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# WILDER WAYS

Straight from the horses mouth

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IT IS THE CALL OF THE WILD, THE WILL OF THE HERD,  
THE THUNDER OF HOOVES, THE POUND OF YOUR HEART.  
IT IS RIDING ... WILDER WAYS.



BRAND NEW WEBSITE

[www.wilderways.scot](http://www.wilderways.scot)



# Hello and welcome

Welcome to our first ever Wilder Ways news bulletin. Each quarter we will be bringing you our latest trips, events and offers, alongside related articles to inspire and inform you.

But first thing's first... for those of you who are new to Wilder Ways, let us introduce our team.

## Meet the team

### The horses - meet our Wilder Ways herd

Our herd is as fantastic as it is diverse, and we take care in selecting every new addition to make sure they complement our trustee steeds. We have our gentle giant Denver, our dainty fairy Kneka, our lion heart Indi and the lovable rouge Angus to name a few, and each and every one adds something special to our herd. You can get to know our whole ten-strong herd in detail at [www.wilderways.scot/the-herd](http://www.wilderways.scot/the-herd).



*"Remember those daydreams you had as a kid, when you packed your tent on your horse and just disappeared into the mountains...that's our passion."*

[www.wilderways.scot](http://www.wilderways.scot)

## The people at Wilder Ways

### Cara Gelati

*"living my dream, surrounded by the people and horses I love, in a landscape, that, whatever the weather, lifts the spirits and feeds the soul"*



**With a professional background in rural surveying and a life long passion for all things horse, I can now be found exploring some of the wildest, most beautiful parts of Scotland and at our homestead in Strachur, Argyll.**

### Nikki Dayton

*"my own adventures have allowed me to develop my personal abilities and a broad knowledge of natural horsemanship, opening my eyes to wondrous possibilities".*



**Having lived in the West of Scotland for over twenty years, spending this time as a freelance botanist, travelling and walking in many of the most remote and beautiful parts of the country, I now use this knowledge of Scotland's hidden landscapes to create spectacular Wilderness Adventures and indulge my horse obsession.**

**To find out more about the Wilder Ways team and herd**

[www.wilderways.scot/us](http://www.wilderways.scot/us)



## THE NEW AGE OF THE WORK HORSE

Our herd are our pride and joy and the very essence of our business. As our main asset, ensuring they're healthy, properly nourished, fit and comfortable, maintains their performance and protects them against injury and time out of work. ***We ask a lot of our horses and we pride ourselves in making sure they are happy at work, something we think is important to our customers too.***

Across our bulletins this year, we are going to talk about the level of 'whole animal' care that is required to ensure healthy, happy working animals and we are kicking it off with something we get asked a lot about ...**saddles.**

### **Sitting pretty** **The importance of a good fitting saddle**

We spend a great deal of time and money ensuring our horses have the best fitting saddles, and we are often asked "why?"

It's simple - our horses ride out six days a week, for up to six hours a day during our riding season, so it is fair to say these animals are

endurance athletes. They navigate demanding, steep and ever-changing terrain, embrace water challenges and all this whilst balancing someone on their back. This level of endurance not only puts saddle comfort to the test for the rider but most importantly for the horse.

In the same way, you wouldn't entertain running a marathon in trainers that were too big or small, an ill-fitting saddle is at best, the cause of painful rubbing and sores and at worst, responsible for permanent injury and life-long suffering.

Saddles need to be comfortable under the varying conditions they are ridden in and under the range of rider size, weight and ability. **All these variables alter the pressure on the saddle making the right saddle and professional fitting essential.**

Our entire herd see our saddle fitter at least once a year in March, when the horses are back to work and regaining their working shape and peak fitness.

## CASE STUDIES

### DENVER

*Our gentle giant, with a twinkle in his eye and a love of mud!.*



Our big lad Denver is an example of where an increase in work load and improvement in fitness has meant a previously, well-fitting saddle is becoming a source of pain and a detriment to muscle development.

A great saddler is not only about selling new saddles, but will work with you to ensure the best fitting saddle within your budget, and by working closely with our saddler we were able to recycle an existing saddle in our tack room. ***Proof that a great fit, when professionally done, can still be achieved with a second-hand saddle, saving money and your bottom.***

This year we are trialling a new product for Denver. As our big boy takes the most weight and has had a problem with a re-occurring sore on his back, which was originally caused by a wasp sting, we decided to trial **The Korректор**. This is an adjustable air filled pad which sits between the saddle and the numnah.

This limits pressure on the back and allows for adjustments throughout the season to take into account differences in both Denver and riders.

**So far Denver seems very happy with his new toy and hopefully it will bring him improved comfort this season, we'll keep you posted**



However, their shape can change throughout the season and so, we carefully monitor them to ensure a continued fit, feeding back to the saddler and acting where required.

Here are our top tips for spotting a problem with your saddle.

