



Sirona Therapeutic Horsemanship CIC

Company Number 6570184

Annual Report For the year ended 31 March 2014



www.sironacic.com

Email: info@sironacic.com



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Devon
County Council

SOUTH WEST WATER



Sirona Therapeutic Horsemanship CIC

Company Information

Directors	Hannah Louise Burgon Dianne Shirley Gammage Jane Turner
Secretary	Janice Elizabeth O'Highway
Company number	6570184 (England and 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) Limited 19b Golvers Hill Road Kingsteignton Newton Abbot Devon

Sirona Therapeutic Horsemanship CIC

Annual Report

The Directors present their annual report on the affairs of the company for the year ended 31 March 2014.

Principal Activity

Sirona is a not-for-profit community interest company which provides therapeutic and learning opportunities through horses within the context of the natural environment. Our mission statement is:

Sirona Therapeutic Horsemanship aims to provide the opportunity for children, young people and adults with varying needs to participate in meaningful, educational, and therapeutic activities centred on caring for, and learning about, horses in the natural environment. Sirona Therapeutic Horsemanship seeks to do this within a holistic and natural horsemanship framework employing a non-judgemental, experiential, learning approach in order that participants can learn and explore more about themselves through engaging with horses within a meaningful context. Sirona Therapeutic Horsemanship also aims to encourage participants to take an interest in the natural environment and engage in physical exercise in order to experience mental and physical health benefits in addition to learning social and living skills.

Background

Sirona was initially set up to deliver therapeutic horsemanship for a Devon based foster care company during 2006-2008 in order to provide the service for young people in foster care assessed as requiring additional therapeutic and learning support. Through demand the service was expanded to take referrals from other organisations including a local youth offending team, pupil referral unit, therapeutic residential care and private referrals. Following take-over of the foster care company and loss of premises Sirona set up as a CIC in 2008, and, following a gap whilst Hannah completed her PhD into Therapeutic Horsemanship at Cardiff University, re-established at new premises in the grounds of Hannahs at Seale Hayne, nr Newton Abbot, Devon in January 2012. This has meant Sirona is now able to provide therapeutic horsemanship for a wider range of participants including adults with additional support needs.

The Sirona team

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

Qualified social worker with 40yrs experience with horses, and qualifications and training in equine facilitated learning and traditional and natural horsemanship. Hannah completed a ESRC funded PhD research study based on Therapeutic Horsemanship at Cardiff University in 2010 and had a book on this research published by Palgrave Macmillan in April 2014 in addition to a number of published articles and papers on equine-assisted learning/therapy.

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

Core process psychotherapist, child psychotherapist and qualified play and drama therapist working with both children and adults. Numerous publications on play and drama therapy. Runs courses on play therapy at international level. Di provides regular clinical supervision for the team at Sirona and has a lifelong love of horses.

Director: Jane Turner: Social Worker

Jane is a qualified social worker working in child protection so offers us valuable advice on current practice. Jane is also the owner of Jaspe' a 15HH semi-retired Lippizanner x gelding who is on working livery at Sirona and a valued member of the equine team due to his strong character and magnificent looks.

Session staff

Sirona could not operate without the dedicated and talented team of self-employed session staff that has grown alongside our development. They include counsellors Emma Matsambanye and Lou Reed-Daunter, philosophy teacher & author Belinda Seward, BHSAI riding instructor Jenny Saxby and experienced horse handlers Angie Whitehead and Danni Humphrey. We have been joined in 2013 by Amy Fitzgerald, an experienced horse driving trainer and Cass Wynne, who both started as volunteers. Cass is training to be psychotherapist. Our session staff bring a wealth of experience, ideas and enthusiasm to the work. Every 6

weeks the team meet to have clinical peer supervision facilitated by Di Gammage to discuss any session, practice and other issues.

Patrons and Supporters

We have a number of patrons & supporters as follows;

Heather Moffett: the international dressage trainer Heather Moffett has kindly donated us a number of her specialist saddles and supports us at our annual open day bringing her magnificent Lusitano horses for demonstrations.

Lucy Rees: our other patron is the horse behaviourist, trainer and author of the bestseller 'The Horses' Mind, Lucy Rees. Lucy now lives in Spain and has kindly given 2 horses to Hannah to join the Sirona herd in addition to providing training to the team when she is in the UK.

In addition Sirona has the support of ex-youth offending team mentor & co-ordinator Kate Legum. Kate has developed the organisation Moor Pony Resources of which Sirona is a partner. Kate tirelessly works and campaigns on the behalf of Dartmoor ponies and in the therapeutic and educational work of Sirona raising our profile and providing networking opportunities for us.

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 29 volunteers have supported Sirona. We presently have 15 active regular volunteers providing on-going support in all areas and In return we offer a warm and supportive volunteering environment with a comprehensive training programme. Because of this word has got around and we presently have a waiting list of 10 people wishing to volunteer at Sirona to gain experience in our approach of equine-assisted therapy, regularly contacting us from across the country and even from abroad!

