

AUTUMN/WINTER
2025



CIO NO. 1169709

AUTUMN/WINTER NEWSLETTER 2025

WELCOME TO OUR NEWSLETTER

Read all about our busy summer here at Sirona and our plans now autumn is approaching. Whilst the horses have enjoyed a break, the team have been working hard behind the scenes preparing for the start of the new term.

Are you joining us for our Open Morning?

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- ****NEW**** Autumn Half Term Open Morning Tuesday October 28th 10am -1pm
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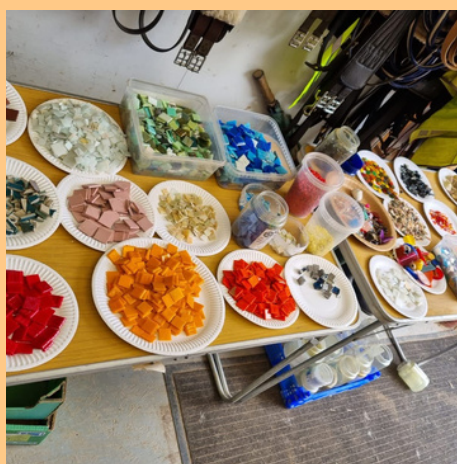


SUMMERTIME AT SIRONA - HOLIDAY ANIMAL AND ART SESSIONS



Our summer holiday animal and art sessions at Sirona are always popular with opportunities for young people to learn about and care for the animals and have some creative fun with art activities. We used clay to model unicorns and frogs and pretty mosaic frames and horseshoe decorating.

We also created a natural sculpture in the Orchard Garden with all natural materials. Everyone at Sirona loves the holiday sessions and we were blessed with some lovely weather to making the most of being outdoors in nature - therapeutic in itself!



**BBC
RADIO**



Devon Live

GUEST APPEARANCE ON BBC RADIO DEVON

We were honoured to be guests on the BBC Radio Devon This Morning show in April and also on the 'Country Matters' segment back in June. Listen to the June interview (via the button below) with practitioner Kirsty Bowles and founder Hannah Burgon talking about our work with young people and how Sirona started.

It was a great opportunity to highlight Sirona in the local area so a big thanks to Radio Devon for having us. Listen to the recording on the button below.



@SIRONAEQUINE



PARTICIPANT STORIES

A number of young people have started their first sessions at Sirona this term with some really powerful experiences with the horses stepping up to support them.

One young person, Michael, (name changed) who has autism and was referred to Sirona due to experiencing anxiety and difficulties in social relationships made an immediate connection with Chasy, our beautiful piebald cob mare. On one session Michael just wanted to sit in the barn with Chasy who was quietly munching on her hay and straw net. After a short time Chasy went over and lay down next to him falling fast asleep and snoring! Michael was delighted with this, and since this session his confidence has grown and he has been able to start to engage in the session with another young person where they are working together to practice leading the horses out for a foraging walk.



In another session Toro, our handsome Lusitano cross rescue gelding made an immediate connection with Sarah (name changed) who had been struggling with her mental health and confidence and was unable to attend school. In one session getting to know Toro he followed her around the field at liberty, even stepping up onto our big sand filled tractor tyres and over some logs. They then stood together in the field for some time just breathing together with Sarah saying afterwards how calming it was. Her practitioner gave Sarah a photograph of her and Toro which she later told us she looked at regularly to help her calm down if she was feeling anxious - remembering the feeling it had given her. This is an example of an equine-assisted mindfulness exercise we introduce with participants if appropriate.

We are so in awe of our amazing herd of horses and the powerful experiences and healing they provide to the young people who attend Sirona. Their welfare is paramount to our values and keeping them together as a herd with a free range lifestyle and conducting sessions with them at liberty as much as possible we believe is vital for their wellbeing. We will be running our annual Introduction to Equine-Assisted Interactions course the Sirona approach next Spring - please sign up to our newsletter for updates on this.

Join our
mailing list
here!

