

HELPING HARPENDEN PEOPLE IN NEED

The Harpenden Trust

Christmas 2016

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

• The Community Fund • The Care Fund • How to volunteer • Befriending • Home visits

... and much more

Do you need help? They did ...

7

examples of the many and varied ways the Harpenden Trust helped this year

A re-housed family

Provided with washing machine

Single parent with three children

Helped with school uniform and shoes

Recently widowed

Enjoys visits from one of our team

Elderly person needs transport to shops

Referred to Harpenden Helping Hand

Widow

Enjoys a coach outing

Benefits temporarily stopped for re-assessment

Helped with vouchers for food and utility bills

Elderly; single

Helped with winter utility bills

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 £7,885.

Look out for our envelope
Delivered during December



The plaque that says 'Thank You'

THE COMMUNITY FUND



The Trust's Community Fund supports the work of voluntary organisations in the AL5 postal area through grants. Its purpose is to provide, improve or enhance facilities for community groups that work for the good of the people of Harpenden.

As more of the town's community-serving buildings and facilities are now displaying the Fund's distinctive purple plaques the significance of the Fund's support for the welfare and development of Harpenden's community groups is becoming increasingly recognised.

More than a dozen grants, ranging from a few hundred pounds to over £15,000, were made in the year to March 2016 in response to applications which we consider every quarter. You can find details of how to apply online at www.theharpentrust.org.uk and hard copies of the application form can be collected from the Trust Centre office in Southdown.

All the money raised by the Trust's Annual Christmas Appeal goes to support the Care Fund's work.

money for a climbing wall and the 1st Scouts had a substantial grant to fix their Scout hut roof. Youth Talk was able to continue its excellent work with the town's young people through money provided to support counselling services and address issues of mental health and stress. Their work is concentrated in local schools, and the Community Fund is proud to be associated with this initiative.

Equally important is the on-going support we give to schools through the Lions Club's well-established Life Skills

programme. This supplies teaching materials, workshops and specialist advisory services dealing with, among other issues, drug awareness, cycling proficiency and personal relationships.

MENCAP was given a significant sum to buy a replacement minibus. The Trust's logo can be seen displayed on the side of its new vehicle as it transports residents from Stairways in Douglas Road to elsewhere in the town and further afield.

The Community Fund's grant to the new Harpenden community bus service, Harpenden Hopper, for residents in the northern part of the town, featured in its summer awards, and Friends of Greenway Spinney benefited during the year as their planting scheme, supported by the Fund, matured and gained recognition as a Local Nature Reserve.

Facing higher costs

Many local organisations, clubs and societies, while working hard to serve their communities, are sooner or later faced with having to update their facilities, repair or improve their meeting places or satisfy the demand for a greater range of opportunities. The Community Fund can often be a source of funds to help meet these needs.

Among the groups we were able

to support this past year were Batford Memorial Hall, which needed to repair its roof, and Sauncey Wood School and Kinsbourne Common Nursery and Pre-School, both of which were able to add to their outdoor equipment.

The Citizen's Advice Bureau and Transition (St Albans), both providing advisory services in Harpenden,



Climbing wall—a big hit

received small grants to promote their work. Rennie Grove received support to replace the laptops used by their hospice and community nurses in Harpenden.

While the Community Fund is an integral part of the work of the Trust, it gets its money from the income from funds donated by the Harpenden Abbeyfield Society, following the sale of its Milton Road home. It works alongside the Care Fund which, as the original Harpenden Trust, has been providing help to individuals and families in the town since 1948. All the money raised by the Trust's Annual Christmas Appeal goes to support the Care Fund's work.

If your community group operates in the AL5 postal area and is in need of money to support its activities, the Community Fund is waiting to hear from you.

Photo © Harpenden Photographic Society



Southdown play area—in action

Organisations can also contact the Fund's secretary to discuss a possible application and, if helpful, meet a committee member who may be able to offer objective advice.

