



## Social Impact Report 2013-2020







## **Our Organisational Structure:**

### **Patrons**

Mary Wanless  
John Peters

### **Volunteer Management Committee**

Chair Trustee & Founder– Andrew McFarlane (left in photo)  
Finance Trustee – Guy Oppenheim  
Trustee – Rosalie Millard Evans  
Non-Executive Director – Caroline Brown  
CEO & Founder – Heather Hardy (right in photo)

### **Charity Development Support Team**

CEO – Heather Hardy  
Secretary - Alison Barlow  
Partnership Manager -Vicky Bennett  
Strategic Manager – Teresa Moksa  
Business Development Manager &  
National Volunteer Coordinator – Chris Worthington  
Policy/Report Writer & Evaluation Manager – Hilary Martin  
IT & Photographic Support – James Hardy  
Admin Officer – Vickie Bennett

### **Facilitation Team**

Self-employed HorseHeard trained Equine Facilitated Learning Coaches around the UK & local Horse Handlers

**Registered Charity Number: 1166682**



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# Executive Summary

HorseHeard exists to promote positive emotional health and wellbeing and to unlock the potential of children, young people and adults in need. An experienced and compassionate team use unique facilitated learning models working with horses to build confidence, self-esteem and empower individuals to overcome their fears, achieve goals and improve their lives to be better connected and contribute to their community.

HorseHeard has been operating since 2013 and incorporated as a national charity in 2016. Targeted programmes are tailored to the needs of a diverse range of partners spanning education, health, military and other settings, where there are people encountering a lack of self-esteem, focus and motivation or those recovering from trauma and abuse.

These cost effective and accessible programmes build personal insight, resilience and help participants to become better able to manage their lives to contribute to the world in meaningful ways. Over 1600 interactions have taken place with HorseHeard programmes nationally and hundreds of individuals, carers and wider family members have benefited as a result of demonstrable improvements in self-awareness, anger management, team work, communication, resilience, an improved sense of wellbeing, identity and increased ability to overcome fears, barriers and deal with difficult conversations.

**By unlocking the potential of people who have experienced trauma, personal difficulties or who struggle to manage their emotions and behaviour, HorseHeard has unique and effective methods to enable people who were previously writing themselves off, or who have been underestimated by others to fulfil meaningful lives.**



In seeking to analyse the impact HorseHeard has, several stages have been undertaken to independently review and legitimise this work. Methods included: thorough desk research, analysis across multiple programmes, a review of over 100 programme evaluation surveys and wider stakeholder consultation including 10 interviews. From the evidence gathered a series of Social Value Indicators have been created where HorseHeard is consistently creating impact and value, these are:

- ♦ **Key Value Indicator 1: Healthier and emotionally resilient communities**
- ♦ **Key Impact Indicator 2: Independent and active citizens with increased capability and increased sense of personal responsibility**
- ♦ **Key Impact Indicator 3: Improved skills, aspirations and ability to transition towards positive futures**
- ♦ **Key Impact Indicator 4: Improved lifestyle chances and opportunities**



The four impact indicators will act as a future framework for measuring impact and value going forward, to build longer term impact data for the organisation and for the Equine Facilitated Learning sector and beyond. However looking at how far HorseHeard has already come in delivering results and impacting communities much has been achieved as detailed in the full Social Impact Report and Social Value Proposition sections (page 31 - 34). When we look at the impact created through the lens of the beneficiaries involved to date, then the impact and value plays out differently. Overleaf is some context as to the costs being reduced and potentially impacted and saved, as a result of the preventative interventions and resilient skills for life that HorseHeard instils in its beneficiaries.

### Children and Young People

When we consider that 50% of children involved in HorseHeard programmes are classed as 'Vulnerable Children' – with a disability, Special Educational Needs (SEN) Statement or living in care - the cost: value of the programmes, preventative measures and projected impact on the public purse is significant. Whilst further longitudinal research would need to be carried out to track the full and direct value of HorseHeard programmes, below several financial proxies are highlighted to evidence base current costs which HorseHeard can contribute towards reducing:

- Estimated overall lifetime costs associated with a moderate behavioural problem amount to £85,000 per child and with a severe behavioural problem £260,000 per child
- Total fiscal and economic savings from the delivery of school-based emotional learning programmes, per child over a 10 year period  
£7,770

- On average, lifetime earnings of a victim of bullying are reduced by around £50,000. By ensuring children and young people are equipped with positive communication skills, techniques for overcoming emotional barriers and have the ability to make friends and build social circles effectively this can be addressed.

(Sources for this information can be found in the Social Value Proposition for Children and Young People, Page 31).

### Veterans

There is currently limited data focused explicitly on the cost of Veteran care and impact on social and health services. As well as a lack of knowledge on socially isolated or disengaged Veterans.

Around 16,000 Armed Forces personnel leave the Armed Forces each year. Current estimates suggest in the region of 3-10% of those have diagnosed mental health disorders. There is an Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) which seeks to support Veterans for a range of needs. Physical and mental health disorders including PTSD, as well as the Veteran's potential employability and the needs of their dependents and families are taken into account in considering settlements. The AFCS provides a lump sum payment for pain and suffering. The sum payable is based on the tariff level of the injury(ies) and ranges from £1,200 to a maximum of £570,000. In addition, individuals whose injuries cause a significant loss of earning capacity may be eligible for a regular tax-free 'Guaranteed Income Payment' (GIP). Between 2005 and 2019 51,887 successful claims were made to the scheme.

This equates to £859M being paid out in compensation to Veterans under the scheme. Of which over £606M was paid out in lump sum payments and over £175M was paid out as Guaranteed Income Payments (GIPs).

(Sources for this information can be found in the Social Value Proposition for Veterans, Pages 34 - 36).

Whilst HorseHeard is an intervention which is likely to be accessed post discharge and decision making of any AFCS claims, it has the potential to improve quality of life for any Veteran and increase their engagement in civilian life, improve family relations and aspirations to seek employment. Tools, techniques, friendships made, and actions taken as a result of HorseHeard programmes may also reduce any worsening of Veteran's mental health and enable them to contribute more fully to community, society and the economy.

In addition to the programme outcomes and research, wider highlights creating innovative partnerships, impact and value include:

- Strengthened relationships with Universities resulting in student researchers and consultants contributing additional support to the organisation. We were also able to build relationships with student journalists who progressed to gaining commissioned work from HorseHeard following an initial pilot project

Partnerships with Equine Centres enabling

- new links between urban and rural communities, access to stables and horse riding activities and a diversification of services being offered at equine facilities to the communities and audiences they reach

- Building networks of community fundraisers who have held community and social events both to raise awareness of HorseHeard and funds to enable bursaries for disadvantaged schools to gain access to programmes

**It is clear that prevention is better than a cure and ultimately as a result of HorseHeard programmes, its supporters and wider activities, more than 1600 people who have faced difficult circumstances are now better equipped to make positive decisions and manage their lives in new ways. Examples include being ready to engage more fully with statutory support, accessing wider opportunities, achieving more in life as a result of raised self-worth, aspirations and confidence, plus having developed tools, techniques and life skills to overcome challenges prevents them from being affected by future setbacks.**



# PART ONE:

## Introduction to HorseHeard

### Chairman's Welcome

I am extremely pleased at the progress HorseHeard has made since commencing operations as a social enterprise in 2013 and incorporating as a charity in 2016. HorseHeard delivers life-changing programmes for young people, helping them develop the vital life skills of confidence, self-belief, and emotional resilience. Our new programme for Forces Veterans is also proving transformational, and we have exciting plans to further develop our geographical reach with this offering.

We are always encouraged by the positive evaluation and feedback we receive on the effectiveness of our programmes; this year we have gained additional insights from Dr Rebecca Clavell-Bate's PhD research into HorseHeard's 'Being Friends' programme; her research is summarised in this report (Previous Research Page 23).

HorseHeard CEO Heather Hardy continues to drive the charity forward with energy, focus and determination, supported by a management committee of highly committed volunteers. We are also delighted to welcome Squadron Leader John Peters as a Patron, to join internationally renowned Riding Instructor and Author Mary Wanless.

We also applaud the courage of supporter Martyn Thornton who, in 2020, will row single-handed across the Atlantic Ocean with the goal of raising £50,000 for HorseHeard. Please join Martyn in supporting, in any way you can, the excellent work of our charity.

Andrew McFarlane  
Chair of HorseHeard



# CEO's Welcome


From HorseHeard's conception, we have been improving children's and vulnerable adults' emotional health and well-being through the powerful connection with horses.

Over 1500 young people have benefited to date. Recently we have also engaged with nearly 100 Veterans and their families, along with the many Veteran supporting organisations.