In order to best support our volunteers we have started to fundraise for a volunteer co-ordinator salary. This would 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, and also gain an accredited NVQ qualification in horse care if they wish.

The Horses

The Sirona herd ranges in size from the mini-Shetland pony Zeph to Jasper', a 15.1HH semi-retired Lippizanner x. There is also Rosie, our 14.1HH cob x mare who is very popular with the participants due to her kind, calm nature, and Toro, a black Lusitano x gelding kindly donated to Hannah from Spain by our patron Lucy Rees. Hannah has continued his training during 2013 and he is now starting to participate in sessions where he enjoys the attention. Ella our current apprentice has recently started having jumping lessons on him as he shows a natural aptitude, jumping into the next door farmer's field to help himself to the longer grass! Beckett, on working livery at Sirona from our BHSAl Jenny Saxby, has become a firm favourite due to his dependable and calm nature. We were recently kindly given on loan by Pauline from Dartmoor Duvets a lovely 13HH appaloosa mare called Laya. Laya has a lovely kind nature and Zeph has fallen in love with her which has made him very happy!

Training and Events

Once again Sirona has provided a thorough and varied training programme for session staff and volunteers during 2013. This has included more first aid training, two horse based junk art and mosaic workshops hosted by Jan O'Highway, an Equine guided leadership team building day with Sue Blagburn, Makaton training, Mindfulness meditation by Di Gammage and Horse Agility. In addition were very privileged to have Lucy Rees come over from Spain and host a bespoke training for the team in December. This included synchrony and other exercises for us to introduce to our participants.

Further courses planned for our staff and volunteer team in 2014 include Animal Assisted Therapy, Herbs for horses, Clicker training for horses, Non-Violent Communication, Useful Psychology, horse logging, child protection and more first aid. Once we have trialled these with our team we will also look at opening some of them up to the general public to bring in further revenue for Sirona.

Our open day in July was once again a great success with around 60 people attending over the day which ran from 11am to 3pm. The sun shone on us and a great day was had by all with the catering team being kept busy all day with the wonderful cakes they had baked and others which had been donated. One of our patrons Heather brought a working student with her horse in training to give a demonstration on long-reining, and Heather Seems and her team brought their horse agility equipment and set up a course in our newly laid

and extended arena (woodchip for the surface kindly donated by Ben from TreeFellas and spread by our volunteers!). They then gave demonstrations with horses at different stages of training which was well attended and kindly left the course up for some of the Sirona participants to have a practice. This was a great opportunity for some of our long-standing participants to showcase some of the things they do at Sirona at a public event and was a big achievement and confidence boost for them.

New courses in 2013

During 2013 we started developing bespoke short courses for our participants and referrers. These were very successful and included the 6 week 'Thinking Through Horsemanship' philosophy course for 6 young people referred from a local pupil referral unit and/or not in education, taught by philosophy teacher Belinda Seward. Practical sessions with the horses were followed with a classroom discussion where they explored themes such as 'do horses make choices' and 'do horses have emotions'. It was a very successful course with some feedback from the head teacher of the pupil referral unit given below. In the summer holidays we also piloted a unique week long 'Equidramatherapy' course for 4 teenage girls with social/emotional difficulties. Developed by Di Gammage, alongside two 2nd year Dramatherapy students, the participants took part in drama and art exercises alongside the horses. The course was a huge success with them all really bonding as a group and reporting gains in self-confidence and self-awareness as well as increased social skills. To make this a more accessible course we then ran this as a day course for a bespoke day for a small group of girls referred by Exeter Youth Offending Team in March 2014. Again this was a great success with glowing feedback from the youth workers and participants and we have another planned for the May half-term.

Because of the level of interest in courses at Sirona we are also starting to run these courses for adults and professionals interested in the work at Sirona. The first Equidramatherapy course for adults to be held in May 2014 was fully booked within a week of being advertised so we have put on 2 more dates in 2014 in June and September. We also have another 'Thinking through Horsemanship' 6 week course for young people planned for the Summer term and are looking at a date for a one day course for adults later in the year. Plans for the future include more courses in the Sirona approach and to start looking into providing an accredited training course in equine-assisted therapy.

Partnership with Duchy College

One of our most exciting developments in 2013 was our partnership with Duchy College. We are now offering an NVQ in Horse Care in conjunction with Duchy enabling our participants to gain an accredited qualification at Sirona. 2 young people have already started this course and we have a further 2 waiting to be signed up with much interest from local schools and other referrers. We are hoping to extend this qualification to adults with additional support needs during 2014.

