



14th June 2024

Dear Volunteers,

This week's newsletter includes additional information on the Governance Review; a round up of Volunteers' week; award nomination opportunities and upcoming training events. We also have an update on Annual Returns and Membership & Insurance Renewals 24/25 and changes to the National Office Team.

Governance Review

In the last newsletter we let you know about the [RDA Governance Review](#), to which our RDA community will be asked to contribute to over the rest of this year. Throughout the review we are committed to involving people from all parts of the federation. Your thoughts, expressed through focus groups during June and road shows and online meetings in the Autumn, will be at the heart of the work done by CCE ([our governance experts](#)). We have tried to keep the initial consultation to times in the early evenings and weekends, and we have kept clear of the summer holidays.

One of the first stages is bringing together five different focus groups over the next few weeks. These groups will held online, via Zoom, and last a maximum of 90 minutes. They will be run by CCE, who have lots of experience with governance reviews in similar federations. We have asked all our Regional Chairs to attend one of two focus groups; we have invited all our National Volunteer leads to attend another group; and the last two groups will consist of volunteers from RDA groups of a variety of sizes and run in different ways. No one is expected to be a governance expert, CCE are keen to learn from you all about your life in RDA, whatever type of volunteer you may be. Everyone's thoughts and experiences are equally valuable.

It is hoped that many of you will want to join in with this review over the coming months, and we are looking forward to hearing everyone's views as RDA comes together to learn from one another and build a strong organisation for the years ahead. As a reminder there will be a series of online and face to face events in the early Autumn to which everyone will be

invited. These events will provide an opportunity for you to hear from our new Chief Executive and Trustees.

Award Nominations

The Pat Straughan Medal and The Harvey Best All Rounder Cup

The nominations for awards 'The Pat Straughan Medal of Commendation' and 'The Harvey Best All Rounder Cup' are now open!

Judging will take place at National Championships after entries close 2pm Saturday 13th July.

Find the nomination forms on MyRDA:

- [The Pat Straughan Medal of Commendation](#)
- [The Harvey Best All Rounder Cup](#)

Entries should be emailed to Katie on kobrien@rda.org.uk

The Dudley Smith Award 2024

RDA Carriage Driving is indebted to Susan Dudley-Smith for wishing to recognise our 'unsung heroes'. Each Year RDA will acknowledge an individual volunteer who has made an important contribution to RDA Carriage Driving through hard work and often unsung efforts. The Award will be presented at the National Championships. To find out further information about the Susan Dudley-Smith award and to put in your nomination [please follow the link](#). The nomination form should be returned by email to the Coaching Team (coaching@rda.org.uk) at RDA National Office and copied to the Eileen Cornish, Carriage Driving National Lead (cdlead@rda.org.uk) by Thursday 27th June 2024.

Volunteering

A round up of Volunteer's Week 2024

As we wrap up Volunteers' Week, we're still buzzing from the amazing energy and enthusiasm that was shared across RDA. Our Volunteers' Week Launch Event, featuring Michael Bishop and Millie Boo Smith Dressage, set the tone for a week of celebration and recognition. And if you missed it, don't worry – [you can catch up on the event now on our YouTube channel](#).

But what made Volunteers' Week so special were all the incredible stories and moments shared throughout the week. From heartfelt tributes to our dedicated volunteers, to inspiring stories of how our participants have benefited from their kindness, we were reminded once again of the incredible impact that our volunteers have on our community.

We're grateful for every single one of our volunteers, and we hope that this week has inspired you to continue making a difference in the lives of our participants and their families.

We want to ensure that every individual who chooses to volunteer at RDA has an exceptional volunteering experience, and we're committed to working together to make that a reality. That's why we are introducing additional support through our new Volunteer Support 'Drop-In' Clinics.

Volunteer Support 'Drop-in' Clinics

A reminder that the first Volunteer Support drop-in clinic is Wednesday 19th June.

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.

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

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, or book directly [via the following link](#).

RDA National Championships Clothing

We are delighted to share that Wainwrights will once again be providing branded clothing for the upcoming RDA National Championships, and items will be available to order online, with new designs for our 55th anniversary coming soon.

This year, merchandise will only be available to purchase online and will not be available to purchase at Hartpury, so please circulate this to your Groups, riders and drivers in advance to avoid any disappointment.

Existing designs are available now, and new designs are coming very soon. Items will still be available after the Championships and these orders can be placed at any time.

[Shop the range here](#), with more items coming soon.

