well done everyone.

Great News, we now have the new Simulator ready and waiting for action.

After we have assessed new riders my aim is to have increased number riders on each ride. Hopefully this will work giving everyone a chance to ride a Pony and the Simulator.

Barbara

On The Yard

The ponies have worked hard this summer, as always doing their very best in driving, riding and all the extra activities we embarked on. We are pleased that all the ponies have been in great health and enjoyed the warmth on their backs, especially as we are now heading into autumn and mud season!

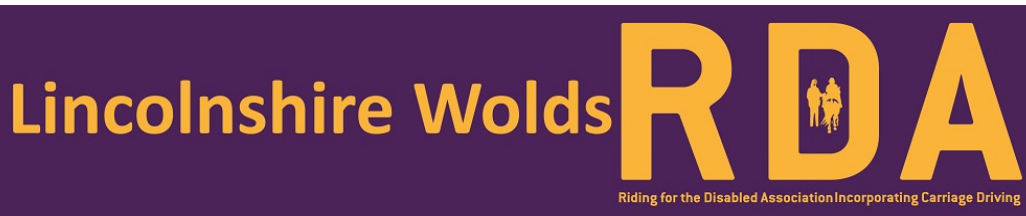
Over the last few months we have been very lucky to have received donations to update some of our saddles. This means that now all 4 ponies have extremely suitable, well fitting lighter weight saddles. To accompany the new saddles volunteer Tony helped revamp the tack and rug rooms to accommodate our new purchases and he also helped us make some low cost storage solutions for our equipment. Thanks Tony!

We have also reviewed and updated our yard policies and these are clearly displayed on the notice board on the yard. If you are unfamiliar with the new practices, then please have a read before you commence work on the yard during sessions. Alongside our updated policies please can I ask that any items taken from the lockable metal cabinet in the tack room are returned directly after use and the cabinet remains locked during all sessions? This is in the interest of everyone's safety as some of the chemicals we use on the yard can be harmful if used incorrectly.

As a group we are putting plans in place for winter and this year we have made an effort to plan for all eventualities after last years snow! We will soon be welcoming a new hay store/shelter and new feeders for the ponies when turned out. We are also hoping to address the challenges of our loyal and very hardworking poo picking team, who over winter struggle through sticky mud with their barrows.

As always we would love more help on the yard over winter and everyday there is something to do. If you could spare time on any day of the week and would like to help with caring for the ponies, please let me know. Winter is hard work for our small dedicated team and a few extra sets of hands will make all the difference!

Helen



Volunteer Knowledge Base - RDA Learning Portal

To run alongside Green Card training The RDA hosts a number of online courses to support volunteers and increase their understanding on a number of topics that relate to our day to day activities at LW RDA. These courses have been launched alongside the new coaching pathway and as such our coaches have worked through these courses recently.

The courses take anything from 20min to an hour to complete and you can save your progress, making them easy to fit in when you have time. Currently there are over 10 topics but the most fitting ones for volunteers are - Safeguarding, Equine Knowledge, Disability Awareness and Autism Awareness.

If you can, please go to www.rda-learning.org.uk and get started. Each course has a certificate when completed and these would be excellent to keep in your training file.

Any questions or technical help needed, please contact me and I will support you through the process!

Helen

Hats in the Arena - What you need to know

From now on

- Coaches are all required to wear an approved hat in the arena.
- ALL volunteers under 18 MUST wear a hat in the arena and also when working directly with the horses on the yard.
- ALL participants MUST wear a hat at all times when on the yard and in the arena unless instructed by a coach to do otherwise.

From Tuesday 30th October

- Volunteers over 18 are asked to wear a hat when working in the arena during sessions.

What hat?

All hats must conform to one of these standards - PAS015(1998 or 2011) including a BSI Kitemark, ASTM F1163(2004a) including a SEI mark, SNELL E2001 or VG1.

Please note hats with a BS EN1384 are no longer acceptable to be used within the RDA.

Hats for Volunteers

We have a large selection of brand new hats in the tack room for volunteers to use. Please see Helen, Binnie or Joyce to get one fitted. This will then be yours to use in sessions and kept at the yard. You are very welcome to wear your own hat as long as it meets current standards and is in a safe condition.

Any problems please contact a Coach in your session.



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