

KESTEVEN RIDEABILITY

Newsletter June 2021

Reg. Charity No. 1074079

As we head towards the Summer life is beginning to get back to some form of normality albeit that we still have to maintain a level of social distancing and masks are a necessity. Despite these limitations we want to thank all those who have supported us throughout the lockdown with one off donations, continuing support as a Pony Angel or by continuing to pay for the lessons not received but which are a large part of our bread and butter income. We cannot thank you all enough. It has been a tough year but with all your support we are still here and still raring to go.

THANK YOU!

(Almost) normal service resumed!

Early April saw the relaxing of rules which meant we had more flexibility in how we delivered our riding sessions. This also meant we were also able to resume carriage driving albeit with our participants required to wear masks. It soon became obvious that the need for our equestrian activities had increased over lockdown and we have had many new riders requesting to join our sessions. We are still maintaining many of the protocols to ensure our riders remain as safe as possible so handwashing (which should already be a given) continues and our lessons are spread out to enable the sanitising of all areas and equipment between each session. Sully has also now been able to come back into play and this has also helped with our new riders as he offers a halfway route into riding a real horse being used to assess what kind of assistance might be needed to help a new rider progress to being on the back of a real pony

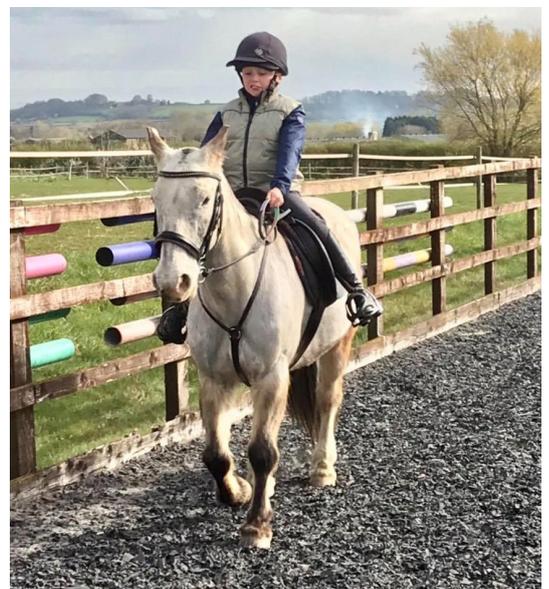
Our first day back

Our first day back saw Victoria and Timmy reunited with Fudge.



Victoria was thrilled to finally be able to ride again and Timmy showed that he had retained all of his riding skills despite lockdown. Fudge had a spring in his step. He had enjoyed his "holiday" during lockdown but seemed really pleased to be finally back doing the job he loves. We were very blessed with the weather which stayed fine and dry so after losing a so much riding time let's hope we have a nice summer so that all of our riders can enjoy being with their ponies again.

Victoria with her family



Timmy and Fudge

More riders return



Rio gets a well deserved hug!



Robert riding Bob the Cob

More riders returned which saw Robert reunited with Bob the Cob and another of our riders showing what it means to be back on their pony as Rio gets a deserved hug.

Meeting some of our new riders

Since we reopened we have been able to welcome some new riders. Sully our mechanical horse (provided for by a grant from the Sir Peter O'Sullivan Charitable Trust)* is now back in action and able to be used to assess new riders. For those who perhaps will not be able to progress to riding a real pony he offers the experience of walking, trotting and cantering so that each person can feel something akin to being on the back of a real equine. He is also a useful physical tool helping to improve the fitness of each participant.



Leo meeting Rio for the first time and having a first go on Sully

Emily and her mum meeting Sully.



*The Sir Peter O'Sullivan Trust was set up by "the voice of racing" Sir Peter O'Sullivan. He was passionate about animals and animal welfare and this is reflected in the kinds of charities supported, mainly equine or equine related. Now in its 24th year it has distributed over £11m to charitable causes. www.thevoiceofracing.com

Carriage Driving

As a newly designated carriage driving group it was wonderful to be able to begin the driving sessions again after such a long time. Pepsi our carriage driving pony is a joy to work with and very responsive to verbal instructions—so much so that you have to spell out T.R.O.T as if she hears the word she immediately responds!