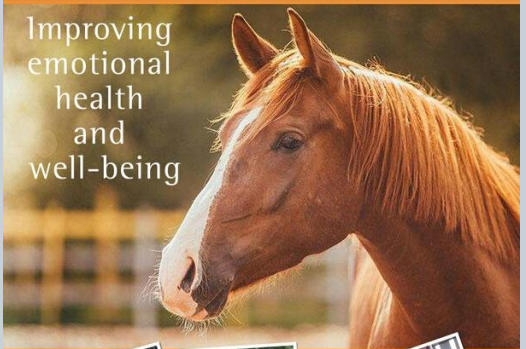
The stories and learnings are humbling and heart-warming - many are captured in this report, as well as through our social media and on our website [www.horseheard.com](http://www.horseheard.com). The learning and behaviour change is so memorable because the feedback is honest and accessible; it can be experienced and seen in the moment and it can be quite emotional, still visible, and talked about in the longer term. I have witnessed a number of Veterans say how their experience with HorseHeard was the catalyst in making pivotal changes in their civilian life. All through horses being horses and sharing magical moments with us.

I am delighted, as the charity and our work become more widely known, we are able to help more people and lead even more positive change.

Heather Hardy  
CEO, HorseHeard



Improving emotional health and well-being



- Self-belief
- Self-awareness
- Confidence
- Motivation
- Communication
- Team working
- Leadership
- Programmes delivered across the U.K.
- Opportunities for volunteers
- Ask us how you can support our work

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f [/horseheard](https://www.facebook.com/horseheard) t [@horseheard](https://www.twitter.com/horseheard)  
globe [www.horseheard.com](http://www.horseheard.com)





--I have learned about determination  
and that I can do anything when I  
believe in myself\_ even when I am a  
little scared--



# About the Charity

HorseHeard exists to promote positive emotional health and wellbeing to children, young people and adults in need. Using a unique facilitated learning model, we work with horses to build confidence, self-esteem and empower individuals to overcome their fears, achieve goals and improve their lives to be better connected and to contribute to their community.

HorseHeard provides early intervention services working with horses to support vulnerable people. We create a calm and safe setting alongside the horses which helps to gently challenge individuals to identify and address issues early on. Alongside this we provide specialist support to help individuals take action to achieve their goals and to access wider support opportunities. We run individual and group programmes across the UK, co-designed by the beneficiaries and in partnership with an established network of partner riding schools and horse and pony rescue centres. Our unique and individualised service is open to all and as a result it has already achieved significant impact with over 1600 people and had national engagement.

Through our group work with horses across nearly 50 partner equine centres, the charity has helped 1500 young people and 100 vulnerable adults to: Become more resilient; Address and overcome challenges; Get in touch with their leadership qualities; Gain greater confidence and control over their lives. This has led to consistent and significant transformation.

HorseHeard has strong values and ethics built from a philosophy of trust, respect and cooperation, with all clients, colleagues and the horses they work with at local riding stables and equine rescue centres.

The work across the country is delivered through a community of self-employed Associates based on a culture of non-competitiveness, inclusivity and empowerment.

HorseHeard programmes (including OFSTED recognised where appropriate) are offered to Schools, Colleges, Youth Groups, Veteran Charities and other third sector organisations.





"The course opened my heart, my mind and took a weight off my shoulders. I learned more about myself and got rid of some demons."



# Background Context

## Why horses?

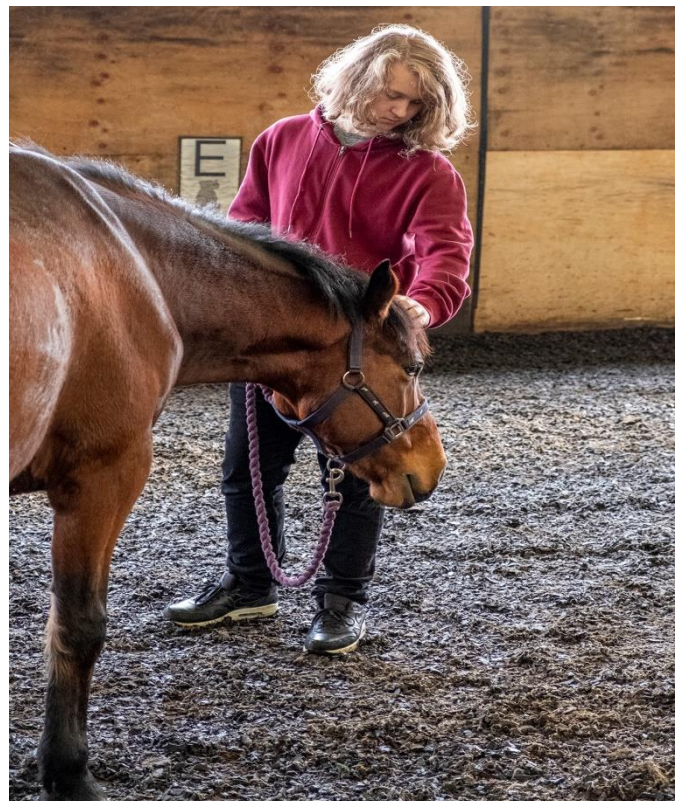
Horses have served people for thousands of years. It is only since the middle of the last century that the physical, psychological, and emotional benefits for humans from the close interaction between the two have been explored formally.

The ability of horses to influence positive behaviour change in humans in particular is receiving increased international recognition. Whilst robust, independent research is limited, a wealth of experience from around the world strongly suggests that horses can be used to effect improvements in attributes such as self-confidence, emotional intelligence, and aspects of learning. (The British Horse Society – Changing Lives Through Horses, Hillary Caroll, 2016).

Any interaction of humans with horses requires continual attention to their natural behaviour and reactions, in order to achieve a positive outcome for both. For instance, as prey animals horses are highly attuned to their surroundings and react instantly to anything that they perceive as danger – by taking flight away from anyone who approaches them in a very angry or aggressive manner. The person who exhibits calm and confident behaviour will achieve a very different response than those with an uncertain and tentative approach. Horses' reactions are a silent, honest, and dispassionate response to the emotions of those around them. The general non-judgemental nature of a horse generates a bond and encourages the participant to change their behaviour in order to achieve the desired response from the horse(s) they are working with.

The quality of a therapeutic relationship has been described as the most significant factor in successful Equine Assisted Intervention outcomes (Selby A 2013).

HorseHeard is able to facilitate this and create trusting partnerships between participants, facilitators and the horses to create a non-threatening environment for revealing and accepting the authentic self and face challenges which the participants are both consciously and unconsciously aware of in a supported way. The immediate response from the horse provides instant positive, or negative, feedback and reinforces the behaviour from the human. The skill of the facilitator is to enable the participant to work out for themselves how they should behave with or react to horses in order to achieve the desired response, largely through the use of non-verbal cues. There is also the potential for this learning to be translated into the context of individuals' lives, for example dealing with trauma, difficult relationships or situations, and to enable them to approach future problems differently.



There are a number of variations in how programmes are set up. Horses may work on a 1:1 basis with participants and are either connected by a loosely held long lead rope or are “at liberty” in a large but enclosed space. HorseHeard programmes involve several facilitators with coaching, education, training and wellbeing backgrounds to ensure effective activity as well as the welfare of horses and participants. Self and group reflection beyond the time spent with horses enables participants to consider aims, set goals and reflect on learning and progress. Increased self-awareness and mindset and behaviour change often happen very quickly in light of what people experience with the horses and facilitators work to support participants to apply this to their life situations and future.

Experiential Learning underpins the HorseHeard experience. A general definition of this being a “therapeutic approach that encourages participants to identify and address hidden or subconscious issues through activities such as role playing, guided imagery, the use of props, and a range of other active experiences”. Participants work with the horse(s) to achieve personal or educational goals, where goals are focused on the present, for example: Team working; Learning the skills of responsibility and effective communication; and understanding feelings and the messages behind them.

HorseHeard Facilitators are professionally qualified coaches, teachers, health practitioners and/or mentors to all ages, they are also equine specialists.

## Why Targeted Programmes?

HorseHeard has a focus on empowering and equipping vulnerable people, through benefiting from Equine Facilitated Learning, they build personal insight, resilience and are better able to manage their lives to contribute to the world in meaningful ways. The targeted programmes support diverse individuals in a range of ways including; helping with their self-awareness; anger management; team work; communication; resilience and ability to deal with difficult conversations. These accessible, inclusive and cost effective programmes can act as timely, holistic interventions, which have significant benefit for the target groups both individually and collectively, and create the capacity to address complex strategic and national challenges including:

- ♦ The national mental health ‘crisis’ (and in particular with targeted groups).
- ♦ The lack of attainment in education of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- ♦ Future workforce development challenges.
- ♦ Leadership gaps.
- ♦ People who have experienced trauma.

## Partnerships & Referral Pathways

Clear and positive communication and understanding of self-awareness and coping strategies to make constructive authentic decisions in difficult situations, are key to building self-confidence, taking personal responsibility, maintaining positive relationships and, ultimately, living happy, healthy and prosperous lives.

HorseHeard programmes including; Find Your Place; Take the Leap; Being Friends; Me, Myself and I; PonyPals and WorkHorse comprise of individual and group sessions which involve Equine Facilitated Learning to overcome fears and barriers to unlock potential and build resilience. Participants devise their own goals, strategies and reflection plans, then set their own targeted actions to help them progress, with support from facilitators and teachers, support workers, family members or colleagues.

