

# BACK IN THE SADDLE AT WIMBLEDON VILLAGE STABLES

“Are you going to Wimbledon this year?” they ask. Yes, but not necessarily for the tennis.

If you're a horse lover, the main draw is a very special riding stables tucked behind the Dog & Fox, a former coaching inn, right in the centre of the village.

Wimbledon Village Stables was established over 100 years ago, making it the oldest in the country. With 2 dressage arenas and miles of tracks across Wimbledon Common and Richmond Park, members have the choice of a lesson with one of the award-winning instructors or can just enjoy the beautiful natural scenery on a hack. For those getting back in the saddle, or who want to hone their skills, they also have a fully interactive riding simulator, which members can practise on.

Deborah Hall, a former BBC News presenter, who now runs The Business of Presenting, discovered WVS 15 years ago: “I was having coffee in the village and was surprised to see a dozen or



so horses emerge from behind the pub and trot off down the road. Then they suddenly disappeared. I was so intrigued I retraced their steps and discovered these charming stables. I'd always loved riding as a child and I was so impressed with the professional and friendly approach of the staff, that I joined on the spot”.

Deborah says it's the perfect counterbalance to her busy work schedule – she is Media Consultant to WHO's vaccination programme, and Personal Impact trainer at London Business School and Durham University: “However hectic my week has been, I never miss my Friday ride. I get on a beautiful horse and for me it's pure escapism – building a relationship with the horse and being at one with nature. I particularly love to see the changing seasons. I really enjoy meeting other like-minded members and I've made so many close friends. Every ride seems to end with a coffee in the village - we call it our ‘canter and coffee’ time. I love it”.

If you want to have ‘you’ time, or just escape day to day pressure of work, be amongst nature, meet new people, and get fitter visit. ■

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