



# CLWYD SPECIAL RIDING CENTRE AUTUMN UPDATE

## SEPTEMBER 2022

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## CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF IMPROVING LIVES THROUGH HORSES

The past two years have been an uncertain time for us all and no more so for our charity. We have had many challenges to overcome on top of the pandemic, but we are bouncing back and finding our stride again as we celebrate our 40th year of providing equine therapy-based activities to those with additional needs.

It is a testament to our loyal staff, trustees, volunteers, donors and supporters - and not to forget our incredible horses and ponies - that we are here today sharing our latest news and plans for, hopefully, the next 40 years. We would be delighted to have you involved with the next chapter of our story...

## BANGOR-ON-DEE CHARITY RACE DAY *40 years!*

We are honoured that HRH The Princess Royal in her capacity as President of the Riding for the Disabled Association, accepted CSRC's invitation to attend our 40th anniversary Charity Race Day at Bangor-on-Dee Racecourse on 28th September.

The Princess has visited our Centre on three occasions over the past 40 years to mark developments that have taken place. We are most grateful for her continued support and interest in the work that we do.

We would like to thank Bangor-on-Dee Racecourse for running the Charity Race Day in support of CSRC. Also, to the many businesses, sponsors and supporters who purchased hospitality tables and tickets for this special anniversary event. We hope you backed a winner!



In July, we were thrilled to open up the Centre for an afternoon of corporate hospitality, to welcome both existing and new faces from local businesses and organisations.

The day also marked the formal opening of the Memorial Wall - a lasting memorial to Anne Sopwith, founder of CSRC. Donated by the Sopwith family and the graphic design work supported by John and Matt Hayes, of Champions (UK) plc, it charts the story of the Centre's inception through to the present day.

We were honoured to have Ed Bracher, former CEO of the Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA), as our special guest to officially open the Wall, in the presence of the Mayor of Wrexham, Councillor Brian Cameron.

It was inspiring to watch the demonstrations from our young riders and to feel the buzz of excitement around the Centre again. The day was a great success with local businesses pledging support and investment that will help some of our new projects come to fruition.

Above, opening of Memorial Wall: L-R Victoria Everall (Trustee), Anne Warner (President of Chester Lions), Ed Bracher, Ann Lambert (former CSRC Chair) and Mayor of Wrexham, Councillor Brian Cameron.





# STAFF UPDATES

**Sara Henney** is our new Volunteer Coordinator. Sara joins us from Coleg Cambria, bringing a wealth of knowledge and is making great strides in the engagement and recruitment of volunteers.

**Tracey Pearson** joined us in March as our Fundraiser on a contracted basis. Tracey has worked wonders generating new funding opportunities and leading on some of our key events for our 40th anniversary.

**Alice Brown** joined our Equine Team as a weekend groom and is a great asset to the team.

**Lucy Brookes** from *Spirit Hippotherapy* is delivering our hippotherapy sessions every Friday.

**Sally McIntyre** and **Casey McDougall** - *Partners in Equine* - continue to use the Centre for Equine Learning and Therapy (CELT) offering support to people with multiple profound needs.

# CHANGES TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

In November 2021, our then Chair, **Ann Lambert** and Vice Chair, **Kath Hodgkinson**, announced they were stepping down after many years of dedication to the charity. But as the pandemic stretched beyond the end of the year, they stayed on until they finally waved goodbye in March 2022. CSRC is forever grateful for their dedication to the charity that remains close to their hearts.

We now have nine trustees on the board - our newest appointments being: **Keith Thompson**, **Julie Cowley**, **Norma Shaw** and **Angela Roberts**.

The position for a new Operations Director remained unfilled. Trustee, Julie Cowley, offered to step in to oversee the role for four months to help support the team in moving forward our re-opening plans. We will be re-advertising the position of Operations Director very soon.

# "ONE WORD... HAPPINESS!"

That's the one word used by a holiday participant to describe her holiday experience at CSRC.

After a two-year break - due to the pandemic - we have warmly welcomed back our RDA Holiday Groups. RDA participants from all around the UK come to stay in our accessible holiday accommodation for a short break in the Welsh countryside.

During their stay, they hire our horses for riding activities and visit local attractions. For many, this is the only holiday they may have, and for parents and carers, they stay in the comfort of knowing the Centre is fully equipped to provide a safe environment for their loved ones.

Income from RDA holidays is a key earner for the Centre and one we have not been able to benefit from over the last two years. It's not just the CSRC staff and horses who have missed seeing the holidays, they have missed coming here too...

**"Delightful in every way. An exciting experience for riders, carers and volunteers alike. We have had a superb time."**

*Foresters Horn RDA Group*

**"The stuff that memories are made of!"**

*Buckenham House RDA Group*

**"We've had a wonderful time here and so pleased to be back again. Loved by us all."**

*Shacks Barn & Buckingham RDA Group*



## TY GWYLIAU HOLIDAY LET

Clwyd Special Riding Centre's self-contained, self-catering holiday accommodation is available for bookings of up to 18 people.

