

Appeal Update September 2024

Update

Following the success of our appeal launched in April we have now raised over £24,000.00 through donations from our very generous supporters, fundraising events and some grant funding.

Thank you everyone.

We are all working extremely hard to continue to raise the extra funds which we need to both improve our existing service and expand on the services we provide and the community we reach out to. These 5 months have shown us we can deliver on our objectives.

What are our objectives?

- To deliver equine therapy through riding lessons and equine based therapy to adults and children with additional needs
- To learn and be given the opportunity to achieve for our riders, volunteers and staff
- To enable them to have physical activity and very importantly have FUN

Why do we need to survive?

We offer riding and equine therapy for people with disabilities across our region enabling them to achieve both physical and mental health benefits. This is through our equine services for both our participants and volunteers.

We run a very successful and unique supported volunteer programme.

We offer support for persons living with Dementia and their family or carers through our Tea with a Pony service.

We offer therapy sessions in the community through a visit with our therapy pony Acer.

We offer the opportunity for volunteering which provides a sense of purpose and achievement. Our volunteers become part of our community, make friends and benefit both physically and mentally.

We are one of the largest purpose-built RDA riding centres in the country and the services we provide are both unique and inspirational.

We offer health, social and employment opportunities in our region.

We offer the opportunity to volunteer with its associated benefits to the individuals

Who will deliver?

The Board of Trustees, the dedicated staff team and our army of dedicated volunteers who assist within the Centre, or further afield through fundraising.

How?

Through our recovery plan we will ensure the future of the Centre.

We need to:

- 1) Increase our activities and turnover
- 2) Increase our equine team with some larger weight-carrying horses
- 3) Continue to carry out maintenance projects and look at how we become more energy efficient
- 4) Continue to source and access grant funding
- 5) Continue and improve our fundraising via
 - Business sponsorship
 - Individuals
 - Trusts and foundations
 - Statutory

Timescale

Short term goals (within 12 months)

- Increase the number of riding lessons and associated therapy
- Increase the use of Blackberry our Mechanical Horse
- Develop and expand our Supported Volunteers' programme
- Increase our staff team to enable us to deliver the above
- Carry out essential maintenance projects
- Increase our external community visits with Acer our therapy pony
- Develop a planned series of fundraising events
- Continue to access available grant funding
- Expand and recruit to our board of trustees.

Long term goals (within 1-2 years)

- Become more energy efficient and sustainable
- Improve and modernise our facilities
- Develop a sensory trail
- Expand the services we offer

Where we are now

We have a number of grants in the pipeline and have recently been successfully awarded a grant from Middlesbrough Council to repair and restore our corrals which at present are flooding regularly. We have won the Your NRG North East Giving Back Initiative through a public vote.

Our fundraising events are proceeding at a pace with an event with Nicola Wilson, our Patron, raising £1025. We have an online auction ending this month with arts and crafts which have very kindly been donated to raise money for our cause.

We have many more fundraising events organised for the next few months including our annual Fun Dog Show.

We have advertised for new Trustees and have had a number of applicants who are presenting with a range of skills and experience necessary to expand our existing Board.

I have received permission to expand the operations of our Board with the creation of subgroups with a membership of user groups, service users and experts in their field to allow us to expand our engagement with the community and be driven by their needs.

With the funds we have received so far, we have done a number of things some of which include:

- New electric fencing for our fields driven by solar panels to allow us to manage the grazing of our equine team and keep them in optimum health
- New bridles for all the equine team
- A new saddle
- New waterproof and warm coats for our staff team to enable them to manage the horses and their duties during the cold winter months
- New pony rugs
- Carry out maintenance work

We continue our search to expand our equine team to enable us to increase the provision of lessons.

And the list goes on!

Jackie Rubin
Chair of Trustees

September 2024