



Volunteer Welcome Pack




WELCOME TO RDA

In being part of RDA you are helping to make a real difference to the lives of disabled children and adults - and helping us collectively achieve this in huge numbers throughout the UK.

RDA has 500 Groups throughout the UK. Together these groups deliver riding, driving and vaulting to over 28,000 participants. This is all made possible by 19,000 volunteers.

As a new volunteer we know that your Group will make you very welcome and, on behalf of RDA UK we would like to add our appreciation and thanks to you for joining us to create opportunities for therapy, achievement and fun for our riders, carriage drivers and vaulters. We hope that you will enjoy volunteering with us in your chosen role and being a member of the wider RDA Family.

If you can't find what you are looking for, or would like further information, please don't hesitate to contact the team at National Office on 0845 658 1082 or by email info@rda.org.uk, we look forward to hearing from you.



Ed Bracher,
Chief Executive, RDA U



THE BIG PICTURE

RDA Groups

All of our activities take place at our 500 Member Groups. All are independent charities, responsible for their own management and finances.

RDA UK

RDA UK is the national organisation – governed by the board of trustees.

The member Groups of RDA form a federation supported and represented by RDA UK, which works to support Member Groups and their volunteers to deliver opportunities for therapy, achievement and enjoyment to RDA participants. RDA UK includes volunteers at County, Regional and National level, working alongside staff at National Office.

Structure of RDA UK

18 Regions, 61 Counties

Volunteers working within Regions and Counties support Member Groups and form the communication channel between Groups and RDA National Office.

National Office

The small team of professional staff at National Office support Groups, Region and Counties and provide services to volunteers and participants.



GETTING STARTED

Getting started as an RDA Volunteer is a simple process, however there are some key steps to take before you begin volunteering. To get started you will need to complete the following...

Volunteer Application Form

As a new volunteer you will need to complete an Application Form which will include providing two referees. All enrolment information is confidential and will be used for RDA purposes only.

Disclosure Check

If your role means you are actively involved in delivering an RDA session you will be asked to complete an enhanced disclosure check. The Group Safeguarding Officer will be able to support you with this.

Green Card

Before you start you will be asked to complete and sign the front page of a RDA Volunteer Basic Training Record Card which is also known as a Green Card. You will be given an introduction to the Group environment, activities and health and safety policies and procedures.



WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO DO?

The range of volunteer roles within RDA is huge. You may have decided what you want to do already, but there may be something that you can do that you have not considered. Let us know if you have a skill to offer or would like to develop a new one.

Some Possible Roles

- Leader / Side helper
- Coach / Whip
- Horse Carer
- Caterer
- Volunteer Coordinator
- Safeguarding Officer
- Publicity Officer
- Fundraiser
- Event Organiser
- Chairman
- Treasurer
- Secretary



TRAINING

As part of your induction and basic training an experienced volunteer will take you through all you need to know in order to carry out your role effectively and safely.

Inside your Green Card is a log of the training you have received relating to different tasks you may carry out as a volunteer.

Your training will be tailored to your role, it is not obligatory to complete all sections on the card.

There is also the opportunity to complete relevant training for your role online by taking part in our e-learning courses. Visit www.rda-learning.org.uk to sign up and get started.



DISABILITIES & MEDICAL CONDITIONS

As a volunteer you will want to provide the best possible support to RDA participants in helping them achieve their goals. RDA Groups work across the spectrum of disabilities and age ranges and it is likely you will work with many participants with many different disabilities.

Often a good starting point is to speak to participants, their parents or carers about their disability in order to gain important information you may need. In addition all participants will have completed an enrolment form which provides key information about their disability and medical condition.

Please note that any information provided by participants should be treated as confidential and not passed on or discussed with anybody other than those involved in the running of the RDA Group.

We have an E-Learning course which provides an introduction to the subject of disability awareness for RDA Volunteers.

Further information is available online

Cerebral Palsy – www.scope.org.uk

Down's Syndrome – www.downs-syndrome.org.uk

Autism – www.autism.org.uk

Multiple Sclerosis – www.mssociety.org.uk

Stroke – www.stroke.org.uk

Epilepsy – www.epilepsy.org.uk

Sensory Impairment – www.sense.org.uk

Blindness – www.rnib.org.uk

Hearing Loss – www.actiononhearingloss.org.uk

Arthritis – www.arthritiscare.org.uk

Spina Bifida – www.asbah.org

Spinal Cord Injuries – www.spinal.co.uk



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Do I need previous experience?

Not necessarily. RDA has many different types of roles, most of which don't require any experience. Of course, if you do have skills you'd like to share with us – we'd love to know!

Will I be insured?

Yes. All RDA Groups have Trustee Indemnity, Public Liability insurance for all volunteers. Volunteers aged between 12 and 90 also have Personal Accident insurance (with some restrictions for those aged between 80 and 90)

More information can be found at:

<http://www.rda.org.uk/runningyourgroup/insurance/>

How old do I have to be to volunteer?

Volunteers have to be 12 years or over.

Will volunteering at RDA help me find a job?

If you're trying to find a job, volunteering can be a great route to employment. Adding volunteering experience to your CV can give you an edge over other applicants and you'll have more to talk about. RDA volunteering can boost your confidence and help you learn new skills.

Can I volunteer if I have a disability?

RDA works hard to ensure that we are able to offer opportunities to any person, regardless of background. Therefore where there is sufficient capacity and where the welfare of our participants and horses is not put at risk we will endeavour to find a suitable role for any person with a disability.

How can I become an RDA Coach?

RDA UK provides a tailored programme of training and assessment to help you achieve your goals whether you want to become a Group Coach or take your training all the way to senior level. For more information speak to the Group Coach who will tell you what you need to do to get started



NEED MORE INFORMATION?

County and Regional Officers

County and Regional Officers are there to support and advise Groups and are a good first point of call if you have questions, problems or concerns. You can find contact details for Regional and County Officers in your Group's RDA Handbook.

National Office Team

RDA National Office provides support to groups and volunteers in many areas including

Volunteering

Safeguarding

Communications

PR and Publicity

Governance

Coaching

Fundraising

RDA Activities

Therapy

Finance

Insurance

New Groups

This list is not exhaustive and if you have any question relating to RDA don't hesitate to get in touch.

Website

The website is a great source of up-to date and detailed information about RDA, including what's going on and how to get involved.

www.rda.org.uk

Contact RDA

If you can't find what you're looking for on the website or would like to discuss an issue you can call the national office team directly.

01926 492 915

