

HEART

HILLTOP EQUINE AND RURAL THERAPIES

VISION

An Equine and Rural Therapies Centre in Herefordshire incorporating high impact equine interventions, equine facilitated learning programmes, land management and rural crafts.

ACTIVITIES

TheHorseCourse - High Impact Equine Intervention for people with serious problems who are "stuck" or disengaged from talk-based support. We teach, rehearse and repeat key resilience skills based around a clear methodology to bring about a theory of change

RDA Group – Approved Riding For The Disabled Group. Carriage Driving, Riding and Ground Work Skills.

Rural and Land Based Activities incorporating permaculture principles, ecology, growing & harvesting, crafts and land management.

Supported volunteering program to engage and encourage local community and business involvement.

CONTACT

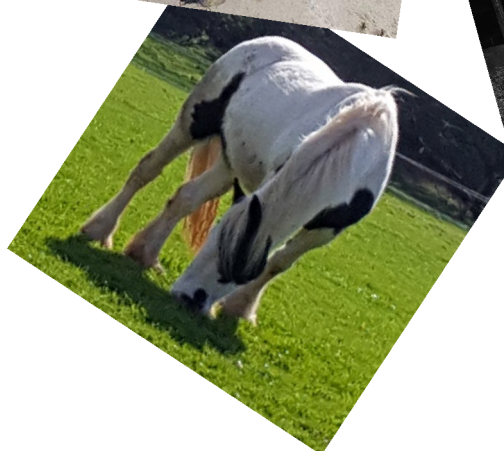
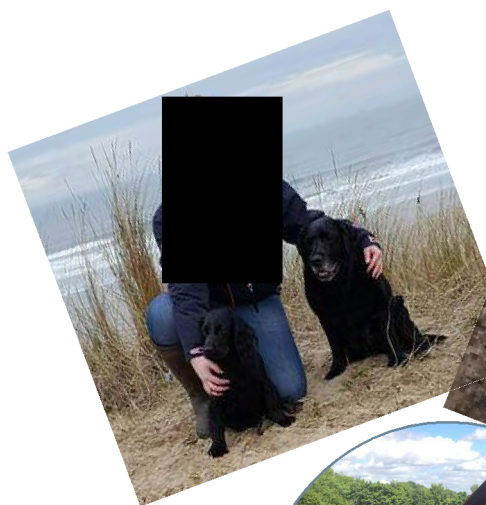
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MEET OUR HERD



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE VISION

An Equine and Rural Therapies Centre in Herefordshire incorporating high impact equine interventions, equine facilitated learning programmes, land management and rural crafts.

Mission Statement

HEART aims to maximise positive therapeutic benefit, individual achievement, self-development and enjoyment for disabled, disadvantaged and local community children and adults. Through the commitment of trained facilitators, coaches, volunteers and horses and through our well-evidenced, high impact equine assisted interventions with feedback in-the-moment, HEART enables people with physical, mental or emotional challenges achieve their goals.

BACKGROUND

The ideas for "HEART" (Hilltop Equine and Rural Therapies), was born from a combination of skills, passion and commitment of Chairperson Barbara Millman and daughter Lisa Millman.

The opportunity to purchase land which had been their life-long dream came to fruition in 2018 and they wanted to share this gift with others who would benefit.

Barbara has been a disabled rights advisor to Herefordshire Council and other local organisations for a number of years, as well as a hotelier and was chairperson for Herefordshire Centre for Independent Living who piloted the now national Direct Payments Scheme.

Her passion for horses, animals and the land also forefront in her daughter Lisa whose experience in business managements, equine therapy and finance with the driving force to motive and enthuse others to join them in making their dream of a community based, equine and rural therapy organisation a reality.

Living on site is an essential part of being able to "make this happen" for Barbara, to live an active and fruitful life as well as essential in the management of the many types of livestock that will make HEART their home.

