

Hampshire & Surrey Borders RDA

Riding for the Disabled Association

Welcome

Welcome to our Summer Newsletter. Our Chairman, Lesley Bull has had a busy 7 months since our January 2016 newsletter and changes have taken place within our RDA Group.

We are delighted to announce that from next term our Tuesday group riding sessions will be held at the Four Seasons Hotel, Dogmersfield. The move has become necessary for a variety of reasons and we look forward to using our new venue and forging a close working relationship with the Four Seasons equestrian centre manager, Anne Murray. Anne has been very welcoming and helpful as we have put our plans into place, and allowed us to try out some of her ponies to see how they respond to the

equipment we use in our riding lessons. Badshot Lea children will continue to ride at their school for the time being, while Tuesday group settles in. Watch this space!

Our year as Sainsbury's Fleet chosen charity came to an end and our friends from Sainsbury's attended a lesson at Pat's farm where they presented us with a cheque for £2,100 and together with other donations/pony rugs gave a total of £5,823 for their very successful and active year.

At the start of the year we had a break from lessons at Badshot Lea School due to building works at the school. We are pleased to be back to our routine lessons there and the children were delighted to see us and of course the ponies.



A very happy Jayden receiving the Silver Anniversary Shield for Achievement in July 2016

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Pet Service

Fundraising with a difference at All Saints Church, Dogmersfield, where Lesley was invited to give a talk about HSB RDA and all the collection money was donated to us as this year's charity. The church was full of dogs, cats, rabbits, guinea pigs, a donkey (Hannah, a veteran pet service attendee) and a tortoise called Sebastian, everyone one of them



superbly behaved throughout the short service. Two ponies that couldn't quite muster the courage to enter the church were waiting outside when the congregation came out and received a lot of attention from the children. A very generous amount was raised with the collection, which, with gift aid added, came to over £500. We are very grateful to the ministers and congregation of All Saints for this addition to our funds.

Zebon Copse

Janet again ran the refreshment stall at Zebon Copse summer fete in June and raised well over £300. We were asked if we'd like to hold a tombola stall at the event. Group volunteers stepped up to the plate with donations for our stall, and some were able to help us man the stall and raise £160 on the day.

Radio Interview—Lesley Bull

The article published in the local News and Mail outlining our need for help with fundraising and our search for a new venue caught the eye of a BBC Radio Surrey researcher, who then telephoned me one Thursday afternoon and asked if I would be prepared to be interviewed on the following Saturday's Breakfast Show.

At 6.30am on the Saturday morning I set off for Guildford in very dense fog. The fog meant that the directions I'd been sent were no help at all as I couldn't see road signs until I was on top of them and landmarks I'd been told to look out for were invisible, even the cathedral! I eventually found the BBC Radio Surrey building with minutes to spare, just time to take off my coat, sit down opposite the presenter and go!

James Cannon (pictured), the breakfast show host, straightaway put me at ease. While the music was playing out he outlined what he was going to ask me and what we would talk about. There was time for a quick joke about whether we could discuss RDA's official viewpoint on the EU 'in or out' and the music was finished. The interview absolutely flew by. When James brought it to close there hadn't been an opportunity to mention our need for a horsebox driver, a webmaster or a new venue, but my request for help with fundraising got a



James Cannon who interviewed Lesley

good amount of airtime. I had been able to tell the listeners how riding benefits the less able children that we have on our rides and spread the word about what a friendly group of people we are.

I'm glad I went to the studio for the interview - fog and all! It was an experience I probably won't get a chance to repeat, I got an insight into the workings of a radio studio and it was much easier to chat face to face with the presenter rather than over the telephone, just like talking to friend over a coffee. The viewing figures for our Facebook page rose considerably the following week, although, as I write, nobody with an interest in fund raising has come forward. Whatever happens, it was fun trying!

Adam & Mandi

A volunteer with both Tuesday and Thursday groups, Adam Mullins, ran the Fleet Half Marathon in March 2016. Of the 2582 race finishers, Adam came in an excellent 1153 place, inside his target time - although he did say the last hill had nearly killed him! - and raised over £300 in sponsorship money for us. Well done and thank you Adam.



Tuesday volunteer Mandi, and her friend Belinda Styles raised £110 for us at their recent Tropic Skin Care event.

We very much appreciate all individual efforts to fundraise for us. Thank you Mandi.



Sainsbury's Fundraising



Presentation to the HSBRDA Group

We were delighted when it was announced that we were to be Sainsbury's Fleet branch Charity of the Year for 2015-16. This year has now come to an end and we have been presented with a final cheque for £2,100, bringing the total amount raised to well over £5,000. More than £3,000 came from the sale of 5p plastic bags to customers and four intrepid Sainsbury's staff walked over the O2 Arena to raise another £450 in sponsorship. Sainsbury's staff members, Alison and Lucy in particular, have worked very hard to raise money for us (including being part of the O2 walk despite being afraid of heights!) during our year as their charity, have attended some fund raising events and a few of our Tuesday riding sessions too.

Along with the cheque we were presented with eight very smart Mark Todd lightweight turnout rugs, with the Sainsbury's logo printed on them, for our ponies. We are very grateful to Sainsbury's Fleet for all the money raised.



