



Activity: Quiet Corner



Missing RDA and looking for an approved RDA activity to engage with your participants?

- An alternative to riding or driving for participants where social distancing means taking part would otherwise not be an option yet.
- A safe space for those anxious about public places following on from lockdown, where minimal contact and social distancing can be guaranteed.
- A space to relax and reflect whilst enjoying the company of horses and volunteers/staff.

Before any activity starts the group must complete and send in their Covid-19 risk assessment and trustee checklist to National Office for sign-off to recommence RDA activities.



Benefits – interacting with horses

- Improves self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Develops trust and empathy.
- Enhances social skills.
- Helps overcome anxiety and depression



Do you have all the resources to run?

- Coach to lead sessions.
- Volunteers to support (keep max numbers to that allowed).
- First Aider – coach or volunteer
- Suitable ponies.
- Suitable, safe outdoor space.
- Participants.

Anyone taking part will be required to sign a consent form accepting the terms of their return.

Set up

- A sectioned off space(s) where the equine can graze or stand.
- An area where the participant can reach the equine whilst maintaining social distancing from the volunteer/coach.
- Seating that allows for social distancing so that the equine can be viewed from a distance.
- Grooming kit, hand sanitiser, tack sanitiser, haynet.
- Try to make the area look visually appealing to encourage the participant to feel safe and comfortable.

Activity: Quiet Corner



The session

- Sessions can be adapted to the group and participants, but a session could run for 20 – 60 mins.
- Participant arrives and follows normal covid safety procedures for the group.
- Volunteer brings equine to the area in plenty of time to allow it to acclimatise/settle.
- Coach and participant go to the area and the session commences.
- Allow the participant to lead the session with regards to the amount of time spent with the equine except where health and safety dictates otherwise.
- It may be necessary to allow the horse a haynet to facilitate closer proximity with the participant.
- Consider how to comply with social distancing when positioning the participant, equine, coach and volunteer.

Developing the session

- Take time to reflect on the session and consider ways to improve and engage with the participant.
- Allow time for the participant to sit in a friendly silence whilst watching the horse.
- Consider a mutually engrossing task you could both engage in – tack cleaning is a good example.
- Walking side by side is a great way to connect, perhaps finish the session with a short stroll.



Remember

- Your risk assessment must cover the session from the participant arriving to departing.
- You must have a qualified first aider who is comfortable to administer first aid if required.
- Make it clear to participants what will be required of them and anyone who accompanies them.
- Be guided by what your participants want and need, be clear what aspects are non-negotiable for example for health and safety reasons.
- Not all equines will be suitable for this activity – select them carefully.
- Have a run through with the equines and a few volunteers beforehand to highlight anything that may not have been picked up on in planning.
- Give yourself time to make changes following the run through if necessary.
- Start small with just a couple of sessions at a time and learn from each session how things can be done to better suit your situation, volunteers, equines and participants.