Lisa has been a volunteer within RDA (Riding for The Disabled) since 1992. In 1997 she qualified as a carriage driving coach and then riding coach. Between 2013 – 2017 she also ran a dedicated RDA Centre servicing over 250 riders each week at Holme Lacy, Herefordshire However, she always felt there was "something missing"! and she wanted to offer a more compassionate and relationship based equine opportunity to disabled and disadvantaged people in the area.

Outside of her charitable experience, Lisa was drawn to working with the horses in a more natural way and became a student of the Parelli Natural Horsemanship programme and well as other independent study and research into developing partnerships with the horses she worked with and this led to a journey of self-discovery.

ETHOS

At the heart of everything is an ethos of compassion, collaboration and transparency which flows through from the way in which we treat our herd of horses and other animals, our participants other organisations and each other. An in-depth understanding of personality traits and clear strategies to support and develop the wellbeing of our participants, volunteers & staff is key to the impact that we strive to achieve.

THE SITE

Based in Upton Bishop just 1 mile from the M50 Junction 3, the site sits on 21 acres of flat and sloping grassland with mature trees and hedges on and along various field boundaries with an 8 stable equine yard and outdoor manege with access off B4221.

KEY AIMS

The points below are some of the KEY AIMS, inherent in delivering the strategic business plan.

- Delivering quality and effective equine intervention facilitation, carriage driving opportunities and rural/land-based activities
- Gradually broadening the services offered to include reaching out to participants from within Armed Services personnel recovering from Trauma or injury, the children of armed services personnel, NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) young people, disabled and disadvantaged members of the local community and those for whom talk therapy has proven ineffective.
- Becoming a hub for "The Horse Course" equine intervention and employing other THC facilitators.
- Increased community engagement through volunteering and the creation of a supported volunteering programme
- Becoming a financially sustainable charitable Centre with each year delivering a surplus or at worst a break-even point within 4-years of trading.

VISION

- HEART is a local community-based charity developing robust and valued volunteer teams from within the local and wider community, working together with staff to provide a high-quality service for the benefit of local participants.
- HEART values the input of people at all levels and is positive about their achievements – whether as a participant, volunteer or facilitator.
- HEART emphasises the importance of training for safety, progression and achievement – for both participants and for volunteers
- HEART values the input of its participants and volunteers in deciding its future.
- HEART is accessible to all – whether as a participant or a volunteer.
- HEART is professionally run, communicates openly and transparently at all levels.

NATURE OF CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

The Horse Course Program (THC)

(see www.thehorsecourse.org for THC Evaluation Report & Youth Outcomes Summary)

Outside of her charitable experience, Lisa was drawn to working with the horses in a more natural way and after much research, started following the Parelli Natural Horsemanship programme (a world-wide program founded in 1981 by Pat Parelli to help raise the level of horsemanship for the benefit of horses and the people who love them), to build partnerships with the horses she worked with and this led to a journey of self-discovery.

The Horse Course is a distinct methodology with a well-defined programme and a clear theory of change where the success relies strongly on the style and quality of the horsemanship. It is a high impact equine-assisted intervention programme for participants with serious problems.

Participants are by referral only from schools and PRU's (Pupil Referral Units), Social Services, NHS Mental Health Services, Troubled Families, Offender Services and other specialist agencies.

Our participants have serious problems and referred to us because they are "stuck" or disengaged from talk-based support. We teach, rehearse and repeat key resilience skills in an intensive and challenging, but fun, 5-day programme with feedback in-the-moment from specially trained horses and 1-to-1 facilitator support. There is no discussion of the past. All sessions take place in action with the horses, there is no classroom content or talk-based therapy/counselling.

