

Together Fund Centre Case Study



North Ferriby RDA East Yorkshire

About the centre

Based in East Yorkshire, North Ferriby Riding for the Disabled (RDA) centre was set up in the 1980s with a focus on those with mental health problems, long term health conditions and disabilities.

They are proud to provide an alternative learning environment for people to develop their skills and learn more about themselves through the many activities on offer, not just horse riding, but working with the horses on the ground which helps to build a relationship through communication and understanding between human and horse.

The centre also is home to many different animals, including alpacas, donkeys, chickens and two very friendly cats which participants can spend time with and learn about their welfare needs.

All the sessions that take place at the centre are designed to ensure participants feel welcome and encouraged to get involved, through the use of animals which can help them cope with stressful situations, build relationships with and gain confidence.

The Together Fund sessions at North Ferriby RDA are designed to engage young people and their families who have been struggling after Covid.

Animal assisted therapy is a large part of these sessions, with the participants getting a chance to spend time with all the animals that live at the centre. Jill Spriggs from North Ferriby RDA explains the value of spending time around animals, "As an organisation, we never underestimate the therapeutic powers of any of our animals...even our yard cats, Oreo and Smartie, often offer the warmest welcome and help people feel at ease the moment they step through the gates!

"It has been our pleasure to be able to run the Together Fund project at our centre, it has allowed us the ability to help children and young adults who have experienced challenges with their mental wellbeing." Jill said, "We have so many young people within our community who would like to access our services which the Together Fund has helped enable.

"Through taking part in these sessions and working with the animals, the participants learn a lot about themselves and feel the benefits of spending time in these environments, "For us as a centre (also from a personal point of view), the knowledge that we are able to offer this sort of help to young people when they need it most is priceless. Every small step along the way which turns out to be a step in the right direction is exactly what we wish to help people to achieve."



Success story - Together Fund

One teenager called Abby began at North Ferriby RDA as part of the Together Fund project. The centre has become an ongoing part of her journey as, at the end of her time, she applied to become a volunteer at the centre.

The staff could see the positive impacts these sessions had on Abby from the moment she arrived. She had previously had a few riding lessons with a local school which she thoroughly enjoyed, but she was really seeking the 'hands on' aspects of being around horses, with her taking a keen interest and engaging in pretty much everything the staff introduced her to.

As these sessions went on, Abby formed a close bond with one of the ponies, 'Saffron,' whom she likes to nurture and care for with great detail and warmth. Abby described Saffron as "a wonderful listener and she never judges me. When I'm with her I am safe". The Together Fund project has provided her with the experience within the world of horses, "My life would not be the same without this place," she said.

Jill commented, "As an organisation, when we saw the positive impact that attending had upon Abby and also how much of a valued member of our team she proved herself to be we were more than happy to be able to offer her a place with us as a volunteer and therefore be able to continue offering our support. We see that it gives her a purpose in life, a safe place to be where she can escape all social pressures for a while."



North Ferriby RDA is just one example of the many centres who have taken advantage of the Together Fund to help young people experience a new hobby which they may never have previously had access to. With a goal to improve physical activity levels and mental wellbeing, these sessions are vital to support those who need a little support in taking a step in the right direction.