

HELPING HARPENDEN PEOPLE IN NEED

The Harpenden Trust

Christmas 2015

136

elderly residents who live on their own, by delivering Christmas parcels to their homes

190

elderly people, by organising three coach outings and a tea party especially for them

96

children and their carers, by organising a trip to Woburn Safari Park

85

children in Harpenden schools to go on curriculum-related trips

THIS YEAR
THE TRUST HAS
HELPED

82

pensioners, by providing help with their winter utility bills

479

families, by financial and other means, including furniture

AND...

224 organisers and collectors delivered approximately **10,000** Christmas Appeal envelopes in **250** roads. The collection brought in **£44,683** (including Gift Aid) or **50%** of the money needed to give the help listed above.

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- Trips to Woburn
- How to volunteer
- Home visits
- Halls for hire
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Christmas Appeal

As our assured income from investments is £22,000 it is the Christmas Appeal that provides the lion's share of the funds we need in our Care Fund to assist individuals and families.

When our purple-and-yellow envelope appears on your doormat in December, please dig deep and give as much as you can.

Please also complete the Gift Aid Declaration on the back of the envelope. It costs you nothing and the tax man pays us — last year the Gift Aid on the appeal amounted to £7,340.



Look out for our envelope

Woburn: a popular venue for young and old

Woburn Abbey was the venue for two of our coach outings this year. In August we took 40 children and 21 parents to Woburn Safari Park. While they were viewing the lions, giraffes and bears from the



Enjoying the gardens at Woburn

coaches, monkeys were amusing themselves on the coach roofs. There were elephant and parrot displays to see, or a train ride or boat trip to take.

Not to be outdone, a month later 24 pensioners enjoyed a half-day outing for lunch at Woburn's Duchess' tea room, followed by an exploration of the gardens.

Once again Westcliff-on-Sea proved a popular choice for this year's seaside visit. Forty-four pensioners were elegantly served lunch in pleasant surroundings. Afterwards, our guests could sit in the garden shelters or stroll along the cliff top.

For pensioners who cannot manage a full-day trip we ran a half-day outing to Bicester Avenue Garden Centre for a hot lunch and time to browse and shop. Those unable to cope with a coach

outing were entertained at a tea party at the Trust Centre.

In all, some 150 seniors enjoyed a change of scenery and the company of others through these outings.

Elderly people are helped in other ways, too. Each year Trust volunteers distribute 130 Christmas parcels to pensioners who are housebound over Christmas. Some 80 grants are made to help others meet their utility bills.

Our weekly coffee mornings offer pensioners the opportunity for a chat and to make new friends over a free cup of coffee or tea. They are held on Tuesday mornings at the Trust Centre and on Thursday mornings at High Street Methodist Church, both from 10 to 11am. Last Christmas our Trust Centre coffee morning had the added attraction of songs from Grove Junior School pupils.

If you have elderly relatives or neighbours who you think could be added to our list for trips, assistance or any of our services, do please contact the Trust Centre.



GETTING IN TOUCH 01582 460457 admin@theharpentrust.org.uk



How our home visitors help the Kathys, Nans and Bobs

Kathy is a capable, independent person, who finds it difficult to ask for help. But a year ago, as a last resort, she phoned the Trust and one of our Home Visitors went to see her.

Kathy explained that when the elder of her two children was diagnosed with a severe medical condition she had to give up her job to look after him. Her son's treatment initially involved weekly hospital appointments that meant an hour-and-a-half's round trip.

Then, when her son was hospitalised and she was visiting him daily, she had to pay for child care for her eight-year-old daughter. The Trust helped her by providing money towards the cost of the child care and petrol.

The Trust's Home Visit team has always been at the core of the charity's help for residents experiencing hardship, usually financial. The role involves responding to requests for help by visiting families or individuals, young and old, in their own homes, assessing their needs and providing immediate practical assistance, for speed is often of the essence.

Occasionally a Home Visitor may signpost someone to another agency

that they think may be able to help further. Our Home Visitors, all volunteers, receive training and support and, once a month, meet up with other members of the team.

No two calls for the Trust's support are the same. An elderly couple helped by the Trust this year are **Nan** and **Bob**, Harpenden-born twins, now in their 80s. Bob has been disabled since birth and Nan has always been very protective of him. After their parents died Bob moved into residential care. Since Nan's husband died she is living again in Harpenden and regularly visits her brother, who can now only sit in a riser/recliner chair.