Therapeutic Horsemanship Sessions during 2013

During our second full year of operating at Hannah's at Seale Hayne we provided 384 sessions of Therapeutic Horsemanship (TH), Equine-Assisted Learning (EAL), Equine-Assisted Therapy (EAT) and Supported Horsemanship/Volunteering (SV/H) sessions. This was up from 328 sessions in 2012-13. This consisted of 151 TH sessions, 102 EAL, 66 SV/H and 65 EAT sessions.

At the present time we are running 3 EAT sessions, 2 EAL sessions, 2 supported volunteering/horsemanship and 4 Therapeutic Horsemanship sessions each week and again have a waiting list. Due to the growing demand we have identified that we need to look at a 'move-on' programme for participants in order that we can free up spaces for new young people to attend. One idea is a 'pony helper' scheme whereby young people who have been attending Sirona for some time and have gained skills and competence in horse care can be 'mentors' for new participants. Now that we have got our partnership with Duchy College we are also able to move some young people on from individual sessions to small group sessions on the NVQ course in horse care which gives them both social benefits and an accredited qualification.

In total 104 participants attended Sirona in 2013-14, again referred from a range of sources such as social services mental health and adoption and fostering teams, learning disability care homes, youth offending, pupil referral units, schools and private referrals. At present we have 44 participants regularly attending Sirona either on a weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis.

Work experience, apprenticeships and student placements

In addition to our regular participants and due to demand we also started to offer work experience and student placements at Sirona during 2013.

- We have had 3 students from Plymouth University degree courses in social care and occupational therapy gain valuable experience of our client group and work.
- 4 young people completed work experience placements at Sirona during 2013-14. They were referred from both local schools and the job centre on work-based experienced programmes for the unemployed.
- In addition we continue to offer modern apprenticeship positions. Initially this was through Haddon Training and latterly through Bicton College and we have now provided 3 apprenticeship positions in total. We are hoping to be able to take on a further modern apprentice during 2014-15 so that we have two placements at any one time.

Feedback

In April 2013 we commissioned Devon Community Council to support us with undertaking a stakeholder consultation. Questionnaires were sent out to our referring agencies, parents, teachers and participants. Some of this feedback includes the following;

From participants:

- *(horse) makes me feel safe and like someone loves me*
- *I enjoyed meeting the horse and making trust between us*
- *I feel in charge and looking after someone, having responsibilities*
- *All my worries and anxieties goes*
- *Being with horses makes me feel very relaxed*
- *I like grooming because it is nice and calming – also giving big hugs*
- *I've been able to read emotions easier*

From parents/carers:

- *The changes I have seen through the work done at Sirona has been amazing*
- *(daughter) has been a lot less volatile around the house*
- *(son) is noticeably calmer and more centred*
- *We have found Sirona to be a very positive experience and one which we would highly recommend*
- *I am just writing to say THANK YOU so much for Thursday morning! K was elated by the whole experience. What you and your team are doing is INVALUABLE.*

From volunteers:

- *I love coming to Sirona – a little ray of sunshine in my week ... it has given me a stronger sense of self and my own personal values, strengths and abilities. I have gained so much.*
- *Volunteering at Sirona has been the highlight of my week. The team have always made me feel welcome and supported... it is a unique place and I will be back!*

From agencies:

- *A breath of fresh air for clients of mental health services*

CPN, NHS

- *I am writing to inform you about progress made by R since she started equine therapy with you in November 2013. Prior to this she had become emotionally unreachable and shut down. Amazingly, she*

has now started to form a relationship with Di Gammage (child psychotherapist & co-director at Sirona), which prior to her involvement with Sirona was unthinkable. has enabled R to increase her self-esteem and create resilience

Social Worker, Fostering Services

- I thought I would let you know how impressed we are with your 'Thinking through Horses' course. The difference we have seen in just 4 weeks has been amazing for all 3 students from SWPLS but especially for R.. His behaviour has improved and he has shown empathy not just towards his peers but also for staff!

Manager of Pupil Referral Unit

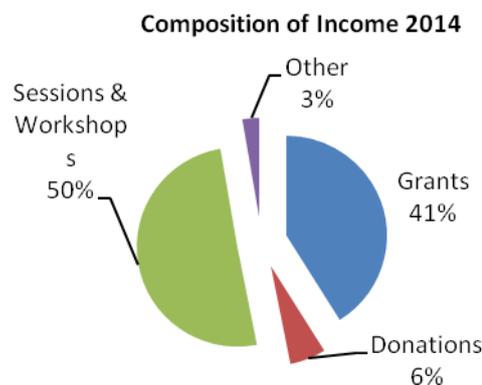
We continue to build upon the evaluation of our service and respond to the views of our stakeholders through regular feedback questionnaires and a stakeholder consultation group.

