

Friends of Hawkhurst

Charity no: 1180085 (Hawkhurst Community Trust 2018)

Annual General Meeting, November 2024

Chairs Report

Good evening everyone, how quickly it feels the year has gone.

NEW name and identity

I'm Anita, Chair and Trustee of the Friends of Hawkhurst and I'll be taking us through our annual report. This time last year you will have known us as Hawkhurst Community Trust 2018, roll on a year and we have in the last couple of months rebranded as the Friends of Hawkhurst. We're really pleased to have made this move, and I'd like to give my thanks to all our Trustees in the work that has been undertaken to arrive at this place. Particularly to Jacqueline, leading the work to create a new brand identity and to Joss in creating a new website. This work enables us to open up new ways to achieve our charities purpose as a community connector as a way to improve the lives and wellbeing of our residents.

Goals for 24

At last years AGM, we set out our goals for 2024. They were to:

- Run our established programme
- Deliver and event or project for senior residents
- Support Hawkhurst Community Fridge volunteer team
- Explore ideas for improving our village environment
- Expand our volunteer team, creating more diverse opportunities to join in
- Grow our community connections – do more good work together

Run the established programme

Our programme has become an established part of the village calendar, with something for each season: An Easter trail in partnership with Tesco's, a village run 5/10k with Highgate Hawkhurst WI and Nicework (along with a whole range of partners contributing to funds from prizes to first aid); a village Playday in August, Makers @TheMoor, arts and crafts event as Autumn arrives and then pop up childrens activity as part of Happy Christmas Hawkhurst. All these events this year exceeded numbers, reach and we received positive feedback across them all. This year we added in a new event for seniors as we felt we could do more for this audience. We planned and prepared an afternoon tea, and just a few weeks ago, the team delivered a wonderful afternoon hosted at Bowles Lodge.

We built in learnings from previous years to this years programme and we will continue to evolve and fine tune in 2025. Lots of preparation and thinking goes into delivering these events, developing our skills as a volunteer team, with thanks to Janet who has honed our activities for families and we now feel confident in this space. They provide a range of opportunities to connect as part of the experience and we're starting to develop more flexible volunteering opportunities and so ways to actively contribute to Hawkhurst village life.

Community Fridge

We are the umbrella charity for Hawkhurst Community Fridge and with a possible move on the horizon for the fridge we knew that we would need to focus more time above the day to day running. I'd like to give my thanks to Stephanie, fridge project coordinator and to Joss playing a linking trustee role in all their efforts in continuing to navigate activity to secure the next step for the fridge. At the moment of reporting here, we are yet to confirm a permanent new home for the community fridge. We have explored many options and we have received positive replies from Kent County Council with respect to a new location, but this will take time. We continue correspondence with Hawkhurst Community Hospital League of Friends, with work starting on the Green Shop in about 4 weeks time we are hoping to remain operating in some shape or form although in a temporary set up. The bigger positive news story is two fold – the team of volunteers remains stable, and they work hard as a team in reducing food waste. Our figures show how well we continue to do, and we should be immensely proud of what this wonderful team achieve every day. In 2025, we will continue to work to keep operations going as much as we can, support our volunteers in making this change and to refresh the presentation of the fridge.

We have been looking to expand ways we can play our part in improving our village environment, we've continued the partnership with Hawkhurst in Bloom through funding planters at the KGV where we mostly hold our events, and thanks goes to Tina for picking up the baton this year for this. We have more ideas we'd like to explore and hope to do more in the next couple of years.

Growing our volunteer team

We have this year taken steps to grow our volunteer team. We held a drop in welcome session earlier in the year, a social evening for the fridge team and we have started to bring new volunteers on board across our activities. Our marshals for the race was our biggest group yet. We will need to continue to expand our volunteer team and to find ways to provide flexible volunteering opportunities. We also said goodbye to David, who stepped down as a Trustee as a house move meant continuing wasn't possible. I'd like to note the contribution that David made to the work of the Trust. Our volunteers do a huge amount in the goal of making Hawkhurst a better place to live, and I'd like to thank them all, as they do this alongside work, family life and often other volunteering too.

Working in partnership

We have been growing our community connections in two ways. With each event or project, expanding who we work with, how we work with them and creating a great experience in doing so. Whilst all our Trustees and network of volunteers do this well, I must give thanks to Eddie in particular for his abilities to secure sponsors, partners and a whole range of products...it's more than keeping our costs down, it has brought funds in to be able to deliver more than we could on our own. Eddie's relationship building skills has meant that we are Waitrose's go to for community grant giving.

Being a community connector

The second way we have done this is via our seasonal newsletter, we've been developing this over the last 2 years, expanding the type of articles. With David leaving, we now have a new editor, Gunda, who will develop this into a new format – Hawkhurst life. As Friends of Hawkhurst this not only provides further ways to volunteer and also to connect, it also means that we can use it expand all the range of things you can get involved in, and be inspired by whoever you are. We look forward to how this will shape up in 2025.

To conclude this chairs report, we must also note the work that goes on behind the scenes. Jacqueline keeps an eye on the email inbox, Tina and Harvey pull together risk assessments and guide on event set up and establishing marketing presence is a team effort. As a new volunteer, Susan has joined us and too.

Thank you all.

I hope this report gives a flavour of the work we have been doing and the impact we have made as a charity.

Formal elements

We now have 2 formal elements of the AGM to proceed with:

Our treasurers report

Nominations of Trustees.

- All are re-elected – all names of Trustees were called out.
- Susan Terrell as a new Trustee – nominated

Hawkhurst Community Trust 2018 Accounts 2023 - 24

(Financial year 1st Oct 23 to 30th Sept 24)

Starting Balance	£11,003.28		
Total Income	£11,592.83		
Total Expenditure	-£9,271.54		
Final Balance	£13,324.57		
Annual Surplus	£2,321.29		
Major Events	Income	Expenditure	Difference
Easter Hunt	£30.53	-£31.70	-£1.17
Hawkhurst 5k/10k Run	£8,461.27 *	-£5,843.24	£2,618.03
* Includes support from local businesses and HCHLoF, totalling £2,450			
Play Day	£0.00	-£822.58	-£822.58
Makers @ the Moor	£1,748.82	-£1,181.31	£567.51
Donations and Fund Raising	£1,253.91	£0.00	£1,253.91
	£11,494.53	-£7,878.83	£3,615.70
General Income and Expenditure		-£1,294.41	
of which major costs:			
Printing of Quarterly Newsletters		-£337.10	
Insurance		-£159.04	
Volunteer events and AGM		-£159.75	
Christmas Hampers for Villagers		-£192.65	
Internet Domain and Logo Costs		-£238.40	

Community Fridge Accounts

Starting Balance	£3,366.08
Total Income	£508.20
Total Expenditure	-£55.20
Final Balance	£3,819.08
Annual Surplus	£453.00

Income came from donations and fund raising, the most significant being £375 from Groundwork UK. In addition there was a donation in kind from HCHLoF to cover the cost of the electricity.

Expenses were minor and covered items including cleaning materials.