



SIRONA

Therapeutic
Horsemanship



ANNUAL REVIEW

April 1 2014 to March 31 2015

Sirona is a not-for-profit Community Interest Company which provides therapeutic and learning opportunities through partnership with horses set in the natural environment.

Our Mission: We provide the opportunity for young people and adults who experience disadvantage to participate in educational and therapeutic activities with horses within a holistic, person and animal-centred environment. By engaging in equine activities centred within the natural environment participants are enabled to experience the mental and physical health benefits from being in nature and engaging in exercise, and in addition gain social and emotional benefits and learn new skills aimed at building resilience and improved life outcomes.

THE
WOODWARD
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The
Northbrook
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Sirona Therapeutic Horsemanship CIC

Company Information:

Directors	Hannah Louise Burgon Dianne Shirley Gammage Jane Turner
Secretary	Janice Elizabeth O'Highway
Company Number	6570184 (England & Wales)
Registered Office and Principal Address	The Merchant's House 10 Town Quay The Plains Totnes TQ9 5DW
Web Address	www.sironacic.com
Accountants	Lee Accounting (South West) Ltd 19b Golvers Hill Road Kingsteignton Newton Abbot Devon

June 2015

Foreword by Hannah Burgon: Sirona's Founder and Managing Director

On behalf of the board of directors I am proud to provide an overview of our activities during 2014-15. Now in our third year we have continued to grow and refine our service, responding to participant and stakeholder feedback to provide a range of therapeutic and educational equine based sessions to participants experiencing disadvantages or difficulties in some way.

In addition to providing an increased number of our Therapeutic Horsemanship and Equine-Assisted Therapy and Learning sessions during 2014-15, we also introduced a new range of courses for adults interested in learning more about our approach. This included 3 'Equidramatherapy' courses which were all fully booked; we also piloted 'Mindfulness with Horses' a new course based on our work with participants, and incorporating Mindfulness based exercises in our equine sessions. We were very proud to be invited to present our Mindfulness work at the prestigious UKESAD* addictions conference held at the Marriott Hotel in London in May 2014. This was attended by delegates from all over the UK, Europe and the USA, and our presentation was very well received with much positive feedback and interest in our work.

Our partnership with Duchy College has continued to grow with a further 4 students enrolling on the Level 1 Horse Care course where they can gain an accredited qualification in a small supportive environment. We are very grateful to the Northbrook Trust who once again supported us with a grant which has enabled us to employ a p/t Education Co-ordinator in order to further develop this side of our work during 2015-16.

We also had sadness in 2014 when we said goodbye to Jaspe' our very special and strong-minded 24yr old Lippizanner gelding who was bred by myself and had been part of Sirona since its inception. Jaspe' was very much loved but his health conditions related to his age meant that his life was very much limited and it was decided that it was kinder to have him put down. This happened on 21st June, Midsummer's day, and was very peaceful surrounded by all the herd. We hope he has gone to join his beautiful dam Donzela.

Hannah Burgon

*UKESAD: UK and European Symposium on Addictive Disorders

Our background...

Sirona was initially set up to deliver therapeutic horsemanship to a Devon foster care company during 2006/08 to provide a service for young people who required additional therapeutic support. As demand increased, the service was expanded to accept referrals from other organisations, and Sirona was constituted as a CIC. After a break during 2008-12 when Hannah completed her PhD in Equine-Assisted Therapy and Learning, new premises were acquired in the grounds of Hannahs at Seale Hayne, near Newton Abbot in Devon in 2012. This has meant Sirona is now able to provide therapeutic horsemanship to a wider range of participants including adults with additional support needs.

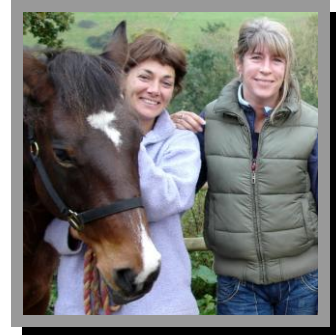
Our directors...