The development of skills is embedded in working towards a horsemanship goal of Parelli Level 1. Tasks are guided by the facilitator and the horses are selected and trained to provide especially clear and easily observed physical feedback. The methodological focus is on social/emotional shifts being made "in the moment" in response to difficulties encountered. Participants are unmounted handlers, learning to work in partnership with the horses on the ground. The course employs an approach using a series of specific tasks as tools to develop positive habits and specifically the skills addressed by the course are

Engagement (confidence as a learner), **Responsibility** (taking responsibility of your own thoughts, emotions and actions), **Calmness** (having the habit of calmness and knowing how to create it in difficult situations), **Assertiveness** (able to be calmly assertive without getting aggressive or upset), **Realistic Analysis & Planning** (stopping to think before acting), **Focus and Perseverance** (working towards goals despite setbacks), **Relating to Others/Empathy** (seeing the needs of others, offering care and support, feeling closely connected), **Communication and Language** (two way, respectful, assertive communications)

Typically, our participants will be referred with more than 4 from the list below; -

Anxiety diagnoses, ADHD, ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorders), Not attending School/Training/Work, Relationship Difficulties, Mood Swings/Impulsivity, Highly Disengaged, Self-harming, Suicidal, Bullying, Aggression, Anger Management issues, Being bullied, Risk taking behaviour, Drug & Alcohol misuse, Eating disorder s, Offending & Re-Offending, Domestic violence, Neglect/abuse, Poor parenting, Parents with mental health problems, Living in care, Leaving Care or at risk of going into care, From area of high deprivation, Homeless, Wounded in service.

A study by Bournemouth University is tracking the outcomes for young people post-course at 2 months and 12 months and the results show that 80%+ are less anxious (with 33% average improvement) and have reduced problem behaviours, Improved attendance/engagement at school, Better relationships and increased self-belief.

RDA ACTIVITIES

CARRIAGE DRIVING

RDA provides a well-recognised and valuable service to people of all ages within the community and there are no other RDA Carriage Driving opportunities in South Herefordshire. The benefits are astounding from freedom of movement, gaining confidence, building relationships and achieving personal goals as well as the simple pleasure of just, being with horses, totally in the moment and learning to relax.

With the beautiful Dymock Woods within a short distance from the Centre, the opportunities to experience the best that nature has to offer is on our doorstep and we are collaborating with the Forestry Commission to use these woods as a regular route for our participants as well as plans to develop a track system around the margins of the land for both riding and driving.

This is a one-to-one coaching session supported by a minimum of 3 volunteers who accompany the turnout either on foot or on bicycles as per RDA Carriage Driving protocol. This ensures not only compliance with health & safety but also safeguarding and the safety of members of the public also enjoying the outdoors.

GROUND SKILLS

Learning to work with a horse, on the ground in the confines of a school or round pen is an activity that many RDA participants want to experience. They are even more hands on than with both riding and carriage driving and for those who are more mobile, this is a wonderful opportunity to be up-close with our horses, learning how to lead a horse safely, how to recognise signs of stress and how to deal with it if it does happen, how to exercise a horse on the ground and in the process, gain confidence, increased physical movement, emotional balance and wellbeing.

Again, this will predominantly be a one-to-one session, out in the elements with one or more of our specially trained horses/ponies.

STABLE MANAGEMENT

This RDA activity is a great way for a small group of RDA participants to work together learning all of the tasks involved in keeping a healthy horse/pony in a stable environment. We do a lot of grooming in these sessions as our participants LOVE the calming effect of gently grooming the horses & ponies. It also encourages empathy in those who struggle with this emotion.

We also muck out stables, fill water buckets, measure and weigh feed and supplements, assess the health and wellbeing of the horses, learn about biology, the importance of a balanced diet, weather conditions and the effects this can have on the horses as well as a whole list of items within this curriculum.

All of these RDA activities are tailor made to suit the participants attending and we encourage collaboration with schools and residential facilities to engage with us in order that we can also incorporate any specific topics they may be working on with them.

RURAL/LAND BASED ACTIVITIES

Located on a 20acre site, gives the opportunity to include a wider range of therapeutic activities based around nature, the seasons, permaculture principles, the weather, animal husbandry, land management, ecology and growing/harvesting your own food.

Specific workshops will be run by experienced coaches with both classroom and outdoor learning areas will be offered to members of the public as well as our disabled and disadvantaged pupils. Not only is this an excellent means of integrating both sectors of the community but also with our supported volunteering programme, those members of our community struggling with social isolation and exclusion can also attend with support.