To keep up to date with evaluation Hannah attended the specialist training 'How to Demonstrate Outcomes' held by the charities evaluation services in December 2013. Earlier in 2013 we met with a researcher from Exeter University to look at how we could collaborate on a larger piece of research and are hoping this will go forward in 2014-15 if funding is forthcoming. In addition Hannah Burgon's book based on the PhD research she undertook on

the previous Therapeutic Horsemanship programme she ran is being published by Palgrave Macmillan on 14th April 2014. The book *Equine-Assisted Therapy and Learning with At-Risk Young People* aims to give a further evidence base to the field.

Finances

The Majority of Sirona's income comes from session fees and workshop and course fees. The balance comes from grant funding, donations, and other fundraising activities. The total income for the year ended 31 March 2014 was £77,041 and was made up as follows:



£39,003 was trading income from our equine assisted therapy, therapeutic horsemanship and equine assisted learning sessions together with a growing proportion in 2013 from running courses, fundraising events and t-shirt and calendar sales. The majority of our session income in 2013 was from Devon County Council via direct payments, children and young people's services, education and, during 2013, from the NHS.

Our income shows a healthy year on year increase. In our second full year of trading it has increased to £77,401 from £46,200 in 2012-13 and £3,298 in 2011-12 (we only started operating in January 2012). We are looking to build on our income in 2014-15 by running more short courses and, building on our success of running a raffle, looking at similar fundraising initiatives at our open day on 19th July this year.

Total expenditure for the year amounted to £77,460 (2013: £43,363). Of this amount £66,199 was direct costs incurred in delivering sessions and courses; feeding and caring for the horses; maintaining the facility; and promoting the work of Sirona. Administrative overheads amounted to £11,261 (2013: £7,552).

Fundraising

During 2013 we were fortunate to be provided with grants from the following trusts;

The Tudor Trust awarded us a further grant in 2013 of £7,500 towards salary costs together with existing funds towards development work still to be spent. With some of this funding we commissioned Devon Community Council to support us with updating our business plan and a funding application to the Big Lottery. In addition we used some of the development funding to commission the support of a local professional funding advisor to support us on submitting a number of further smaller grant applications and advise on how to best present and complete these. We submitted 12 applications with this support in January 2014 and two have been successful so far. These were;

The Country Landowners Association awarded us £1000 towards equipment costs and

The Elmgrant Trust awarded us £600 towards general running costs.

Additional fundraising during 2013 included the following;

The Clare Milne Trust granted us £5000 towards sessions for disabled adults. This has been used to pay 2 session staff to run the weekly supported horsemanship/volunteering sessions.

Devon Community Foundation awarded us a grant again this year, giving us £1500 towards our session staff and volunteer costs.

The Northbrook Trust gave us a repeat grant of £10,000 towards providing subsidised Therapeutic Horsemanship sessions. We are using this to again offer the very popular and much needed bursary scheme for applicants who cannot afford the full fee.

South West Water gave us £100 again in 2013.

The Gibbons Family Trust awarded us £1000 towards the upkeep of 1 horse over the year.

Teignbridge CVS gave us £500 from the public health development fund.

The Margaret and Geoffrey Jones Trust gave us a donation of £1000 towards our general running costs.

We were supported by a number of these applications by a fantastic volunteer Liz Meadows who has done a lot of the donkey work involved in short listing grants we are eligible to apply for and putting together the drafts for Hannah to then complete and submit. Liz started with us on our supported horsemanship sessions as she had lost confidence following a car accident and had been unable to work for a number of years. After attending this group for 6 months Liz was able to take on some paid fundraising support for Sirona and was then offered a job locally at a health centre. So unfortunately we lost our volunteer fundraiser but Liz gained the confidence she needed to re-enter the job market!

In November 2013 we were chosen by the prestigious Crux Craft Fair at Rattery as their charitable organisation of the year. The craft members all donated Sirona pieces of their beautiful arts and crafts and we raffled these at a stall over the craft fair weekend. This raised an amazing £1335 and also gained us a lot of exposure and interest from our stand where we had fun meeting lots of new people.

Future developments

Our major plan for 2014-15 is to start the process of securing a new base for Sirona as we are outgrowing our present site, which is also not on a secure lease. This would enable us to expand our services and offer more courses and a private equine-assisted therapy space, as at present we can only offer one Equine-Assisted Therapy session at a time due to our space constrictions and this restricts both the number of people we can help and our income. Plans are still in the early stages as a suitable site needs to be secured and it is a huge endeavour

with fundraising and capital needing to be raised but we have been offered two potential sites and are determined to make this happen so watch this space!

Summary

Sirona has gone from strength to strength during our second year of operating and has continued to expand beyond our wildest expectations. During 2014-15 we aim to focus on raising funds to cover salaries, develop our courses to the general public to bring in more income, and, most importantly, to start the process of a move to a bigger premises in order to provide a secure base for Sirona to be able to develop and expand our operations and offer more opportunities to benefit the community.