

2026



2026

Heron's Ghyll Newsletter

January 2026

HAPPY NEW YEAR

A rather belated Happy New Year but with best wishes and hope you all had a very merry Christmas and not too much snow at the beginning of January.

From her photo on Facebook, it looked as if Hilary had quite a snowfall! Let's hope now for some good weather especially when driving starts again in March. The provisional Spring programme is below:

January 29 th	Helper's Lunch at the King's Head Horsebridge.	12.00 pm for 12.30 pm
Feb 12 th (Thurs)	Disabled drivers meeting at the Green Man, Ringmer at 12 pm. All volunteers are welcome to join them for lunch at 12.30pm. Please let Karen know if you are attending.	
March 12 th	All Volunteers Training Day at Golden Cross Equestrian Centre.	10.00am
March 26 th	First Drive at Burchetts (subject to weather and ground conditions!)	

This is just a preliminary programme but we are hoping for a full programme of events this year and we will keep you updated as they are confirmed.

2026

2026

2026



2026

Charlie

Charlie, probably our longest serving pony for RDA and most of his twenty five years was spent with Heron's Ghyll until his retirement. This is what Liz remembers about him...

Charlie was found by Shirley Price tethered under a motorway! He arrived to be looked after by Anthea until he was passed fit for RDA use. He was then taken over by the Longley family for the rest of his life.

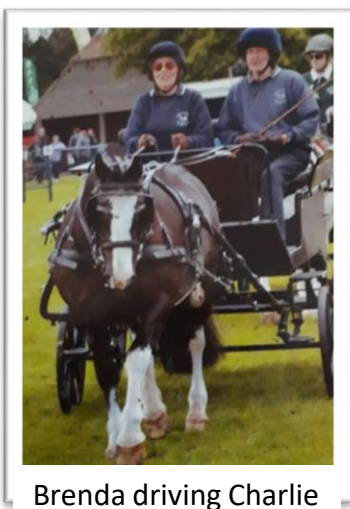
He taught Jeni to drive and she competed with him at the Oaks events mainly indoors for his experience. Unfortunately he suffered from sweet itch and COPD in later years which meant he lived out 24/7. He also loved his food, especially carrots!

When he left Heron's Ghyll, he was given to the Longleys and went to the Kipling group for light duties and latterly as a 'petting pony' for which he excelled giving comfort and support to many of their members who did not necessarily want to drive.

Described by Jeni as the easiest and loveliest pony to deal with apart from a tendency to tread on her father Jerry's feet!

Charlie was 100% traffic proof except for an aversion to donkeys which made life interesting for Pat and Moira who drove him past a field with donkeys on their way to Heron's Ghyll weekly.

Thank you Charlie for all your loyalty; you will be very hard to replace!



Brenda driving Charlie



Moira driving Charlie

Christmas Lunch December 2025

A roomful of Heron's Ghyll drivers, carers, escorts, volunteers and guests was a joy to behold. Once again held at Wellshurst Golf Club we enjoyed hearty Christmas fayre along with a welcoming smile from Sue Fragniere offering wine or juice on arrival.

A big thanks went not only to the Wellshurst crew but to Jo Angear for helping set the whole thing in motion and, along with Hilary, selling a shed load of raffle tickets to boost our coffers.

Along with the awarding of the 2025 trophies and rosettes, deservedly earned by our drivers, Lorraine made her seasonal cheque presentation, for which we are very grateful.

We also put out on show, our photo montage that Rosi and I created for the recent South East AGM held at Ardingly, which brought forth many comments and revived some happy memories for some, including Betsy Gunner, one of our guests, who was a founder member of the original group – even the Wellshurst staff enjoyed viewing it and appreciated the work we are doing. Let's keep doing what we do and fingers crossed for fine weather for 2026 to enjoy our activities.