In addition to the workshops, project specific tasks such as building a wormery, designing and building an outdoor forge area, designing and creating wild flower areas to encourage insect species to inhabit the land and the ongoing management of these areas.

Various gardening projects to grow, care for and harvest fruit and vegetables which are then the basis around which a lunchtime meal will be carefully prepared and where everyone on-site are welcomed to sit together, sharing stories and building a safe and calm community for the benefit of all who come to the Centre. We believe that this is hugely important in creating an atmosphere of equality, compassion and understanding, the core principles upon which we work.

Animal husbandry is a very important part of the activities and this will require that our animals are checked before bed, can be attended to throughout the days when the charity is closed and through the night when

we have sick animals, have foals being born and during the busy lambing season. This will be the responsibility of the CEO and will require on-site accommodation.

CRAFTS/ARTS WORKSHOPS

With the completion of a permanent building to house an indoor classroom area, will come the opportunity to offer craft and art workshops to members of the public and to our disabled and disadvantaged members of the local community etc. Again, this will be based around nature and its beauty. Collecting items from the land to turn into amazing collages, pictures etc. Our flock of Cotswold sheep will provide all of the wool required for spinning, weaving and felting workshops and a platform upon which to exhibit and sell on-site creations in the gallery/Café part of the building.

Barbara Millman, Chairperson of HEART will lead these activities with a wealth of knowledge not only within the disability awareness sector, but also as an artist.

One of our staff/directors is a wheelchair user and to enable her too facilitate these workshops and craft sessions, living on-site with wheelchair access to the craft room is essential.

CAFÉ/FARM SHOP RUN BY PARTICIPANTS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

With a permanent building, we envisage a small area being set aside to create a café where local people with learning difficulties etc, are supported and trained in the preparation, sale and service aspect of a small rural café. Great life skills being taught with a view to possible future work opportunities as well as applying this to their own living environments. Some of the food used in the café will have been grown on land by the very people who may be preparing, cooking or serving the food. A very simple but incredibly empowering opportunity.

SUPPORTED VOLUNTEERING

This is a programme supported by every member of the Board of Trustees, all of whom will participate in delivering this service and time and time again at our meetings, the need for this programme becomes so apparent.

We aim to offer a continual supported volunteering programme to allow ex-participants and other members of the local community who want to be involved in a volunteering capacity but require an element of hand-holding to ensure that they are safe, engaged and enjoying their assignments, and helping our participants to get the best out of what we offer.

All members of staff will be trained to mentor and support our volunteers and we will also, hand-pick members of our volunteer group to train up to supervisor level in order that they can work either on a one-to-one basis or with a small group of volunteers giving support and encouragement.

Volunteering has huge benefits to those who offer their time and expertise to help and support others. Within HEART, the benefit that this brings is not underestimated and we log each hour that is given and recognise the effort that is put into supporting this charity. The staff and trustees discuss volunteering at each meeting and will be holding annual volunteering "thank you" events and recognising those who go "over and above" to support the activities we offer.

The feeling of community will develop as this programme develops and as more people join us. Our core principals will trickle through to everyone and everything that forms part of the organisation by nurturing our volunteers.

Management Team & Governance Personnel

LISA MILLMAN – CEO

Apart from years of RDA experience, I am a qualified book-keeper, internal auditor and hold qualifications in Operational Management.

I have studied Parelli Natural Horsemanship for the past 12 years after my beautiful mare Minnie found me. She had been beaten, whipped and scarred both physically and emotionally. She tested my horsemanship and my patience before I found the extent to which she was damaged! I needed to find new ways to help her and this led me to Parelli Natural Horsemanship and a beautiful and trusting relationship with her as well as a journey of self-discovery.

I am adamant that healthy relationships, a natural environment and compassion are key for the wellbeing of all sentient beings and these are the key skills that I bring to the charity.

BARBARA MILLMAN – CHAIR

I believe in the ethos which guides all we do at HEART and the healing power of horses.

I know what it is to have that special relationship with a horse having had a lovely grey mare who seemed to even know what I was thinking. She had 2 foals and we will be breeding our own horses so that we can start them off in a loving and mutually respectful relationship with human beings.

