

Riding high

» Community

Horse, pony and carriage-riding offer disabled riders an element of freedom, pleasure and confidence they might not feel in their everyday lives.

The volunteers at Cranleigh Riding for the Disabled Association in Rowley know this well, which is why a recent sponsored ride starting off from Albury Heath was a huge success, collecting £10,000 so far, and rising.

Angie Hargreaves helped on the Good Friday event, which saw 130 riders with horses of all shapes and sizes, from London and all over the South East, ride the 11-mile loop through the Surrey Hills, across Blackheath, Farley Heath and Winterfold Forest.

Angie said: "It was very rewarding to have been involved: all the riders were so appreciative and their enjoyment evident. Despite dreary weather conditions, the riders were unfailingly upbeat and positive. Smiles were seen all along the way, raising the spirits of the chilly marshals who sat patiently all day, rain spattering their check sheets, to make sure none went astray."

Two of the Cranleigh RDA horses, Robbie and Aero,

regularly used for session work with special needs riders, trotted out with volunteers Alice Lee and Sue Keen. Ten young riders completed the shorter three-mile route for led and accompanied riders, including three young special needs riders who regularly ride at Casis's Farm, the group's base, who were awarded with rosettes. One rider said afterwards: "Just wanted to say a huge THANK YOU for a wonderful day. It was so well organised and we hope you raised lots of money!"

Neighbours supported the day by allowing their land to be used, and many businesses and companies sponsored marshal points. The funds raised from this annual ride are crucial to helping disabled people of all ages to achieve their goals in a supportive environment.

● To find out more about CRDA and how you can help, visit www.cranleighrdagroup.co.uk To donate, visit www.justgiving.com/casis-farm-teams-2015/



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