



Animal Health Trust

media *release*

4 July 2015

GALA RACE DAY RAISES THOUSANDS FOR LOCAL CHARITY DESPITE TORRENTIAL WEATHER CONDITIONS.

Thunder, lightning and torrential rain didn't dampen the spirits at the Animal Health Trust's annual Gala Race Day held at Newmarket's July Course on 25 June.

Local riders, business owners, residents and staff from the charity joined together to enjoy a fabulous day's racing which raised more than £40,000 for the charity. The event helps to fund the AHT's pioneering work improving diagnosis, treatment and prevention of disease and injury in horses, dogs and cats – in the UK and across the world.

With committee members from various Newmarket businesses, the event is a true credit to the people of Newmarket who all worked tirelessly to ensure its success.

Dr Mark Vaudin, Chief Executive of the Animal Health Trust, said: "We are extremely grateful to Noel Byrne and the committee of volunteers who generously give their time and energy to organise the event. Over the years that Noel and the Race Day committee has been organising it, the event has raised more than £200,000 for our vital work."

Noel Byrne, Chair of the Committee and Managing Director of the Bedford Lodge Hotel and Spa, said: "The AHT Gala Race Day is a culmination of the hard work of the committee on behalf of the AHT, but more importantly, it shows how well supported the AHT is by both local and regional guests as well as many from much further afield. Despite the weather doing its best to dampen spirits, everyone I spoke to really enjoyed the occasion and gave generously."

Held annually the AHT's Gala Race Day showcases the crucial role that the charity plays in the equine industry, and this year included a raffle, auction and a Charity Race helping to draw in donations.

The Charity Race, which was won by 17-year-old Hannah Knowles of Newmarket on her second attempt at the race, provided an exciting addition to the programme of the day. Hannah fought off competition from seven other highly skilled riders to battle her way to victory in an exhilarating race on incredibly soft ground.

Hannah said: "After competing in the race last year, I got such a buzz I knew I wanted to do it again. So to come back and win the race is an amazing feeling. I love race riding and being a huge animal lover, the charity race for me could not be more perfect - allowing me to do something I love and raise money for such an amazing charity! Thank you to the AHT for giving me this opportunity and to John Ryan for letting me ride the fabulous The Gay Cavalier."

Noel Byrne added: "We are already planning 2017's day and I'd urge local businesses to contact the AHT or myself to talk about the opportunities available to them. It's now a popular event so sponsorship and tables sell fast so don't delay if you want to be a part of this awesome event next summer."

A table at the Animal Health Trust's Gala Race Day makes a perfect day out with friends and family or an ideal way to entertain business clients. If you're interested in attending next year's event, please email Hester Abbatt on hester.abbatt@aht.org.uk

ENDS

For further information, please contact:

TBC, AHT press office, 01638 751000 Ext: 1572

Additional notes:

The Animal Health Trust (AHT) is an independent charity, employing over 200 scientists, vets and support workers. It aims to improve the health and welfare of horses, dogs and cats through research. It also provides specialist referral services and continuous education to vets. For more information, visit www.aht.org.uk