

Trustees Report.

Report of the trustees relates from 1 March 2023 to 28 February 2024.

Our Aims

The Fort centre RDA Maghera (therein known as the Fort centre - Company No. NI660376) are a voluntary charity (registered under Charity no. 104575) aiming to provide therapeutic horse riding for children and adults with a range of physical and mental disabilities within the Mid Ulster area. The Fort centre became an incorporated organisation in April 2019.

Public Benefits

The service provided by the Fort centre has numerous benefits. Horse riding improves physical health in areas such as balance, mobility and core stability, and enhances cardiovascular health. Furthermore, there are mental health benefits associated with horse riding as an exercise, particularly outdoors. These advantages extend to volunteers in addition to riders, as they lead the rides. Wellbeing and confidence are increased, as riders and volunteers have the opportunity to socialise with each other and create relationships in a safe and appropriate environment. Riders and volunteers can learn new skills and receive qualifications related to horse riding and horse care. The group as part of wider RDA adopt their ethos, guidelines and regulations which ensure that the public receive a service delivered by experienced and trained individuals. The Fort centre trustees are well versed in the purposes of the charity and their role in promoting these. The Fort centre building have purchased a hoist to allow them to provide rides to a larger number of service users, and a new horse, Toffee. Plans have also been approved to renovate the front of the building with new fencing.

Group Achievements in 2023/24

Training

One new riding instructor has been qualified and joined the centre as a riding instructor.

Riding instructor training updated as needed throughout the year.

Child Protection Training completed by all relevant volunteers and committee members.

First Aid Training completed by all relevant volunteers and committee members.

Several riders underwent Grades 1, 2 and 3 with other riders working towards these grades.

Fundraising

Several local businesses held fundraisers with the fort centre as their beneficiary.

The 'Friends of the Fort' account remains active and is routinely publicised locally.

The centre have organised for a clothing bin to be set up in the centre carpark, with income from all clothes donated going to the fort centre.

The committee are in the process of setting up PayPal for make donating more accessible. 'QR' codes will be added to all fort centre advertising which links directly with PayPal.

Financial Report

Forward audited report for Submission to Charity Commission.

Trustee minutes submitted by Sean McKenna

Group organiser