

Annual Yard Report April 2010 - March 2011

Horses and Yard Management

This year saw the arrival, well, really the return of 1 new horse - Maisie! The cute foal is now a full up standing hunter type and is the weight carrier we needed if a bit of a stretch on the hips! The return of Maisie in January 2011 was a much needed boost after the loss of Penny in September & shortly after Maisie's arrival, Red. Both Red & Penny gave a long and valuable service to WRDA and still talked about by volunteers, staff and riders alike.

Ben continues to be in good health and the medication for Cushings disease is serving him well and despite the unheard of temperatures of down to -15 all the horses did well through the cold snap. They lived out in the corrals and outdoor school and had plenty of haylage to eat and kept well rugged up and coped surprisingly well.

Intelligent Worming have supported our worming programme, initially providing a quote & programme for the year and then offering to sponsor our worming for 2010. They continue to support us with an individual programme for each horse and providing egg counts and wormers at just a cost of £5.00 per horse to cover the initial management fee.

Pennine started renting the fields at the other side of Wood Lane with a view to us producing our own hay and haylage and providing more grazing. We brought contractors in to plough and sow the field with grass and requested quotes for post and rail fencing. WRDA is very grateful to Pennine for taking on the extra land.

Riders and ride sessions

WRDA continued to provide ride sessions to pupils from Oakfield Park, Holly Bank and a group from Hendaal Resource (PBS) who do riding & horse care on Tuesday afternoon whilst Highfield School continued with ASDAN Towards Independence and returning pupils have a progression route onto ASDAN Transition Challenge. Pennine Community students have achieved RDA Grade tests and ASDAN TI and instructors continue to encourage riders to take part in Grade tests and in-house dressage competitions.

Volunteers

Volunteer numbers have remained consistent and placements for college and school pupils have continued to be high. Volunteers have supported us in their usual way with help for the weekly ride sessions, assisting fund raising activities and Regional Qualifier held at Port Royal Equestrian Centre. We are very grateful for the time and commitment our volunteers invest in WRDA.

Staff

Sarah Thornton, Leanne Baines, Janet English and Sarah Harrison have provided riders with stimulating ride sessions, attended regular Instructor meetings, provided riders with additional activities to keep them inspired and aiming for new goals and additional cover for checks on weekends and evenings when cover is needed. Sheena Woodard is now supporting Sarah on Wednesday afternoons, taking a weekly session as a volunteer instructor and also helping with cover when Sarah has been on holiday. Hannah Ferry joined our team in January on the Future Jobs Fund scheme which was kindly supported and financed by Groundworks. Hannah provided support for a 6 month period to Pennine students working towards horse care and riding awards. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their hard work and support over the year.

Chris Rush provided supervision for Saturday morning routine duties, Sarah and Janet continued to provide evening sessions for riders – a switch to Mondays did take a bit of getting used to!

Education

The education programmes now extend to the following choices: 10-12 week short programmes achieving 1 PSD unit or the RDA Green Card, Work Start – a 2 year programme achieving 3 PSD units & C&G Level 1 Certificate in Equine Skills and personalised programmes for young people who do not fit into a 'box'. We now have Centre Approval for ASDAN Entry level 1-3 PSD, C&G Entry Level Skills for Working Life and C&G Level 1 certificate in Equine Skills providing an excellent progression route for Pennine Community students and young people from the LA.

Other Events

The facilities were also used by British Dressage, West Yorkshire Horse Play, Phoenix Charity and local riders.

Carol Blake
Yard Manager