**Just think C.H.A.P.S**

## Coat

Is there a change in your horse's coat? (Shine, texture, curling, greying)

## Hair

Check your numnah for hair and sweat patches. This is a good indication of how straight the saddle is sitting and of pressure distribution.

## Attitude

Has your horse's attitude to work or being tacked up changed?

## Performance

Has your horse's performance changed?

## Stress

Is your horse more resistance to performing tasks?

For horses whose shape is changing through growth, losing or gaining weight, becoming fitter or increasing or decreasing their workload, a close eye and frequent fittings may be required until their shape stabilises.

**To better understand the importance of vigilance and building a good working relationship with your saddler, see our case studies.**

Appropriate saddle fitting is driven by a whole host of factors. Weight, condition, fitness, exercise regime, terrain, discipline and historical treatment all have an impact.

Today we are more aware of the importance of saddle fitting, but with so many different saddle types and endless new technologies it can be difficult to know what is best for you and your horse.

Our advice? Listen, watch and speak to a professional. Building a good relationship with a Master Saddler will save you time and money and ensure your herd, whether it's just you and your steed or a whole field are comfortable and ready for the adventures ahead.



## AMBER

*Lovely and understated, looking after people is what she does best, quiet and yet touch button responsive..*

With patches of white hair behind her shoulders and on her nose, premature greying caused by trauma, Amber showed classic signs of previously ill-fitting tack when she joined our team.

***If the rider doesn't fit the saddle the horse requires, then the odds are, the horse is not the right one for the rider.***

Despite now having good fitting tack, Amber's associations of pain results in a dislike of girthing. We worked hard all last year to try and alleviate this anxiety habit but were unsuccessful in breaking it.

This season we are trialling a **Prolite girth** which has deep cut-aways behind the elbows and disperses pressure over a greater surface area. She still has a way to come, but so far Amber is showing signs of improvement, watch this space for an update.

Many horses display 'grumpy' behaviour when girthing which we often all too ready to accept without asking why. Saddle fit and comfort is a good place to start .



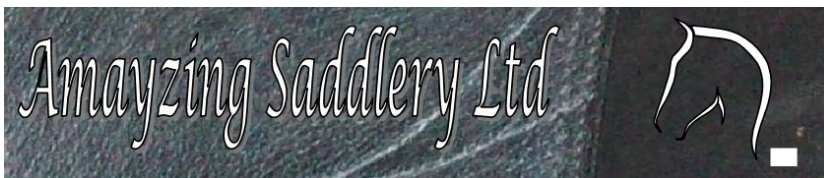
### What the saddlers say

*"We do an in-depth assessment of the horse which includes a ridden assessment suitable for the horse's desired ridden purpose."*

#### Why do we do this?

*"Because we cannot ensure 100% that the saddle is suitable for horse and rider without you on board. A saddle can look good sitting on, but with the weight and ability of the rider that fit can dramatically change. Saddle fitting should be a fundamental part of your maintenance for your horse."*

**Laura Nickel Amazing Saddlery.**



*Wilderness Riding Adventures*

# KIDS CAMPS

THIS TIME IT'S ALL ABOUT THE KIDS

Book now - [adventures@wilderways.scot](mailto:adventures@wilderways.scot)



**BOOKING NOW**

Prices from £345



### KNEKA

*"Our dainty fairy with floaty paces and a really precious poppet of a character"*

Seriously underweight when she arrived at our homestead, Kneka has had a busy year of eating. Through careful rationing and feeding Kneka's general condition has improved greatly. In June 2016 Kneka was fitted with a saddle from an ex-racehorse, which gives you an idea of her shape.

She was worked on a light work programme all year which has allowed her muscle to develop more slowly as her general improvement in body condition and health has allowed.

In our latest saddle fitting in March our saddler was delighted with her progress and we were all thrilled to see her move into a new wider saddle to accommodate her muscle growth. We hope, with her new good feeding and work regime Kneka's shape will now stabilise.

With 10 horses to saddle, many of them frequently changing shape, this kind of working relationship and approach saves us time, money and most importantly keeps our horses comfortable and healthy.



## RIDING WITH WILDER WAYS

Our riding adventures provide a fulfilling and exhilarating adventure, allowing us to get you even further into the wilds and off the beaten track, while experiencing diverse terrain and obstacles. We give you time to build a rapport with your horse, us and the other riders, which combined, makes for an immersive experience.

*We hope you'll get so absorbed in what you are doing that you won't want to leave.*

### ARGYLL'S SECRET COAST - (APRIL, JUNE, JULY, AUGUST, SEPT)

**A real hidden gem** where rides include secret coves and bays, woodland trails and open hill land and lochs. Watch the sun set over Loch Fyne from a luxury outdoor hot tub, for a truly magical end to a day in the saddle.

### COWAL PENINSULA, ARGYLL - (APRIL, JUNE, JULY, SEPT)

**From hill to glen** this ride brings you spectacular mountain views and glassy reflections of Loch Eck by day, and iridescent sunsets of Loch Fyne by evening.