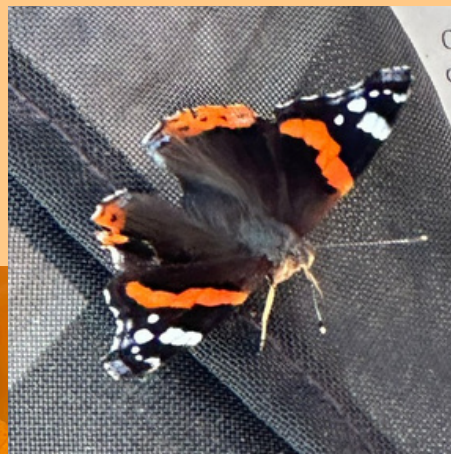
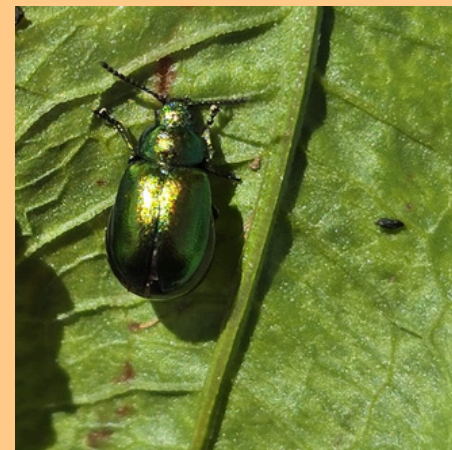
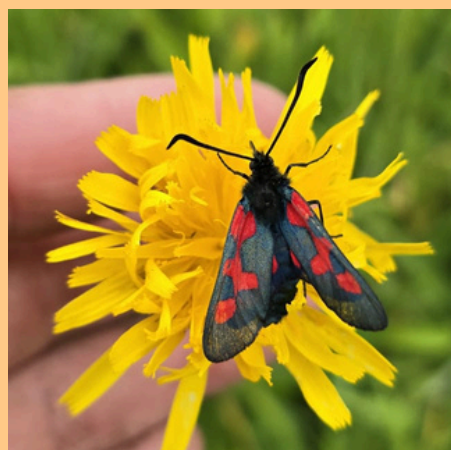


BIODIVERSITY UPDATE - BUTTERFLIES, DRAGONFLIES AND FROGS

We are in a wildlife haven here at Sirona on the Dartington Estate and are so lucky to share this beautiful space alongside many species of plants and animals. Here are some photos of recent spots here, we really are blessed to be able to capture these photos in our day to day work life.

This year we took part in the Butterfly Conservation Big Butterfly Count. We planted Buddleia in our carpark hedgerow 4 years ago as part of our commitment to increasing biodiversity at Sirona and they now attract butterflies as well as a wide range of pollinators including bees and different flies and beetles. We saw 2 Small Tortoiseshell, 1 Large White, 6 Gatekeeper, 1 Painted Lady, 1 Peacock and a Red Admiral and have updated our count to the Big Butterfly Count website.

Thanks to Shaun, Jade, Natalie and Kate for the photos.



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UPCOMING EVENTS

INFORMATION EVENT



We run information mornings or afternoons termly throughout the year. This is a chance for referrers, professionals and anyone interested in our work to visit Sirona and find out more about what we offer.

Our next event will be on
Thursday 16th October 2025
11:15am – 12:15pm

at Sirona Therapeutic Horsemanship, Buckhams Stables, Dartington. TQ9 6EB

We run these events once a term – so don't miss your chance to visit, connect, and be inspired!

Places are free, but booking is essential.

Email info@sironaequine.org.uk to reserve your spot or phone 01803 868779

Registered Charity No. 1169709

Information Event

Thursday 16th October 2025 11:15am – 12:15pm

For referrers, parents and professionals. Please book with us via our contact form on the website.

Join our
mailing list
here!



