



# NEWSLETTER

It's hard to believe we are already moving into March! The days are getting a little lighter and we've even had a touch of sunshine as we head into a busy spring term.

Thank you, as always, to our riders, volunteers, families and supporters for everything you do to keep the group running so smoothly.



**IMPORTANT – Session Changes**  
Week beginning Monday 9th March – Sunday 15th March  
There will be some altered sessions during this week:

- No education sessions during this week
- Work experience running as normal on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday
- No sessions Wednesday 10th March (morning)
- No sessions Thursday 11th March (evening)
- No sessions Saturday 14th March (morning)

Please make a note of these changes.

## Important Reminders

Please, when driving down the road to The Brook and onto the yard, drive slowly. There are children, vulnerable adults and animals on site.

This also applies when passing horses out hacking. We have recently had vehicles pass horses very quickly. Please slow down, pass wide and pass carefully.

A reminder to please ensure you have read the Safeguarding Policy, Code of Conduct and Fire Evacuation Procedure, and signed to confirm in the office.

Currently, only one person has signed to confirm they have read these documents. We cannot emphasise enough how important this is. These policies are in place to keep everyone safe — riders, volunteers and horses alike.

## Education Groups

The education groups continue to thrive. The younger group have worked hard on their creative writing entries and learning about feeding rules, while the older group have been developing practical yard skills — including clipping, horse care routines and lunging.

It's fantastic to see their confidence and independence growing.

It has been great to welcome Bidwell Brook back to enjoy the Horse Harmony course and mechanical horse sessions. We look forward to the next group starting in a couple of weeks.

Manor Primary School have begun another six-week block. If you have an hour to spare between 10:30–11:30am, please speak to Sophie or Peggy about volunteering.



## Driving Day

Our recent driving session was another great success, with lots of smiles and growing confidence from participants. Thank you to Coach Rachel and the team for making it such a positive experience.

If you're interested in finding out more about carriage driving opportunities, please speak to us.



## Social Groups

Happy Hoof Club recently enjoyed a cosy film night with lasagna, which was a great success and a lovely way to spend time together socially.

Details of the next get-together can be found in the dates section.

The Accessible Social Club had a wonderful time making bird feeders, enjoying a creative and relaxed morning together.

A big thank you to Emma for organising such a lovely session.

Details of the next catch-up are in the dates section.

## Creative Writing Competition

Entries have now been submitted for the Creative Writing Competition — huge good luck to everyone who has entered! We have loved seeing the effort put in, especially by our Primary Changing Lives group. Well done to all involved.

## Attendance

If you have not attended this term and have not been in contact, your space will now be offered to someone else. We understand that circumstances change, but please do let us know if you will not be attending sessions, as we have volunteers and horses allocated and waiting.

We would encourage everyone to take their rubbish home with them.

If you are unable to do so, please put food waste in the food caddy and recycling in the green bin.

Ideally, however, please take your rubbish home.

## Fundraising

Enormous thanks to Bethany's sister for raising over £300 by having her hair cut — we are very grateful for this support.

We currently have two important fundraising projects in the pipeline:

Firstly, we are raising funds to purchase sit-on weighing scales to enable us to carry out termly rider weight checks more efficiently and comfortably. We have already received a generous £500 donation to start this fund — thank you very much to our supporter.

Secondly, we have recently purchased Jack, "the mechanical horse," from Southfield RDA Group in Dorset. A huge thank you to Southfield for loaning Jack to us for the past 10 years — he has been invaluable to our programme.

As Jack is now 17 years old, we feel the time is right to begin planning for a new mechanical horse within the next two years. This will be a significant fundraising project, with costs expected to exceed £60,000.

We believe this is an investment worth making for the next generation of participants. Jack has provided enormous benefits in rider development, confidence building and accessibility, and a new model would ensure we can continue offering these opportunities long into the future.

We warmly welcome any fundraising ideas, grant opportunities or contacts who may be able to support us with this project.

We are looking forward to a busy and exciting few months ahead.

Thank you for being part of Erme Valley RDA.



### Dates

- 11<sup>th</sup> March: NO AM RIDING SESSIONS
- 12<sup>th</sup> March: NO 6pm RIDING SESSION
- 14<sup>th</sup> March: NO RIDING SESSIONS
- 17<sup>th</sup> March: volunteer, trustee and coach training at Chard Equestrian
- 23<sup>rd</sup> March: Happy Hoof at The Brook 6pm – 8pm
- 24<sup>th</sup> March: ASC Easter Crafts
- 31<sup>st</sup> March: Tea with a pony
- 3<sup>rd</sup> April: 19<sup>th</sup> April – EASTER HOLIDAYS
- 9<sup>th</sup> April: Team quiz with pony club (invite only)
- 20<sup>th</sup> April : First Session back
- 28<sup>th</sup> April: Regionals at the Brook
- 2<sup>nd</sup> May : ICC at Bicton (invite only)
- 4<sup>th</sup> May : No Riding sessions
- 19<sup>th</sup> May : Lakefield regionals
- 25<sup>th</sup> May : HALF TERM
- 15<sup>th</sup> June – 20<sup>th</sup> June: Helper training week (Details to follow)
- 29<sup>th</sup> June – 4<sup>th</sup> July : coffee morning week
- 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> July : RDA NATIONALS at HARTPURY COLLEGE
- 16<sup>th</sup> July : AGM and BBQ
- 20<sup>th</sup> JULY : Last day of Term