HorseHeard programmes are applicable to, and create significant impact across, a range of settings and over the last 3 years, we have developed trusted partnerships across the UK to innovate the way educational, health and therapeutic services are delivered to help people enable positive futures for all. Plus, we have created new partnerships with equine centres nationally to diversify their use and reach new audiences.

Current key referral pathways span primary, secondary, further and higher education institutions; children and adult services teams within the public sector; and community organisations providing mental health and disability support to adults and children. There is also a growing referral pathway working with those who have mental health issues and those who have experienced significant trauma, such as the veteran community.

### Strategic Partner - Help For Heroes

HELP for HEROES have supported over 22,000 Veterans and their families to date. They have actively referred many Veterans to HorseHeard Programmes since 2018. The holistic nature of the programmes means that Veterans, carers and partners have all been positively impacted by support. "HorseHeard have helped over 25 Veterans from across several UK regions, to better manage complex needs including PTSD through their Find Your Place programmes."

### Equine Partner - Ecclestone Equine Centre

This award winning equine centre has been a venue for both adult and children's HorseHeard Programmes. There are mutual benefits from the partnership in terms of access to facilities, expertise and new audience development. 50 new people have attended sessions at the centre across 4 programmes and a new income stream for the hire of the space has started to positively impact the centre.



Given the success of HorseHeard programmes in working with people who have faced trauma, they have developed a range of partnerships across the Military and Veteran communities including relationships with Help for Heroes, Combat Stress, BLESMA, The Royal British Legion, Moving Forces and Blind Veterans UK. Additionally, NHS psychological services are now also referring people at an earlier stage on their waiting list to initiate support sooner.

Social media, events and word of mouth are another important way in which people get to know about HorseHeard and the services they provide and the impact they are having across multiple and diverse communities across the UK.



### Haxby Road Primary School, York

HorseHeard delivered the Being Friends programme to groups of Year 5 & 6 children in York. Those referred to the programme were experiencing a range of complex challenges including trauma from domestic abuse, challenging home lives, or bereavement of close family members, and several children were growing up in care.

"The transformation in the children from their experience of the HorseHeard programme has been quite obvious. We have seen them grow in confidence, they are calmer and helpful and are taking on challenges and opportunities they would not have previously considered".





**"There is always something new to learn. I didn't know I could have the ability to walk the horse around an obstacle without a lead rope, get the horse to follow me and get the horse to do what I wanted him to do - that was incredible."**



# Overview of Services:

## HorseHeard's Five Core Programmes.



### Being Friends

The Being Friends programme works with mainstream Primary Schools and Year 5 and 6 school children (ages 9 – 11) to develop emotional resilience. It is a four week programme which targets not only personal learning but sustained behaviour change. This includes an introductory session for parents/carers and teaching staff to experience the work for themselves in order to support the behaviour change of the children.

Core outcomes from this programme are focused on friendships and community, specifically:

- Developing and maintaining friendships;
- Working with and caring for others;
- Increasing confidence and self-esteem;
- Reducing inappropriate behaviour through awareness of choice.



### PonyPals

This is a condensed 2 session version of the Being Friends programme aimed at children in the age range 8 - 11. Core outcomes for this programme are:

- Increasing confidence, self-esteem and self-belief;
- Managing feelings and controlling behaviour through greater self-awareness;
- Developing the ability to persevere even when things get tough or challenging;
- Knowing it is ok to try something new/different.





## Me, Myself and I

This programme works with young people aged 11- 18 to develop life skills such as confidence, self-belief and emotional resilience. This will be, by creating a safe environment to share feelings and emotions around new situations, having experienced being out of their comfort zone and challenging themselves to do something unfamiliar. These personal challenges will allow them to consider their behaviour and demonstrate their increased confidence and self-awareness. They will also spend time around horses and find out what makes these animals so special in terms of improving mental health and wellbeing.

Core outcomes for this programme are:

- Increasing confidence, self-esteem and a stronger sense of self heightened awareness of others and their needs with a greater understanding of how to build and maintain relationships;
- Improved ability for young people to managed themselves and their behavioural choices by taking responsibility for their actions;
- Feeling a sense of success and sense of achievement, sometimes for the first time;
- Improved effective communication and an increased ability for young people to express their feelings, opinions and personal learnings.



## WorkHorse

This programme works with young adults with additional learning needs to help them develop the skills that will enhance their potential to gain voluntary or paid employment. This will be by helping them to develop the emotions and behaviours that would be recognised by a potential employer. This is achieved by presenting them with personal and group challenges that enable them to develop their self-awareness and increase their self-confidence and other life skills. This programme consists of 4 half day sessions with intensive groups of no more than 4 participants at a time and is recognised by OFSTED.

Core outcomes for this programme are:

- Improved self-awareness, self-confidence and self-esteem;
- Increased awareness of the key emotions and behaviours that increase their potential to become a voluntary or paid employee;
- Young people will have learnt the importance of teamwork;
- Demonstrable employability skills to use for their personal profile and Curriculum Vitae to inform future interviews and employers.



## Find Your Place

This four session behavioural change programme works with Armed Forces Veterans to help them re-establish their sense of self in the home, work place and community. It is designed to help veterans find their place in civilian life integrating back into a less regulated environment, whilst creating and implementing a plan with respect to their future.

Core outcomes from this programme are:

- Heightened self-awareness and greater sense of identity;
- Improved expression of feelings and developing mechanisms to manage emotions;
- Increased experience of being an effective 'Civvie' street team member and buddy support;
- Increased skills in goal setting, identifying aspirations and developing action plans.




## Take the LEAP

Is a 4 session programme over 2 days which works with college students and other teenage groups to develop life skills sought by employers. It targets leadership and employability, helping them to develop and practice SMART goal setting. Through a combination of individual and group challenges they can sharpen and demonstrate their self-awareness and confidence, as well as the ability to work with and influence others. Developing skills that are applicable from the examination room, to the interview and on into the workplace.

Core outcomes from the programme are:

- Heightened self-awareness and core life skills;
- Attain a greater level of confidence and self-esteem;
- Understand personal power, influence and the benefits of self-management;
- A greater understanding of the demands of the workplace.

A photograph of three children and a horse. In the foreground, a young girl with blonde hair is looking towards the right, wearing a white shirt with colorful polka dots. Behind her, a boy with dark hair is also looking right, wearing a blue shirt. To the left, the side of another child's head is visible. On the far right, the head of a dark-colored horse is partially visible. A semi-transparent white box with orange text is overlaid on the lower half of the image.

--As a result of HorseHeard programmes the children have grown in confidence they are calmer and more helpful. They are also taking on challenges and opportunities they would not have previously considered.--



# PART TWO: SOCIAL IMPACT REPORT

## About the Author

This report has been undertaken by Nickala Tortington, Social Business development consultant and Social Value specialist with 20 years experience of working in the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector. Nickala is a co-founder of Flourish Together CIC a pay it forward consultancy and network of support for social entrepreneurs which invests its surplus resources in supporting women changemakers to create the change they see needed, whilst increase their economic independence.

For further information about social value measurement, training or consultancy please contact [Nickala@flourishtogether.org.uk](mailto:Nickala@flourishtogether.org.uk) or visit [www.flourishtogether.org.uk](http://www.flourishtogether.org.uk)

## Methodology

HorseHeard have started to look at the impact of their work and have a thorough evaluation process in place. Here we build on this, to analyse and combine findings from previous evaluations and add additional feedback, insights and observations from a range of stakeholders who have seen value from and benefited from the programmes and activities. HorseHeard gathers continuous feedback from commissioners, referral partners such as schools, community organisations and participants themselves to understand the impact, wellbeing, attitudinal and behaviour change taking place through their work, as well as use findings directly to improve on service design. They are keen to co-design interventions that are fit for purpose and respond directly to the needs of their clients, partners and beneficiaries, recognising that they can only do this through two-way dialogue.

A mixed approach was used combining desk-top research, analysis across multiple programmes of work, review of over 100 programme evaluation surveys, wider stakeholder consultation including 10 interviews and consideration of the findings of in-depth existing Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS) evaluations of programmes. Additionally we have considered findings from a critical review and evaluation carried out by the University of Central Lancashire in 2018 exploring of the experience and impact of Equine Facilitated Learning (EFL) on a group of Year 5 and 6 children in a mainstream primary school. Whilst there is a high proportion of data for the children and young people programmes, we must highlight that there are some limitations with the amount of current data from participants on the Veteran programmes given the smaller data sample currently available and a lack of wider published research on Military and Veteran care.

We have started to quantify some basic value indicators and provided some concluding social impact data across a broad range of areas where social value is being created by the interventions and services HorseHeard are running. In order to attach impact and value to the outcomes delivered, we have prioritised a series of Social Value Pledges which form the social value proposition for HorseHeard going forward and have highlighted a range of reports which evidence base the need and social value proposition for HorseHeard. Finally, there are a series of impact case studies giving testimony to the quality and impact of HorseHeard's programmes and activities and highlighting the journey for beneficiaries, partners and wider stakeholders, as well as how people's lives and opportunities are changing and improving as a result.