All set up to begin our carriage driving sessions

At present we have two participants in this discipline which offers a way forward for those who perhaps have had to give up riding or who cannot physically get on a horse. The carriage can provide for walking participants as well as offering the chance for a wheelchair bound person to take part either as a passenger or as a driver. Pepsi our lovely little carriage driving pony is very responsive and we are very lucky to have the loan of her for this new adventure.



Pepsi showing her trotting skills

Negotiating cones



The RDA National Championships do have classes for Carriage Driving and we are hoping that one or our participants will perhaps take part. There are no Regional Qualifiers for this discipline so entry is directly into the Nationals which this year are due to take place virtually in August. The carriage driving competitions normally fall into two groups; a dressage competition and a cones competition (where the driver manoeuvres the pony and carriage around a course of cones and obstacles aiming to complete in as short a time as possible without knocking any of the cones over). This year because of the pandemic it has been decided to just offer a dressage competition so this is what we will be aiming at entering. Although our current participants are inexperienced it's fun to do something like this and the judge's comments are

always useful as a pointer to how well a driver is progressing in the discipline and where they might need to improve their skills. It's proving a very exciting and fun activity and with the benefit of our cross country field we have lots of options for learning the techniques and skills that make up a good carriage driver. There might even be the chance to take the pony and carriage around the village!

Horse therapy

Some of our riders have been learning more about how to interact with their pony "on the ground". Paul, one of our newest riders spent time learning how to lunge his pony, Bob, as well as giving Bob some therapeutic grooming. Additional to riding their pony these actions can help to build a greater bond and will aid a rider as they become more experienced and can progress to riding independently.



Paul giving Bob some therapeutic grooming



Paul learning to lunge Bob

SEIB Search for a Star winner

As we told you in our Christmas newsletter Rio won the SEIB Search for a Star 2020 competition towards the end of last year. He looked a real bobby dazzler in his winning photograph but at the time we had not yet received his Winners' sash and rosette. We thought you might like to see him wearing them so here he is with Gay, one of our Trustees, looking very smart and comfortable as if winning something like this is an everyday occurrence for him. (It's not but we haven't told him!)



It's no doubt he is a naturally handsome pony but he looked even more handsome after Karen, practising her plaiting skills, gave him a new look mane wise.

Rio sporting his new plaited mane



What a handsome boy!

Competition Time

Competitions this year are consigned to a virtual format as the transporting of horses and people across the county is not really ideal in the present circumstances. The Regional qualifiers have therefore been videoed at our yard and uploaded to a designated site for judging. The first qualifier was the Countryside Challenge and we had four of our riders taking part; Timmy, Grace, Thomas and Victoria. They all did really well so we are hopeful of qualifying for the National Competition in July. The dressage qualifiers are later this month and we hope to have a couple of our riders taking part.



The Countryside Challenge Course all set up for our competitors



Three of our riders after successfully being videoed for the Virtual RDA National Championship Qualifiers. Victoria, Timmy and Thomas on the ever young Fudge.

Good Luck to all three!



Online Learning Zone

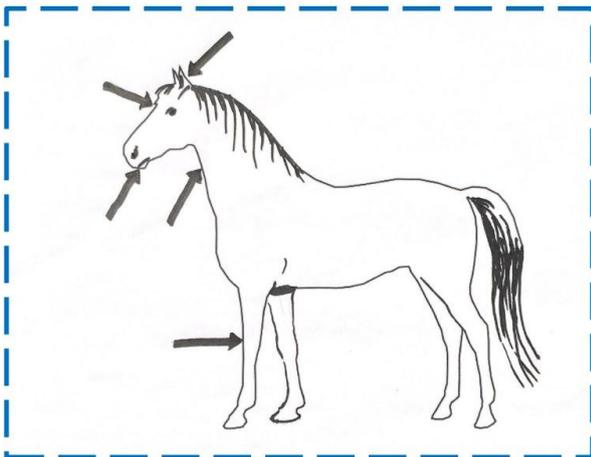
To help and encourage our riders during the lockdown we set up a virtual learning section on our website to enable distance learning of the RDA Proficiency Tests. These have been developed by RDA Coaching experts and are part of the wider RDA Education 'Learning through Horses, Learning for Life' programme, which offers a valuable opportunity to recognise and reward achievement, at all levels of ability.