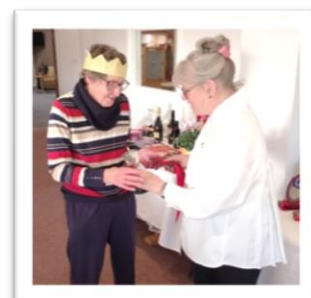
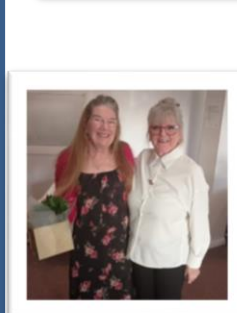
Jan - Chair

Sarah's Xmas hat was a winner!



More photos and full list of awards over -

Trophy	Winner
Achievement Award – Sue Page Plaque This award is for the driver who has achieved all the goals and challenges set out for our drivers this year.	Tim Finch
Instructor's Cup – This award is given by Hilary Hill for the driver who she feels deserves most credit for their efforts this year	Karen Tritton
Endeavour Cup – This award is for the driver, who after a long absence from driving has come back with great fortitude and effort.	Mike Stephens
Improved Beginner Cup – His Nibs Cup This cup is awarded to the most improved beginner who has taken on board all instruction with enthusiasm.	Megan Wardle
Special Endeavour Trophy – Glass Trophy This trophy is awarded to the driver who consistently does their best at every session.	Anthea Shipley
Disabled Drivers Choice – This trophy is awarded to the volunteer that the Disabled drivers feel deserves recognition for their efforts	Liz Major
Helpers Cup – This award is given by the Committee to the volunteer they feel deserves recognition for their efforts	Susanne Willis
The Gordon Trophy – This trophy is awarded for consistent Achievement by a driver	Shelley Redshaw
The Gordon Plaque Endurance Trophy This award is given to a driver who has overcome their difficulties with good humour and resilience.	Ian Keating
Consistent Achievement Cup – The Sophie Cup For the driver who drive s with the most consistency throughout the year.	Michael O'Doherty
Cones Competition 2025	
CLASS 1	Cones Penalties Time Penalties SCORE
SHELLEY	3 5 8 1st
ANTHEA	6 7 13 = 2nd
MICHAEL	12 1 13 = 2nd
IAN	7 9 16 3rd
KAREN	0 21 21 4th
CLASS 2	
MIKE	0 5 5 1st
MEGAN W	6 11 17 2nd
JACKY	15 5 20 3rd
TIM	33 1 34 4th



Dressage Competition Results 2025			
Class 1	Score	Place	
Jacky Fuller	25	1 st	1st Jacky Fuller
Michael O' Doherty	29	2 nd	
Shelley Redshaw	33	3 rd	
Anthea Shipley	33	3 rd	
Class 2			
Mike Stephens	32	1 st	1st Mike Stephens
Tim Finch	35	2 nd	
Ian Keating	37	3 rd	
Charlie Cup – Best Dressage Score			Jacky Fuller

20262026

A reminder from Jan, our Chair,
about Heron's Ghyll Values
(not necessarily in order of importance)

Respect and Inclusion : Both our clients and volunteers, whatever their seen or unseen disabilities/difficulties. Everyone deserves to be heard with dignity and support and honouring how individuals navigate the world.

Kindness and Patience : For those with less skills and experience in horsemanship.

Use of the voice : Unless an emergency, shouting and raising the voice sharply is upsetting to both clients and volunteers.

Supportive and awareness : Being aware of the possibility that someone may have "stuff" going on in their lives that they may be finding hard to talk about.

Recognition and Acceptance : Different skills that are brought to the group can be helpful and should not be dismissed out of hand.

Empowerment and Enable : We are all here to give, not only time, but knowledge to our clients but also to other volunteers especially if asked for. We're aiming to equip them with knowledge and confidence.

Create : We aim to create an environment where everyone feels welcomed, valued and supported with tolerance.

Bullying : Verbal or physical cannot be tolerated and using calm and clear instructions helps avoid misunderstandings. Offensive, Intimidating and insulting words undermines and humiliates and can cause emotional harm.

Heron's Ghyll Driving Group RDA
Registered charity 1073569
'Carriage Driving for People with a Disability'
www.heronsghyll-rda.co.uk

20262026