### Sample

In order to gather robust, legitimate and diverse research, to independently inform feedback and findings, a broad range of people and organisations have provided feedback and insights. A summary is below:

- Several Primary Schools across the North West – views from senior managers, teachers and pupils
- Parents, Carers and Siblings of young people who had been through the programme
- Veterans across the UK who have taken part in HorseHeard Programmes
- Family members and carers of Veterans, plus Support Workers at agencies supporting Veterans
- University Students involved in the Take the Leap programme
- Board members, staff and volunteers at HorseHeard who form part of the strategic management and delivery
- Wider commissioners and champions of the programme including Help for Heroes, Burnley Football Club
- Equine Centres including Ecclestone Equestrian Centre Lancashire and Merrist Wood Equine Centre, Surrey

## Previous Research

HorseHeard have carried out extensive research into the impact of their programmes with children and young people, both through evaluations and feedback which have been used as part of our findings and summary as well as external research by universities and wellbeing professionals. Dr. Rebecca Clavell-Bate researched the HorseHeard 'Being Friends programme' in 2018 exploring the impact of Equine Facilitated Learning (EFL) on a group of Year 5 children in 2014. The research considered how the HorseHeard approach might help children with additional Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs.

What the research found:

1. EFL has the 'Feel Good Factor' – The children enjoyed taking part; they found it was fun and exciting, it was something new to them and it made them happy. Taking part in the intervention allowed the children to feel good about themselves.
2. Increased perceptions of friendship and group cohesion – The children in the participant group considered themselves to be better friends because they had taken part in the intervention. The class teacher perceived the children to have made improvements when working together in a group and their relationships with the wider class were also considered to have developed.
3. Positive changes to behaviour – The children considered themselves to be kinder and more helpful to each other. They appeared to engage in more positive behaviours towards each other, for example they were sharing more and much of their behaviour seemed to be less impulse driven. Changes in attitudes of staff towards the children and children towards each other led to more positive contact with others. There were fewer incidents reported during unstructured times of the day (less name calling and falling out), the children came back into class after breaks and lunchtimes in a calmer state and this was considered by the class teacher to have had a positive effect on their learning.
4. Increased feelings of self-worth and confidence – The positive experiences afforded all the children a sense of achievement and feeling proud of themselves, and this in turn appeared to have a positive impact upon the children's sense of self-worth and confidence. Being part of the EFL programme created memorable experiences for most of the children and through an experiential learning approach, provided opportunity to learn and practice a variety of skills, including those necessary for positive social development, leadership, collaborative learning and problem solving away from their normal classroom learning environment. In some cases, this learning was transferred to other areas of school or home life.
5. The TA (Teaching Assistant) is central to the process – The TA had a shared experience with the children and played an important role in the reflective process throughout the sessions and back in school. The consistent support of the TA allowed follow up when back in school, reinforcement of skills learned in sessions and the pinpointing of positive examples of behaviour, attitude, problem solving, teamwork. They continued with facilitating the children in making sense of what they experienced and what they learned from their experiences. This contributed to the development of positive relationships between children and staff and lead to positive changes in both behaviour and attitudes.

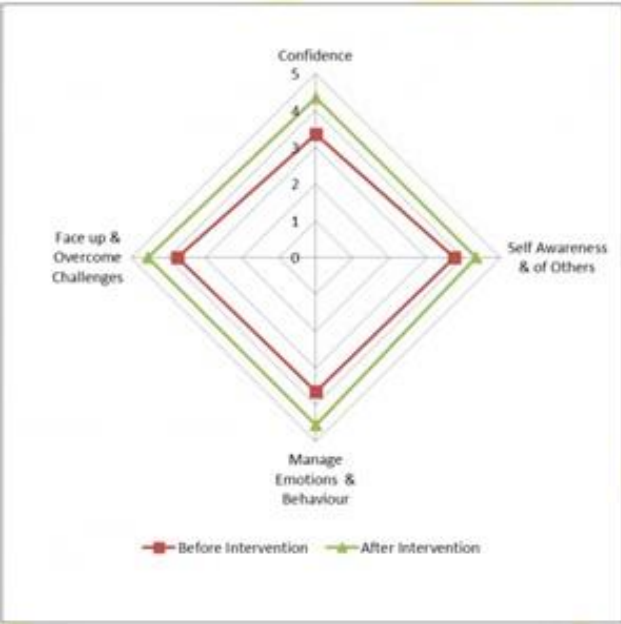


6. EFL and SEMH Support in School – Taking part in an intervention in a place other than school provides an opportunity for school to meet the needs of children who may otherwise be reluctant to engage or are at risk of social exclusion, through a positive and novel approach to learning which takes them out of their comfort zone and a chance to do something they have possibly not done before. Unlike other school based approaches in which targets are often set for children, EFL allows children to identify their own targets or areas of need, as did the children in this research, and as such creates a personalised and unique learning experience for each child. EFL could be used to offer support to those with SEMH. EFL has potential to boost confidence, self-esteem, improve social skills and promote positive behaviour change. EFL has the flexibility to be incorporated into PHSE/Whole School Curriculum offering a potential to improve behaviour around school, possibly reducing the need for schools to use commissioned services.

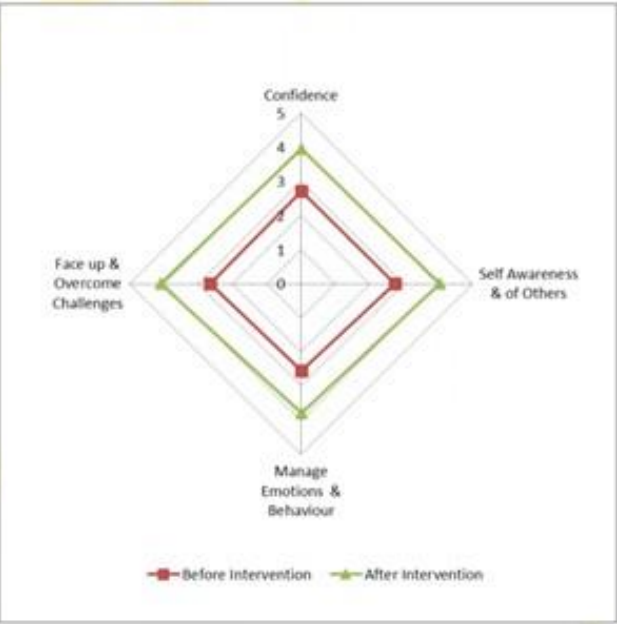
Additionally in 2015 HorseHeard carried out research into the impact a series of targeted programmes with children and young people throughout Cumbria. The HeadStart Programme delivered a bespoke version of the Being Friends programme with Children in Key Stage 2. In depth evaluations and feedback were gathered from 21 year 6 students, 26 parents and several teachers across two locations in Cumbria. A summary of the evaluation findings is given below.

Pre- and Post- intervention self-assessment measures recorded positive changes (circa 20% increase in mean scores) in the children’s emotional self-awareness and ability to manage their emotions and behavior, as well as personal confidence and resilience. Even greater improvements were recorded by adults observing and interacting with them (Parents and Teachers). This is well illustrated in the graphs below:

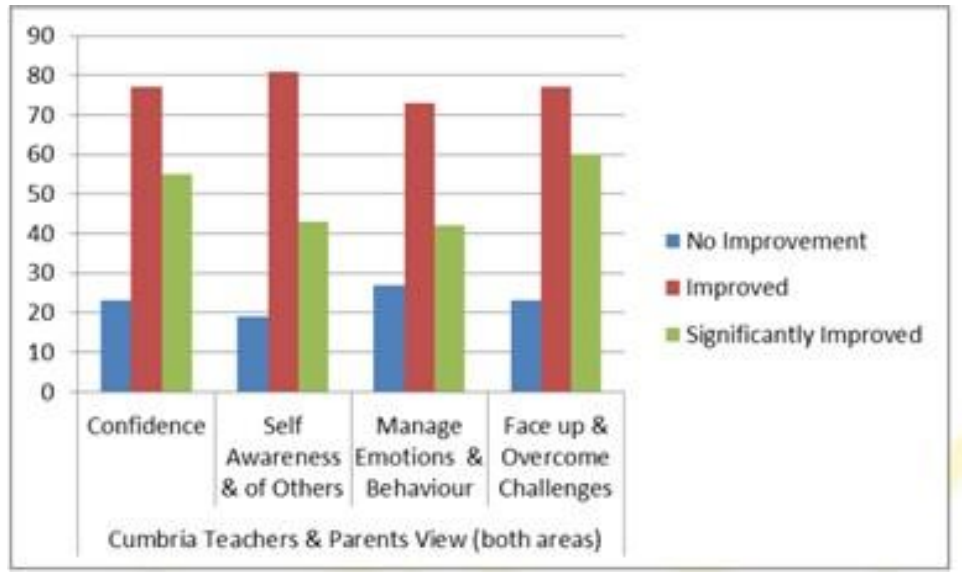
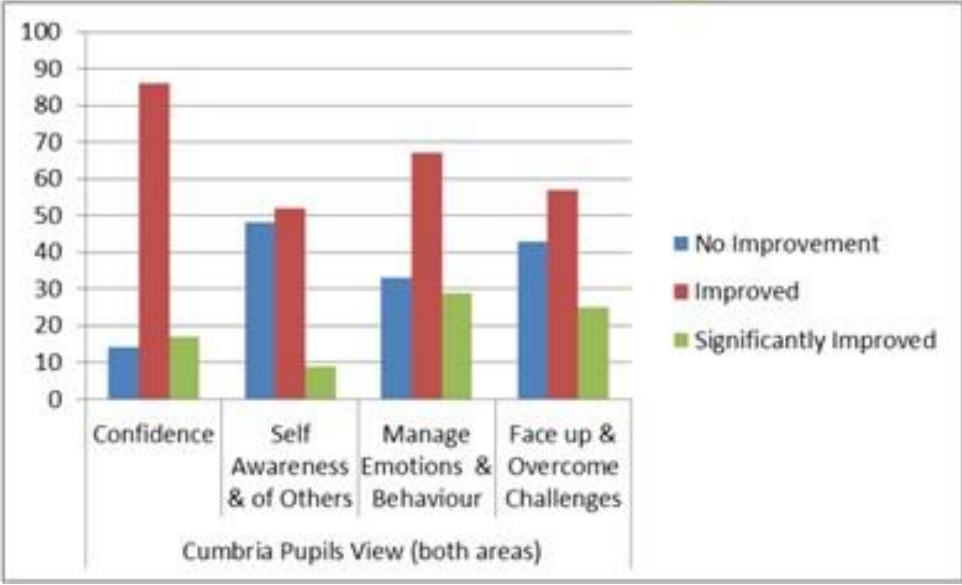
Graph 1: Mean self-assessment responses before and after the programme by KS2 children



Graph 2: Mean observed changes in behaviour and awareness by parents and teachers



All attendees reported an improvement in at least one measured quality, whilst in total over 50% recorded an improvement in each questioned category; and over 70% of parents, carers and teachers questioned observed improvements.



These initial findings give an illustration of the value in providing structured experiential learning for young people outside of the class room, and the horses provide an important honest and non-judgemental interactive medium for that learning process.

# Outcomes, Impact and Value

## Across Programmes

Over the following pages we highlight a range of impact statements and summarise the impact and value created across HorseHeard Being Friends and Finding Your Place programmes in particular.

Impact Statements	Impact	Value Indicators
<p>"When I came back from it and I was absolutely buzzing, full of positivity, very happy and I hadn't felt like that in a long time."</p> <p>"I never thought I'd be able to do something like that, being blind and even the blokes on the course said they never thought I'd be able to do it – and I did."</p>	Increased confidence, motivation and self esteem	Improved emotional wellbeing, resilience and confidence to take responsibility and action
<p>"I have learned that when I talk and share what I am thinking then this is even better."</p> <p>"I am going to make my class mates see me by looking at them and speaking louder."</p> <p>"We have noticed pupils are contributing in class more, putting up their hand and speaking out."</p> <p>"My granddaughter will now talk to us rather than storm out of a room."</p> <p>"One of the course participants got back in touch with their estranged family and is now in ongoing contact with them."</p>	Increased communication and interpersonal skills	Improved relationships, decision making and ability to communicate effectively in a range of home/ life/ work settings



"The course opened my heart and took a weight off my shoulders. I learned about myself, got rid of a few demons and am now much calmer."

"I learned I can manage my energy levels and be calmer and this has a positive effect."

"I learned how to relax."

"I used to have lots of fits, since HorseHeard these have become less frequent and more manageable."

Increased sense of calm, ability to relax and manage energy, anger or frustration

Improved emotional wellbeing, reduced stress and anxiety

Improved interaction with others through managing body language

Reduced internal and external conflict

"I didn't know I could have the ability to walk the horse around an obstacle without a lead rope get the horse to follow me and get the horse to do what I wanted him to do – that was incredible."

"I can now do things I didn't believe I could do – If I put my mind to it, it will happen."

"Being blind, others on the course said they never thought I'd be able to do it – and I did."

Increased self-belief, sense of bravery and ability to make and take positive, constructive decisions

Improved sense of empowerment and independence

Reduced reliance on others

An ability to take personal responsibility for ones actions

Increased levels of future aspirations

"Suddenly I found myself doing things that I wouldn't do in the past, for example, I now do voluntary work on a Wednesday on a canal boat, I'm doing environmental work. I've started seeing a psychologist and I have been to the dentist which I promised myself I would do."

"My granddaughter is now better prepared and calmer to engage in counselling services we have been waiting for – before HorseHeard she would not have engaged and got the benefit from counselling."

Increased sense of hope, trust and willingness to engage with wider opportunities

Improved mental health and emotional wellbeing

Increased potential to create new relationships and reduce isolation

Increased engagement with wider services has the potential for increased local economic impact, increased outcomes from supporting wider support agencies



## Additional Outcomes, Impact and Value - Children & Young People

Impact Statements	Impact	Value Indicators
<p>"I learned how to focus my thoughts more and how I was more successful when I did this."</p> <p>"When I get nervous I have learned to breathe calmly and keep my hands still beside me."</p>	Improved focus and attention	Increased ability to pay attention in class and ultimately improve learning experience for themselves and others
<p>"I now realise I can choose to be still and calm or be energetic and move about depending on the situation."</p> <p>"I learned that when I am determined and try, then I can be successful."</p> <p>"I have learned that I can challenge myself and speak up for myself and when I do this I get better results."</p> <p>"We have noticed the quality of independent learning and homework of pupils has improved."</p>	Improved attitude, behaviour and approach to learning	<p>Increased educational attainment and achievement, particularly for young people from vulnerable backgrounds leading to a more diverse, skilled and capable workforce</p> <p>Increased skills, knowledge and future learning potential</p>
<p>"I have learned about determination and that I can do anything when I believe in myself – even when I am a little scared"</p> <p>"I learned that I can be confident in future – I learned that with the pony."</p>	Application of new tools and techniques to deal with difficult decisions	Improved emotional wellbeing, resilience and coping techniques to overcome setbacks and challenges



## Additional Outcomes, Impact and Value - Veterans

Impact Statements	Impact	Value Indicators
<p>“The programme helped me build my trust and self-belief again, I’m now back in work and have improved my financial situation.”</p>	<p>Increased independence and social interaction</p>	<p>Reduced reliance on support services and mental health services</p> <p>Increased economic impact</p> <p>Increased diversity in the jobs market</p>
<p>“The tools and techniques I put into practice from the HorseHeard programme definitely helped me find a sense of identity and purpose beyond the Armed Forces.”</p> <p>“I found engaging with the horse difficult at first, then one day it just clicked and I realised I needed to change my behaviour. I’ve learned a lot about myself. It’s given me a chance to reflect on my past and a way to navigate my future.”</p>	<p>Increased sense of identity and belonging</p>	<p>Improved health and wellbeing</p> <p>Improved relationships with others</p> <p>More active citizens, secure in their communities</p> <p>Reduced anti-social behaviour</p>

## Social Value Proposition with Children and Young People



Young People are struggling to deal with the stresses and complexities of the current way of life and mental health issues amongst children and young people are at an all-time high. According to Young Minds, a leading mental health charity, 1 in 8 children have a diagnosable mental health disorder – that's roughly 3 children in every classroom. With 1 in 6 young people aged 16-24 having symptoms of a common mental disorder such as depression or an anxiety disorder and half of all mental health problems manifesting by the age of 14, with 75% by age 24.

Contributing to this are high levels of young people growing up in poverty. According to The Children's Society there are currently 4 million children living in poverty in the UK, one of the worst rates in the industrialised world. It is also clear that not all children flourish in the education system they are currently expected to fit into. There are pressures and expectations around standards of educational attainment, as part of an evolving educational system which needs to prepare young people to be work ready longer term and strengthen the capacity and capability of our future workforce to compete in a global economy.

As Norman Lamb outlined in the Future in Mind report (2015) as Minister of State for Care and Support at that time "Our childhood has a profound effect on our adult lives. Many mental health conditions in adulthood show their first signs in childhood and, if left untreated, can develop into conditions which need regular care." The HorseHeard programmes have a strong track record of making a real difference in improving children and young people's confidence, motivation, communication, sense of responsibility which is contributing to improved levels of positivity, improved mental health and aspirations for the future. 50% of the 116 children who took part in surveys analysed for this report are classed as Vulnerable – with a disability, SEN Statement or living in care. Additionally, HorseHeard run targeted programmes working with young people who are growing up in the care system or through kinship care and who have other complex needs as a result of growing up in poverty. HorseHeard are creating a critical turning point for such children to improve their skills, attitudes, behaviour and communication skills for the future. (Kinship care is a term used for children brought up by grandparents.)