Director and founder: Hannah Burgon, Ph.D, MADipSW, MSc, Bsc(hons), Cert in Counselling

Hannah is a qualified social worker, with over 40 years of experience with horses, together with qualifications and training in equine facilitated learning and traditional and natural horsemanship. Hannah completed an ESRC funded PhD research study on Therapeutic Horsemanship at Cardiff University in 2010, and her book on this research was published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2014, in addition to other published articles and papers on equine-assisted learning and therapy.

Director: Jane Turner, BA.(hons) Social Worker.

Jane is a qualified social worker working in child protection so offers us valuable advice on current practice.



From the left:
Rosie, Di and Hannah.

Director: Di Gammage, BEd(hons) MA Core Process Psychotherapist, Dramatherapist, Playtherapist.

Di is a core process psychotherapist and child psychotherapist, as well as a qualified play and drama therapist working with both children and adults. Di has written numerous publications on play and drama therapy, and also runs courses on play therapy at international level. Di provides regular clinical supervision for Sirona, and has a lifelong love of horses.



Sirona people...

Our session staff: Sirona could not operate without the dedicated and talented team of session staff that has grown with us as our organisation has developed. They include counsellors Emma Matsambanye and Lou Reed-Daunter, BHSAI riding instructor Jenny Saxby and horse handlers Angie Whitehead, Josie Arscott, Cass Wynne, and Danni Humphrey. We have also been joined by Tamasine Norton who holds an HND in Equine Science and is a qualified counsellor, and Mel Beath, a social worker from Australia. Our session staff brings a wealth of experience, ideas and enthusiasm to their work, and every 6 weeks the team meet to have clinical peer supervision facilitated by Di Gammage to discuss session practice and other issues.

Our Patrons and Supporters: The international dressage trainer Heather Moffett has kindly donated to us a number of her specialist saddles, and supports us at our annual open day, bringing her magnificent Lusitano horses for demonstrations. Lucy Rees, the horse behaviourist, trainer and best selling author of 'The Horses' Mind' is our other patron. Lucy now lives in Spain and has kindly given Hannah 2 horses to join the Sirona herd, and also provides training to the team when she is in the UK.

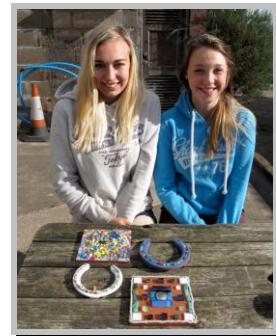
Our Volunteers: We have a fantastic team of volunteers who provide support and bring a wide range of skills and experience to Sirona ranging from horse management and land and building maintenance to photography, film, website and admin support. During the past year 40 volunteers have supported Sirona. We presently have 15 active regular volunteers providing on-going support in all areas; in return we offer a warm and supportive environment and a comprehensive training programme including Child Protection and Safeguarding, First Aid training, Mental Health Awareness, Animal-Assisted Therapy and various horse based workshops in order to provide a wide range of personal development opportunities to our valued team. We currently have a waiting list of people wishing to volunteer at Sirona, contacting us from across the country and even from abroad. In order to best support our volunteers we have started to apply for funding to cover a volunteer co-ordinator salary. This will enable us to manage and support our volunteers in a more effective way, and open up more possibilities for people with additional support needs to be able to volunteer at Sirona.

Our 14/15 year in summary...

- U 119 Participants
- U 404 Horsemanship sessions
- U 7 Work Experience Placements
- U 2 Student Placements from Plymouth University
- U 2 Full time staff
- U 1 Apprenticeship, from Bicton College
- U 40 Volunteers, 10 under twenty five.
- U 6290 hours contributed by our volunteers.
- U 7 Part-time staff: Therapists, instructors, horse assistants
- U Our first 4 Equidramatherapy courses
- U Our Open Day with over 100 in attendance.
- U Sirona fundraising stand at Exeter Races Family Raceday
- U 3 Students completed Duchy Level 1 Horse Care course
- U 16 Team Training Events

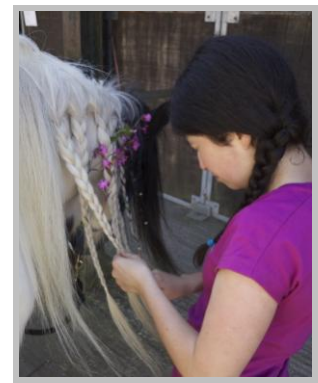
Team training & events...

