

# Muirfield Riding Therapy



A member group of  
Riding for the Disabled Association

Returning to  
Volunteering  
Phase 1 Riding  
Outdoors

Welcome to our MRT Covid –19 Basic Training and thank you for your help and support in our Return to Riding Programme.

As I am sure you will appreciate, the safety of our riders, their carers and our volunteers is our main priority. It is going to take some time before we get things "back to normal" at MRT . We have developed self-distancing practices which mean we can phase our Return to Riding Programme starting with our more independent riders. Phase 1 will involve outdoor riding on a 1:1 basis.

We will continue to expand the range of riders and types of session we can run as regulations allow and RDA UK guidelines introduce more flexibility over the coming months. In the meantime we are asking that riders are accompanied by a household member.

This module is designed to provide everyone involved, existing MRT Volunteers and the family supporters with basic training in our new ways of working and to let you know how sessions will look as you return. We look forward you seeing you again soon.

Michelle

Please note that the procedures illustrated in this presentation are likely to change as new guidelines are developed. Please bear with us as we try to keep apace with an ever-changing situation!



# COVID Basic Training

Module for All Volunteers  
including Family Supporters



# Aims and objectives of this module

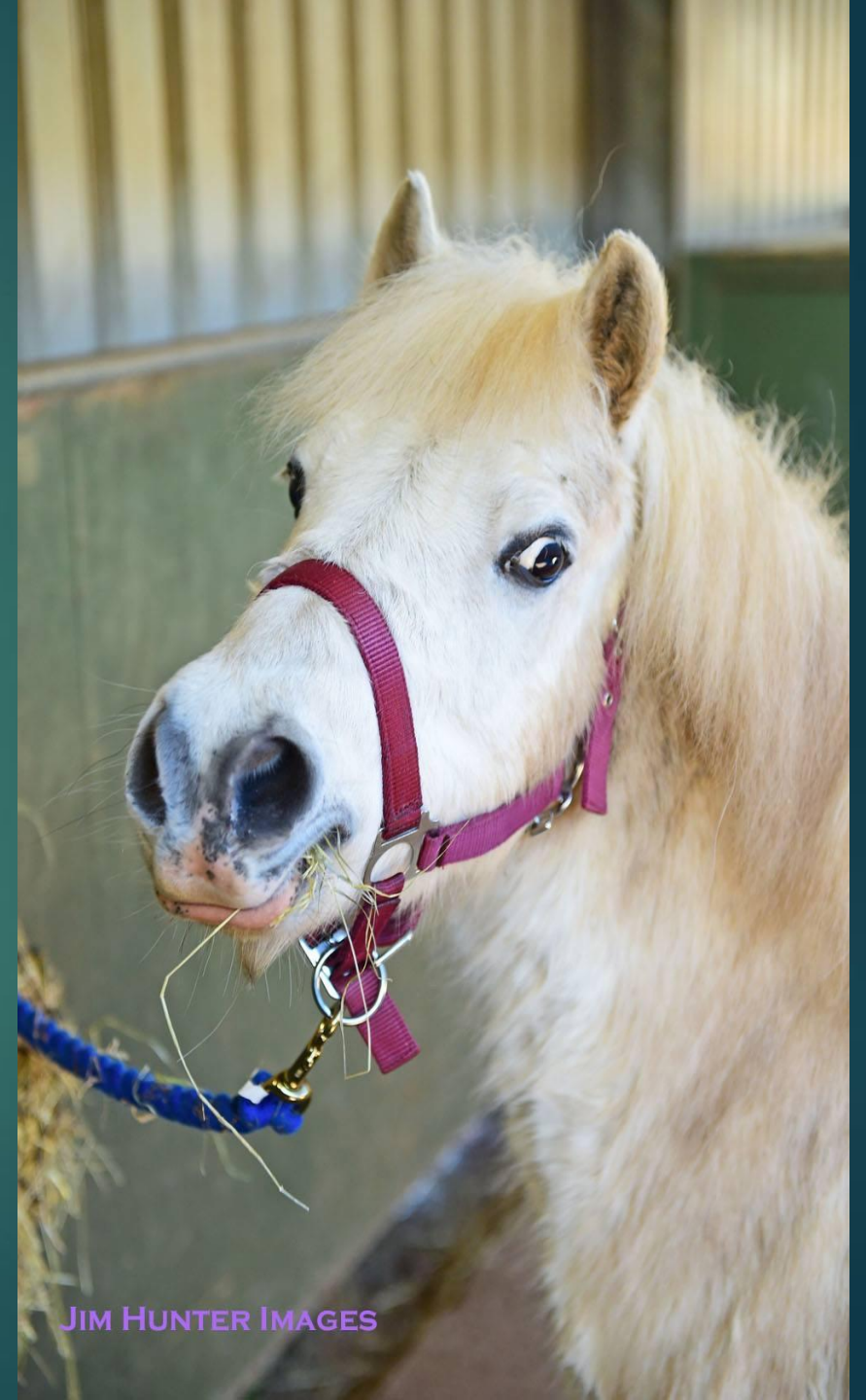
- ❑ To demonstrate the new procedures and ways of working to keep Riders, Family Supporters and Volunteers safe during the Covid-19 outbreak
- ❑ To show Family Supporters how they can be a valuable part of the MRT team
- ❑ To describe to MRT Volunteers how working with Families will allow MRT to begin the long road back to riding.

