

Trustees Annual Report

Ballyclare Riding for Disabled 1st July 2023 – 30th June 2024

Charity number: NIC 104521

Based at Laurelview Equestrian Centre, 18 Knowehead Road, Templepatrick BT39 0BX

Contact Group Organiser: Avril Nicholl 32 Beech Green, Doagh Ballyclare BT39 0QB

The charity exists to provide therapeutic riding and contact with horses to children and young adults with special needs in the Ballyclare area.

The group normally meets on Thursday mornings during term time for a total of 24 weeks during the year. We started back in October 2023 with three separate rides. The first group come from Roddensvale school, the second ride is made up of individuals brought by their carers. The last ride come from Jordanstown school. The riders who come from school groups change every 6-8 weeks to give more children the opportunity to experience the benefits and enjoyment of riding. Our group of individuals come every week. Where possible our riders work towards their RDA grade tests.

We meet at Laurelview Equestrian centre, where we use the indoor school and ponies thanks to the generosity of Robert and Linda Davis. Our main cost is our payments to Laurelview of £600/term towards our use of the facilities and ponies. This was a nominal fee paid to Laurelview, from next year the prices will increase to reflect industry wide prices for arena and pony hire, we will be paying approximately £130/week. Also, we pay fees for membership and insurance to RDA headquarters in England. Our group instructors, organiser and helpers are all volunteers. We now have only one fully qualified instructor, Sylvia and Margo is training to be an instructor.

Our main source of income is our education authority grant. We have also had some very generous donations from the Wishart Group and East Antrim hounds. We ended the year with a closing balance of £11761.

The public benefit delivered by Ballyclare group is reflected in the enjoyment and achievements of our riders. Some of our riders are extremely nervous when they start and it is wonderful to see them gain self confidence. Physically, the riders benefit from improvements to their core strength, coordination, mobility and balance.

We make every effort to ensure the rides are conducted safely, using trained volunteers under the supervision of a qualified instructor. All our instructors and volunteers have completed Enhanced Access NI checks. Our group has an up to date safeguarding policy. Every session has a qualified first aider in attendance.

We consider that we have regard to the Commission's guidance on public benefit and have fulfilled our obligations in this respect.

Signed Margo McClure

Date 19th April 2025

Margo McClure

Chairman and Trustee

On behalf of the following trustees

Julia Desmond

Avril Nicholl

Maeve Rosemond

Sylvia Coulter

Angela Houston

Cathy Mullan