

Here is another in our series of stories featuring one of the ponies at the stables.

Tommy

Fairytale princesses dream that a knight in shining armour riding on a fine white charger will sweep them off their feet and marry them! A few years ago this came true for one particular bride when Tommy became a 'white charger' for the day.

Over the years Dawn has received many unusual requests and has always done her best to help. On this occasion a young man phoned her to see if he could borrow a white stallion for the day. He explained that it was tradition for the groom to arrive at his wedding riding a white stallion. Dawn thought about this for a moment and said that yes she did in fact have a 'grey' stallion that looked white which he could borrow but had he ever ridden before? The young man replied that he hadn't. In view of this, Dawn suggested that he might be better riding a different, somewhat 'quieter', pony instead and that she had a white looking 'grey' gelding which might fit the bill – Tommy! The man agreed and as they say, hopefully, everyone lived happily ever after!

Tommy has lived at The Meadow School of Riding for 14 years and is thought to be about 28 years old. He is a versatile, 13.2hh Welsh pony – able to carry light adults as well as children. During the week he is a popular pony with RDA riders and has competed with them successfully at many shows and Special Olympic events. He won the Regional Dressage competition in 1999 with Jane Stidever. He is also popular with adults who like to hack as he is brilliant at opening gates (with only a little assistance from the rider!) He is quite a character who enjoys a snack – either during a lesson when he will snatch a mouthful of hay from the haystack if he can or on a hack when he will try to eat anything green! He also regularly brings a ride to a standstill by staling (not sailing! - as one child thought Dawn had said) which he seems to want to do at least once in every lesson. He has become a much loved and trusted pony to try something out on for the first time – whether it is a first hack, a first canter or a first go at jumping.

His current lifestyle is a far cry from the life he used to lead. The lady who owned him before he came to the stables used to take him shopping with her into Groby and he would carry her shopping home in panniers on his back!