Wheelchair access is essential and our aim is to make our premises as accessible as possible to everybody.

I have first hand experience of being a carer and have been involved with voluntary organisations for many years. I was a business woman and with my husband had a care home for people with dementia.

I came to Carriage Driving through an RDA Driving Group and now I want others to experience the thrill and freedom and sheer joy that it gives.

I believe that here at HEART, we can make a difference.

LUCY BAILEY – TREASURER

From a young age I have been passionate about horses. At the age of 14, I began supporting a disabled gentleman on his private yard with his 3 horses from everyday tasks to grooming at shows. I became actively involved with the RDA and have seen first-hand the healing that can be given from time spent with horses.

I have worked within the same industry for 10 years and have supported and lead many colleagues with both their career and wellbeing needs during this time.

"HEART is a wonderful new Charity with balanced ethics and a great ethos to support many people throughout different stages in their life journeys".

RACHEL HILL – COMPANY SECRETARY

Currently, I am an Innovation Engineer but previously I worked for a dressage Olympian both in the UK and in Switzerland. My main horse had received a prior facial injury as a foal, causing one side of his head to be concave. To me, he was always the most beautiful horse there and I was very sad to see him go, it was very fitting that he went on to join a Paralympic Team. 14 years ago, I eventually (after 23 years of longing for a pony) acquired my own horse, an elderly ex-racehorse who gave me 12 more wonderful years. I bought part of the land which will now be forming part of the HEART premises and several friends joined me there including Lisa and Lucy, (whom I have known for over 12 years). It has always been a happy, friendly place where everybody is welcomed and supported and the animals are well loved. I know that a special place like this will be the ideal setting for further help people (and animals) in need of a "leg up", in life.

COMPLIANCE

The Board of Trustees meet every 2 months but will meet monthly once we are fully operational.

HEART takes its responsibilities towards compliance seriously and has produced a robust set of policies and procedures to ensure our duty of care to our participants, our employees, our animals and the environment.

Compliance is a set topic for all Board Meetings and an external HSE expert works with us to keep our policies up to date.

Our CEO is the link between the day-to-day running of the Centre and the Board of Trustees and is responsible for overseeing Centre Finance, Fundraising & Communications, Policies and Procedures, the implementation of Strategic Business Planning, Grants application, service delivery and both horse and human welfare.

We have developed an induction programme for all future Trustees in order to ensure a clear understanding of our services and our core principles. All trustees, are DBS checked and are in attendance at the Centre regularly or are directly involved with service delivery, horse welfare and volunteer support. All staff and trustees undergo an annual appraisal in line with best practice as recommended by the Charity Commission.

SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

- A lease from landlords Chetwyn Properties Ltd, (Director sits on Board of Trustees to ensure awareness of all future plans)
- Cultivating a strong identity (brand) for HEART.
- Cultivate a customer base for this new and innovative equine intervention within Herefordshire and surrounding areas
- The only THC (TheHorseCourse) Hub in Herefordshire.
- A successful major fundraising Appeal Campaign
- Building a strong fundraising base through exploring the donor/corporate partner base and corporate contributions
- Securing funds to invest into further development of the site as and when expansion is required
- Cultivating an environment which retains and invests in local volunteers as well as encouraging new volunteers.
- Onsite Accommodation for CEO & family – temporary dwelling initially to prove viability. Wheelchair access to rural crafts for a member of staff who is lead facilitator for this sector of activities. Night-time checking of all animals plus sick animals, foaling horses and lambing.
- Ensuring all areas of the premises are accessible to our wheelchair participants and those with limited mobility so all members of the local community can be welcomed.
- Encouraging membership from volunteer and participant groups to ensure they have a voice in the decision-making process of where HEART is going and how it gets there.

