

## **Ceffyl Du Carriage Driving for the Disabled Group**

We are a registered charity (charity No.1074334) and a member of the Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA-charity No. 244108) and are therefore bound by their standards of care and safety and inspected regularly.

Ceffyl Du Carriage Driving for the Disabled Group was formed in 1985 and will be 25 years old in 2010, the same year as RDA celebrates its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The group owns 2 ponies (Cassius and Tinker and another is loaned (Lucy) and we have purchased 2 Bennington Superstar carriages which have a hydraulic ramp which makes it easier to load a driver in a wheelchair.

Our Aim is to provide disabled people with the opportunity to carriage drive to benefit their health, well being and quality of life.

Carriage Driving is particularly useful for people who can no longer ride or prefer a different kind of challenge. It offers the following benefits:

- Improved co-ordination
- Improved muscle power
- Improved balance
- Relaxation through rhythmic movements
- Being out in the open air

plus:

- Decision making
- Making friends
- Achievement
- Self confidence
- Having fun

Drivers can take proficiency tests, compete or just participate. Our non-disabled drivers (known as AB Whips), who give driving tuition are fully trained and have passed examinations by the British Driving Society (BDS) as well as RDA. We have 2 specially designed carriages which can take ambulant drivers or those in wheelchairs and they are always accompanied by an AB Whip who has a second set of reins (dual control!).

As the only driving group in the region our drivers come from far and wide and we welcome new members and volunteers.

We meet to drive every Monday evening 5.30pm until dark at GreenMeadow Community Farm, Cwmbran, Torfaen, throughout the summer season (April to September). GreenMeadow has fields and tracks for us to drive on. We also hold occasional picnic drives in the woods at Castle Farm, Usk, and Monmouthshire and want to extend our activities there. Throughout the year we go on various trips. In the winter we continue to meet regularly for training and social events.

We have no paid employees but are run entirely by volunteers currently with an age range from 15 to 75, male and female! We have a committee and officers with representation from disabled drivers and volunteers helpers some of whom act as Group Trustees who are responsible for the overall management of the group. These volunteers are an essential part of the Group, not only for the Monday driving

sessions but also fundraising, committee activities and the social life of the group. Without these volunteers the group couldn't possibly function.

We are always looking for volunteers. Experience with horses is great but not essential mostly we are looking for reliable people with a big heart who are able to offer us time. There are jobs to be done that don't involve the horses but we also try to provide an opportunity to learn about them if that is what a helper would like to do. Some of our helpers have had grants to help them learn to drive. We have to comply with regulations that mean that helpers in certain roles have to have been CRB checked (i.e. have a criminal record check).

As a charity we need to raise our own funds. We receive wonderful support from our volunteers, drivers and the community but we are always looking for sponsorship and ideas for fundraising

Contact Details:

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