March: Child Protection Level 2
April: Useful Psychology for Youth Professionals
1st Aid Training with equestrian focus
May: Horses in Education & Therapy Int. network day
UKESAD Addiction Conference. London



July: Challenge of Change Resilience Training
Sirona Open Day for team and participants
Aug: Horses Inside Out, Demo at Coombe Park
Stable Management Refresher Course
Sept: Young People's Mental Health training
ICO Workshop on Data Protection

Oct: Animal-Assisted Training with Sarah Urwin
Group 3 Child Protection Training
Equine-Assisted Practitioners Development group meeting,
Equine-Assisted Therapy Documentary DVD evening
Nov: Child Protection Training
Dec: First Aid at Work, Newton Abbot CVS



Our Activities and Participants...

Referrals: Our participants continue to be referred by a range of agencies including Social Services fostering and adoption teams, schools, pupil referral units and mental health and learning disability services. Referrals have grown steadily over 2014/15. We now have between 20-30 participants attending Sirona each week, running 2-3 sessions each day, and we have a waiting list of approximately 10 people at any one time. In response to demand we have introduced a further after school session, so that we now run 2 after school sessions in term time, and have planned more holiday horsemanship and horse based art courses in school holidays for 2015/16.

Activities...

Each week we provided the following sessions:

- 6 Therapeutic Horsemanship
- 3 Equine-Assisted Therapy
- 2 Level 1 Horse Care course
- 1 Supported Volunteering



Sessions are delivered by our team of qualified counsellors and therapists, BHSAI riding teacher, and other specialist practitioners with a wide variety of equine experience.

Sessions generally run for between 1-3 hrs and participants attend either weekly or fortnightly. Participants help set their own goals and targets in conjunction with their referrer and this may be to learn new skills, increase confidence or find ways to build more positive relationships. Our model at Sirona believes that the participant holds their own key to well-being and our role is to provide a safe, nurturing environment in order to facilitate growth at the participant's own pace. By focusing on building relationships with the horses and learning about their individual needs and characters, participants are able to explore their own stories and needs through the safety of the horse. In Equine-Assisted Therapy sessions the therapist may be able to help support the participant through the use of analogy and metaphor; this is especially useful for young people who find traditional therapy too intense.

Activities in sessions include grooming the horses, learning about horse psychology, general care of the fields and stables such as mucking out and filling haynets, and activities such as learning to lead the horses and horse agility.

Equine-Based Mindfulness (EBM)

We have also introduced our own 'Equine-Based Mindfulness' exercises into sessions where participants learn breathing and calming techniques with the horses which they can then take into their everyday lives. Feedback has overwhelmingly shown that participants have benefited in a growth in self-confidence and being calmer after sessions at Sirona.

“ When I first met Rosie (horse) I learnt how to act confident even if I don't feel it. I use this in school now when I don't feel confident in my lessons – I act confident and the others trust me which makes me feel more confident ”
(youna person)

Measuring the impact of our activities...

We are constantly aware of the importance of measuring the impact of the work we do, and very grateful to our referral agencies and participants for the feedback they provide. Some of our impacts are quite precisely measurable, and some are more subjective, but we hope to continue to build on producing both qualitative and quantitative data to provide a robust analysis of our work.

In their feedback questionnaires, 100% of our referral agencies reported positive impacts on participants attending Sirona sessions.

Identified benefits included:

- * Improved confidence and self-esteem
 - * Mental health improvements
 - * Increased calmness and emotional control
 - * Better communication skills
 - * Improved school attendance

Some figures to support these impacts:

76% of participants reported an improvement in their wellbeing and general mental health from attending Sirona.

61% of parents and carers reported that young people were calmer after sessions.

55% of parents and carers reported an increase in empathy following attendance.

10 participants have moved on into further training and volunteer placements during 2014-15.

