



Wyfold Riding for the Disabled is an independent charity which has been running since 1970 thanks to the hard work of its volunteers.

More than 80 dedicated people volunteer for Wyfold RDA, which is one of the oldest RDA branches in the country.

Based at Wyfold Court in Peppard, on the former site of the Borocourt Hospital, the team offer riding and driving to about 75 disabled adults and children in Oxfordshire and Berkshire. The centre is open six days a week all year and we keep eight very special horses. This costs £40,000 per annum and, as Gill Rushworth explains, "We have to raise every penny and still need the support of local people and organisations to keep running. We are always pleased to show people the wonderful work we do."

The charity's aim is to help disabled adults and children learn to drive and ride horses, to get out into the fresh air and find a new mobility. Children as young as one can sit on a horse with a physiotherapist. "Riders gain confidence independence and improved balance and mobility," adds Gill. "The movement of the horse activates muscles, encouraging the child to support him or herself."

The organisation also has a horse and carriage which can take wheelchair-bound adults and children around fields and woods and which some of our disabled adults can learn to drive themselves – one is aged 80 years plus.

One rider, Hannah, says: "I love it, it makes me happy. I feel safe when I'm at Wyfold. Riding gives me confidence." Hannah's mum says: "Riding is the highlight of her week and the Wyfold volunteers are worth their weight in gold – the therapeutic benefits of horses are beyond price."

Wyfold RDA are searching for two horses, as two have recently had to retire. Anyone with horses of the right temperament who can help are urged to get in touch.

- On Saturday 14th November, Aliquando Choir will hold a concert in aid of Wyfold RDA at St Mary's Church in Henley at 7.30pm. Visit www.aliquando.co.uk.
- Find out more about Wyfold RDA by calling **01491 628 260** or visiting www.wyfoldrda.org.uk

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