



## HOLCOT CHARITABLE TRUST

Charity Registration No: 1092332  
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# News Update, Spring 2024

## Dear Friends

When looking for inspiration to introduce this news update, I re-read all the previous newsletters and was shocked to realise that this was number 25. Where have all the years gone? Looking back to the beginning, nearly all our updates start with information on what still needs to be done but ... *pause for sigh of relief* ... **all** our big projects have finally been completed and the games hall has even been 'future-proofed'. Whilst there will always be general maintenance and the need to replace worn-out equipment, it is amazing to be able to say the hard slog really is over.

Our work within our local community still grows and is more important than ever in the current economic situation. In fact, I am sure everyone reading this will agree with me when I say that small charities like ours are more vital than ever before because we can work quickly, and respond immediately, to local needs, without the hindrance of the bureaucracy and politics of larger organisations.

We currently have just over 100 families registered (and regularly engaging) with us, and it genuinely feels like one big family. During the pandemic years, needs were simple: food, laptops, and mental well-being. Now, however, with the cost-of-living and mental health crises both still upon us, it is a little more complicated. This all takes money and we continue to be especially grateful to the c30+ charitable foundations, trusts, and grant-making organisations plus some (very) loyal friends that help by providing the essential grants and donations that keep us going.

In 2020 our income rose sharply due to the many emergency projects we ran. This is now beginning to settle down, but it is also true to say that funding in general is getting harder to find as more and more 'grant-providers' change their focus. For that reason, good working relationships are more important than ever and, thankfully, we have developed some especially good ones over the years.

Looking back over the last year, it has been a very busy one. Our day trips got off to a good start with an Easter trip to the London Museums. We then took three large



coaches (plus half a dozen cars) to Littlehampton seaside in the summer where c100 kids 'ran riot' getting our monies worth with the unlimited ride armbands, and finished by taking a further 150 to a very enjoyable Christmas pantomime.



We were able to reinstate our food poverty/healthy eating project in the late autumn when it received a massive boost from the National Lottery Community Fund and, for five months, were able to shop with participating families every few weeks, paying for fresh healthy proteins, fruit, vegetables, and dairy produce etc. This was in addition to the 100 very substantial hampers which provided a cheery Christmas for 425. *(Individual project reports are available on request.)*

Our swimming pool parties continued every couple of weeks, as did many other smaller initiatives, games and competitions run through our facebook page. There were also a variety of celebratory events including for Easter and the King's Coronation when every child was presented with their own special gift-wrapped souvenir mug.

Further practical support for our families was provided by the expansion of our referral agency partnerships (see Trustees Annual Report). This project alone has enabled families to access thousands of pounds worth of hardship grants and vouchers for food, fuel, and other necessities as well as larger items for those living in appliance poverty. This was followed up with carpets and curtains to improve heat retention in homes and all on top of our new partnership with the Cash for Kids Organisation which has already provided a £50 voucher for **every** disadvantaged child on our register!

A special thanks must also go out to our hard-working volunteers and this year we were thrilled to be able to access a one-off grant enabling everyone to come together for a celebratory Christmas lunch.



Finally, we are very happy with the progress of our mentorship programme which has 'taken on' a handful of local community organisations. We will continue to work closely with them for several years, providing advice and support, helping with official paperwork and grant applications etc until they become self-sufficient.

## Future

Our family swimming parties will re-start at the beginning of May, Littlehampton and the Christmas panto are all booked, and we are currently seeking funding to re-open our educational laptops project to help struggling youngsters, many of whom do not currently have a school to attend.

# **HCT - Trustees Annual Report & Accounts 2023-24**

## **Legal and Administrative**

Holcot Charitable Trust is governed by a Declaration of Trust, executed on the 24<sup>th</sup> day of April 2002, and registered by the Charity Commission on the 5<sup>th</sup> day of June 2002. Financial records are kept using the simple 'receipts & payments' method, and are independently examined by Mrs Catherine Ellinson, Rohan, Hilders Lane, Edenbridge, KENT, TN8 6LQ.

Banking is provided by Lloyds Bank, payroll services by Cadence Accounting of Station Road East, Oxted, Surrey, RH8 0QE and insurance services by Howe Maxted Group Ltd of 17 Hatherley Road, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 4BP.

## **Trustees and Governance**

Trustees that served during the accounting period were Christina Andrews MA, Lesley Andrews, Audrey Batchelor, Lauren Martin BA, and Kieran Reed. All serve a four-year term and have the power to appoint new Trustees by majority decision. Two of the Trustees are employed for eight and ten hours a week respectively to work on IT and other highly confidential matters. Both are remunerated in line with our commitment to the Living Wage Foundation.

