

EAST PARK RIDING FOR THE DISABLED GROUP

ISSUE 32 - June 2023 - December 2023

EAST PARK NEWS

*Looking back
on 2023*



*Looking Forward
to 2024*

News

We went to The National Championships

July 2023 - The results were better than the Weather

Following our success in The Regional Qualifiers for the Countryside Challenge, we

were excited to arrive at The National Championships in Hartpury Gloucestershire.

One young man from Oxted School and three pupils from St. Stephen's, arrived to find the most awful weather possible, short of a hurricane! For the entire day the rain came sideways at us and it was relentless. At this point we definitely need to thank all the officials and volunteers for their stoic professionalism, standing out in lashing wind and rain all weekend long is really no fun at all so a heartfelt well done to them all.

Thanks to Annie and Sally at Littlebrook Equestrian, the ponies were better kitted out for the weather than most of us were. Also a huge thank you to Lysa, our inventive Coach, Jon Day, Gayle and John for going above and beyond by travelling to the event in order to lead and support the children in such atrocious conditions, it certainly couldn't be called a holiday!

The children did their very best and the results are below.

Child	Class	Pony	Position	
Oscar	Junior Lead	Guy	1st	
Erin	Junior VI Lead	Guy	1st	National Class Champion
Clark	Junior Lead with side walker	Star	3 rd	
Grant	Junior VI Lead with side walker	Star	1st	National Class Champion



Great effort in challenging conditions, we could not be more proud of them.



Massive thank you to Sally and Annie from Little Brook for turning the ponies out so well (again) and transporting them all the way to Gloucestershire. Also to all our amazing coaches and volunteers whose gift of time each week makes such a difference to the lives of so many children.

THANKYOU!

End of Term Prize giving

Thursday Group Rewarded with Endeavour Awards

Our pupils from St. Stephen's primary school enjoyed having their parents and carers watch them ride on their last session of term.

Deputy Mayor, Cllr Stephen Ody was honoured guest and delighted the children by not only watching them ride but staying on to present them with individual Endeavour awards which they had been working towards.



Most improved newcomer	Eadie
Meeting Every Challenge	Clark
Consistent Good Riding	Olive
Overall Improvement	Jacob
Continue Best Effort	Grant
Improved Listening & Following Instructions	Leo

Meet Freddie

Kind as well as handsome

Please meet Fred who was kindly loaned to us when we lost Leo earlier in the year and who we have now purchased.



Fred is a 10-year-old 12.2hh piebald gelding. He came with an exceptional history of being not only a reliable family pony where he hunted, competed at shows and took part in pony club activities but also had experience as a RDA pony. He is a lovely fit for East Park and we are lucky to have him.



EG Common Good Trust Donate

Marvellous contribution towards a new pony

The EG Common Good Trust generously donated £3,600.00 towards our fund to buy a larger pony for our riders. This is a great boost and we now have 75% of our planned expenditure. All we have to do now is find a suitable pony and sadly they are few and far between. We hope to bring you further news soon.

Generous Waitrose Donation

WAITROSE
& PARTNERS

A 'Little Love' comes our way

Our kind friends at Waitrose East Grinstead donated £525.00 from their Give a Little Love initiative. We are very grateful to them.

Royal Warrant Holders Association Donation



Generous donation helps our goal

We have been looking for a larger pony for some of our heavier riders. The Royal Warrant Holders Association have donated £3,000.00 thanks to Trustee, Katie Giddings, who husband's company, Milborrow Chimney Sweeps, holds a Royal Warrant.



Our ponies need a very special temperament to bear our disabled riders, and the right pony is very hard to find. This donation is particularly valuable as we now have the certainty of some of the funds being immediately available.

We are very grateful to both Katie, and the RWHA for the donation. All we have to do now is find the right pony!

Dormansland Horse & Dog Show

Long established alliance

Dormansland Horse & Dog Show: It was a lovely hot day and the show was a great success, with lots of competitors, both equine and canine, with their riders and handlers. The show organisers have been long term supporters of East Park RDA and we are very grateful to them. This year we erected a stand and met lots of friends, old and new. We particularly enjoyed the family atmosphere of the show and to thank them for their kind and generous donation of £900.00



New Coach Qualifies

Familiar face qualifies further

Jon Day, a familiar face at Little Brook and East Park, has taken and passed his qualification to become a coach for ridden lessons. Jon, who was already one of our carriage driving coaches, after supporting in many ridden lessons over the years decided to assist East Park further by qualifying to coach single and group lessons. Well done Jon, we look forward to seeing you in action.