The economic case for investing in children and young people to develop tools and techniques to manage their mental health is strong, given 75% of mental health problems in adult life (excluding dementia) start by the age of 18. As outlined in Future in Mind, which specifically highlights that failure to support children and young people with mental health needs costs lives and money. The impact of mental health disorders extends beyond the use of public services. The Centre for Mental Health took this wider societal viewpoint into account in their 'Building a better future: the lifetime costs of childhood behavioural problems and the benefits of early intervention' report by Parsonage M, Khan L, Saunders A (2014), which estimated that the overall lifetime costs associated with a moderate behavioural problem amount to £85,000 per child and with a severe behavioural problem £260,000 per child. Other comparators of financial proxies related to provision of mental health support for children and young people include:

Total fiscal and economic savings from the delivery of school-based emotional learning programmes, amounts to £7,770 per child over a 10 year period according to Mental Health Promotion and Mental Illness Prevention: the economic case (Knapp et al, 2011).

A number of HorseHeard's programmes are around developing skills to build social circles and friendship groups. Being bullied at school has adverse effects on both psychological well-being and educational attainment. There is evidence from longitudinal data that this has a negative longterm impact on employability and earnings; on average, lifetime earnings of a victim of bullying are reduced by around £50,000. This is taken from 'Cost effectiveness of Universal Interventions Which Aim to Promote Emotional and Social Wellbeing in Secondary Schools' SCHARR, University of Sheffield (Hummel S et al 2009). These proxies are significant when considering 50% of the children and young people HorseHeard works with are classed as

'Vulnerable Children' – with a disability, SEN Statement or living in care.


Below are the range of impacts and outcomes analysed from 116 evaluation responses and several stakeholder interviews, demonstrating HorseHeard has the means to create social and economic value for children, young people and wider society in some of the following ways:

### Key Value Indicator 1: Healthier & emotionally resilient communities

With stress, anxiety and levels of low mood and depression being at an all time high amongst young people, the benefits of the programme (boosting confidence, self-esteem and communication skills) have the potential for significant value. The programmes are targeted at those most in need with some having complex or traumatic experiences to try and overcome, which can have a significant long term value.

- 50% of children involved in programmes are classed as 'Vulnerable Children' – with a disability, SEN Statement or living in care
- 95% of children and young people involved demonstrated increased confidence
- 30% of children and young people independently fed back (without prompting or leading questions) that the HorseHeard programme had helped them improve their communication skills
- 30% of children and young people independently fed back that they had increased self-belief





## Key Value Indicator 2: Independent and active citizens with increased capability and increased sense of personal responsibility

Growing up and developing the skills to transition into adulthood over time is not necessarily something that can be taught in a class room. Building resilience, mentally, emotionally and socially needs access to real self-reflection experiences and creative, practical experiences to challenge oneself and one's reactions, attitudes and behaviours. HorseHeard programmes combine all of these elements and have achieved the following results where young people were taking action:

- 90% of the children who started HorseHeard courses finished them
- Over 90% of children across programmes consistently achieved a positive action or behaviour change within school following a HorseHeard programme
- 80% of children and young people felt better able to manage emotions and improve their behaviour
- Just under 25% of children and young people independently fed back that they had increased their sense of bravery and trust in themselves or others

## Key Value Indicator 3: Improved skills, aspirations and ability to transition towards positive futures

One cannot underestimate the impact of increased motivation, self-reliance and increased capability to take responsibility for one's actions, which the reflective and practical elements of the HorseHeard programmes promote. This builds resilience at a timely point in these young people's lives as they transition into adulthood. It was observed across several pieces of feedback from teachers, that following the HorseHeard programme, students were more inclined to work independently, contribute in class and set goals and achieve them. Other impacts included:

- 70% of children and young people who went on HorseHeard programmes felt more able to face up to and overcome challenges
- Over 90% of children across programmes consistently achieved a positive action or behaviour change within school following the programme
- 30% of children and young people independently fed back that they had increased positivity
- 50% of participants felt more determined and had tried harder at something they had found difficult before, examples included: school work, certain subjects, speaking out and socialising

## Key Value Indicator 4:

### Improved lifestyle chances and opportunities

The ultimate value of the programmes is to support people to improve their life chances and give them confidence and tools to equip them with the ability to access new opportunities to improve their futures in ways which wouldn't otherwise happen. As a result of increased communication skills, and determination young people are changing their lives and aspirations in a range of ways. Example impact statements are given below:

"I would say HorseHeard helped prepare me for High School because it gave me confidence to contribute in class, share my opinions and develop teamwork skills".

"I now see myself as a leader."

"My granddaughter is now better prepared and calmer to engage in counselling services we have been waiting for – before HorseHeard she would not have engaged and got the benefit from counselling. She is now being kinder to herself and stopped blaming herself for things that happened in the past which were outside of her control – this is a big step forward for her."

## Social Value Proposition with Veterans

Around 16,000 Armed Forces personnel leave the Armed Forces each year. The 2014 Annual Population Survey estimated that there were around 2.6 million UK Armed Forces Veterans

living in the UK. Of these, over 50% are aged 75 or older. The percentage of Armed Forces personnel initially diagnosed with a mental health disorder at specialist mental health services has increased steadily over recent years from a rate of 1.6% (3,119) in 2008–09, plateauing at 3.2% (5,147) in 2015–16. It has since fallen slightly to 3.1% (4,886) in 2017–8, which means that the proportion of personnel diagnosed with a mental health condition has nearly doubled over the last decade. It has to be said that the majority of people who become Veterans have no physical or mental health problems, however current data from the "Veteran's Work – Moving On" report showed 5% with a physical disability and 10% having challenges with their mental health.

The issues Veterans face are complex and they need more intensive care and support when faced with mental health issues given The Ministry of Defence reports that over 90% of serving personnel diagnosed with a mental health disorder at primary health care were referred to secondary specialist care in 2015–16. Better support for Veterans is now a strategic goal for the NHS and in 2018 they announced the development of Integrated Personal Commissioning for Veterans (IPC4V) to invest in commissioned services for Veterans as a priority group.

Feedback from 7 Veterans from across 3 different HorseHeard programmes was analysed to start to develop Key Value Indicators for the programmes. All 7 participants interviewed both achieved the goals they set and reported achieving additional beneficial outcomes. The goals, set by the individuals themselves, brought them out of their comfort zones and were significant current challenges they were facing and trying to overcome.

Whilst we appreciate this is a small sample size, it is clear from the findings that HorseHeard has the means to create social and economic value for the Veteran community in some of the following ways:

### Key Value Indicator 1: Healthier and emotionally resilient communities

In addition to the mental health statistics highlighted above, the suicide rate among male Veterans aged 16–59 years for a comparative group in the UK general population was 18 per 100,000 in 2016. In total, the number of male personnel taking their own lives between 1998 and 2017 was 292. In fact, some participants on HorseHeard programmes openly spoke about their battle with suicide and the majority spoke openly about their mental health challenges. Evaluation findings which back up this indicator include:

- 100% of Veteran participants reported improved mental health through the programme
- 100% of Veteran participants reported feeling less stressed, calmer and more relaxed
- Additionally, more than half of the participants interviewed, reported being able to better interact with a wider range of physical and mental health support services now, as a result of the impact of the HorseHeard programme in terms of their improved self-worth, sense of trust and improved independence and communication.

### Key Value Indicator 2: Independent and active citizens with increased capability and increased sense of personal responsibility

The nature of the Armed Forces involves people adopting strict codes of conduct and following orders, with most people's needs being catered for through the armed services directly. Unsurprisingly, once Veterans leave, sometimes the practical adjustment can be difficult and many struggle to connect with mainstream life and remain isolated and disconnected for many years. The HorseHeard programmes have been impacting many areas from communication and improved relationships, to improved life situations and even personal appearance and attitudes to personal care. Evaluation findings which back up this indicator include:

- 71% of Veteran participants reported an increased sense of trust in themselves and others
- 71% of Veteran participants reported increased independence and social interaction



### Key Value Indicator 3:

#### Improved skills, aspirations and ability to transition towards positive futures

It is clear that many people transitioning from military service are highly skilled and go on to maintain a good quality of life beyond the armed forces. The Veterans Work report from 2016 showed that 72% of companies with Veteran recruitment programmes would recommend employing Veterans and a high proportion understand how military skill sets fit with their organisational needs. The Office of National Statistics Data (2017) 79% of working age veterans are in employment.

