

Trustees Report for period from 1st Sept 2020 to 31st Aug 2021. Brook Cottage Farm RDA Riding and Horse-Care The last year has been challenging and disrupted for all, in many ways, due to Covid. However, we still managed to run a reasonable number of sessions for our Thursday riders, which was already great. We have not managed to recommence with our monthly Saturday riders yet: many local riding schools have unfortunately closed down, so Brook Cottage Farm Riding School is experiencing really high demand for riding during the weekends and we don't wish to add to the stress-levels. Mindful of BHS and RDA Covid guidelines during August and September 2020, Caroline and Hester had made preparations during the last week of the summer holidays, calling in some participants' parents and carers for training sessions with the ponies and tack to give them the knowledge necessary to be able to side-walk and help their child or adult mount. Then we held a coffee and training morning for our new parent/carer volunteers and our usual volunteers on Thursday 10th September 2020, where much of the additional Covid-related paperwork was filled in. Sessions started back on Thursday 17th September 2020 with around half of participants riding and half doing horse-care. Sessions ran from 9am til 12 noon. We allowed an extra quarter of an hour between sessions to allow for hand-washing and wiping down the saddles and reins. Several parents were helping mount and side-walking with their children, which worked really well and a lot of them said how much they enjoyed being more involved. We managed to run 6 sessions up til half-term, the last session being on 22nd October. After half-term, we responded to a rising 'R' rate by cancelling sessions, as Covid was becoming a risk to our more vulnerable riders and volunteers. The Government (always a bit late!) then followed our lead by imposing another lockdown in early November. We made a little book called Twiggy's Christmas Surprise which was on sale in the café in the run-up to Christmas, when we were doing Jingle-Bell Carriage-Drives (which amazingly were allowed as it was all outdoors) for riding school clients. The sales of the book and other donations from kind riding school families raised around £700. Lockdown continued off and on, so we conducted no sessions from January until mid-April 2020. The riding school did a tremendous job keeping all the horses and ponies exercised. The driving team (Frank, Hester and Caroline) kept Bruce and Freddie driving during these months too, going out several times a week two people at a time, with Frank driving and Caroline or Hester often on a bike or on foot (so as to maintain social distancing.) In early April restrictions started to relax, so we filled in reams of paperwork to do with our re-start, and then invited volunteers to a coffee-morning with Covid-related training and discussion on Thursday 15th April. We had several new riders. Sessions started up again the following week on 22nd April with 23 participants and continued for 6 sessions until 27th May. Then, after half-term, we conducted sessions on the 10th and 17th of June and the 1st and 8th of July. During the last three mornings we did Dressage tests, a newly-devised 'Town and City Challenge' test, and Gymkhana Games, and all participants received Brook Cottage Farm RDA rosettes for their amazing riding. We wanted to conduct some summer horse-care and driving sessions for our RDA riders early on in the summer holidays but unfortunately the Strangles outbreak at the yard meant we had to cancel. In summary: 16 riding mornings went ahead with 5 sessions per morning. So that's 80 half hour sessions with on average 4 riders in each session, which makes around 320 individual rides...so I think we can be proud of that. Looking forward to this term: We have our RDA volunteers' coffee and training morning scheduled for Thursday 16th September, and our first session back, with quite a few new riders, scheduled for Thursday 23rd September, and Covid-permitting, we should now be able to run all the way through to Christmas. We hope to be able to support the two other RDA groups which are now operating at Brook Cottage Farm, with help whenever we can. There is potential for joint fund-raising efforts too. We are hoping to be able to run a couple of events soon, but for the moment we will wait and see how things go. Several wonderful donations were made, from Leanne, Lindsay Loxley and all the donations from the bucket in the café. These totalled and have been gladly received as we have been unable to run fund-raisers. We were lucky to have

an article about our group in the July Bishop's Stortford flyer. This led directly to a newly-retired lady contacting us wanting to become a volunteer, so any publicity we can muster is always worth it.

