



The Stella Hancock Driving Group was one of the first established RDA carriage driving groups and is now the largest in the UK. We are a charity relying upon fundraising and donations.

Starting in 1974, operating at first from Stella's own farm at West Horsley, we are situated on the 700-acre Merrist Wood College campus near Guildford, with our own purpose built carriage house, clubhouse, harness room, stables and yard, officially opened by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh in 2003.

Mission: To provide carriage driving in a safe, happy and friendly environment for anyone with a disability, in order to promote improved emotional well-being, self-confidence, independence and personal achievement.

Vision: To create an outdoor environment of friendship, learning, fun and inclusivity alongside the therapeutic relationship with horses.

Core Values: To treat everyone with respect and kindness, with high welfare standards for our horses.



We welcome any company or organisation who would like to come and see what we offer and discuss how they could support us. Sponsorships are a good way to help provide funding support as well as increase corporate awareness, whereas local grants and donations can make a huge difference to our group's activities.

Drives take place: every Wednesday morning between April and October when qualified coaches, trained volunteers, and disabled drivers meet to be teamed up with our 5 horses and ponies for a morning of driving. A choice of fields, woods, tracks, and campus roads offer enjoyable drives around the grounds, with an additional outdoor arena for practising dressage competitions, obstacle and cone courses and pace and control. Teas and coffees, biscuits and cakes are provided encouraging a friendly, social, and active community.

The group: has a very friendly, inclusive, and supportive ethos, with over 70 members, including 22 disabled drivers (some who are wheelchair bound) and 25 regular, active volunteers.



Volunteers: are assigned each week to a supporting team per horse and carriage to assist the qualified coach and keep the drivers safe. usually have a love of everything horsey, but it's not essential. Tasks range from grooming, head holding, harnessing and an ability to also ride a bike is ideal for roles of safety supporters. The loading and unloading of wheelchairs require precision and strength for those volunteers able to offer this type of help. Training takes place at the start of each season, supported by regular ongoing training. We are always looking for new volunteers for a variety of roles including fundraising for those who are not "horsey". Regular attendance at the group is helpful but not compulsory.

Please contact us if you would like to visit, donate or volunteer: 07788 504934

Group Organiser: Fiona Stuart fionaannestuart@gmail.com

Charity number 1200775

Or visit our website: for more information: www.stellahancockrda.org