

EAST PARK RIDING FOR THE DISABLED GROUP

ISSUE 20—January/March 2019

EAST PARK NEWS

New challenges for



News

Our sponsors change lives – One child's Story

The following article is written by Katie Giddings

I have been an RDA instructor for around 15 years, and have had the pleasure of teaching 100s of children over the years. Every so often you come across a pupil who makes a lasting impact. We are lucky enough to have such a child at the moment.

Simon (not his real name) suffers from Cerebral Palsy, with associated learning difficulties, and abnormal muscle tone.

Simon started riding with his 5 class mates in September 2018. A very quiet, anxious, shy child, who clung to his teacher obviously extremely nervous and scared of the new environment and challenge he was being asked to face. It was a struggle to fit a hat and boots as In addition to being non verbal Simon was not keen on being touched.

I knew Simon would require a great deal of gentle persuasion to approach a pony, let alone mount! A special team were required! I chose a steady, experienced pony, (quite narrow as Simon was unable to "spread his legs" comfortably,) and we fitted special stirrup adaptations to accommodate and support Simon's lower leg and foot. (Simon wears leg splints.).

Due to Simon's anxiety issues I asked 2 experienced lady volunteer helpers to work with Simon to build up his trust and confidence, one to lead the pony and the other to side walk, and support Simon physically and emotionally.

For the first few sessions Simon was extremely anxious and rigid in the body, and totally non verbal. We worked in the group lesson keeping everything steady and very monotonous and my 2 volunteer ladies worked extremely hard quietly gaining Simon's confidence, and very slowly Simon began to relax his body and allow himself to feel the paces of the pony thus gaining the benefit of the pelvic movement that the pony's gait provides. It was absolutely apparent that Simon was beginning to enjoy the riding sessions, and interacting with both the pony and my wonderful volunteers.

By the end of the first term, In December we awarded Simon an RDA Endeavour Certificate to reward his vast improvement.

As the weeks have passed Simon is now one of the first into the hat room to find his hat, he sits and waits patiently until it is his turn to come forward to the mounting block, and when called the smile on his face lights up the arena!

Simon is now confident and we are told that the riding session is the highlight of his week! Best of all Simon is now verbally interacting with his volunteers (all be it in a very quiet whisper). Simon is relaxed and I am told by his teachers that his regular physiotherapist has seen a marked improvement in Simon's muscle tone, which is attributed to his weekly riding sessions.

We are hoping that Simon will reach the standard to achieve RDA Stage 1 riding and horse care by the end of the academic term in July.

It is an absolute honour to teach a child like Simon, he truly is "special".

As a footnote, here is a report from "Simon's" teacher with reference to his riding -

Simon has Cerebral Palsy and associated developmental difficulties. He struggles using his lower and upper limbs simultaneously. Horse riding encourages his gross motor skills to improve. It helps him sit up straight whilst in-class he requires a specialised chair to enable this, however when horse riding he is able to support himself. The arm work required to participate in horse riding encourages reaching and balancing which in turn facilitate his overall strength and core stability.

During riding lessons the instructions given and the ones pupils use to direct the horses, encourage Simon's speech, listening and overall communication skills and enhance his confidence.

Simon looks forward to horse riding and anticipates his weekly lessons, when there is a break such as during school holidays this is evident in his joints becoming tight requiring additional Physical Therapy to loosen him up.

This is just one child's story and we teach so many. By sponsoring East Park you are quite literally changing the lives of our pupils and their families. The skills they learn and the confidence they gain are transferred to many aspects of their lives and go beyond simple enrichment or therapy. For Simon riding has physically strengthened his body and has been the start of him communicating verbally with others.

Post Christmas Party

The 24th of January saw The Chamfron Building utilised for a 'Post Christmas' party which was well attended and enjoyed by all. The food was delicious and the company was excellent.

James Baxter thanked all for their hard work and enthusiasm throughout 2018 and we all raised a glass to the coming year.

The Sussex Wanderers MG Car Club donate £1000



The kind motor enthusiasts from the Sussex Wanderers MG Car Club have been raising money for us again! Their meetings during 2018 raised a fantastic £1,000 for us, which was handed over on January 29th to Sally O'Neill & James Baxter.

Several members braved the elements in their beautiful cars, making a perfect photo opportunity, with our star pony Liquorice getting in on the action too.

David and Ursula Griffiths organise this donation every year, and we are very grateful to them and their fellow members.

Volunteers needed

The SESH A Heavy Horse and Country Show is one of the biggest Heavy and Working Horse shows in the South East, it takes place at the East Bysse Showground, RH7 6LF on the A22. This year's show is shaping up to be the best yet, with a fully packed programme over 2 days.



East Park directly benefits from providing volunteers to operate the gates for this prestigious show. Please contact Sally (07803813947) if you can spare an hour or two on Sunday 5th or Monday 6th May 2019. The more volunteers we have the easier it becomes and you will be able to stay and enjoy the show for free!