Join us at Sirona for our **Autumn Open Morning** this half term.
Tuesday 28th October
10am - 1pm. **All welcome.**

Following on from our Summer Open Day we are opening the gates once again this year at our beautiful Dartington home for another chance to find out all about what we do. Join us for horse themed games, art activities, games and refreshments. Entry by donation.




Autumn Open Morning

Tuesday 28th October 2025
10am - 1pm

Come to our centre on the Dartington Estate to meet the team, the horses and other animals.

JOIN IN:
Horseshoe Painting,
Art Activities,
Meet the ponies and animals.
Cakes, Tea & Coffee
Bric a Brac Stall and Gifts for sale

Find out about our
SPONSOR A PONY SCHEME -
Ideal Christmas present and support Sirona too!

'Sirona Merchandise' On Sale

Entry by Donation -
Cash Welcome
No Dogs Please

SPONSOR ME! GILDED LILY

CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

Buckhams Stables,
Old School Farm
Dartington Hall, TQ9 6EB

info@sironaequine.org.uk
www.sironaequine.org.uk
Charity No: 1169709



OPEN DAY 2025

Our 2025 Open Day at Sirona was a resounding success. We welcomed 188 people and raised an amazing £1608.30 through sales, refreshments, raffle and donations. Thank you to everyone who attended and to our dedicated team for all your hard work. Our annual summer open day is an important chance for the community to visit and learn more about what we do.

Our participants once again stole the show, proving the power of horses, animals and nature in helping young people shine.

Many helped with the horses and on our stands, whilst four participants gave brilliant demonstrations, including a creative 'Water theme Agility' course and a 'foraging scent enrichment' activity. These highlight our efforts to keep our horses engaged while giving young people the chance to learn new skills, be playful and build confidence.

Thank you also to our wonderful herd of horses and animals who support so many young people every year. We look forward to seeing you again in 2026!

TOTAL RAISED £1608.30



FUNDING UPDATE



A very big thank you to the Anthony V Martin Foundation. The Foundation has generously donated a funding grant of £3,000 to Sirona. We are incredibly grateful for this much needed donation to support our work that is so vitally needed by vulnerable young people. Anthony V Martin, a passionate advocate for animal welfare, established the foundation in March 2001. The Foundation seeks to improve the lives of animals in many ways and without restriction as to geography. It is primarily dedicated to animal welfare but does from time to time make grants to other worthy causes. Thank you so much to the Foundation for their generous award. Click below to read the full article on their website.

SIRONA ON THE ROAD

Sirona On The Road at the EAS Symposium Gloucester

The EAS Partnership held their annual Symposium and AGM in April with a day of interesting talks from all backgrounds connected with Equine Assisted Activities.

“The EAS Symposium at Hartpury University in Gloucester was attended by 100 wonderful people from the EAS sector working together today at [#LoveEAS2025](https://twitter.com/LoveEAS2025). It was a great day with a wide range of speakers from equines at liberty to ridden; learning, psychotherapy and physical therapies and therapeutic interactions.”

Elsa Sinclair Clinic

We also attended a clinic as spectators to see Elsa Sinclair, the American horse trainer's Freedom-based training.

The whole team had a wonderful day watching Elsa demonstrate her way of working with horses, with an authentically horse focused approach and affirming how we work with our horses here at Sirona.

A huge thank you to Elsa Sinclair, Ginny Banks and Nicola White from Ayton PRE East Beere Farm.





SUPPORTED VOLUNTEER GROUP



Our supported volunteer group who help our yard team on a weekly session created this beautiful flower trough near the entrance to Sirona. The group undertake many tasks with the help of our yard team including poo picking, cleaning water troughs and sweeping plus tending to our garden plot. We greatly appreciate their help and time and always look forward to their help and support. If you are interested in finding out more about this group and other volunteering opportunities at Sirona please message us on the Contact Form on our website.



NEW TEAM MEMBERS AT SIRONA

JULES ROBERTS - REFERRAL CO-ORDINATOR

Jules has been a volunteer for Sirona since May 2024.

With a lifelong background of horse ownership and care, Jules has been an integral member of the equine team over the last twelve months.

