

DIGSWELL PLACE GROUP RDA

End of year review July 2021

An extraordinary year...

...And thanks to the extraordinary spirit of everyone involved with Digswell Place we've made it through and back to something more normal! Sadly, we won't be together in person for our summer lunch & yearend update but here's a quick look back at the year that was.

Most riders now back in the saddle

It's heart warming to report that we end the year with about 80 riders now enjoying sessions at Digswell thanks to our coaches and session teams. All being well, we look forward to seeing more back next term and welcoming more new riders. Our rider waiting list has grown this year and we're working hard to accommodate as many as we can.

This all been possible thanks to;

Our Yard team and ponies

Sian, Sue J, the core team & minders did a fantastic job throughout the challenges of the year. The Yard is in ship shape and our ponies were kept safe, well and ready for work when needed. Sadly we said goodbye this year to 3 of our dear equines; Dicken, Flavia and Grace. It's heartbreaking when we have to say goodbye, especially to these 3 who touched so many hearts during their long and faithful service to RDA. Looking forward though we're delighted to welcome 3 new ponies; Splash, Tiggy and Baloo funded by donations and grants.

Our volunteers

Thank you all for your patience, help and support in so many ways over the past year. By now most of you will have had a chance to be back at the Yard and involved again. Thanks also go to those who worked tirelessly behind the scenes keeping things going; the

maintenance team, the Management team, our Trustees and RDA UK County & National who guided and advised us. Lockdown highlighted the value we all experience from volunteering and we're delighted to welcome 20 new volunteers to Digswell in readiness for September.

Careful financial management & generous support from our community

With significantly reduced income from riders and our usual fundraising events, prudent financial management was our watch word. Thanks to everyone involved, and with the help of grants and generous donations from so many supporters, we end the year in a good financial position ready for the year ahead.

New ways of fundraising

It's been a year of adapting and changing, our fundraising team and others have demonstrated this so well with; digital fundraising campaigns, grant applications, online events such as the art competition & the recent coffee & cake sales at the Yard. All this learning will stay with us in future.

And new ways of working

Our digital communications & online working underwent a step change and was invaluable in keeping us connected and engaged through: our website, Facebook, Whatsapp groups, online training and of course Zoom for meetings & updates.

Looking forward to September

Everything could change again, but for now Digswell Place is ready & raring to go again for the new school year thanks to our brilliant community. Meantime enjoy the summer and stay safe.

*With very best wishes from DPGRDA
Trustees & Management Committee*