Located in Llanfynydd, North Wales, this fully accessible holiday let offers simply furnished, no frills accommodation for a unique getaway.

[Visit our website for more details](#)

# PUTTING OUR BEST HOOF FORWARD

The future is looking brighter, well brighter than it was in March 2020!

We have made great strides in the re-opening of the Centre. Our weekly sessions of riding, carriage driving, mechanical horse and hippotherapy are well established again, with room to extend them further to offer more places. Volunteer recruitment to support the increase of participants is going well. We are also piloting more mechanical horse sessions on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

As an approved Riding for the Disabled (RDA) and British Horse Society (BHS) Centre, we are looking at opportunities to maximise the use of our amazing facilities to open up the Centre to more exciting activities.

We have many projects on our wish list, from upgrading the windows and refurbishing our holiday accommodation, to replacing our ageing tractor. Contact us if you think you can help on 01352 770 446 or email: [info@clwydspecialridingcentre.co.uk](mailto:info@clwydspecialridingcentre.co.uk).

Our indoor/outdoor arenas, 2km all-weather track, CELT building and common room are all available for private hire; as is our mechanical horse to qualified coaches.

Our holiday accommodation is being opened up for private hire outside of the RDA holiday season to general enquiries. Its location beside Offa's Dyke makes it the perfect retreat for walkers and cyclists trekking the Welsh countryside. Visit our website for details.

## Thank you!

From everyone at CSRC and all who benefit from the services we offer; we want to say a heartfelt *THANK YOU* to anyone who has supported us in the past and those who support us today.

To steal a phrase, 'every little helps' - whether it's a donation of time, money or materials; we are deeply grateful of your support. Pockets are being squeezed tighter for everyone, but without your help we would not be able to offer the services we do, and participants like Rachel Harry (below) would not have achieved her personal 40th birthday challenge.

Rachel Harry, one of our mechanical horse participants, recently shared the incredible story of her rehabilitation to LeaderLive. Visit our website's News page to read how she defied all odds to achieve her 40th birthday challenge whilst raising funds for CSRC. It is truly inspiring!



Rachel's challenge is just one of many incredible fundraising events completed in aid of CSRC, from marathons, to rowing and even bungee jumping. Thank you all!



## HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE TO SOMEONE'S LIFE

Volunteers are a vital part of the success of Clwyd Special Riding Centre. Our riding sessions are run solely by volunteers and we often require up to three volunteers per rider. We currently support around 87 participants a week.

We need volunteers for all equine based activities, and for site maintenance, gardening and at events. In return, volunteers learn new skills, make new friends and can themselves benefit from enhancing their own well-being.

No prior experience with horses is needed, we provide training on site. Whatever your skills, you will have something to offer. Volunteers must be over 14 years of age.

Contact Sara Henney, Volunteer Coordinator: [volunteering@clwydspecialridingcentre.co.uk](mailto:volunteering@clwydspecialridingcentre.co.uk) 01352 770 446



# CSRC NEWS



## RDA NATIONAL CHAMPS

After a two-year pandemic break, CSRC RDA Group were thrilled to have six of our participants qualify to compete at the 2022 RDA National Championships.

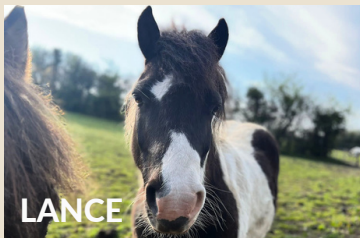
They overcame the searing heatwave and, like true professionals, kept their cool and rode and drove brilliantly to achieve two 2nd places and a 6th place. Our very own horses, Mack and Moo, even stepped in last minute to enable competitors from other RDA groups to compete - that's the RDA way!

Sadly, the heatwave meant the last day of the event was cancelled, meaning some of our riders missed out on competing. We are extremely proud of all of our riders and ponies who qualified. Well done!

## CELEBRATING OUR VOLUNTEERS



Volunteers' Week is an annual celebration of the difference millions of people make across the UK through volunteering. As a token of our gratitude and to recognise the fantastic contribution made by our volunteers, everyone received a *thank you* cookie kindly donated by CSRC supporters, Gerrards Bakery.



## NEW BOYS ON THE BLOCK

Meet Lancelot, Super Ted and Benson - our newest members of the equine team.

As our more mature horses and ponies retire from RDA life, we look for new horses and ponies to join the CSRC family. Having horses of differing heights and breeds allows us to be more inclusive.

Lance, Ted and Benson will be joining sessions soon.

Visit our new website to meet all our handsome boys and to find out how you can sponsor or adopt them.

CLWYD SPECIAL RIDING CENTRE'S CHRISTMAS FAIR IS BACK!

Join us for a day of festive fun

10am - 1pm  
at Llanfynydd,  
LL11 5HN.

Registered Charity no. 118241



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