Volunteer Training

“What will we do when wormers stop working?” Online Seminar: Thursday 27th June 6 – 7:30pm

Hosted by the RDA National Training Centre, 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

Travelling with Horses Training: National Training Centre, CV35 7AX, Thursday 4th July, 10 am – 12 pm

This is an in-person session for RDA volunteers in the area to cover:

- What you need to pack for travelling
- Lorry/trailer checks
- preparing the horse and loading practice

For more details and to register your interest email Debs at djuler@rda.org.uk

Free online Volunteer Training opportunities

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

- Tuesday 18th June: 12 – 1pm: Getting On Board Trustee Learning Programme: 'Recruitment In-Tray – Live Q&A'
- Wednesday 19th June: 4 – 5pm: Getting On Board: Trustee Learning Programme: Organisations in crisis: the role of Trustees
- Wednesday 19th June: 5:30 – 6:30pm: Getting On Board: Trustee Learning Programme: First Impressions: getting application ready
- Wednesday 16th June: 5 – 6pm: Getting On Board Trustee Learning Programme: What questions should Trustees ask about a charity's finances?

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 \(myrda.org.uk\)](#)

Fundraising Opportunity

LAST FEW PLACES REMAINING - Take part in Parallel Windsor – 7th July 2024, Great Windsor Park

RDA have partnered with [Parallel Windsor](#) for 2024, where we are delighted to offer free spaces for the RDA community and family. This is a great opportunity to **set a challenge and raise funds for your Group** in a fun and inclusive environment.

Volunteers, participants and families can choose between a 100m, 1K, 5K, 10K or a SuperSensory 1K – these events are not a race, those who take part can walk, push or run - there are no cut off times.

Everyone who takes part will get a medal, t-shirt and goody bag.

The final few places are remaining, don't miss out, it's going to be an amazing day.

To claim your FREE place and join the RDA team email **Emily, Fundraising Officer** ecoleman@rda.org.uk and we will sort the rest!

Annual Return Reminder

Thank you to everyone who has completed the Annual Return survey so far. If you have not done so already, this is a gentle reminder to those remaining groups yet to complete theirs that the deadline is Friday 19th July 2024.

You can find information and support on the [Annual Return MyRDA page](#). Any further queries please get in touch with groupsupport@rda.org.uk

Membership & Insurance

Membership and Insurance Renewals packs for 24/25 will be landing in email inboxes this week. For each Group, emails will be sent to the Group Chair, Group Treasurer and Primary Group Contacts.

This year, the RDA insurance package includes cover to support Groups attending non-RDA events, with the details included in the renewal email.

Any queries get in touch with groupsupport@rda.org.uk

Staff Updates

Warm Welcome

Last week, we welcomed our new Chief Operating Officer Lee Heard, who will lead the operations team within National Office.

Having worked in the charity sector for over twenty years, Lee is joining RDA from a senior leadership role in a nationally represented charity that is structured in a similar way, and so has comparable and transferrable experiences that Lee is excited to use to support the charity. Most notably his experience in supporting volunteers and building major relationships and partnerships.

Lee has a Master's Degree in Sports Development and is well versed in the physical, social, and mental benefits of sport and physical activity and the overwhelming impact on individuals - elevated in RDA through the powerful connection of disabled people, volunteers and horses and a key reason for him joining the team. Welcome Lee!

Fond Farewell

With sadness we say farewell to Faye McKenning, as she moves on to an exciting new opportunity with Motor Neurone Disease. Faye reflects on her time with RDA...

"After nearly 10 years with RDA, I am moving onto pastures new at Motor Neurone Disease Association. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time with the RDA and having the opportunity to work with countless inspirational volunteers and participants. RDA has given me memories to last a lifetime and for that I am so grateful for my time here. Keep being amazing - it's what you can do that counts!"

We are sure you will join us in wishing Faye every success in her new role!

Faye's last working day is lunchtime on 20th June 2024. From then please use the following contacts for volunteering specific queries:

RDA UK County, Regional and National Volunteers

Rebecca Wheaver, Network Support Manager

Phone: 01926 962985

Email: rwheaver@rda.org.uk

Group Volunteers

Rachel King, Volunteering Manager and Mel Parry, Volunteer Co-ordinator.

Email: volunteer@rda.org.uk

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.

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

Best wishes,

Molly Knox

Communications Coordinator

Riding for the Disabled Association



Registered Charity No. 244108 and SC039473 (Scotland)

Stay in touch with RDA

Riding for the Disabled Association

Lowlands Equestrian Centre, Old Warwick Road,
Shrewley, Warwickshire CV35 7AX

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