Carriage-Driving Because carriage-driving clients have to be physically quite close-up to the carriage-driving coach, Covid restrictions meant that it took longer for carriage-driving to be able to resume. But as soon as RDA said it was able to go ahead (with restrictions in place, such as time spent on carriage, masks, cleaning of harness etc) Hester did all the paperwork and sent it off. Amber came for her first session back on Friday 18th June, driving all the way round the village with Frank and Hester. She enjoyed four more sessions until past the end of term. We have a new driver who has been passed on to us from Waverley driving group which closed down: Connor, who is ten. He has enjoyed two sessions a week through July and August, driving both Freddie and Bruce around courses of cones in the field and in the menage. Restrictions due to the Strangles outbreak have meant we can't go around the village at the moment, but we are hoping to resume that soon. From September, we would like to offer a carriage-driving session every half-term to all our regular riders. Our aim over the next few months is to find more RDA drivers who would like to come on a Tuesday or Friday morning and also to train more of our volunteers in the skills necessary to be part of the carriage-driving team. We had a visit from our new regional rep who is called Anne Barrows. We had a discussion with her about the possibility of doing pleasure-drives for our clients, through RDA. Pleasure or therapy-driving is where a participant sits in the back of the carriage with their carer or parent, and they just enjoy the ride, and look at the scenery. Over the years we have done many of these with riding-school clients and families and Hester's Airbnb Experience, so we know it works well. Anne talked to Eileen, the new head of Carriage-Driving and they got back to us, saying that RDA don't approve of pleasure drives and the only driving RDA allow is when there is one client in the front next to the coach, holding their own reins (which are often not attached to the horse at all!) and chatting with the coach. We pointed out that many of our participants would rather not hold the fake reins, and in some cases will not necessarily want to talk with the coach either, but would prefer to sit with their parent or carer and enjoy a stress-free trip. Our request was turned down. Caroline, Hester and Louise believe that RDA are not being inclusive in expecting all clients to sit in the front, hold the reins and chat, so we plan to continue the discussion! We will of course be able to offer pleasure and therapy-driving to our RDA riders, but it will not be through RDA, it will be through the Riding School and will be using the Riding School insurance. (We think it is a shame that those trips out will not count towards RDA's total.) In early summer, Hester went to Ashfields and retrieved the large carriage that we bought from them (with the RDA grant money) a couple of years ago. Hester, Caroline and Louise's aim is to find a very steady horse (a Shire or Clydesdale) that is big enough to pull it, and use it for pleasure and therapy driving around the village. If it turns out that we can never use that carriage for RDA, then Hester will buy the carriage from RDA and use it for the Riding School where it will raise lots of money! We were lucky, in June, to receive a donation of a pony-sized harness, in very good condition, from another driving group that was closing down. It fits Freddie perfectly. The grant money that was left over has been recently spent (with the kind permission of RDA) on carriage-maintenance costs, a new harness for Bruce (as his old one has signs of wear), some new driving cones, and a carriage-cover.

Financial Year 1st September 2020 to 31st August 2021

Previous Financial Year Brought Forward Balance **11882.23**

As At 31/8/2020

	RECEIVED	Date	Ref
Panto			
Panto - can GIFT AID			
Go Fund Me			
Gymkhana			
Pony Plod			
Grants Hub RDA			
Furneux Pelham Fun Day			
Tea Takings	110	13/07/2021	Direct
Grants			
Donation Polo Club			
Donation Driving Event Gift			
Donations Loxley	100	18/11/2020	Cheque
Liberated at Ltd donation	300	24/12/2020	Direct
Twiggy donations	320	06/01/2021	Direct
Claudette Henrys ref Lucia	20	08/01/2021	Direct
Joa Bell ref Lucia	50	11/01/2021	Direct
Carol Smith ref Lucia	100	11/01/2021	Direct
R Firbrother ref RobClareFarbrother	150	11/01/2021	Direct
SE Phipps ref Lucia	10	11/01/2021	Direct
Janet James ref Lucia	10	13/01/2021	Direct
Russell Savory re Kay Smith	20	18/01/2021	Direct
AFTS receipt from Cofunds Nominee 177779/Rfb/Aegon	0.6	19/01/2021	Direct
White D/AD Gold ref Lucia	30	20/01/2021	Direct
Knight L ref Letitia	20	25/01/2021	Direct
HMRC Charities Gift Aid ref ZD07248	102.59	01/02/2021	Direct
Loft donation	75	12/03/2021	100003
Edward Wills ref car seats	15	16/03/2021	Direct
I Shepherd ref Twiggy	11.83	06/04/2021	Direct
Donation from Popham NR&PA	53	07/05/2021	Direct
Donation Yarrien	139	26/04/2021	Direct
Eldrett LV First Aid	53	05/05/2021	Direct
Gransbury CJ&M First Aid	53	05/05/2021	Direct
Flyer Group First Aid	53	05/05/2021	Direct
Smith LKA First Aid	53	05/05/2021	Direct
HMRC Charities GIFT AID CLAIMED	243.52	06/05/2021	Direct
L Goldklang First Aid	53	17/05/2021	Direct
GrayM&J First Aid	53	17/05/2021	Direct
Donations Caff HT	45	08/07/2021	Direct
Contribution to Hat Fittings			
<i>Income Totals</i>	2243.54		

	SPENT		
Panto			
Go Fund Me			
Gymkhana			
Pony Plod			
Carriage Service to HT	255	19/04/2021	Direct
Carriage Assessments			
DBS Checks			
Training (First Aid)	636	29/04/2021	card
Training Refund			
Pony Hire (LS) Sep to Oct 20	729	19/11/2020	Direct
Pony Hire (LS) Aug 20	105		
Pony Hire (LS) 22/04/2021 to 31/08/2021	720		
Vets Fees			
Insurance	537.50	12/04/2021	Direct
Small workplace kit Medi K performance (reimbursed CY)	38.36	07/09/2020	Direct
Grooming Kit (various) & Saddlepad Harry Hall (reimbursed CY)	71.96	07/09/2020	Direct
Van Hage	49.76	10/12/2020	card
Books & Postage to HT	27.63	19/04/2021	Direct
Refund of Grant from RDA Hub	431	17/08/2021	Direct
<i>Expenditure Totals</i>	3601.21		

B/f plus Income Less Expenditure = C/f 10524.56

Bank Statement Balance 10524.56 As at 08/04/2021

Adjustment for Not yet on statement

	10524.56