

SPRING
2025



CIO NO. 1169709



SPRINGING INTO 2025



TORO

STORM ÉOWYN AND LEARNING FROM OUR HORSES

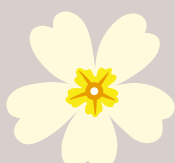


2025 got off to a stormy start at Sirona! In January during a busy morning of therapeutic sessions Storm Éowyn hit Sirona out of nowhere. One minute we were enjoying a calm, sunny day and the next the heavens opened with torrential hail followed by deafening thunder and simultaneous lightening right over our centre.

A number of participants were on the yard at the time but our fantastic practitioners quickly took control of the situation and moved the participants into the tack room, our safest building, whilst the equine team stayed with the horses to ensure their safety. Toro, Hannah's Lusitano x gelding who can be anxious to loud noises due to past traumatic experiences, was the most affected and became very agitated, leaping around his pen and trying to jump out. However, with calm handling he was able to manage his anxiety to be lead out of the yard where he stood calmly on the track staying within sight of the other horses with his tail to the storm. The other horses chose to stand together in the big open barn seemingly unaffected by the deafening hail on the roof, and remaining amazingly calm in spite of the extremely frightening weather event.

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ELSIE

Giving a beautiful demonstration of animal and humans supporting each other, Elsie our lurcher dog who was really frightened by the thunder chose to go straight to one of our participants who was also very scared. Elsie stuck to his side whilst the participant comforted her, helping him stay calm himself, which was beautiful to witness. After the storm had passed we noticed how the horses spent time rolling and resting together later that afternoon, to shake off the experience and recover. During our debriefing as a team afterwards we discussed what amazing role models horses can be, demonstrating their resilience and capacity to 'weather the storm' and knowing what they needed to do to recover.

FILMING PROJECT

Our new film!

We are very excited to share a new film about our work at Sirona which has just been completed and edited by the talented Matt at Contour Films (www.contourfilms.co.uk) together with Sirona's own Shaun Dérioz on camerawork supported by Paige Beattie and many helpers and contributors, including our patron George Monbiot. A huge thank you to everyone who helped on the film, which can be found on our website or <https://vimeo.com/1071127065>



MERCHANDISE

We now have a wider selection of Sirona merchandise for sale including our popular organic hoodies, t-shirts and baseball caps, together with new Sirona tea-towels and mugs featuring all our horses. Sacks of our well-rotted horse manure is also available to purchase from our gate – just please call and arrange collection first with Diane on 01803 868779.






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FUNDING

TRUSTS



We are grateful to a number of trusts who have awarded funding to Sirona recently. The Hargreaves Trust once again provided funding towards equine-assisted sessions for a number of young people with adverse childhood experiences, and the St James' Place Foundation granted funding towards the salary of an equine-assisted practitioner over the next three years. Finally, the Worshipful Company of Loriners kindly awarded Sirona £1000 towards our HorseWorks group session for young people who are NEET or risk of NEET.



St
James's
Place



SUPPORTERS

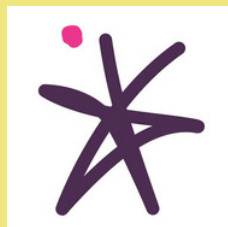
We are also really grateful to Kate Sandal from **Soft and Sound** and to **South Brent Riding Club** who together raised £257 for Sirona at their members evening talk 'How our Horses Learn'.



WWW.SOFTANDSOUND.ORG

WWW.SOUTHBRENTRIDINGCLUB.CO.UK

Thanks also to recruitment company, Stop Gap for their donation of £250. www.stopgap.co.uk



SPONSOR A PONY



We are hugely grateful to a number of new sponsors recently, both individuals and a company sponsoring our ponies, and also towards equine-assisted sessions for a vulnerable young person. These donations vary from as little as £5 a month to a fantastic £200 a month, and make a huge difference to our charity by providing regular funds toward our horse and session costs.



@SIRONAEQUINE



SPRING 2025



@SIRONAEQUINE



COMMUNITY EVENTS



We have had a busy spring with a number of events. In February we were delighted to welcome the leader of the Liberal Democrat party Ed Davey together with our local MP Caroline Voaden to visit Sirona. Ed and Caroline were really interested in our work and to learn about the power of horses to change vulnerable young people's lives. We also talked about the complexities and difficulty in funding the work we do, with disparities in the funding system for young people who are care experienced or adopted, with Caroline saying she will be sure to feed this back to parliament.

Later in the month we hosted our popular information morning for people interested in learning more about our work or how our referral process works, and also ran a course for our team on Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder which affects many young people referred to Sirona.

Then in March we were honoured to be invited to a black tie dinner and fundraising auction at HMS Drake in Plymouth hosted by The High Sherriff of Devon, Jake Moores OBE who chose Sirona as one of his charities of the year in 2024-25. We are very grateful to Jake for fundraising £1500 for Sirona and for presenting us with a High Sherriff Award for Community Services.



Finally, Hannah and Diane attended a really informative course on improving grass management for horses and the environment run by Equiculture www.equiculture.net/the-equicentral-system. We highly recommend this course, and it was heartening to see that we are already practicing many of their recommendations with our open barn system, rotating, seeding and mulching paddocks, and also to learn what more we can work towards doing.