## **Objects and Operations**

The Charity has two aims. The first is to support the use of Holcot as a charitably run self-catering group holiday centre, primarily for the benefit of organised children's groups, including those considered to be disabled and/or having extra or complex needs. The second is to improve the lives of local (Edenbridge and surrounding Parishes) disabled and/or otherwise disadvantaged children/young people and their families. The second aim is achieved through the provision of a series of community projects and referral agencies.

## **Volunteers**

There are c30 volunteers who help to keep all costs to an absolute minimum. They are subject to DBS checks (as needed) and receive training in first aid and safeguarding. Further CPD certified training is available in an extensive range of subjects through Kent Safeguarding Children Board's e-learning programme.

## **Policies**

Policies are reviewed annually, with the following available on request: Code of Conduct for Trustees, Community Projects, Complaints, Conflict of Interest, Cyber Security, Data Protection, Day's Out/Coach Travel, Emergency Hardship Fund, Equality & Diversity, Ethical Fundraising, Financial Control, Harassment (which includes Bullying & Abuse), Pool Parties, Referral Agency, Risk Management, Safeguarding, Social-Media, and Volunteer.

## **Accreditations & Referral Agency Partnerships**

The charity continues to fulfil the requirements for the Charity Excellence quality mark and for accreditation as a Living Wage Employer. They are also registered with the Fundraising Regulator and Hidden Disabilities.

Referral-agency partnerships are maintained with organisations to benefit the families registered with the Community Projects (just over 100 families during the reporting period), and include BBC Children in Need Emergency Essentials Programme, Cash for Kids Organisation, Colyer-Ferguson Charitable Trust Grants Scheme for Young People Lacking Opportunities, Family Holiday Fund, Kent Community Foundation Grants for Individuals Scheme (disabled youngsters or carers of any age), Kent County Council Household Support Fund.

## Achievements and Performance

There were no major premises-related projects during the reporting period, just general equipment, and minor maintenance. The main community-related projects continued to be free coach days out, educational laptops, food poverty, referral agency hardship grants & vouchers, family-based pool parties, Christmas hampers, as well as a variety of celebratory events. Games, competitions, wellness and 'keeping connected' initiatives continued to run through the charity's facebook page.

The new mentorship programme for smaller organisations has 'taken on' several local groups. The Charity's Treasurer will continue to work with and support these organisations for the foreseeable future, ensuring all accounts are professionally managed with the aim of assisting them to achieve self-sufficiency.

## Financial

The charity seeks grants and donations on a project-by-project basis but does not raise funds from the public in general. Nor does it crowdfund or employ the services of consultants/third-party fundraisers. All funds are considered restricted and the policy is to **not** hold funds in reserve unless committed to a specific purpose. During the accounting year donations were received from individuals and c30 Charitable Trusts, Foundations, and other grant-making organisations. The following accounts have been independently examined and approved by the Trustees:

	£	£
<b>B/F from previous year</b>		33,242.07
<b>INCOME</b>		
Donations	2,776.82	
Grants	45,070.00	
Grants (Hardship/Referral Partners)	14,432.00	
Grants (Rcvd for Others – Mentorship Programme)	1,000.00	
HMRC Gift Aid	271.25	
Interest (Lloyds Bank)	<u>336.96</u>	
<b>Total Income</b>	63,887.03	<u>63,887.03</u>
		97,129.10
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Community Projects	47,533.21	
Core Costs	16,579.58	
Equipment	3,282.86	
FA Fund to Support Camps	427.76	
Grants Repaid to Others (Mentorship Programme)	1,000.00	
Holcot 90 <sup>th</sup> Birthday	<u>284.23</u>	
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	69,107.64	<u>69,107.64</u>
<b>Balance at Bank</b>		£28,021.46

**NB** All monies carried forward are restricted/committed funds





**Section A**

**Independent Examiner's Report**

**Report to the trustees/  
members of**

**Holcot Charitable Trust**

**On accounts for the year  
ended**

**5<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

**Charity no  
(if any)**

**1092332**

**Set out on pages**

**ONE**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 05/04/2024.

**Responsibilities and  
basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent  
examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

**Signed:**

**C.F. Ellinson**

**Date:**

**13/5/24**

**Name:**

**Catherine Ellinson**

**Relevant professional  
qualification(s) or body  
(if any):**

**AAT Level 3 in Bookkeeping**

**Address:**

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**Hilders Lane, Edenbridge**

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