

CHESTON FARM

EQUESTRIAN CENTRE

Cheston Farm, Wrangaton, TQ10 9HL

CHESTON FARM E.C NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2009 - No. 4

WELCOME!

Hopefully, word has gotten out that the dirty old Cheston arena has changed, and changed beyond recognition! We finished the arena just before Christmas, a month behind schedule, but it has all been worth it – read on for more detail.

Winter is the toughest time for working with or owning horses: we have battled with frozen pipes; no water for over 48 hours; burst pipes in fields, café and the house; fields solid with ice to fields thick with mud and back to ice / snow again!

However, the days ARE getting longer and despite the recent heavy rain and snow, fun can still be had on a horse! More on that later....



Cheston Farm EC : Developments

Indoor Arena: - the biggie!

Phase 1: Our first and biggest real project has been accomplished and we think the end result is really pretty good. Our big, dark old shed with the dusty undulating sand and puddles is now a light, airy and level riding arena with a safe equestrian surface that is already being enjoyed by many!

It has been an enormous undertaking: I will never look at arenas the same way and certainly will value using other arenas more!!!!

- For starters, we removed approx. 2000 tonnes of old sand, boulders and dirt from below the surface just to get to a level where we could start again. This meant digging down about 6 inches in one corner and yet in the opposite corner, going down 2 ½ foot to get to the same level!
- Next a membrane went down, before we brought in crushed stone to back fill and laser level a solid base. This was then vibro-rolled and hand raked to get exact levels correct. Next a semi-permeable membrane was laid and stretched tight to the new timber frame that was built in within the existing walls – except for one wall which was completely rebuilt.
- The arrival of the sand was quite a logistical feat! The lorries could not drive on the membrane so we had to back in one load of sand, spread it by JCB in order for the next lorry to be able to back on to the sand to continue dumping. If the sand was too deep, the lorries would get stuck so our JCB driver, Jono Vincent, was kept busy as lorries came and went for about 3 days.
- 400 tonnes of sand later and the first signs of an arena were beginning to emerge. First, more vibro-rolling and laser leveling took place.
- Finally, the fibre additive (Martin Collins 'Clopf') arrived in 17 enormous bales and was strategically deposited in the arena for distributing across the surface – this took 4 days!
- The final stage was blending the sand and fibre together with a tractor mounted power harrow and a rotavator. And on Dec 21st it was ready!

We have now taken possession of an arena leveling machine just to groom and maintain our much manicured surface and the results are fabulous!

There is still more to do: - an irrigation system to install, timber paneling to complete and then the whole building wants painting – but at least we can ride in all weathers! Dressage mirrors are on the wish list...but sadly a bit lower down!

Training/Lessons/Events & The Riding School

Lessons: Sophie is now back in the swing of giving lessons to owner/riders whether one off or regular bookings. We now have riders approaching us for specific training livery/short holiday experiences with lessons combined with the

opportunity to enjoy surely some of the best hacking around.

Training Events: For those with horses of your own – we have many training activities coming up between now and May. Dressage trainer, **Peter Cook BHSI** is periodically coming to the yard for private flat lessons for all abilities. **Andy Lovell BHSI** has group clinics available – the next date being March 7th. Andy is well known for helping the nervous and novice horse & rider but equally trains the all levels. Several riding clubs are also using us as a venue for club training.

The Riding School: we anticipate being ready for April 1st to accept limited lessons with riders suitable for our current team of horses. This is whilst we build up a safe team of steadier neddies for younger and more novice riders. We are on the look out for ponies & cobs 14-16hh and a couple of 'tiny tot types' who would suit real beginners either to loan or purchase. However, we are not doing a 'working' livery but long term loan horses are of interest.

Other Events: Back in January, and for the second year, we had The Dartmoor Hunt meet on the yard. Sophie's choc and raisin flapjacks reached new heights along with Andrew's homemade sausage rolls and great fat chips, all washed down with mulled wine in bright sunshine - then off they went in a clatter!



Livery yard Dressage saw a good turn out with everyone taking part, thanks to Dom for organizing and Pam Melville and Bettina Morgan for judging and writing.

Other plans in the pipeline: We hope to host show jump and dressage fun nights

for those who want a combination of training and informally competing. Once our outdoor arena is completed and able to serve as a warm up facility we will do more competitions. If you have any ideas on what you would like to see at Cheston then please let us know!

All the best and please get in touch if you have any enquiries,

Sophie & Andrew

Any Enquiries please call : 07977 588 754 or see our website

WANTED

STEADY NEDDIES

Long term loan horses or ponies for riding school, hacking or trekking. Must be sound and sane, but any age or height considered. One week up to one month trial essential for which a contribution to livery is required before a decision can be made.

ARENA & SHOWJUMP SPONSORS REQUIRED

Would you like to see YOUR business promoted here at Cheston Farm? How about a show jump in your family's favourite colours or named after your horse? We are looking for expressions of interest from sponsors for arena banners, training mirrors, show day floral displays, show jumps, arena clock etc. Ideas and enquiries welcomed!