The Forces in Mind report entitled 'Lifting the Lid on Transition' highlighted that families' awareness of support services available to them is low with 51% of survey respondents unaware of organisations that offered advice for healthcare and wellbeing or other support services such as education and work beyond the Armed Forces. Families did not know where to go for help and advice, so as well as improving Veteran's skills, confidence, aspirations and ability to transition well, they act as a positive peer support network and can signpost to wider opportunities. Evaluation findings which back up this indicator include:

100% of Veteran participants reported

- increased hope and positivity
- increased confidence
- increased self-belief, and
- improved communication

### Key Value Indicator 4:

#### Improved lifestyle chances and opportunities

For some, returning back to mainstream life after working in the Armed Forces can pose a major challenge. Picking up family relationships and connections, earning a living beyond the Armed Forces, accessing appropriate and affordable housing and managing health, wellbeing and the potential effects of trauma can limit lifestyle chances and opportunities. Evaluation findings which back up this indicator include:

100% of Veteran participants reported lifestyle improvements due to an increased sense of calm, improved communication and an increased sense of independence and personal responsibility.

Some of the life improvements mentioned included:

- Securing a job and returning to work
- Improving their finances and housing situation so they now felt more stable and secure
- Getting involved with volunteering opportunities and leading new projects
- Building friendships with others and even one who had gone on their first date in many years
- Re-establishing family networks after long periods of non-contact
- Needing to access mental health support services less frequently for moderate to severe mental health needs

# Impact Case Studies - Veterans



Jeff is a blind Veteran who wanted to build his confidence, he brought his guide dog to every session. The course brought him out of this comfort zone, gave him confidence and self-belief and changed the perceptions of others on the course who underestimated his capability due to having sight impairment.

*"It has proved that if you set the goal to do something you can achieve it. Just walking the horse was a huge achievement, I never thought I'd be able to do something like that, being blind and even the blokes on the course said they never thought I'd be able to do it – and I did."*

It has helped him to overcome some of his challenges due to his disability, meaning he is going out more, feeling calmer, confident and getting more out of life. He's also interacting with his guide dog better as a result - feeling less anxious and more in control.

*"The course is great for partially sighted people because it gives us a bit more confidence to get out in life."*

Alan used to have his own horse many years ago and recognised the therapeutic benefits, however after the horse died he hadn't been near one in years and he had missed the interaction with horses. He also wanted to overcome some emotional challenges as well as anger management issues he recognised he had through the trauma he experienced in the Armed Forces and hoped to become more motivated and feel more comfortable in a range of social settings.

*"Suddenly I found myself doing things that I wouldn't do in the past, for example, I now do voluntary work on a Wednesday on a canal boat, I'm doing environmental work. I've started seeing a psychologist and I have been to the dentist which I promised myself I would do. Plus, I have done an exhibition in London and taken photographs for the National Trust. So quite a lot has changed in that respect since the HorseHeard course and I have been able to achieve a lot of things."*

Alan found the experience boosted his confidence, self-belief and promoted a feeling of success.

*"There is always something new to learn. I didn't know I could have the ability to walk the horse around an obstacle without a lead rope, get the horse to follow me and get the horse to do what I wanted him to do – that was incredible."*



Andy was still experiencing trauma and anxiety as a result of PTSD and wanted to be more motivated again, fitter and sleeping better. Andy definitely achieved his goals, experiencing improved sleep and getting back into training for marathons and an Iron Man competition.

*"I use the experiences and memories from the HorseHeard course frequently to help me sleep, to help me deal with stressful situations."*

There have been some wider benefits for Andy in attending the programme including developing new tools and techniques which have built on the medical support he has received and he is also using the techniques in his job to help others. Although he had seen a psychiatrist and this helped managed his condition to some degree, he found the HorseHeard experience gave him some practical tools to manage his anger, frustration and anxiety.

*"Although I'd seen a psychiatrist for a couple of years previously, every now and again, I found myself getting anxious and wound up and I just couldn't relax. On the HorseHeard course, when I first went to the horse it was all jittery and sort of jumpy, because of what Heather and Andrew called my energy levels, so I had to physically and mentally learn to relax and it has helped me so much ever since at work, at home and I've applied some of what I have learned with the vulnerable children I work with to help them benefit from these techniques."*

The programme has also improved his confidence, self-esteem and rekindled a sense of renewed hope and positivity.

*"When I came back from it and I was absolutely buzzing, full of positivity, very, very happy and I hadn't felt like that in a long time."*





Jamie came across HorseHeard through a local Veterans support group and although he's now been out of the Armed Forces for over 40 years, still suffers from trauma and mental health issues which has resulted in multiple suicide attempts and has affected his relationships, quality of life and sense of identity and belonging.

*"The programme blew me away, I didn't realise horses were that intuitive and able to read and respond to human behaviour. You can see and tell that they can feel your emotions, energy and anger levels - I can't tell you the science but it works!"*

Due to his experiences, Jamie was holding onto a lot of tension, anger and trauma. After taking a little while to bond with the horse, he has found the experience to be life changing in the respect that he is better able to manage his anger and emotions and remain calmer, plus he now has more positive relationships with others. He isn't needing the same level of support from Mental Health services and has found the practical, holistic approach to be more beneficial for him.

*"Personally, I have found that HorseHeard has helped me where statutory services haven't been able to."*

The programme has helped Jamie find a sense of identity beyond the Armed Forces and this has improved his life immeasurably, where he now has less reliance on mental health services, has improved housing security and is less isolated after growing his social connections.

*"The course opened my heart, my mind and took a weight off my shoulders. I learned more about myself and got rid of some demons."*

He has since bonded with a local family who he now sees as a "surrogate son and granddaughter" and has a much better quality of life, feels less isolated and is hopeful about the future.

# Impact Case Studies - Children and Young People

*Allie Crewe is a lecturer at Xaverian College in Manchester, who had a long standing passion for horses. "Manchester has high levels of unemployment and low income. We have over 2000 students at the college and 54% of our students come from a home that is economically deprived with 14% in the highest disadvantage rating. People who are from such backgrounds often feel that 'Aiming High' and 'Leading' is beyond their reach and we try to challenge this. One of my students, Charlotte is a gifted and talented student, but economically deprived. Although she had never touched a horse before she got heaps from the programme. It was a fantastic investment of our time and resources."*



Kim Wherry is a teacher from Brannel School, Cornwall. She brought a series of children to take part in HorseHeard programmes and was astounded by the results within just a few weeks.

*"Children are learning: determination to succeed; developing self-belief and goal-setting. Also tolerance; resilience; trust; calmness and how to express love and positivity. I've observed increased levels of self-confidence, self-awareness and self-control and understanding how to form positive, healthy connections; how to be kind and that being loving and kind are not weaknesses. It has been good to see an acceptance of themselves and others as they are."*

*Sam Smart is the Family Liaison Officer at Haxby Road Primary School, a member of EBOR Academy in York. As a new school to start commissioning programmes for year 5 children in 2019, they had a real need for support with a high number of vulnerable pupils facing complex home lives, a high number of children growing up in care and dealing with loss and bereavement. The school needed support to not only turn around challenging behaviour and unlock the talents and attributes of their pupils, but also to give them coping strategies they would need for life.*

*"As a result of HorseHeard programmes the children have grown in confidence they are calmer and more helpful. They are also taking on challenges and opportunities they would not have previously considered."*



Katherine now volunteers with HorseHeard and is the partner of a Veteran who joined a 'Find your Place' programme in 2019. As well as being a carer, she had faced a few setbacks and lost some of her confidence. She had also lost her nerve with horses after many happy years riding them as a child. Within an hour of her first visit to HorseHeard to support her partner, she had been recruited as a volunteer and has now supported two 'Being Friends' programmes and is about to join a third with children and young people in Lancashire.

