

Hanslope Community Orchard Annual Trustee Report 2024/25

Registration number: 1200266

Registered Charity Address: 18 Park Road, Hanslope, MK19 7LT

Orchard address: Adjacent to Hanslope Village Hall, Newport Road, MK19 7NZ

Charity Structure:

We are comprised of 3 Trustees who meet every 6 months or as required throughout the year. The Trustees are Nici Wilcox, Chrissy Elvins and Vicky Crawford.

The Trustees are accountable for decisions made. We also have a committee structure that feeds into trustee decision making. This committee is called Hanslope Community Orchard Members. The Hanslope Orchard Community Members meet every 6-8 weeks throughout the year.

The Trustees approve or decline decisions and recommendations made by Hanslope Community Orchard Members, and are ultimately accountable for the orchard's operation in accordance with health and safety, financial viability and the rules of our constitution.

We regularly send out an email newsletter via our mailing list and social media. We aim to recruit more volunteers and trustees from within the parish boundary of Hanslope village.

Activities and objectives in the year:

Our aims as a CIO for 24/25 were to

1. Use grant funding to establish a legal lease of land for the orchard site.
2. Expand the orchard by converting a new section of unused agricultural land adjacent to the existing site.
3. Use the expanded site to make tree sponsorship available to more local residents.
4. Maintain and enhance the willow tunnel, plant new bulbs and perennials. Restore benches and install bug hotel.
5. Increase our core membership for both maintenance volunteers as well as committee members.

All of the above objectives were achieved, with further detail provided below:

1. Following the verbal agreement of the lease with the land owner in 2022/23 and having secured funds from the Parish Council in 2023/24 for the legal costs, the Trustees took forward the legal process to acquire the land on a 50 year lease. The legal title of land was secured in November 2024.
2. A new section of land (adjacent to the original orchard) included in the lease was cleared of weeds and rubble over the winter of 2024/25 and prepared for cultivation by volunteers.
3. In February 2025 local residents were given the opportunity to sponsor 13 heritage trees on the newly cultivated site. This is in addition to the 42 trees planted in February 2023.
4. Our willow tunnel built in February 2024 became well established over its first year, with local volunteers increasing the height of the tunnel in spring 2025. Biodiversity was further enhanced with new bulbs, perennial planting and the installation of a bug hotel created by a local artist. Public access and leisure opportunities were increased with the installation of newly restored benches.

Our core membership was increased this year with a replacement of trustee Avril Francome with Chrissy Elvins and 3 new committee members. We wish to publicly thank Avril for her contributions in setting up the Orchard. Chrissy brings a wealth of experience to our trustee team. Our committee membership now comprises Simon Thorp, Helen Capel and Angela Poole as well as the Trustees. Our work party volunteers remain strong with a core of approximately 10 local residents who attend work parties to help maintain the site. These volunteers also feed in suggestions and ideas for the enhancement of the orchard to the Hanslope Orchard Members and Trustees.

Achievements for public benefit:

- Hanslope village residents continue to have free access to an environmentally considered and managed village space. The space is inclusive and accessible to all, regardless of income or social status.
- All residents of Hanslope are invited to join in with our workdays which are enjoyable community events.

- The meandering mowed pathways encourage local children and families to wander around the orchard and have summer picnics on the reclaimed benches. Hanslope Pre School who use the adjacent Village Hall have been regularly taking nature walks in the orchard. They are often seen having stories told in the story telling area which includes a giant's chair made by a local artist. The chair was kindly donated by a Hanslope resident in 2023.
- Our tree sponsorship options in Feb 2025 offered more affordable monthly direct debit payment options.

Financial review 2024/25:

Expenses

	Planned	Actual
<i>Totals</i>	<i>£0.00</i>	<i>£4408</i>
Landscaping contract - Parker		£607
Willow Coppice		£400
Restored Benches		£413
Tree planting		£350
Local Giving annual sub		£360
Pub Liability Insurance		£131
Tree labels		£75
Solicitors fees for lease		£2043
Hanslope Village Hall hire		£29

Income

	Planned	Actual
<i>Totals</i>	<i>£0.00</i>	<i>£3908</i>
Tree Sponsorship		£616
Solicitor fees refund		£131

Local Giving gift aid		£1
Donations		£3160

All funds are held in our charity bank account with Metro Bank. No other funds are held by custodian trustees.