The RDA Proficiency test programme has been carefully designed to be as accessible as possible, encouraging participants on each step of the way. From Grades 1 to 4, the tests gradually increase in difficulty, providing an attainable challenge within the scope of the individuals' capabilities and giving participants the opportunity to gain useful, practical knowledge, even at a basic level.

Points of the Horse Test 1

Write these parts of the horse in the correct place on the drawing. You could colour in the horse when you've finished 😊

EYES EARS MOUTH NECK LEG



What horses eat



Horses love to eat grass. It is the food they would eat in the wild but sometimes it can get too rich especially in the spring.

Hay is dried grass and it is fed to horses in the winter when there isn't enough grass in the field or when the horse is in a stable overnight.



Horses need to drink water to survive. It drinks 30 - 50 litres a day so you need a big bucket!

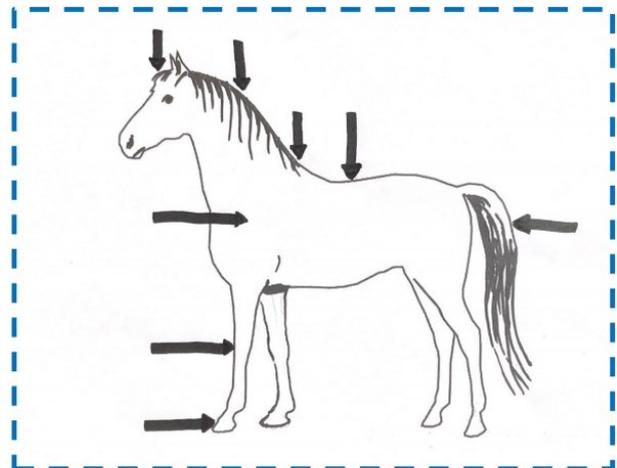
Horses can also be fed different types of feeds. Some feed looks like muesli and is called mix. Other feeds look pellets and these are called pony nuts. Horses enjoy carrots too.



Points of the Horse Test 2

Write these parts of the horse in the correct place on the drawing. You could colour in the horse when you've finished 😊

MANE TAIL HOOF BACK
KNEE SHOULDERS FORELOCK WITHERS



The learning zone contains fun worksheets and quizzes for riders to complete covering basics such as the points of a horse and where they live as well as more complicated things such as the types of feed horses can eat and the range of equipment that is needed to saddle up and ride a horse. Once they have worked through these the learning zone also offers a link to the RDA UK e-learning website where they can formally take the Horse care levels 1 & 2 and gain certificates.

Examples of the worksheets for Grade 1 and Grade 2 Horse Care

SEIB RDA Centre of the Year 2021 nomination



It was so exciting being able to reopen once again and resume our riding and driving sessions but on top of this we learnt in late May that not only had we been nominated for the above award but that we had made the shortlist. We were thrilled and so excited. Over 1000 nominations had been made and to be selected as potential winner was a real fillip given how tough the past year has been.

The [SEIB Livery Yard and Riding School of the Year Awards](#) have been set up by SEIB to celebrate excellence in teaching, training and horse care. The 2021 running of the SEIB Insurance Brokers Livery Yard and Riding School awards are set to show how determination in the face of adversity has helped many yards weather the storm of Covid-19.

Each short-listed yard has been requested to submit a video detailing the highlights of the yard, what it offers to clients and with some client feedback. We have been busy recording bits and pieces to create one which shows in the best possible way what we do and how we do it.

Here are some of the lovely comments made by our riders and their families.

