



31st May 2024

Dear Volunteers,

This week's newsletter includes several important updates including news from the RDA UK Board about the governance review.

There is also an update to safeguarding policies, as well as news on the upcoming Volunteer's week event, new drop-in volunteer support sessions, training opportunities, the Virtual National Championships, plans for future Coaching Conferences, and the coaching awards deadline.

## **Governance Review**

The RDA UK Board has commissioned a governance review to take place over the coming months and is committed to involving our members, volunteers, and participants in this process, and which can only be effective with your input. The aim of the review is to ensure that RDA UK continues to operate effectively in achieving our shared mission and that our governance continues to evolve and be updated in line with good practice so that we all meet the expectations of the Charity Commission, OSCR The Scottish Charity Regulator, and the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland. The review will also look at relationships and how we best work together across the federation.

Following a competitive tender process, the specialist charity governance advisors, the [Centre for Charity Effectiveness \(CCE\)](#), has been commissioned to support RDA UK with this review. The CCE is part of the Bayes Business School, and its consultancy team brings a combination of regulatory and academic rigour together with extensive practical experience of working with charities who have federated structures similar to the RDA.

There will be opportunities for everyone to get involved between now and the autumn and the Board very much encourages everyone's participation. CCE will start by consulting with a representative set of member group volunteers, which will then be followed by a wider consultation process open to all volunteers within the federation, through a series of online

and face-to-face events at which there will be the opportunity to hear from Trustees and our new Chief Executive, as well as plenty of time for comments, questions and discussion.

On a practical note, over the next few days, Regional Chairs will receive an e-mail asking them to put forward representative volunteers from member groups to take part in the first stage of this process.

The Board hopes that many of you will want to participate in the governance review and looks forward to hearing your views over the coming months as we come together to learn from one another and build a stronger organisation.

## **Volunteering**

### **National Volunteer's week – less than 1 week to go!**

We are looking forward to celebrating Volunteer's week with you all. Don't forget to sign up to our online launch event on Monday 3rd June 6 – 7pm.

Our new CEO Michael Bishop will be shining a spotlight on Millie Boo Smith, para dressage rider, disability advocate for Cerebral Palsy and bilateral hearing loss, and Young RDA Volunteer. Michael and Millie will be sharing their stories on how volunteers and volunteering has impacted them and their lives.

This session will be hosted by our new Volunteering Team as we kick off a week-long celebration of the incredible individuals and teams behind the scenes of RDA.

[Click here to book your place.](#)

We will be sharing inspirational stories all week to celebrate RDA Volunteers... get involved and encourage others by completing this [short online form](#).

### **The Big Help Out 2024, 7 – 9<sup>th</sup> June 2024**

Don't forget to register your events and Volunteering opportunities on The Big Help Out App. Last year 70% of people who tried volunteering for the first time said they're more likely to volunteer in the future – Don't miss out!

[More details can be found on MyRDA.](#)

Any queries on the above contact our Volunteer Team on [Volunteer@rda.org.uk](mailto:Volunteer@rda.org.uk)

### **Volunteer Support 'Drop-in' Clinics**

This is an opportunity to connect with the new Volunteer Support and Network Support Teams, who are here to provide support and guidance for Group and RDA UK volunteers. You

can contact them by email at any time, or book a specific time slot to discuss your unique questions and situations.

The Drop-In Clinics will be held on-line via Zoom/Teams or Telephone.

Current dates planned are:

- Wednesday 19th June (9.30am – 4.45pm)
- Tuesday 24th July (2pm-6.45pm)

Book 30 minutes with the relevant team to support you:

- RDA Group Volunteers – book a slot with the Volunteer Support Team
- RDA UK National/Regional/County Volunteers – book a slot with the Network Support Team
- Not sure who to talk to – book with either team

Further details can be found on MyRDA or email [Volunteer@rda.org.uk](mailto:Volunteer@rda.org.uk), or book directly [via the following link](#).

## **Volunteer Training**

### **Preparing and Presenting**

**RDA National Training Centre, CV35 7AX: Thursday 13th June 10- 12pm**

A confidence giving session for local RDA volunteers, providing an opportunity to practice grooming, washing, and plaiting to competition standard.

To join email Debs at [djuler@rda.org.uk](mailto:djuler@rda.org.uk) spaces limited to 20 attendees

### **“What will we do when wormers stop working?”**

**Online Seminar: Thursday 27th June 6 – 7:30pm**

Claire Shand, Director of Westgate Labs, will shine a light on one of the biggest horse health problems, wormer resistance; and provide an update on current resistance status, and explain some simple changes to improve care for horses and the environment.

FREE for RDA members and volunteers. For more details and to join the guestlist [click the link here](#). or email Debs at [djuler@rda.org.uk](mailto:djuler@rda.org.uk)

### **Free online Volunteer Training opportunities**

Don't miss these upcoming online webinars hosted by Getting on Board, Volunteero and The Diversity Trust, these sessions are **FREE** for anyone to join!

- Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> June: 1 – 2pm: The Diversity Trust Lunch & Learn Session: Autism & Neurodiversity in the Workplace
- Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> June: 5:30 - 6:30 pm: Getting on Board Trustee Learning: The Onboarding: induction training for newly appointed Trustees

Event details and sign-up can be found on [MyRDA](#) as well as further training opportunities.