One of our Case Studies:

'DW' (aged 15) was referred to Sirona by a PRU (Pupil Referral Unit) where she was struggling with attendance. DW had previously been in an adolescent mental health ward due to ongoing mental health issues, anxiety, and an eating disorder. Despite being very bright her academic performance had suffered as a result. DW attended 12 sessions of Therapeutic Horsemanship at Sirona alongside another young person. During these sessions DW built up a relationship with the horse B and learned how to care for him with activities such as grooming, feeding, leading him out for exercise and reading his body language in order to understand how he was feeling. In turn this led to discussions with the practitioner around the importance of caring for herself, her diet, and being aware of her physical and mental health. DW grew in confidence during her sessions at Sirona and her self-esteem improved as a result. Her teacher at the PRU reported that her attendance during and after attending Sirona improved remarkably and DW managed to remain at the centre until she left school then went on to enrol in an animal care course at a local college. She told us.....

'Thank you so much for what you have done for me. I can't even begin to explain how much this has helped me when times were really tough.'

Outcomes and Evaluation...

In 2014 we were fortunate to have the help of Matt Hill from South West Forum who helped us develop our Theory of Change. This maps our service, what we do, how we do it and what our outcomes are. It is a useful tool for monitoring our service.

Our Theory of Change Statement...

Sirona Therapeutic Horsemanship gathers appropriate evidence to indicate whether particular changes have taken place or assess levels of progress towards particular outcomes. Developing a Theory of Change for Sirona Therapeutic Horsemanship has begun to inform the development of a monitoring and evaluation framework (Nesta 2013), to evidence whether activities are working as planned and where improvements might be made. Working through this process will support the ongoing learning and development of the activities provided by the organisation. Gathering evidence on these outcomes will also enable the organisation to test the underlying assumptions within the framework.

In collaboration with our participants and volunteers Sirona has been developing and refining our evaluation methods during the past year. This has involved adapting our feedback forms to make them more user-friendly: We now have 2 versions, including a shorter, scaling tick box form for younger participants and those who do not like longer forms, and a more in-depth questionnaire for those who would like to give more feedback. In addition we introduced a 'drop box' on the suggestion of ex-participants and volunteers where people can just 'drop' comments, drawings or anything else they would like to feed back on their experiences at Sirona.

In addition to this, Caroline, an ex social worker and one of our new volunteers has very cleverly designed us an 'Outcomes Cartwheel' where participants can choose targets they would like to work on or develop at Sirona and then measure their progress.

The Cartwheel is still in the development stages so we are hoping to pilot this during the next year.



Feedback

Some comments from parents, carers, teachers and other professionals:

...she is much calmer and relaxed and a lot easier to communicate with. She shows true feelings and emotions for the horses and misses them when away from them for too long. (Parent)

It's been very beneficial for her. She has used the horses to help calm herself and put her anxiety under control. (Carer)

...a history of poor attendance at school, but she never missed a Sirona session. An improvement in school attendance since. (Teacher)

...just writing to say THANK YOU so much! It is without doubt an environment where she can develop new skills, and most importantly, personal confidence. What you and your team are doing is INVALUABLE. (Parent)

It was the first time she had touched a horse - it was great for her self-esteem; she has been asking (already) about a career with horses. (Teacher)

The girls have benefitted in so many ways it's unbelievable. Both of them have grown in confidence and K has got her spark back again. (Parent)

The girls have learnt to look after and respect horses which has helped them look after themselves and each other. For K, seeing how many times a horse breathes - I've noticed that when she gets panicky her breathing has slowed down so she's much more relaxed. (Parent)

'A' didn't speak all the way to Sirona, she looked sullen and uncommunicative. When I came to collect her a different girl greeted me, she was smiling, chatty and very excited because she had photos of herself and the horses. Sirona has made a big difference. (Family Practitioner)

Some comments from participants...

Rosie is my favourite (horse). She is very calm which is good when I'm feeling anxious as she calms me down.

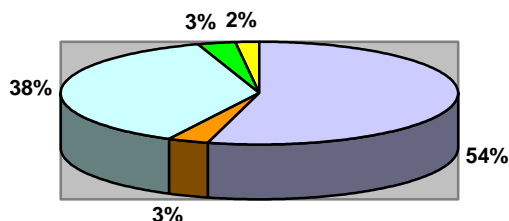
When I first met Rosie (horse) I learnt how to act confident even if I don't feel it. I use this at school now.

I enjoyed meeting the horse and making trust between us.

Being around the horses makes me feel happier and more comfortable

Horses have definitely improved my life. It was the most enjoyable therapy I've participated in. Horses can read our emotions and are very responsive to them, so to keep the horse relaxed you have to focus on being calm, and your breathing.