Alison, Lucy and colleagues cycling in-store for our charity



Smart new rugs for our ponies—presented by Peter Sims of Sainsbury's

Term End Farm Rides and Prizegiving

Both Tuesday and Thursday groups enjoyed their last rides of the school year, the traditional farm ride at Pat's. Although they both took place the same week, it was Thursday group that were most fortunate with the weather and the children went treasure hunting for all kinds of booty before showing the instructors what they'd found and getting a rosette for their efforts.



Thursday group presented the children with their awards for the year; each of them received an 'I Can' certificate, eight of them passed Grade One, two of them passed Grade Two and two passed Horse Care Grade One. Jayden received the Silver Anniversary Shield for Achievement (see front page), he has reached a very good standard of riding during his time with us, and Herkus, who was very reluctant to put a riding hat on at first and now is 'leader of the gang', received the Winchester Cup as the most improved rider.



The helpers from both groups enjoyed a picnic lunch at the end of another successful riding year.

Tuesday Group Farm Ride

The riders from Henry Tyndale School enjoyed their 'Flower Power' themed Farm Ride. We were able to go on a lovely hack with Pablo, Flash, Merlin and Smokey. All the riders received their Grade 1 Certificates together with a rosette. Cups for endeavour and achievement over the riding year were awarded to Gabriel, Kai and Florence. The children then picnicked under the gazebos so thoughtfully put up by Pat - and they were needed - sadly, the third ride did not get to ride because of the rain, but enjoyed their picnic all the same.



Greyhound Open Day

Greyhound Lifeline, based at Redfield's Cottage Farm where our ponies are kept, invited us to have a stall at their Open Day. We sold donated items - unwanted gifts, plants, books etc - and raised £88. It was an enjoyable (sunny!) day with dogs everywhere, mostly greyhounds of course, and a lot of fun competitions they could enter.

Special points of interest:

- Several children who started to ride with us were unable to stand or walk independently. Many have now made great progress and have achieved important milestones.
- The games we play while sitting on a pony involves bending and stretching and this is strengthening their core muscles without them knowing it—and it's fun.

Fleet Carnival Float



We are in the running to be Fleet Carnival's Charity of the Year for 2017, result not yet known. It was suggested that we could raise our public profile, and hopefully the number of votes for us, by entering a float in the 2016 carnival procession. The theme was Rio and we constructed a dressage arena complete with stuffed horse, rag doll (fully dressed in dressage riding outfit) rider, scoreboard and judge. Volunteers 'rode' hobby horses alongside and our banner was carried behind the float, just to make sure everyone in the crowd knew who we were. Our float got a lot of attention during the procession and was rewarded with second place in the motorised section of carnival floats. A lot of people helped with the construction of the float and finger's crossed it boosted the number of votes for us to be next year's carnival charity.

A splendid day was had by all and this selection of photos illustrates HSBRDAs imaginative contribution to the event.



Fundraising —Fleet Lions

Thank you to Fleet Lions from whom we were pleased to receive a cheque for £500. Fleet Lions generously helped us to replace all of our riding hats two years ago, but new EU and RDA Head Office regulations mean that we need to buy another new set. Lesley went along to a Fleet Lions' meeting to explain the situation and they were very happy to help with the expense of replacing our hats with a donation of £500.



Lions Funfest

All of the local area Lions groups come together to hold their annual Funfest at Yateley Manor School at the end of June. Lions groups support us well, Fleet Lions in particular, and we are keen to support Funfest as a 'thank you'. Disabled children from all over the area and their siblings are invited to attend free of charge, to play games, to have a go at typical funfair attractions and dance along to Elvis. HSBRDA stall had hobby horse races for those that wanted to 'ride' them and the children decorated biscuits, which went down well – literally!

We continue to need Fundraising help—it's what keeps us going and an essential part of our work. No unique skills are required – the main ingredient being enthusiasm and a willingness to give a little time. We all work together whether arranging events or collections, liaising with the Rotary, Lions, completing fund-raising forms, updating the website, etc. We are always looking for new ideas—so make your suggestions however bizarre and help us to maintain our HSBRDA Group into the future.

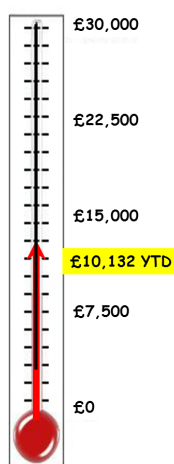


Our team at work—the ponies

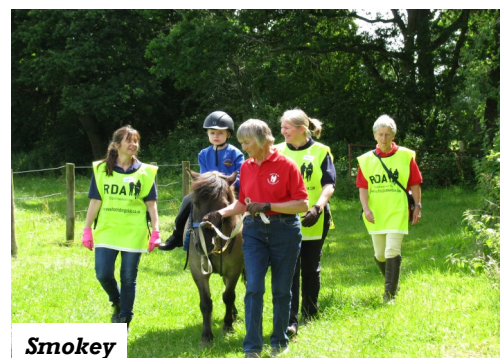


Pablo

Fundraising Target (Financial Year ending March 2017) (YTD end July 2016 - 4 months)



We're on the Web
www.hsbrda.co.uk



Smokey



Merlin

AND FINALLY

Thank you to all Sponsors, Supporters, Volunteers and Helpers who make it possible for us to keep running, to keep helping local children and help to make a difference year after year – we really do appreciate you all

Hampshire & Surrey Borders RDA

(Registered Charity No: 1074282)

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