As a Referral Co-ordinator, Jules is the first point of contact for new enquiries at Sirona and we welcome her again, this time to the Admin Team.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Do you want to help make a difference to young people in our communities? Sirona Therapeutic Horsemanship has a number of volunteer vacancies for people to support our charity in the following roles. We have vacancies for the following: Chair of Trustees, HR Trustee, Finance/business Trustee and Horse and Animal Care Volunteers.

In Return

In return you will be part of a small but passionate and impactful team making an incredible difference helping vulnerable young people and adults in our communities to have more positive futures through equine and animal-assisted therapy and learning.

CLICK THE BUTTON BELOW TO FIND OUT MORE



TEAM DAY IN THE WOODLAND -FORESTRY, FOOD AND FUN



These are some photos from our recent team morning of nature, mindfulness and teamwork based in the beautiful woodland copse at Sirona. The forest shelter was the perfect venue for this activity. Our new Forest School leader Jade created a fabulous activity morning for the team starting with a lovely introduction - a short meditation followed by a wellbeing story about dragons! Soon we were off foraging for firewood followed by a lesson on campfire building, lighting and safety.

The team then all had a go at woodland crafts working with wool and branches to create eye-catching natural art, and clay modelling from 'real' clay dug out of the ground on the estate.

Then in true outdoor style we cooked our lunch on the cob grill before heading back to the office and animal care. The summer holidays at Sirona are a chance to catch up on general repairs and admin as well as a little time for team building and practicing new skills ready for the new Autumn term.

Thanks Jade for a fun and informative team morning; we hope the new Nature-Based sessions will be a popular additional activity we can offer participants. Please sign up for our mailing list on the button below.



HOW ANIMALS HEAL US BOOK REVIEW

Hannah was very honoured to have been asked to review the wonderful new book by Jay Griffiths 'How Animals Heal Us' and invited Hannah to the book launch at Hatchard's in Piccadilly in June. Jay references Hannah's PhD research and our work at Sirona, and the book is full of the most amazing stories of how animals help humans in so many ways, and how imperative it is we reconnect with both animals and nature more positively. Please visit www.jaygriffiths.com

Jay gave a talk about her book at the East Gate bookshop in Totnes on the 17th July together with our patron George Monbiot if www.monbiot.com/.

And if you want to learn more about Sirona do come along to our Open Day this Autumn, Tuesday 28th October 10am - 1pm www.sironaequine.org.uk/events/



Ways you can support Sirona

- Visit us here in Dartington on our upcoming Open Morning on Tuesday 28th October - entry by donation.
- Grab a great hoodie, mug, Tshirt, teatowel and more and shop early for Christmas.
- Christmas cards of the ponies - we have some beautiful photos of the ponies made into cards, a lovely way to support the charity
- Sponsor a pony gift - a thoughtful clutter free gift for any family member - find details are here on our website www.sironaequine.org.uk/sponsor-a-pony-new/ or **click the button below.**



THANK YOU TO THE PETS FOUNDATION



The Pets Foundation very kindly awarded Sirona Therapeutic Horsemanship a grant of £27,252 over two years which we have been using over this year. We have used this funding towards the salary of a specialist equine-assisted practitioner to provide sessions for young people from families struggling with the cost-of-living crisis by providing subsidised and free places to eligible participants.

**The grant has supported 43 direct young people
and provided 168 sessions to date.**

Some feedback from young people includes;

“Sirona has helped me – I feel happier around the horses. I am more confident and I have learned that even if I think I can’t do something, having a go is the best thing to do”.

“Being with other people has boosted my relationships and made me feel like I can make friends.”

“I’ve learnt life skills – like being kinder to people and taking care of animals. It’s helped me learn about myself”.

We are so grateful to the **Pets Foundation** and the following trusts who have supported Sirona recently- without whom we could not continue our vital work with vulnerable young people.

The Souter Trust, The Swire Trust, The Pixel Trust, The Gordon Carling Foundation

