

EAST PARK RIDING FOR THE DISABLED GROUP

NEWSLETTER issue 33

December 2023 - November 2024



Another year, another National Championships!



RDA President HRH, The Princess Royal meets with RDA Chief Executive Michael Bishop and RDA Chair Helena Vega-Lozano.

Each year we take some of our riders to the **Regional Qualifiers** to give them a chance to compete against other RDA riders. This year we took five riders to the Regionals and two of them qualified for the **National Championships** in July at Hartpury in Gloucestershire. Our team of instructors and volunteers drove up there with Fred and Star and were delighted when the children came 2nd and 5th in their classes. Parents and school staff attended and raised funds for the trip.

Well done to all concerned!



Noteable Donations

Collection at
**Lingfield Park
Racecourse**
where Dame Judi
was in attendance.
We raised £433.

A donation of £2,150
was received from our
long term supporters
**The Sussex Wanderer's
MG Car Club** with
another £518 of
Gift Aid to
be claimed.

**Edenbridge and
Oxted Show**

£500

Shire Horse Show

£500

**The Gatwick Airport
Community Trust** has
awarded a grant of £3,500
towards the cost of a new
larger pony for us. We now
have £10,100 in the fund:
£3,600 from the
**East Grinstead Common
Good Trust**, £3,000 from the
**Royal Warrant Holders
Association**.

**Dengie
Horse Feeds** has
donated £300
of vouchers
for food.

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

Lingfield Park Collection Day

Our friends at **Lingfield Park Racecourse** were kind enough to let us collect money at their Race Day on Friday 5th April. It was a very chilly blustery day, but racegoers generously put their hands in their pockets and dropped £433 in total into our buckets. **Our patron, Dame Judi Dench**, was in attendance to present a prize to a race winner and support our cause. Thank you to Judi, to our bucket collectors and to Steph for the photos.



Dengie Horse Feed Donation

Dengie Horse Feeds are the leading manufacturer of fibre-based horse feeds. Last year they were voted the UK's favourite fibre based horse feed, having topped the 2023 National Equestrian Survey.

Dengie very kindly donated to us £300 of vouchers. Our ponies who work so hard for us deserve the very best, and have been enjoying their premium nosh. Even little Star might grow a bit! Thank you Dengie.



Welcome Alfie to East Park!

For some time we have been searching for a new, larger, pony or horse to carry our older riders, whilst fundraising for the money to buy one. Our ponies need to have a very special temperament and good RDA ponies are very hard to find. Three organisations were kind enough to make grants totalling £10,100 to purchase a pony: **The Royal Warrant Holders Association**; the **East Grinstead Common Good Trust** and the **Gatwick Airport Community Trust**. They have all been very patient while we have been tracking down the right one.



Credit: Amy Griffiths Photography

We are delighted to announce that we have finally found our pony!

He is a 12 year old 14.2 hand Welsh cross piebald gelding, with lovely manners, known as Alfie. His full name is Pentregwyn Ashley and he came from Luke Tomlinson in Rochdale. We have had him on trial for a week and he has settled in well, ready for the new term which starts in September. We are enormously grateful to all three sponsors who enabled us to purchase him.

Volunteers Needed

Do you have Wednesdays 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.

Little Brook Equestrian is without a doubt a beautiful place to volunteer!



End of Term Prize Giving

Our 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.

Continued Best Effort - Olive
Challenge Award - Christian
Achievement Award - Eadie
Most Improved Rider - Clark

Jason, Charlie, Henrick, Sebastian P., Sebastian B., and Chester received their **Grade I Riding Certificate**.

Olive received their **Grade II Horse Care Certificate**.

Eadie, Deo, Christian, Grant and Clark received their **Grade II Riding Certificate**.

A long-time volunteer, **Yvonne Smyth**, recently died, and a special trophy was additionally awarded in her honour to a child who had overcome adversity. **Christian** had been fearful of riding different ponies and overcame this whilst improving his posture tremendously!