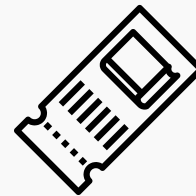
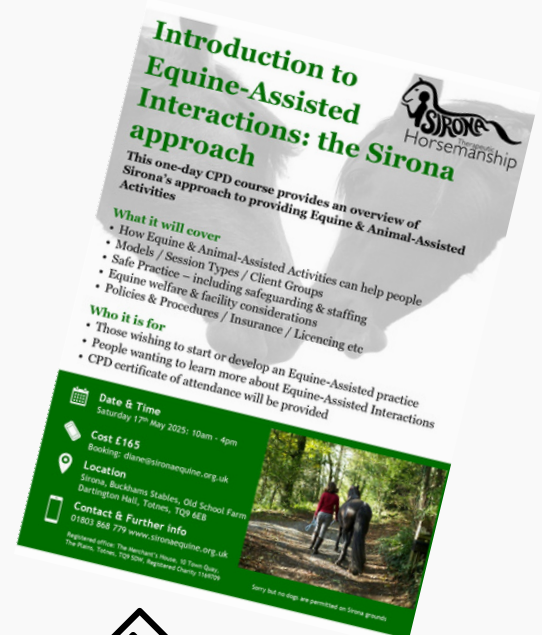
UPCOMING EVENTS

SATURDAY 17TH MAY

INTRODUCTION TO EQUINE-ASSISTED INTERACTIONS: THE SIRONA APPROACH

We still have spaces on our popular 'Introduction to Equine-Assisted Interactions: the Sirona approach' on the 17th May.

This course gives a really good overview and understanding of what is involved in setting up and running equine and animal-assisted activities, whether you are looking to start up and explore training options, or are already established and need to keep up with developments in the field such as legislation and fitness to practice. It is also great for networking with others in the field and learn more about our approach to equine welfare with a tour of our facilities and example of a session activity.



For booking and further information please email
Diane@sironaequine.org.uk

ANNUAL OPEN DAY - SATURDAY 21ST JUNE

Our annual open day is on midsummers day this year – so we hope it will be a lovely sunny day again! As usual this is open for all and entry is by donation (no dogs please). This is a great family day with the opportunity to meet our horses and other animals, learn more about what we do and with fun activities for children such as horse shoe painting and mosaics and educational games. There are also refreshments and cake, plant and bric a brac stalls.



Raffle prizes: we are on the lookout for raffle prizes and good quality items to sell on our bric a brac stall. Do you have any unwanted gifts or know a local business or craftsperson who might like to donate a prize? Previous raffle prizes have included a weekend holiday cottage stay for two, meal vouchers at local eateries in Totnes, massage vouchers and beautiful jewellery and local artisan crafts. Our annual open day is a really important day for us in raising vital funds to support equine and animal-assisted sessions for vulnerable young people in our community and so any help you can offer is much appreciated.





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TEAM NEWS

FAREWELL AMBER



We were very sad to say goodbye this month to our fantastic apprentice Amber who successfully completed her Level 2 Equine Groom apprenticeship at Sirona with flying colours. Amber is progressing onto a Level 3 apprenticeship at a bigger livery and competition yard to gain more experience but has promised she will come back! Amber left us this really moving and thoughtful testimonial on her time as an apprentice at Sirona.

"I had the pleasure of doing my level 2 equine groom apprenticeship at Sirona and it was probably the best 15 months of my life. The environment is very warm and welcoming, the team immediately made it feel like home. They delivered high quality training and teaching daily, there was never a point during the apprenticeship where I thought that I wasn't able to ask questions or learn more. Sirona is a none judgemental environment which is hard to find in the equestrian industry, they never pressured me which is why I was able to learn so much not just about horses but about myself. Sirona enabled me to learn a horse centred approach and get a refreshing new perspective of horse handling, care, psychology and much more which I will carry with me in all aspects of my life. I was extremely lucky to experience the world "through the horses eyes" and synchronise with Sirona's stunning, kind natured horses".

WELCOME BACK TESSA



With Amber moving on we are really pleased to now welcome back Tessa to restart her apprenticeship after a break. Tessa is going to be posting a regular 'day in the life of an apprentice at Sirona' blog on our facebook page so look out for updates.

We offer our apprenticeship in partnership with Duchy College who provide the training at college with Sirona providing the practical work experience. In addition to apprenticeships we offer work experience and student placements and internships when we can. Keep updated by signing up to our mailing list.



Scan to join our mailing list!



Equine and Horticultural volunteers needed

Sirona is desperately in need of a committed gardener/horticulturalist who would like to help look after and develop our horticultural areas. This includes our beautiful orchard garden which we would like to develop further to include some raised beds with herbs for our horses, and helping to look after the vegetable and flower boxes.



We are also in need of volunteers with a good level of horse experience (who work within our model of compassionate horsemanship), to volunteer once a week to help with field and stable chores and exercising ponies in hand (or possibly ridden for a light rider). If you would like to learn more about either of these roles please get in touch with diane@sironaequine.org.uk



VACANCY EQUINE INSTRUCTOR

Our fabulous BHSI instructor is sadly moving on after 9 years at Sirona due to her expanding freelance teaching and so we are looking for a new equine instructor to join our team at Sirona. The roles includes yard and horse care and teaching apprentices. MUST hold either BHSI or ABRIS instructor qualification and work with horses in a kind and sensitive manner. [Get in touch for more details.](#)



CIO REGISTERED OFFICE: THE MERCHANT'S HOUSE, 10 TOWN QUAY, THE PLAINS,
TOTNES TQ9 5DW