[Coming to Kesteven RiDeAbility] “helps my balance, my coordination, my concentration. Everything which seems to have slipped away from me with my MS.” Liz

“[It’s] about giving the rider hope in doing something other people can do. It’s an indispensable part of our lives.” Liz’s family member

“I enjoy this riding place” Frazer

“Coming to Kesteven is the best thing I ever did” Elaine

“It’s a magical place” Sue

**“The support we get from the riding is brilliant...brings the confidence he needs.”
Timmy’s family member**

The winners will be announced on the 30th June so we are all keeping our fingers crossed!

How you can help us

We have now resumed but our sessions are limited due to the distancing and sanitising regime still required and this will affect our income stream for sometime. Our ponies still have to be looked after and kept fit and well so they are ready to go whenever we reopen. If you can help and would like to here are a number of ways you can do so.

For those who are already supporting us as Pony Angels or by individually donating we are extremely grateful—thank you.



Become a Pony Angel

Pony Angels are supporters who by pledging a fixed amount every month or year help us cover the costs of our RDA ponies. They are very important to us and we are always grateful for the support they give us. Have a look at our website at www.kestevenrda.org.uk or contact ponyangels@kestevenrda.org.uk to find out more and you could be helping to continue the work we already do teaching disabled children and adults to ride.



If you use Amazon you can join their charitable donation site Smile Amazon and every time you shop with them through Smile they will donate to your chosen charity. Like easy fundraising, it costs you nothing to do this. Go to www.smile.amazon.co.uk to sign up.



Join easy fundraising and every time you buy something online you can raise money for Kesteven Rideability. It doesn't cost you anything. Just go to www.easyfundraising.org.uk join up and select us as your charity then whenever you shop online remember to shop via easyfundraising. It's simple and they even had a little reminder app which will mean you never forget to shop this way. You can support us and join via our website www.kestevenrda.org.uk



Take part in LotterySK *

Many of our supporters take part in this and in December one supporter was the lucky recipient of £2000 having matched five numbers !

We retain 50p from the cost of each ticket.

You can buy tickets via our website www.kestevenrda.org.uk

**LotterySK was created in 2018 by South Kesteven District Council.*

Set up to support community projects in the local area, LotterySK operates on the principle of raising money within the community for the community. We empower local good causes to raise money in a fun and effective way. In a time of shrinking budgets and increased community need, LotterySK enables people to support the causes they care most about, helping good causes to connect with their supporters.

A ticket for LotterySK costs £1 per week and 60p will go directly to good causes! There is a top prize of £25,000 and each ticket has a 1 in 50 chance of winning.



You can also donate via Virgin money giving.
Go to our website at www.kestevenrda.org.uk

We realise that it is a difficult time for many people and that finances may be stretched but donating the cost of just one lesson could make a real difference to us. We need to be there for our riders old and new as we slowly begin to get back to some kind of normal. Thank you.

A **BIG** thank you from all of us to the following people for their very generous Donations during what has been a challenging year.

Sir Peter O'Sullivan Charitable Trust
Tryac
Hon Mrs C Sacks
Skylark Endowment Fund
Mrs J Neasham
Mrs E Charlton

Maggie Clark
Grace Moore
Sleaford Lionesses
Mrs S Watson
Ms J Beckett
Sue Ashton

thank
you!

South Kesteven District Council

Marie Ashton

Ros Wenworth

Chandlers



Andy Honeywood



Gay Hatton

Kathy Blake

Jane & Vince Heslop



**Thank you to all our Pony Angels
for helping to get us through the
most challenging of years.**



Paul Johnson

Stephanie Smith-Maxwell

Sarah Shelbourne

Suzanne Saunders

Rachel Stothert

Mark Frazer

Rachel & Lee Williams

Kesteven RDA Uniform:

If you would like to purchase Kesteven RDA badged clothing, follow the link from our website, www.kestevenrda.org.uk.

You can choose from a range of garments including smart polo shirts, cosy hoodies, gilets and jackets.

The orders are sent direct from Print Bureau, or you can collect your order from their unit in Grantham.

Contact Us:

On our website...

www.kestevenrda.org.uk

By email...

[in-fo@kestevenrda.org.uk](mailto:info@kestevenrda.org.uk)

By phone...

07732 418848

You can also find us on...