Income & Funding



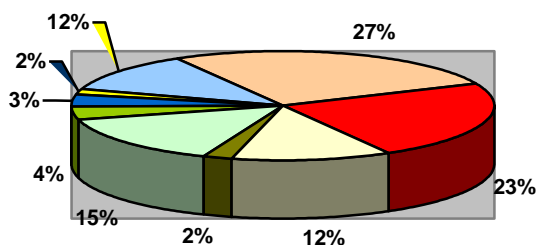
In the 2014/15 financial year, our total income from all sources amounted to £72,753.

As ever, we are deeply indebted to the trusts and individuals who provide the funds that enable us to continue our work, with income from grants and donations amounting to £29,471 which represents 41% of our overall income. The total figure is made up of grant income of £27,289 and individual donations of £2,182.

We continue to work very hard to grow the core elements of our work through our equine sessions, workshops/courses, and fundraising. In the year, 59% of Sirona's income was self-generated, with equine sessions producing £39,403; workshops/courses £2470, and fundraising/sales adding a further £1409.

We are particularly pleased that our income from equine sessions increased from £35,763 to £39,403, an increase of 10.2%. Our self-generated income fully covers the cost of salaries, admin, licenses, insurances and some other overheads.

Expenditure and costs...



2014/15 has been a year of prudent cost management with overall expenditure reducing from £77,460 to £71,907.

Salary costs for our three employees totalled £19,161. The costs associated with our session work increased by 5.7% from £15,978 to £16,890, this extra expenditure facilitating a significant 10.2% increase in session income, and in the same period we were able to reduce administration costs.

Feed, tack and other material costs reduced by 13% from £12,296 to £10,686. The cost of Licenses and Insurances remained static during the year at £2,777.

We are permanently grateful to our hard working volunteers who contributed 6298 hours in the year. Based on the minimum wage, the monetary value of this contribution is almost £41,000.

Sirona's Horses, with a few of their human friends...

EZMEE enjoying a festive joke with our apprentice Ella. Ezmee is Ella's first horse and Ella is bringing her on with a little help from the Sirona staff team.



TORO with Josie Arscott, trainee counsellor. Toro is a young Lusitano X in training with Hannah. He is a rescue horse given to Hannah by Lucy Rees from Cáceres in Spain



CHAPAS with Daisy, one of our younger volunteers. Chapas is also a rescue horse from Spain donated to Hannah by Lucy Rees. He is very handsome, but sensitive, and he takes time to trust new people.



ROSIE with Emma Matsambanye a child and adult counsellor. Rosie is an 18 year old CobX with a beautiful kind and gentle nature.



ZEPH is our Shetland Pony, pictured here with volunteer Emma Jones. Zeph is the smallest member of our equine family; he is kind natured and very popular.



BECKETT with Jenny Saxby BHS AI, his owner and our riding instructor. Beckett is a 14.3hh Welsh X TB and the Sirona schoolmaster.



A big Thank You to all our supporters and donors in 2014-15...

Big Lottery - Awards for All fund

Teignbridge local councillors: Cllr Bunday, Cllr Hocking, Cllr Rowe,
Cllr Corney-Walker, Cllr Shantry, Cllr Hook, Cllr Brodie.

The Woodward Charitable Trust

The Norman Family Trust

The Patrick & Lady Heathcoat Trust

The Northbrook Community Trust

Devon Community Foundation

The Bloss Family Foundation

The Rotary Club

The Self Heal Society

In addition we would like to say thank you to the following for donating their services and support to Sirona during the last year...

Tim Hughes - for offering a great service to our horses and ponies

Kevin Peglar - our vet at Blackdown Equine Practice

Ben at TreeFellas - for donating woodchip for our arena

Kate Legum - for support of funding for training our team

Liz Meadows - for providing equine Shiatsu for our horses

Shelagh Coghlan at DreamHorse - for providing TTouch for our horses

Teignbridge CVS, and especially David Cox - for fundraising support (and ginger beer!).

...and by no means least, all our session staff and volunteers who give so much time behind the scenes to enable Sirona to operate and benefit so many young people and adults.