In June we welcomed volunteers from **SES Water's Give A Day** scheme, where employees are given a day off each year to volunteer for a local charity. Our gallery in the indoor school, where the children are fitted with boots and wait to mount, gets fairly heavy wear and was in dire need of a spruce up. We provided the brushes and paint and the lovely ladies from SES Water set to. Most of the paint went on the walls and ceiling, but we hope the team were wearing their oldest clothes! The gallery now looks fantastic and we are very grateful to the volunteers and to **SES Water** for giving them the day off.



The Hill Brush Company, who are Royal Warrant Holders, have kindly donated some brooms, brushes and a shovel to us to help us keep our yard spick and span for our riders. Hillbrush have a fantastic range of cleaning equipment from traditional brooms to more eco-friendly alternatives, and they supply these worldwide. We are very grateful to them for the donation which will certainly be put to good use.

Over the years we have had a lot of support from Royal Warrant Holders, both through their association and also individually.

We are lucky to have connections – Katie Giddings, one of our instructors for many years, is married to Kevin, whose company, **Milborrow Chimney Sweeps** are also Royal Warrant Holders.

Thank you Hillbrush for your support.



Some Very Sad News ...

Written by Katie Giddings, Trustee and Coach

Start of term September 2009 was a very special time for **Burstow Park RDA Group** (later to become **East Park RDA Group**). Although at the time of course, we did not realise what a memorable date this was to be. For this was the initial occasion a small black and white pony was trailed in an RDA lesson ... **Liquorice!** Liquorice had been purchased by Burstow Park Riding School, which is where our RDA sessions were held. By January 2010 we knew Liquorice was one of a kind, a **special boy**, and the RDA group agreed to purchase Liquorice – certainly money well spent! In 2011 we moved to **Littlebrook Riding School**, and of course Liquorice moved with us; we became East Park RDA Group. Not many ponies are lucky enough to have the same owner and home for the majority of their lives, but when you find a special equine; they are treasured and loved - Liquorice was one of the special ones. For in excess of 14 years Liquorice has worked tirelessly as an **RDA pony**. I'd love to be able to calculate just how many children have had the privilege of sitting on his back. How many **smiles, giggles and rides** he has been responsible for.



Never a cross expression, he has accepted the bumps, screams and wobbles of our children, and taken it all in his stride. I can honestly say, I have never witnessed him put a hoof in the wrong place. Liquorice was always the **“go to” pony** for the particularly reluctant or difficult child, and for this we thank him and will sorely miss him. Liquorice has attended many **RDA Regional Fun Days**, and has travelled and stayed away at National RDA events. Liquorice was simply a **superstar** - not all angels have wings! The final gift we are able to give an old and tired pony is a peaceful and pain-free journey over **The Rainbow Bridge**, and in late September it was Liquorice's turn to make the trip.

“What do we do when our hearts hurt? We wrap them with friendship, memories, time and shared tears, until they make us happy again.”

From us all: **Thank you Liquorice; now rest in peace.**

And Some Good News

Kevin Escott, Captain of **Lingfield Park Golf Club** has kindly decided to choose East Park RDA as his chosen Captain's Charity.

This will be until the end of Season 2025.

All fines (i.e. going into certain bunkers and not getting over the ditch on the first) will be donated, plus on July 26th there is the **Captain's Charity Day** and all monies from this will also be donated to East Park RDA.



Easy Ways to Donate

Charities Aid Foundation

You can donate via our website at bottom of page, or directly click on this link:

<https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/19524#!/DonationDetails>

Tandridge 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 £25k** 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.

The QR code here will take you straight to the link.



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.

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.

Autumn Term starts 16th September and finishes **13th December**.

Spring Term starts **13th January**.

E-mail:

sally@littlebrookequestrian.co.uk

WWW.EASTPARKRDA.ORG.UK

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East Park Riding for the
Disabled Group
Little Brook Equestrian Centre
East Park Lane, Newchapel
Surrey RH7 6HS
Telephone 01342 837546



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