# Basic Training for A Family Supporter of a Rider covers a few key areas:

1. Knowing what to wear: stout shoes or boots and clothes that will not flap around.
2. How to behave around horses and ponies: calm and quiet!
3. How they can help the Rider during Mounting and Dismounting, while fostering independence
4. How to Side walk with the Rider, if necessary

On completion of this on-line module there will be other more detailed training opportunities as well as "protected" practical training before the Supporter is invited to come along with their Rider.

We are really grateful for  
the help offered by  
Family Supporters and  
you should be aware  
that MRT Volunteers will  
be supporting you at all  
times      THANK YOU!



JIM HUNTER IMAGES

# MRT Volunteers will be responsible for:

1. Catching
2. Grooming
3. Tacking
4. Warming up pony by riding (so that girth can be tightened from on board before the rider mounts)
5. Leading throughout a session
6. Untacking and turning out
7. Disinfecting all equipment

# The right pony for the job



- ▶ The equine is chosen to suit the riders therapeutic needs
- ▶ This consideration must include the method of mounting and dismounting appropriate for the rider during the Covid-19 pandemic
- ▶ Temperament is very important so MRT ponies are very calm
- ▶ MRT Volunteers have worked with the ponies so that they understand their new way of working





*The Leader will have caught, groomed and tacked the pony as well as ridden him in warm up and tightened his girth from on board.*

## MOUNTING

- ❑ Leader to bring pony into ramp.
- ❑ Pony must stand at distance from Leader to allow the Leader to maintain 2m distance from Rider and Family Supporter
- ❑ This whole area is now a designated Mounting Area and strict one way system observed.



Rider arrives with own hat if possible, mask and gloves if they choose to wear them, accompanied by the Family Supporter.

*(If the Rider needs to borrow a hat, the Family Supporter will be sent a hat fitting video)*



Having carried out current hand sanitising measures with materials supplied by MRT, the Rider sits and waits until Leader & Coach are Ready.



## Mounting

- ❑ At direction of Coach the Rider, accompanied by their Supporter will approach the mounting ramp at the pony's head
- ❑ When the Leader is happy that the pony is settled The Rider and Supporter will step up.
- ❑ The Supporter will pick up both reins in their left hand as directed by Coach
- ❑ The Rider will be instructed to place both hands on the front of the saddle and bring their right leg over the back of the saddle.
- ❑ They will then be reminded to sit gently down into the saddle.
- ❑ As they walk away from the ramp the Coach will do a visual check of the Riders position before the team walk away.





Under the Coaches direction we will proceed

❑ As this is a working farm we must be very aware of traffic. 1. Stop, 2. Look & Listen



❑ When safe we proceed to Outdoor Arena



- ❑ Once Rider has entered the Outdoor Arena the Coach will close gate to Outdoor Arena



- ❑ Rider will halt on centre line and at Coaches direction the Family Supporter will check that Rider is comfortable.

*NOTE that stirrups will be pre-measured for Rider and girth has been tightened by Leader from on board but the Family Supporter can view video of girth tightening in case required.*

- ❑ During the early days of Returning to Riding lessons will involve 1 Rider, 1 Coach, 1 Pony, 1 Rider accompanied by 1 Family Supporter.
- ❑ Lessons will focus on the basic riding exercises with minimal use of props and equipment.
- ❑ There may be an opportunity to ride out when safe to do so.
- ❑ As things progress MRT will continue to build on these simple sessions.



## Dismounting, under direction of Coach

- ❑ Feet out of stirrups,

- ❑ Leader to check offside stirrup from 2m distance

- ❑ Hands forward onto withers





## Under direction of Coach

- ❑ Leaning forward to give pony a hug looking towards Leader while bringing right leg over the back of the saddle



- ❑ Sliding down slowly to ground between pony and supporter





Under direction of Coach

- ❑ Steping back away from pony, supported only if required



6. And thanking Leader!



After Rider dismounted Leader will run up stirrups and lead pony back to the Tie ups



Family Supprter will accompnay Rider out  
of Outdoor Arena and back to the Car  
Park



UNTIL NEXT TIME!