If an application is successful the committee members value continuing contact with the project to satisfy ourselves that the grant is properly spent. When the project is complete we enjoy visiting the group to see the results of their hard work, celebrate the achievement and present our plaque, which we ask to be displayed prominently.

Youth figures large

Sporting and youth organisations continue to figure large in the Fund's consideration. The 9th Scouts received



The new Harpenden community bus

The Care Fund

HELPING HARPENDEN PEOPLE AND FAMILIES IN NEED

Our New Service

Befriending elderly people

Harpenden Trust volunteers visit some 150 of our senior clients to check their needs and provide a vital link to our services. These visits have shown us that there are many lonely people in Harpenden who would appreciate more regular contact.

The Trust now has a small team of volunteers who are helping to fill this

need, calling round for a chat and a cup of tea.

If you know of someone we could help in this way, please tell us. Or if you could spare an hour or so once a week or fortnight to be a befriender, we'd love to hear from you.

Our contact details are on the back page.



Photo © Shutterstock

A chat and a cup of tea

Refreshments and trips for pensioners

Every week we have two venues where pensioners can come for a free cup of coffee or tea, have a chat and make new friends: on Tuesdays at the Trust Centre and on Thursdays at High Street Methodist Church, both from 10–11am.

Three coach outings — two to garden centres and one to the coast — were organised this year for about 100 senior clients. The garden centres, Wyevale at Bicester Avenue in July and Frosts at Woburn Sands in September, provided venues for half-day visits for lunch, followed by time to investigate the shops.

In August, Westcliff-on-Sea again proved popular for our full-day outing, with a delicious lunch served in pleasant surroundings. Afterwards, our guests could wander among the gardens along the cliff top, or sit to admire the view.

In November, those unable to go on the coach outings were entertained at a tea party at the Trust Centre. About 150 seniors enjoy the change of scenery and the company of others that this annual event provides.

Transport to and from the Trust Centre for outings is provided for the elderly by volunteer drivers. Please contact us if you could help out with transport — it would only be once or twice a year. We would also like to have volunteers for transport to the Tuesday coffee mornings on a more regular basis.

Last Christmas, Trust volunteers distributed 125 parcels to needy or lonely pensioners, and 83 seniors received help with their winter utility bills.

If you have elderly relatives or neighbours whom you think could be added to our lists for trips or assistance, or if you would like to help in any of these activities, please contact the Trust Centre.

Supporting young people

Most schools organise trips for their pupils to help them gain extra knowledge for their curriculum courses, or take part in educational experiences with the whole class. Unfortunately, some children have to miss these excursions because their parents cannot meet the cost. This is where the Trust steps in to help. During the year to March 2016, the Trust awarded grants to enable 58 pupils from primary and secondary schools in Harpenden to go on such trips.

Although school trips accounted for the bulk of the grants awarded, some assistance was given for children to have swimming lessons or extra support. Several families have been helped with grants for school uniforms. A grant was made to a family towards the purchase of special equipment to assist their child's mobility. Grants are available provided the family lives in the AL5 postal district.

In the summer holidays, Chessington World of Adventures was once again the destination for our annual children's outing for families who are unable to provide such treats. Forty children and 20 parents were entertained on rides in places like Land of the Dragons, Pirates Cove and Mystic East, or enjoyed the sea lion show and lion feeding time in the zoo. An exhausting time was had by all!



WE NEED YOUR HELP

PLEASE VOLUNTEER

The Harpenden Trust is looking for volunteers to join its **Home Visit Team**, which covers the AL5 postal district, and helps those suffering hardship, financial or otherwise. This involves visiting families or individuals in their home and assessing their (mainly financial) needs. All volunteers receive training and support and meet up with other members of the team once a month.

