

# **COURTMEADOW GROUP RIDING FOR THE DISABLED ASSOCIATION**

incorporating Carriage Driving

**Charity No 1203735**

## **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025**

We are a small Charity that was started in 1977. Our aim is to provide riding as therapy to children and young adults, aged 3 to 19. Disabilities are wide ranging, those that can be seen – these can include riders with Downs Syndrome, epilepsy, cerebral palsy, spina bifida to name a few – and those that can't – severe behavioural difficulties, autism, ADHD, ADD, to name a few.

Regardless of disability, our young riders are treated with respect and sensibility. They are encouraged to progress at their own speed in a fun and safe environment. It is well known that riding develops balance, muscle strength and self-confidence. Riding also provides a physical and emotional outlet, and improves sensory development, co-ordination, independence and self-awareness. Learning to ride gives a new dimension to otherwise restricted lives and the principal aim of our Group is to encourage and develop each and every student's skills and confidence.

Every week during term time over 40 volunteers turn out in all weathers to help, either in the indoor school, or in the small 'classroom' where our students learn about tack and horse care, or with the very young newcomers receiving their first introduction to ponies, hard hats and the new sensation of sitting on a saddle.

We do not charge for our sessions. This was decided when we were founded, and we have always maintained this stance. We currently have four sessions - one for our independent riders who come with parents/grandparents or carers - and three sessions with young riders from three different SEN schools in both East and West Sussex. These children generally stay with us for the year but there is a small number who only stay with us for a term, or at the school's insistence for half a term. This decision is taken so that as many children as possible can experience the sensation of riding. In the past we have had children riding with us for several years, entering competitions at local, regional and national level, but alas, the general school syllabus has changed so much recently and the schools now prefer that all of their students have the opportunity to ride, hence their comparatively short time with us. This of course means that we are, at present, unable to enter our riders into these competitions as they are unable to reach the necessary standard. We would dearly love this to change, but the decision is down to the individual schools. In the past we were known as a competitive Group and we are still regarded as such throughout the region.

All the children do however manage to take proficiency tests and they receive certificates and badges for their efforts. They also receive specially designed rosettes at the end of each term as a reward for their hard work. These are awarded after a fun gymkhana in the indoor school – competition is key! Father Christmas has been known to visit with presents as well.

We were seriously affected during the Covid pandemic, and as a result we could not function for some 18 months. We have slowly rebuilt our sessions and we are now giving lessons to over 50 children and young adults a year. Only months before the pandemic we had to move premises due to the fact that the previous owner had sold their land for redevelopment. We were fortunate to find another stables, and this owner is particularly supportive of us, so much so that he hasn't raised our rates since 2019.

Some 20 years ago we were fortunate to be bequeathed a sum of money. We have in general kept this amount for capital expenses, such as two new storage facilities, a horsebox and equipment. After the pandemic and coinciding with the difficulty of fund raising, the Trustees decided to use some of this capital for day to day running costs. We have maintained reserves of £40,000 which we would ideally like to keep to build a classroom, but space at our current stables is at a premium so this will have to wait.

Our largest expense (£6,940) is the hire of ponies and facilities. Our volunteers used to bring in their own ponies but unfortunately this is no longer possible.

Our Group is run by our 11 elected Trustees. We have 8 Trustees with set responsibilities, and 3 without specific roles. The attendance rate at our Trustees' meetings stands at 86.36%.

We currently have a waiting list with two schools and some ten independent riders on it. Had we the extra income and additional volunteers we believe it would be possible to run another session. Demand for riding is increasing due to the more efficient diagnosis of SEN children and young adults, and the knowledge that riding is so beneficial for their wellbeing. We see the difference in the riders over the course of a term, and the teachers at one school in particular that caters for children with severe behavioural issues are amazed by the change in the riders demeanour.

We are proud that one of our Coaches was awarded the 'Coach of the Year' award at the South East Region AGM in 2024.

**Court Meadow Group Riding for the Disabled Association**  
**(Registered Charity No; 1203735)**

**Statement of financial activities for the year ending 31st March 2025**

	General Fund 2024-25	General Fund 2023-24
<b>INCOME AND EXPENDITURE</b>		
incoming resources		
Donations	£ 5,481	£ 3,907
Deposit interest	£ 2,872	£ 1,329
Fundraising	£ 1,065	£ 816
Sale of assets	£ 62	£ 63
Admin	£ -	£ 48
<b>Total Incoming resources</b>	<b>£ 9,480</b>	<b>£ 6,162</b>
Resources expended		
Insurance	£ 459	£ 473
Tremaines - hire of ponies and facilities	£ 6,940	£ 8,100
Subscriptions RDA Membership	£ 713	£ 681
Equipment	£ 489	£ -
Admin, gifts, AGM, training	£ 616	£ 450
Children's fun day	£ 20	
Clothing and hats for riders	£ -	
DBS Checks	£ 184	
Lloyds Bank monthly charges	£ 10	
<b>Total resources expended</b>	<b>£ 9,431</b>	<b>£ 9,704</b>
<b>Net outgoing/incoming</b>	<b>£ 48</b>	<b>-£ 3,542</b>
<b>Balance brought forward To 1st April 2024</b>	<b>£ 58,982</b>	
<b>Balance carried forward To 1st April 2025</b>	<b>£ 59,030</b>	