Nan approached the Trust to see if we could help buy a recliner chair for her flat, so that her brother could enjoy a change of scene by visiting her. The Trust made a grant to Nan towards the purchase of the chair.

After lots of interviews **Shelley** succeeded in securing her first job, but her excitement was short-lived when she realised she didn't have enough money to pay for her train fares to and from work. She had spent all her savings going for interviews.

She rang the Trust office for help. One of the Home Visitors went to see her and helped her buy a week's season ticket, which meant that she could travel to and from her job before she received her first week's wages.

Chantal had suffered domestic violence for years. When she moved with her three children from a women's refuge into a Harpenden flat a contact managed to provide her with the bare essentials. But her children were all starting new schools and she couldn't afford the uniforms, so when someone told her about the Harpenden Trust she contacted the office. A Home Visitor called on her and gave her vouchers for school uniforms and school shoes and some food vouchers to feed herself and her family.

Could you be a Home Visitor?

The Trust values all its many volunteers but is especially grateful for those who continue our long tradition of helping local families and individuals suffering hardship. There is always a need for more Home Visitors.

All the names have been changed.



Children at Sauncey Wood School enjoying their new playground markings
2nd Harpenden Rainbows on the new disability ramp at the Townsend Lane guide hall



Norman Hoare, Chairman of the Community Fund, and Jan Seager, Secretary, met with Jennifer Provin, Rennie Grove's Chief Executive, and Rahima Droueche, a Health Care Assistant working with patients in Harpenden. Rennie Grove expressed their thanks to the Harpenden Trust for their recent financial support.

Left to right: Jennifer Provin, Jan Seager, Rahima Droueche and Norman Hoare

Community Fund grants pass £300,000 mark

2008 was a landmark year for the Trust

The gift from the Harpenden Abbeyfield Society in 2008 of funds from the sale of their Milton Road home made possible an extension to the Trust's work that had long been only a pipe-dream. After 60 years of helping Harpenden's families and individuals in need the Trust could now extend its support to the town's community groups.

A Community Fund, financed by those funds and managed by former Abbeyfield Society trustees and Harpenden Trust members, was born. Its remit: to use the income from the funds to make grants to local community groups to improve or develop their facilities or even to start up.

Since 2008 Community Fund grants have totalled £300,000.

Grants made over the past 12 months have ranged from a few hundred pounds to £15,000. A small group of educationally challenged children are now deriving extra benefit from their playgroup facilities. A grant to the Southdown Play Areas Working Group has helped to get their appeal for funds off the ground. The Harpenden base of the St Albans Food Bank now has new computer equipment to support its work locally.

Youth and sporting organisations continue to figure large in the Fund's list of grants. Harpenden and Redbourn Girl Guiding, the 5th and 9th Harpenden Scouts, Harpenden Swimming Club and Harpenden Football Club have received help to improve access to their centres, enhance facilities or buy important equipment.

A grant to Harpenden Lions Club

is supporting its innovative work in local schools. Young Enterprise has received money to encourage school pupils to participate in local initiatives and regional competitions. Grants have helped to provide playground equipment and play areas at Sauncey Wood School and the Harpenden Free School. In many cases our money bridges the gap between other sources of privately raised funding or regional and national support.

The range of the Fund's support is illustrated by the grants to the Friends of Greenway Spinney, the Harpenden Branch of National Childbirth Trust and the Trust's own Care Fund for families and individuals, which has been helped considerably every year.

The Community Fund committee meets quarterly to consider applications for support. Organisations are also recommended to contact the committee's secretary to discuss a possible application and maybe to meet a committee member for advice.

With successful applications the committee likes to maintain contact, its members enjoying visits to the groups to see the results of their hard work and to present the Fund's blue plaque, which we ask to be prominently displayed. This serves to remind the community that the Harpenden Trust, through its Community Fund, now serves the Harpenden people collectively through its grants towards local projects.

For more information on the Community Fund and an application form visit the Trust's website: www.theharpendentrust.org.uk

We need your help. Once a year. Once a month. Once a week.

All our events for elderly people are organised by teams of volunteers. Some involve a once-a-year commitment; others once a month or weekly.

Each spring one team visits more than 200 seniors to check their needs, so providing a vital link to our services. Each team member visits a dozen pensioners.