We also need:

- Volunteer drivers
- Befrienders
- Christmas Appeal collectors

If you would like to become a volunteer, please fill in this form and send it to:

The Harpenden Trust Centre
90 Southdown Road
Harpenden
AL5 1PS

Name	_____
Address	_____ _____ _____
Postcode	_____
Tel	_____
Email	_____

Help for those who are struggling

With increasing pressures on finances, some families in Harpenden are struggling. As a reminder of the support available from the Harpenden Trust, here are a few examples of how Harpenden residents have been helped by the Trust over the last year.

Siobhan and **Mark** have two children, with another on the way. When Mark was laid off from his shift work at a local warehouse, they used up all their savings while he looked for more work. They were then granted benefits to help with rent and living expenses, but for more than a year Mark was unable to find a new job.

When the new baby arrived the Benefits Agency stopped the family's benefits while they reassessed their new circumstances. For some weeks, until their benefits were re-instated, Mark and Siobhan had no income. The small amount they were able to borrow from their family wasn't enough to feed them all and pay for their gas, electricity and

water, so they asked the Harpenden Trust for short-term assistance. A Home Visitor provided supermarket vouchers which enabled them to buy food and put electricity on the meter.

Edna's husband died last year. She put on a brave face but, having no children, she was very lonely and found it difficult to cope. A neighbour persuaded her to contact the Harpenden Trust Centre. A Home Visitor went to see her and arranged for Edna to receive a £200 grant towards her winter fuel bills and a new electric cooker to replace her faulty one. The Home Visitor also told her about the Trust's free coffee mornings for pensioners on Tuesday and Thursday mornings.

Karen was a victim of domestic violence and had been living in a women's refuge with her three children. When they were relocated to Harpenden the family had nothing. A neighbour suggested she contact the Harpenden Trust and very quickly a Home Visitor went to see her. She was supplied with a

cooker, fridge freezer, washing machine and basic furniture. She also received food vouchers.

The summer school holidays can be a difficult time for working parents, especially single parents. **David** arranged for his son to go to summer camp but struggled to cover the extra expenditure. He contacted the Harpenden Trust Centre and was delighted when the Home Visitor told him the Trust would be happy to help towards the cost for this.

As well as providing grants towards school uniforms and school shoes for children who live in the AL5 postal district of Harpenden, throughout the year the Trust also helps with paying utility bills and providing food vouchers for families who are struggling. Our Home Visits teams deals with all enquiries on a totally confidential basis.

If you would like help contact us on help@theharpendentrust.org.uk

All names have been changed.

Halls for hire

The Trust Centre has two halls for hire: the Renwick Hall, which seats up to 80 (120 standing), and the Randall Room, which seats 40 (50 standing). Both are well equipped with tables and chairs, newly-fitted projection screens, amplification equipment, pianos and free wi-fi.

The Centre has a spacious kitchen with a fitted water heater for making hot drinks, a cooker, fridge and microwave. There are separate men's and women's toilets plus a disabled access toilet that also has baby-changing facilities. Free parking is moments away, and the

Photo © Harpenden Photographic Society



Music time in the Renwick Hall

321 bus stops right outside the door.

We also have one-off slots for parties and charity events. Early booking is recommended.

Trust takes over Seniors' Club lunches

The lunches, whist and bingo sessions provided by the Harpenden Seniors' Club are now being run by the Trust.

This follows an approach by the Harpenden Day Centre Association (HDCA) ahead of their decision to wind up the Seniors' Club. The Trust readily agreed to provide the continuity the HDCA were seeking for their lunches—one monthly and two weekly—and the games.

Income from a donation from the HDCA to the Trust will meet the cost of transport to and from the lunches. It will also provide funds towards extending the Trust's services to seniors.

To enquire about hiring availability, please email the letting secretary Kay on bookings@theharpendentrust.org.uk

Getting in touch

RING US ON

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

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.theharpendentrust.org.uk

CALL IN AND SEE US

The Trust Centre is open between 10am and noon Monday to Friday.

EMAIL US

General enquiries:
admin@theharpendentrust.org.uk
Care Fund:
help@theharpendentrust.org.uk

WRITE TO US AT

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



**The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service**

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.)