

Junior Camp 23 – held on Saturday 19th August at Aylesford Equine

Our first junior camp was an absolute success. We quickly filled the offered 12 spaces and even had a waiting list of 2. Each pony attendee had a stable, which was a great benefit for all. At lunchtime, we had unmounted games, including a treasure hunt, which everyone seemed to enjoy. In hindsight, it would have been better to have a horse related demonstration at lunchtime, but we struggled to source anything suitable this year. This will be high on the agenda for 2024!

Tom Fray and Jo Holmes Cole were our 2 trainers. Tom had not been involved with RLRC juniors before, so it took him a bit longer to get his group going, but they were soon up and running! Due to Jo already being so involved with RLRC juniors, she knew most of the attendees in her group so they hit the ground running, so to speak! They spent the morning doing flatwork and jumping in the arenas, and then all went onto the XC course in the afternoon.

Overall, a great day was had and everyone wanted to stay overnight to do it all again the next day! Dates for next year have already been booked and you will be hearing about them in the very near future.

Senior Camp 23 - held from the evening of Saturday 19th to late afternoon of Monday 21st August at Aylesford Equine

This was RLRC's third senior residential camp, and we held it at Aylesford Equine for the first time due to the Walker family having temporary stables so we could camp overnight with our horses. The facilities really worked well, and we had a large marquee as our meeting and eating venue. We used an outside caterer – Sara Groom Catering – and she provided us with excellent food.

We had three trainers over the two days, Sam Hobbs, Jane Wallace and Wade Barley; and everyone's preferences for lesson content was accommodated. The choice was flatwork, poles, show jumping, arena eventing and XC. The trainers expressed how much they enjoy teaching at our camps, and they were very flexible to work around making sure everyone got to do what they wanted.

We did a quiz on the first night and pass the parcel on the second, which both proved to be very popular as in previous years. We will therefore definitely be including them in our future camps. We also had demonstrations on both afternoons after we had finished riding for the day. Our first was an introduction to side saddle, and showed us all the elegance and horsemanship required to partake in this wonderful discipline. Our second afternoon gave us an insight into Endurance riding, including how to compete over several, quite mind boggling, distances in this equine sport (we have an Endurance team within RLRC!). Both were well received and piqued interest with several attendees.

Unfortunately, we had to cut the proposed three-night camp down to two as we didn't have enough bookings to financially sustain three nights, which may have been due to the dates being in August. We have therefore booked the next camp in July, the dates are on the website, and it will be at Aylesford again.