If you have time to extend your involvement with the Trust's work you could get involved with the coach outings. Or help once a month with the coffee mornings. Or, once a week, visit a lonely person, preferably during the day.

We need volunteer drivers, too, to transport the elderly to and from the Trust Centre for our outings and tea party. You would be needed only once or twice a year.

Every year there are gaps in our volunteer teams that need filling. How about volunteering to fill one of those places?

If you would like to volunteer please fill in the form below and enclose it in our Appeal Envelope or send to: The Harpenden Trust Centre, 90 Southdown Road, Harpenden, AL5 1PS.

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Tel _____

Email _____

I would like to help once a year

I would like to help on a weekly/ fortnightly/monthly basis

An ambassador for the Trust

Paul Phillips spoke at the Trust's Annual General Meeting in October about the help he received from the Trust after a road accident left him paralysed from the waist down.

Paul's family adapted their house to his needs once he came out of hospital but the work created a lot of dust and fumes. So that 22-year-old Paul could stay at home, surrounded by his family and friends, the Trust funded two top-quality air purifiers. Paul said in a letter to the Trust:

'... A massive thank you on behalf of my whole family. The funding you provided for me has allowed me to stay at home without worrying about breathing in too much dust or anything else, causing further health problems.'

A year later tragedy came again when Paul's father suffered a stroke. The Trust helped to pay for a chair lift so



Paul Phillips addresses the Trust's AGM

that his father could still sleep upstairs.

This remarkable young man now works with a spinal cord injury-focused charity to help to convince newly-injured people that life isn't over because you're a wheelchair user. He goes into schools, local clubs and organisations, explaining how he was helped and supported by charities such as the Harpenden Trust.

'I want to raise awareness of what charities like the Harpenden Trust do,' Paul told his audience at the Trust's AGM. 'Without their help I might not be here now,' he added.

Halls for hire. Or join a class

The Harpenden Trust Centre in Southdown Road, opposite the Plough & Harrow pub, has two halls for hire. The Renwick seats up to 80 and the Randall 40, though more if people are standing.

The centre is very well equipped, with a small kitchen, free wi-fi and amplification equipment, and there's disability access. It's convenient, too. Free parking is only moments away and the 321 bus stops right outside the door.

There are still a few regular daytime and evening slots available for hire. At the weekend one-off bookings are popular with local parents holding children's parties and for charity fundraising events, such as lectures, bridge evenings and quizzes. Early booking is recommended.

Email lettings secretary Kay on bookings@theharpendentrust.org.uk if you want to know more.

A range of activities

If you're wanting to join a class then the range of pursuits is immense. Our regular hirers offer ante-natal classes,



Dancing class in the Renwick Hall

theatre, indoor soccer and art, and many adult exercise classes, including line, ballroom and jazz dancing, Medau, circuit training and Pilates.

To exercise the mind there's a full programme of WEA classes, a weekly meeting of a women's club and the U3A, a bridge club and a photographic society. A bagpipe band rehearses regularly and there's a weekly prayer group. And for the polyglots, Chinese, German and French classes are on offer.

Many of the hirers have posters in the centre's bay window, but to get more information the office staff can pass on your details to hirers.

Mayor chooses Trust

The Harpenden Trust is one of two local charities chosen for support during his year of office by Town Mayor, Councillor Brian Ellis.

An exciting schedule of fund-raising events included the Summer Carnival

in June, a very successful quiz night in July and balloon modelling at the Harpenden Food and Drink Festival in September.

Still to come is a Charity Film Night at the Public Halls on 5th February. The film, *The Hundred-Foot Journey*, stars Helen Mirren.

Getting in touch

RING US ON

01582 460457 anytime. If the office is unmanned, please leave a message and we will phone you.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.theharpendentrust.org.uk

EMAIL US

admin@theharpendentrust.org.uk

CALL IN AND SEE US AT

The Trust Centre between 10am and noon Monday to Thursday, and between 10.30am and 12.30pm on Friday.

WRITE TO US AT

The Harpenden Trust Centre, 90 Southdown Road, Harpenden, AL5 1PS.



The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

The Harpenden Trust

The Harpenden Trust is a Company limited by guarantee and is registered under the Charities Act. Company number 5951591. Registered charity number 1118870. Registered office at the address shown above. (The Company is the successor to the charity The Harpenden Trust, Number 212973, founded 1948.)



Keep a look out for our envelope

FRSB give with confidence