### ISLE OF ISLAY - (JULY)

**Set sail - the Hebridean Isle of Islay** awaits 7 km of golden sands, cliff top paths, woodland trails and heritage. This is for the truly adventurous!

### KNOYDART, WEST HIGHLANDS - (MAY)

*A last true Scottish wilderness, accessible only by boat on an isolated peninsula. Ride breathtaking mountain scenery and scramble along the coastline for spectacular rides, full of delicious and unexpected treats.*

Knoydart is considered one of the most remote locations in Scotland. Spectacular coastlines do not disappoint and while this rugged landscape delivers the very best in remote wilderness adventures your experience will be of high quality comfort.

We work with first class local businesses to ensure your adventure combines wild with luxury. Trips including overnight stays, (subject to availability), are at **The Gathering**. With a warm welcome, luxurious surroundings, and the best breakfast you will ever taste, this homely, four star location is a welcome sight at the end of a



long trail ride and with outdoor hot-tubs on site there is no better way to ease off sore muscles while taking in yet more stunning views.

**Doone Dining** is a gastronomic experience not to be missed, whether you are choosing from local lamb and venison or their famous sea food night with creel caught prawns and crab, and scallops from

local divers, their sustainable and organic fare ensures a spectacular dining experience in the wilds of Scotland.

The **Roads End Café** provides superb lunches keeping you well fed along your adventure and why not enjoy a bottle of



## KNOYDART, WEST HIGHLANDS

Knoydart's endemic beer, **Remoteness** after a long hard day in the saddle.

If you are planning a longer stay, Knoydart certainly has a lot to offer. This outstanding area of natural beauty offers walking, nature watching and for those who want to get out on the water why not add on a cruise or a spot of fishing with **Minch Adventures**.



THIS IS: SPECTACULAR, WILDERNESS, LUXURY ----- THIS IS: ADVENTURING THE WILDER WAY - KNOYDART.



## GETTING READY TO MEET YOU...

We can't wait to meet you all as you embark on your Wilder Ways Riding Adventure. Here are just some of the things we are busy doing getting ready for the season ahead.



THERE ARE LOTS OF WAYS YOU CAN KEEP IN TOUCH  
WITH OUT ANTICS ON AND OFF THE TRAIL



EXERCISING OUR TEN-STRONG HERD TO GET THEM "MATCH FIT" FOR A BUSY SEASON AHEAD



CHECKS FOR OUR ANNUAL RIDING ESTABLISHMENT LICENCE INSPECTIONS - WE PASSED WITH FLYING COLOURS!!!



FITTING IN ALL OUR ANNUAL VET INSPECTIONS, ROUTINE DENTAL CHECKS AND A VISIT FROM THE FARRIER



CHECKING TACK, SADDLE FITTINGS, TRIALLING AND PROCURING NEW TACK PLUS SORTING THROUGH OUR OWN KIT AND EQUIPMENT



GETTING THE FOOD BALANCE JUST RIGHT FOR OUR WONDERFUL ATHLETES TO ENSURE PEAK FITNESS FOR ENDURANCE , AND SHIFTING A LOT OF HAY!



OH...AND LOTS OF PAPERWORK ALONG WITH NEW WEBSITE LAUNCH AND CREATING OUT FIRST EVER NEWSLETTER!



**WILDER WAYS PROGRAMMES** We offer a choice of locations for each of our programmes which run April to September. Get in touch to plan your next trip.

**DAY TREKING FROM £70.00**

Half and full day rides

**MINIATURES £495.00 PP**

Include 2.5 days riding, picnic lunches & 2 nights accommodation with evening meals

**WEEK LONG (BASE HOLIDAYS & POINT-TO-POINT) £1,395.00 PP**

**Base holidays** include 6 days riding with 1 rest day, picnic lunches & 7 nights accommodation with evening meals, from one base location. **Point-to-point** include 5 days riding with 1 rest day, picnic lunches & 6 nights accommodation with evening meals - rolling location.

**KIDS CAMPS £345.00 PP**

Include 2 days riding, picnic lunch, 1 night camp & BBQ meal

**BESPOKE RIDES** Tailored adventures made to order just for you! POA



As well as devising our thrilling and action packed riding programme for 2017, we have been working on our brand new website as well as launching our new twitter page.

Please pop along and say "hello", and don't forget to subscribe to make sure you never miss a copy of our quarterly Wilder Ways newsletter.

**Facebook:** @WilderWays  
**Twitter:** @Wilder\_Ways  
**Web:** www.wilderways.scot  
**Email:** adventures@wilderways.scot

# YOUR ADVENTURE AWAITS ... WWW.WILDERWAYS.SCOT HORSE RIDING ADVENTURES



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Contact us, Nikki & Cara, at adventures@wilderways.scot or call on 07826 273291