Our Monday Riders

Autumn Term Fun

We recently took some lovely photos of our Monday riders. Everyone seems to be having a great time.



A Sad Goodbye

Little Brook and East Park lose an exceptional lady

This Autumn the very hard decision was made to let Rosie go over the rainbow bridge. Rosie was the most incredible pony we could have ever asked for. She really was one in a million and was the absolute queen of the yard!

Rosie has taught so many people to ride over such a long period of time and was honestly one of the kindest, most giving ponies we have ever had. We will never find a pony like Rosie again, they are like gold dust. A yard favourite that was loved by everyone. Rosie made it to the Nationals, more than once, and has given us so much over her lengthy career.



The decision was incredibly hard but we must do right by our animals. She had been suffering with arthritis for a while and we had been able to keep on top of it and keep her happy and comfortable. Sadly this became increasingly difficult to achieve and during the latest cold spell she just became too uncomfortable.

She will be missed more than anyone can imagine and has left a huge legacy. I'm sure many of you will have very fond memories of her. She has left too big a shoe to fill by another. Fly high in the sky and keep everyone in check up there, particularly Leo who also passed away earlier this year!



The dashing Leo passed away while out in his field. Although he wasn't with us long he was certainly a character. You will be missed Leo RIP our friend.



East Grinstead Lions & COGS Come up Trumps

Charities come to the rescue

When St. Stephen's school had to cancel one of their weekly sessions with us due to largely financial reasons, Brian Richens, long standing volunteer at East Park and general 'Good Egg' sprung into action to save the day.

East Grinstead Lions Club have supported the work of Riding for the Disabled (RDA) based at Little Brook Equestrian, for over 20 years; either as volunteers or with periodic financial assistance.

Brian liaised with, the EG Lions about the situation and orchestrated a linked approach with Caterham, Oxted and Godstone (COG's) Lions to help fund the 1pm afternoon session for a full academic year. Each Club donated £1008.00. Potentially this will help 24 children over the year. The benefits of these sessions are immense and include: helping to improve muscle tone, posture and motor skills, fine and gross. It also helps to develop self-confidence, improve communication, build relationships and learn new skills including valuable life and social skills.



The photograph above shows Rebecca Hodges, school SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator) from St. Stephen's, meeting with representatives of both charitable organisations to express her thanks. We were delighted to invite them to come and watch some of the children they had given the opportunity to ride.

Accountants gift

Thoughtful gift of time and expertise



Peter Hodgson & Co.
Chartered Accountants & Registered Auditors

As a charity our accounts have to be externally examined annually, normally at a cost to East Park, but this year Aidan Smyth, owner of Peter Hodgson & Co. Chartered Accountants & Auditors, very generously donated his time and expertise completing the examination in a very professional and timely manner without charge.

Based in Royal Tunbridge Wells, Aiden and his company undertake all aspects of accounting and wherever possible they consider their role is to operate as a partner alongside you in the efficient running of your business, whether a large or small company. His viewpoint is; A good accountant can save you time and help your business grow; a bad one could cost you much needed money.

We are very grateful to Aiden for his expertise and generosity of time.

Santa's in Town!

Checking the Naughty or Nice list

Some of our lucky Thursday pupils just happened to be riding when they had a very special visitor. Santa had come to check if he had the right children on his Naughty or Nice list. Luckily, and only after extensive searching, Santa found all of the children were on his nice list. Phew!



Each child was given a beautiful handmade stocking, lovingly made by Jo, to take on a treasure hunt around the school. The goodies were bought by the volunteers. After filling their stockings they received a special chocolate Santa from the man himself.



Thank you Santa for taking the time to bring us happiness.

Volunteers are Needed

Do you have Wednesday's free?

Are you currently free on a Wednesday morning and looking to do some good for your community? We are desperately short of volunteer leaders and side walkers for a school of youngsters that attend between 10 and 11 o'clock every Wednesday.

No experience is necessary as we will support and train you to either lead a pony or walk alongside offering verbal support to the rider.

All volunteers will, with our help, complete a DBS check and once that formality is sorted you will become an invaluable part of our team of caring, like-minded people.

Please contact Sally or Annie at Little Brook Equestrian on 01342 837546 or 07803 813947 if you would like a new challenge, to be part of an exciting and rewarding hobby or maybe make some rather lovely friends this New Year.