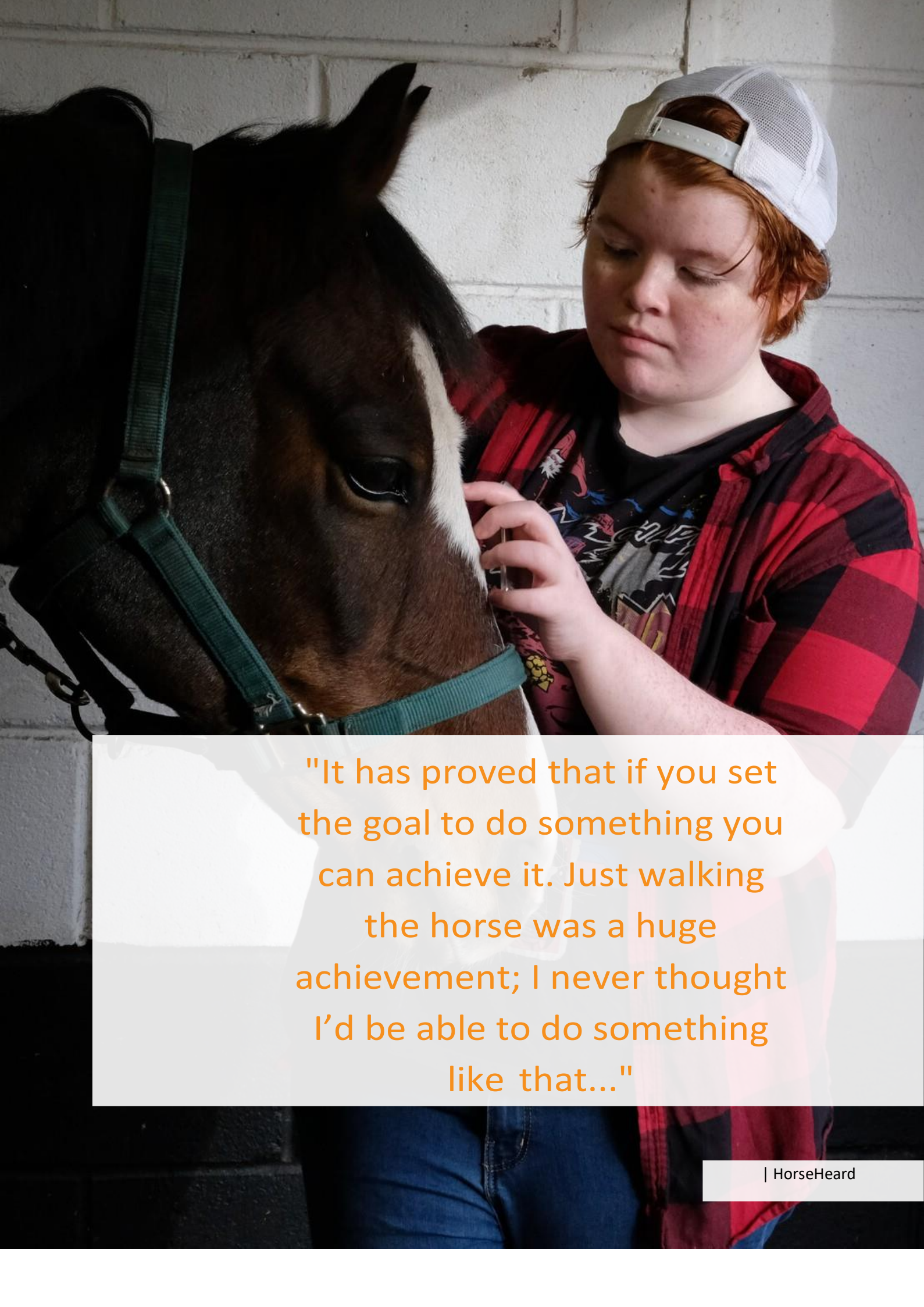
*"It was a massive boost for HorseHeard to notice something in me – and to see that I could help. I had teaching qualifications and mentoring skills from a former job in the civil service, but I hadn't seen how these could be transferable skills. It has been just incredible to support these young people and observe the difference this has made. I feel honoured and humbled at the same time – to see those children grow emotionally in those 4 weeks I never would have believed it. It's amazing how the horses bring them out of themselves, with the nurturing guidance of the HorseHeard team."*



Student Charlotte joined a 'Take the Leap' programme. She failed her AS exams first time, and then dropped out of Sixth Form with depression, *"When I got to Xaverian College I did my AS exams again. Eventually I got quite decent grades, but when I set off to do my AS exams I was tired and felt stupid and really felt I was going nowhere, I was full of self-doubt. I was scared to apply to University because of the debt so I decided to do an apprenticeship with a degree combined. Everyone rejected my applications."*

Since doing two sessions with HorseHeard she has approached things differently. *"When I went for my interview for AstraZeneca I really handled myself with pride and I envisioned it like I was leading the horse, I didn't have time to stop and think about 'what ifs' because then they wouldn't believe I was sure about what I was doing. It was really interesting because I used the 'Grace and Power' techniques I'd learned a lot during the course and I was able to bring out who I am. After that (even before they accepted me) I was so much happier and more confident knowing that I can change my state just like that. I can't tell you how amazed/happy I am. I'm training in my dream job. So I owe a big thank you to my teacher who saw my potential and everyone at HorseHeard."*





"It has proved that if you set the goal to do something you can achieve it. Just walking the horse was a huge achievement; I never thought I'd be able to do something like that..."

## Students invited to creatively capture the impact of HorseHeard

**ALLOW HORSEHEARD TO HELP YOU:  
LEAD THE WAY  
TAKE THE LEAP OF FAITH  
SEIZE THE REIGNS  
AND TRY TO BE THE CHANGE YOU WANT TO SEE TODAY.**

**Phil Evans, (UCLAN) University of Central Lancashire**

*"In making work for HorseHeard I have considered the ideas of change, viewpoints, mental wellbeing and resilience. Everyday existence can at times be mundane, overwhelming and bleak. Trauma impacts each of us differently, we often become blinkered and the world seems unfriendly and grey. My work with altered photos changes ordinary photographs into images filled with colour. This highlights elements that were always present but often unnoticed and unrecognised.*

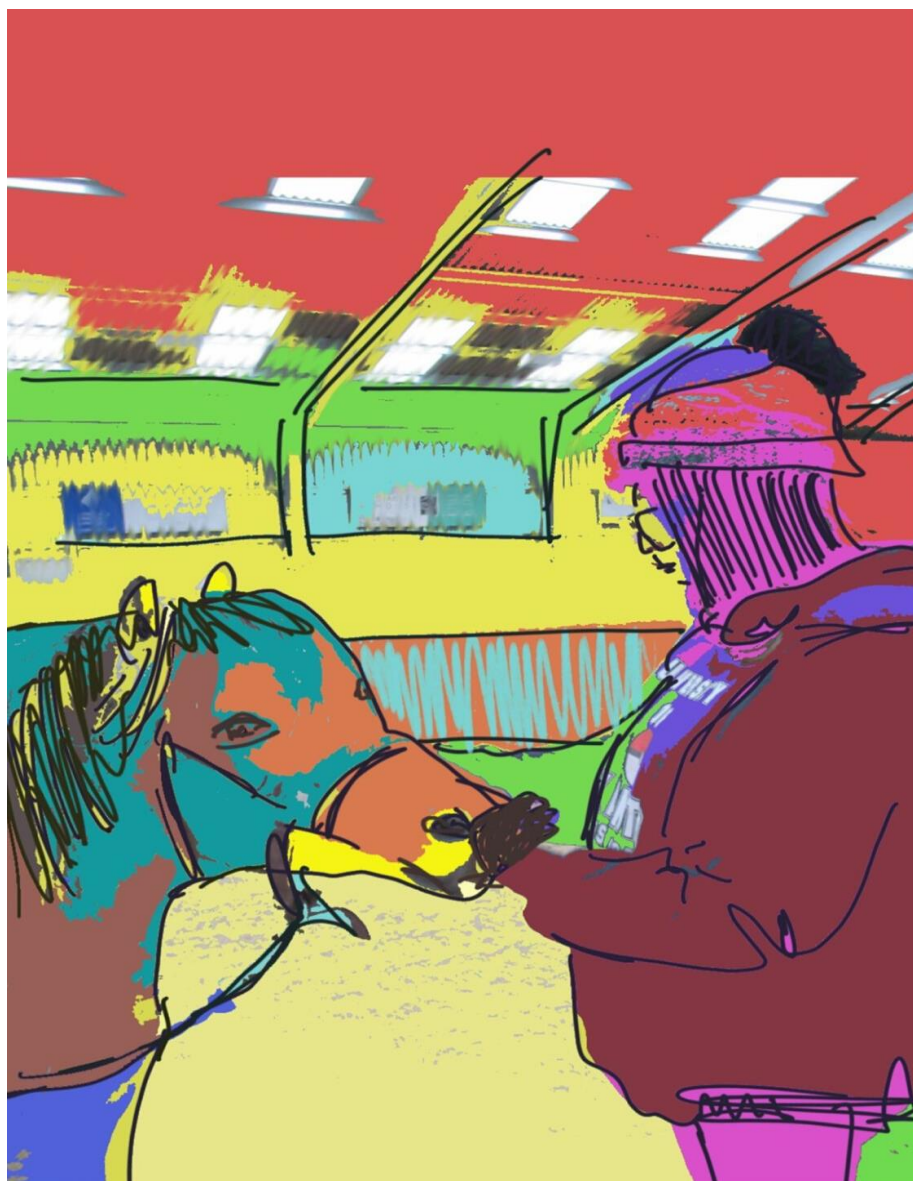
*Working with the horses took me out of my every day situation and made me look at the world in different way. I was thinking about bringing colour into our everyday existence. Life is often mundane and when we are feeling low for whatever reason, it is easy to feel like the colour and rhythm have gone out of life.*

*Sometimes we just need to take a fresh look at things and horses facilitated this new perspective. By changing the colours in the originals to unusual colours, I hope to stimulate an ability to see new, to find interest in the world and see patterns and order.*

*If we are willing to do the looking and thinking, we can alter our view of reality and experience the full technicolour of the world we live in. Colour is always perceived in relationship with other colours, my work plays with the way colours affect each other and influence our emotions.*

*The group work with the horses was all about relationships. The wellbeing work seemed to happen in the relationships between the horse, the participants and the facilitators. We were presented with choices about how we wanted to walk, how we wanted to carry ourselves, how we wanted to respond to each other and to the horse. I have tried to capture all of this in my composition, photo choice and the way I have worked with the photos to get the final image".*

**Rachel Cousins, (UCLAN) University of Central Lancashire (artwork next page)**



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