Sad Goodbye to Archie



Renkum Art Award, to give him his full title, arrived at East Park in early summer 2013. Dark bay, about 15.2hh, and of Anglo-European breeding, he was purchased with a grant from Santander Bank's Community Foundation.

Intended to take our larger riders Archie's super temperament and unflappable nature won him a lot of admirers and a firm place in our hearts. He had the special quality we need for working with riders with disabilities

Unfortunately Archie developed arthritis and despite excellent veterinary care and varying types of medication it became apparent we could not keep him comfortable as the arthritis worsened and he was gently put to sleep in February. So very sad to lose a horse who was both beautiful in form and personality.

Carriage Driving at East Park

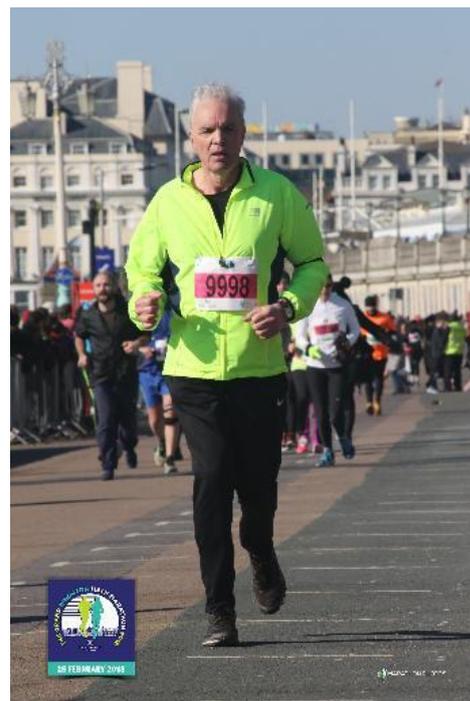


We would like to invite new clients to try their hand at carriage driving this spring. It is a sport that can be enjoyed by all the family, even if you have never driven or ridden a pony before you will be sure to enjoy the experience. For those that 'get the bug' there is the possibility of competing when able. Why not contact Sally to arrange a trial lesson and start off the spring with a new challenge?

Forthcoming events

Brighton Marathon Fundraiser

Bob Howells is running the Brighton Marathon on April 14th to raise money for East Park RDA! Bob finds his job as a driving instructor too sedentary and started running to get fit. Last year he ran his first marathon, at Brighton, and this year he is going to do it all over again to raise funds for us. Bob can be sponsored via his fundraising page on BT Donate as follows: mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/roberthowells1.



Bob's target is £1,500. Do please go to the page and sponsor Bob.

Regional Challenge Day Felbridge Showground



Thursday 9th May will see East Park once again aiming high at the South East Region show. We will have several riders entering the Countryside Challenge putting their skills to the test. Do come along and support us.

***Felbridge Showground, Copthorne Road, East Grinstead, RH19 2NU
Kindly sponsored by Cowan Architects**



The Star

The Star at Lingfield holds a quiz night every Thursday evening from 8:30pm with cash prizes for the winners. East Park regularly receives a portion of the funds raised on these evenings so if you're in Lingfield on a Thursday evening do challenge yourself by joining in.

Grants & Donations

£90 from the Jewellers

£50 in memory of Rob Howell

£372.19 from Sainsbury's bag packing day

East Park can only operate with the kind donations from companies, organisations or individuals and we would like to express our grateful thanks to the following organisations;

**The Village Jewellers,
Woodhatch**

**East Grinstead Lions &
Horley Lions**

Little Brook Equestrian Centre

The Star
Public House Lingfield

Copthorne Golf Club
Borers Arms Road

Our grateful thanks for their continuing support by fundraising on our behalf.

Help Fundraise!



Help us Fundraise via the Tandridge Lottery!

We have signed up with the Tandridge Together Lottery, a weekly draw supporting good causes in the Tandridge District. Of each £1 ticket purchased we receive 50p directly, and another 10p goes into a general fund to be shared between all the good causes. The draw takes place each Saturday, with prizes of up to £25,000 and every ticket has a 1 in 50 chance of winning a prize.

Please sign up for tickets and chance your luck for a big prize, while supporting your favourite RDA charity.

Note Cards Note cards with pictures of our horses are available from Little Brook Equestrian. Singly at £1.20 or in packs of five for £5.

Easy Fundraising If you regularly shop online, you can help us with every purchase you make. Simply register with www.easyfundraising.co.uk and access your favourite websites through their page. We receive a donation every time you shop.

Become a Friend of EPRDA For £10 per year, you can become a Friend of East Park RDA and receive newsletters to keep you up to date with our activities.

Our Supporters



East Park Riding for the Disabled Group

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We're On The Web

WWW.EASTPARKRDA.ORG.UK



Please Like Us on Facebook

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/EASTPARKRDAGROUP

Registered Charity Number: 1074259

A Member Group of Riding for the Disabled Association Incorporating Carriage Driving, Registered under Charity Number 244108



RDA Term dates

Summer term 2019

Start of term	Half term	End of term
29 th April 2019	27 th – 31 st May 2019	12 th July 2019