WEAKNESSES

- Newly registered charitable organisation
- Phased premises development over next 3 years limiting the number of horses and thus the number of participants initially.
- Limited parking initially
- Limited funding until established
- Working facilities are outdoor limiting times of year that the services can be offered until phased development in place.
- Initially, one main facilitator (Lisa Millman) immediate plans to train additional facilitators from 2020.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Develop a relatively new but highly effective equine intervention for referred participants who are "stuck" or disengaged from talk-based support
- Working in partnership with other local organisations and charities such as Riding for The Disabled, HVOSS (Herefordshire Voluntary Organisations Support Service), Help for Heroes, Veterans Support Group, Schools & Colleges, Day Care Facilities, Residential facilities.
- To build and operate a charitable organisation with a strong ethos and clear objectives.

THREATS

- Failure to raise the necessary funds for the proposed capital to build and develop existing premises.
- Fail to enthuse local participants
- Fail to build on existing relationships within social services, NHS, education and care sectors.

PHASED ACTIVITIES

PHASE ONE (6MTHS)

- Complete registration process for RDA Group Membership – approval granted April 2019
- Gain charitable (CIO) status with Charity Commission England – granted April 2019 (1183846)
- Refurbishment of premises – completion by April 2020
- Employ part-time admin clerk via Royal National College for the Blind on 6mth supported employment contract
- Train & work alongside volunteer group
- RDA Carriage Driving Activity (One turnout) – to be assessed in April 2020 with clients thereafter

PHASE TWO (18MTHS)

- The Horse Course Equine Intervention – develop Herefordshire HUB
- Complete grant applications for capital funding for premises development
- Complete grant applications for client participation & volunteer training/support
- On-site manager to move to premises
- Begin groundworks for garden/growing areas
- Build outdoor kitchen, bee hotels, wormery, pond etc
- Employ additional equine facilitator (RDA & THC)
- Encourage new Trustees
- Develop Fundraising Committee
- Develop Funding Focus Group
- Re-visit business plan to develop phase 3
- Continual Land Development

PHASE THREE (2-5yrs)

- Introduce additional livestock & increase existing herd by own foals & lambs)
- Develop Rural Crafts – attain funding to build craft room/classroom, forge, wood-working etc
as specific program for both participants & volunteers
Marketing strategy – additional participants & volunteers
Funding Focus Group
- Develop Arts & Crafts program with Cafe

Financials

There are three main income streams which will support the phased development of HEART.

Our treasurer Lucy Bailey has a strong finance background as well as equine and volunteer support and will ensure transparent and ethical finance procedures are in place both on a day-to-day basis as well as in future planning.

Regular finance committee meetings will be held to maintain control of both running costs and capital expenditure and in-depth financial reports will be submitted to the Board monthly and at Board meetings.

FEE INCOME

Every participant will pay a fee which will depend upon the particular activity they opt for.

The prices for 2020 are anticipated as follows. A small price increase may be implemented by the Trustees annually.

RDA Carriage Driving	3/4hr	Individual	£ 15.00
RDA Stable Management	1/2hr	Individual	£ 10.00
	1/2hr	Group	£ 8.00
RDA Ground Skills	1/2hr	Individual	£ 10.00
	1 hr	Individual	£ 20.00

TheHorseCourse Intervention	per week	Individual	£550.00 (Referrals from NHS, Social Services etc)
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GRANT APPLICATIONS

Applications will be submitted for the following: -

- Bursary – to support participants who are financially disadvantaged. The Board of Trustees will accept applications in writing and will decide on a case by case basis against a set criterion.
- Capital Funding Projects – Project Specific funding for the development of existing facilities and phased activities.
- Supported volunteering program costs
- Smaller grants from local grant making bodies to support the delivery and on-going development.

FUNDRAISING & DONATIONS

With the development of a fundraising committee, we will be

- putting on various events at our premises to not only raise funds, but showcase the opportunities that are available to the local community.
- Going out into the community, giving talks to groups encouraging donations, participation, volunteering and support.
- Running fundraising events at local venues
- Ensuring donations are Gift Aided where possible
- Running in-house competitions – 100 club, bingo
- Sponsor a horse/pony/sheep etc
- Sale of goods made by our participants at craft fayres etc

Lisa Millman

CEO HEART

Charity Reg: 1183846