## Safeguarding Courses

Do you need to update your safeguarding training? There is a schedule of virtual course dates available to book here: [Events \(myrda.org.uk\)](https://myrda.org.uk)

## Updated Safeguarding Policies

In our ongoing commitment to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of everyone within our community, we have recently reviewed and updated our safeguarding policies. The update is aimed at strengthening our procedures to better protect individuals within our organisation and providing more clarity for implementing safeguarding practices.

The new policies will consist of:

1. Safeguarding Children Policy
2. Safeguarding Adults at Risk Policy
3. Managing Concerns Policy
4. Safer Recruitment Policy

We plan to roll the safeguarding policies out in a gradual phased process.

The **initial phase** is to introduce the three policies: [Safeguarding Children](#), [Safeguarding Adults at Risk](#) and [Managing Concerns](#). We would like to assure you that there is no material change within these policies and no action is required from Groups other than to adopt them as updates to those policies that are currently in place. To reiterate, these policies have been updated to provide more robust practices and clarity in their implementation.

The three policies will be uploaded onto [MyRDA Policies](#) and aligned within the [Safeguarding Section](#).

The later phase will involve the roll out of the fourth policy, Safer Recruitment. There is more material change within this policy because of statutory changes and we are developing a detailed phased plan for implementation to support Groups before this is introduced. **You do not need to action anything at this stage.**

If you have any questions, please email [GroupSupport@rda.org.uk](mailto:GroupSupport@rda.org.uk).

## Coaching

### Coaching Conference Update

We have been reaching out to the coaching community and would like to thank everybody for their input. We have received lots of helpful feedback through the recent coaching survey, as well as feedback from the conference itself. We know that many of you look forward to the coaching conference, but based on our consultation we have decided to defer this year's conference and use the feedback provided to shape what we offer in the future.

In the meantime, we will continue to run CPD opportunities accessible to coaches across the UK, inviting multi discipline networking and collaboration, as well as sharing of coaching ideas, resources, and best practice.

In addition, as an optional extra, we plan to host some question-and-answer sessions on the Friday of the National Championship. These will be with paraprofessionals, including one speaker who has been through the coaching pathway, and subsequently become an RDA participant!

We appreciate that many of you at Champs will be busy with your participants, so just come if you can. And if you're a coach who has never been to Champs before, why not come along and see what it's all about. We'd love to see you there! Further details tbc soon.

### **Coaching Awards – Nominations closing soon!**

A gentle reminder that nominations for the 2024 RDA Coaching Awards are still open! There are five award categories open, and the nomination form can be found on [MyRDA here](#).

Nominations close 6th of June 2024.

If you require the nomination form in a different format, please contact [coaching@rda.org.uk](mailto:coaching@rda.org.uk)

## **Competitions**

### **Save the date: RDA Virtual National Championships, 15th – 17th November 2024**

We are delighted to be able to run the Virtual National Championships again and the [schedule is now live on MyRDA](#) and entries close on Sunday 6th October 2024.

This year, working with RDA UK's National Leads and Regional Dressage coordinators, we have made some improvements, so the competition is accessible to more participants.

We have introduced additional grass roots ungraded classes, to encourage more RDA participants of all levels to compete. In addition, all the action and results will be live streamed across three days this year (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday), during the afternoon and early evening, when more people have time to watch.

And we are delighted to be partnering with Dressage Anywhere to run graded classes for our more advanced riders. Dressage Anywhere will run grade 1 – 5 classes, including the Visually Impaired grades B1, B2, B3, B4, B5, as part of their exciting RDA specific dressage series, where points can be accumulated, culminating in a Dressage Anywhere Championships.

Some of these graded competitors will also be featured within the RDA Virtual National Championships live stream event. [Visit Dressage Anywhere to enter.](#)

## **Handbook**

The 2024 Handbook has been posted earlier this week and will be arriving to individuals and Group Primary Contacts this week and early next. Additional copies are available to order from [Group Orders](#).

## **Annual Return**

Last week the Annual Return survey went live and an email with a unique link was sent to all Group Primary Contacts. Please look out for this in your inbox, check your junk / spam folder first if you have not seen it, and then let us know if you have not received it. All further details, including the guidance document and a step by step walk through the questionnaire can be on [found on MyRDA](#).

Any queries, get in touch with [groupsupport@rda.org.uk](mailto:groupsupport@rda.org.uk).

## **Fundraising**

### **Movement for Good Prize Draws**

We have previously mentioned Movement for Good & the regular £1,000 draws for nominating your charity and are delighted to see that a few RDA Groups have registered already. [Register your Group today](#) then share with participants, families and volunteers to vote!

Their next £5,000 draw will be open between the 17<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> of June, [click here](#) to get notified and enter your Group to be in with a chance of winning.

### **Help share the news**

Please help us to share RDA news with fellow volunteers within our federation. To make this easier, from this week onwards a link to the newsletter will be available under the 'News' section on MyRDA, from the Friday of every newsletter week.

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*This email has been sent to:*

*Regional Coaches, Regional Reps, Regional Treasurers and Secretaries, Coach Developers, County Chairs, County Coaches, County Reps, Group Chairs and Primary Group contacts.*

*Please share this information with your Group and network where appropriate.*

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Need quick access to MyRDA, click [HERE](#).

Best wishes,

**Molly Knox**

Communications Coordinator

Riding for the Disabled Association



**Stay in touch with RDA**

**Riding for the Disabled Association**

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