Wade's World

Wade is a miniature Mediterranean donkey foal purchased by the Lions Club to train to be a therapy donkey, in remembrance of their Club colleague and Thursday RDA volunteer Rob Holwell.



Wade has had a busy year



The mischievous little donkey foal has grown and matured this past year, it must have been all the sunbathing he has done! So much so he has begun his career as a therapy donkey.

He understands he has to be gentle around people, particularly anyone with mobility needs. He has developed a real way with those who have anxiety or fear and makes a big effort to cooperate and stay calm. He has quite a large fan base now.

Should you know anyone who would benefit from a little donkey wisdom and calm do give Sally a call and we'll set you up with the handsome chap.

Fund-Raising Trustee needed

Your chance to make a real difference

We're looking for a highly organised and personable volunteer, ideally with some experience or background in sales and/or marketing, to be responsible for generating income for the Group. The successful candidate will be responsible for:

- Applying for grants
- Liaising with potential donors
- Organising at least one fundraising event per year
- Creating innovative ideas for maintaining and improving income

Fund raising is crucial to ensure our valuable work continues.

The Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) is run by a small group of trustees, who meet four times each year on a weekday evening between 6.30 and 8.30. It is a very enthusiastic team who like to work in a relaxed and friendly environment. As the Fund-Raising Trustee you would be expected to attend these meetings and to communicate regularly with the other six Trustees during the year.

The CIO relies on grants, donations and fundraising events to raise some £17,000.00 per year to continue operating. There are established links with grant making bodies and donors and the CIO has an excellent reputation among local companies and councils.

Please do consider joining us. You will be made very welcome and supported to carry out your role. Although we are only looking for one trustee you can partner up with a friend to carry out the role, pooling your skill set, sharing ideas and lightening the load on you. The role is not as daunting as you may think.

Contact in the first instance by telephoning Sally O'Neill on 01342 837546.

Upcoming Lesson opportunities

Do you know a group or person who could benefit?

Some sessions for up to six riders may be available for this coming year. The sessions are fully supported by volunteers and can be for any age group or ability.

Please call Sally or Annie on 01342 837546 or 07803 813947 for more details.

Carriage Driving at East Park

Is there a little Ben Hur in you? Then driving could be the activity for you. If you have driven before or are new to this exciting activity we have a number of carriage driving sessions available.



If you wish to brush up on your existing carriage driving skills, or try an introductory lesson to see if it's a sport you might enjoy, do get in touch. We can accommodate children as well as adults and many abilities and disabilities, including wheelchair users. Bring your enthusiasm and we'll supply the rest. (maybe not four in hand to start with) We are more Downton Abbey than Ben Hur!



Forthcoming events

None at present, but do watch this space...

Grants & Donations



- £3,600.00 EG Common Good Trust**
- £3,000.00 The Royal Warrant Holders Association**
- £ 525.00 Waitrose**
- £ 450.00 Gina Weare**
- £ 500.00 Paula Hunt for the National Championships.**
- £ 900.00 Dormansland Horse and Dog Show**

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!



A new easy way to donate

Help us to help others

With your help we have been able to continue as a group through another difficult year. The opportunities to raise much needed funds have however, again, been restricted. We would ask if you are in a position to donate, please continue to do so as it really is a lifeline for us. A huge thank you for all you have done and continue to do.

After difficulties with our previous donation platform, and in order to make donating as easy as possible, we are now using Charities Aid Foundation where it is easy to set up regular or one off payments. If you received this newsletter by e-mail you can follow the link below, or alternatively use the button on our website or Facebook page. <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/19524>



Support local
good causes &
**WIN UP TO
£25,000!**

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. For each £1.00 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 £25,000.00 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.

Below is a QR code which takes you straight to our Tandridge Lottery page.



Note Cards Singly at £1.20 - or in packs of five for £5.00 - note cards with pictures of our horses are available from Little Brook Equestrian.

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 £10.00 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



RDA Term dates

Start dates account for not commencing the first week following the re-start of each new term.

Individual schools may decide to cease riding the week before the end of each term.

Start of term	Half term	End of term
Monday 8 th January	12 th February – 16 th February	Friday 28 th March
Monday 22 nd April	27 th May – 31 st May	Friday 19 th July

East Park Riding for the Disabled Group

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Please Like Us on Facebook

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/EASTPARKRDAGROUP

Registered Charity Number: 1168147

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

