Harpenden TRUST

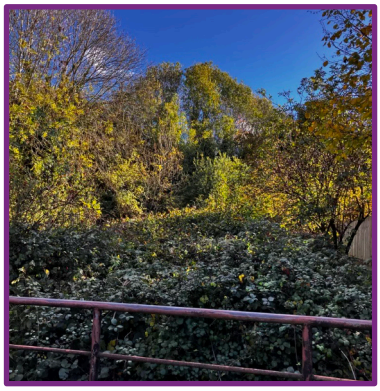
Supporting Our Community

NEWSLETTER **WINTER 2026**

New Community Garden from the Harpenden Trust

The Harpenden Trust is delighted to announce the development of a new Community Garden. The garden will be built on a disused plot of land that used to be an allotment site, situated at the end of Heath Close, next to the railway line (see map).

Richard Nichols, Chair of the Harpenden Trust said, "We are thrilled to make this announcement about our new community garden. We believe it will make a real and positive difference to the people of Harpenden."



The garden will be used by existing Harpenden Trust groups such as the Compassionate Café, Ribbon Cancer Support Group, and Harpenden Trust Activities Club, and a new gardening group will be developed in partnership with local GP surgeries as part of the Harpenden Wellbeing Hub.

The project has also been developed with Harpenden Mencap, a local charity that supports adults with learning disabilities. Sarah Holmes, Head of Wellbeing at the Harpenden Trust said, "It's a wonderful opportunity for us to work alongside Mencap members and work together to develop a new community space."

Clare Haines, Head of Life-long Learning at Harpenden Mencap said, "We are delighted to be working in partnership with the Harpenden Trust to create a green space where members of the local community can enjoy the physical and mental health benefits of horticulture. We aim to bring empowerment to adults with learning disabilities through their involvement, growing and nurturing plants and maintaining and improving the plots as part of this collaborative project."



Clearance work has begun on the site. Groundworks and landscaping will soon follow to create fully accessible pathways, raised beds for planting, a water feature, tool storage sheds, and security gates with CCTV.

"The garden has been carefully designed to make the most of the space, and, once it is fully up and running, will be open to the public on scheduled open days throughout the year," explained Richard Nichols. "It will offer many flexible areas so we can use it for many different things. We are aiming to open the garden sometime in 2027."

For more information about the Community Garden, please contact admin@theharpendentrust.org.uk

For over 75 years, the Harpenden Trust has been helping local people and supporting our community.

Thanks to the generosity of our community, the Trust provides practical and financial help to those in need, brings people together and funds community projects.

We are local people helping local people.

CAROLS ON THE COMMON

Join us at 6pm on Christmas Eve for the Harpenden Trust's Carols on the Common, a wonderful free community event. See the newsletter's back page for details.





CHRISTMAS APPEAL

Last year's Harpenden Trust Christmas Appeal raised a fantastic £60,000. This was thanks to the generosity of all our donors, the support of local businesses, and the hard-working team of volunteers. Look out for details of this year's Appeal!



SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY

INTRODUCING THE TRUST

Since its foundation in 1948, the Harpenden Trust has provided support for local people in need, whatever their age or background. It is funded by and managed by Harpenden people to benefit Harpenden people.

The Trust can help you with practical support, activities and signposting. It has a range of core services available such as befriending and wellbeing support and can provide financial aid through the Care and Community Funds. The Trust aims to be your good neighbour – and this was made clear when over 700 local people stepped forward to help out during the COVID pandemic.





Since the pandemic, the Trust's work and activity levels have increased. We have launched the Harpenden Wellbeing Hub in partnership with the Harpenden Primary Care Network (PCN) and have opened our Well Bean Community Café. In 2026, we responded to over 600 calls for Home Visits, organised family outings, activity clubs, and assisted local pupils with school trips and courses. We reach and support thousands of local residents each year. This shows that the Harpenden Trust is still very relevant and much needed into 2027 and beyond.

The Harpenden Trust's Values







The Harpenden Trust has a clear set of values which publicly define what the Trust stands for. These reflect our beliefs and guide our thinking and activities. They define what is important and worthwhile in the work we do.

With Care & Kindness - Whether we are supporting a client or working with a fellow volunteer, we always treat each other with respect and thoughtfulness, showing care and kindness in our actions towards others.

With Community Spirit - As a good neighbour, we give our time for the good of our community because we truly care about it. We partner and collaborate with many local organisations to support our local residents.

With Creativity & Commitment - With input and ideas from everyone, we do our best to solve any issues we are presented with. Our volunteers show commitment in abundance to their roles, clients and the Trust as a whole.

NEWS SUMMARY

Harpenden Green Loop – a great way to get around!

Harpenden Town Council has recently created the 'Harpenden Green Loop'; a convenient and attractive walking and cycling route around Harpenden.

The Green Loop is a 15km (9.3 mile) route that connects various existing paths, open spaces and trails which can either be walked or cycled, in its entirety or in sections. It's a great way to discover new areas of Harpenden, travel sustainably and enjoy outdoor exercise.

You can join the Green Loop at a number of points, whether you simply want to get from A to B or get out and about and enjoy the beauty of the town's green spaces. Included in the Loop is Harpenden Common, the unique habitats of Batford Springs Local Nature Reserve, sites of local historical interest such as the Nickey Line, and a number of smaller parks and play areas. There is also an option of a 'Half Loop' trail for those wanting to visit the High Street for a bite to eat, a coffee or a spot of shopping.

The Town Council's aim is for the Loop to appeal to a wide variety of users (both visitors and residents), from cyclists and ramblers to dog-walkers and families on a day out. Introduction of The Harpenden Green Loop follows a public engagement survey conducted last summer to find out what people wanted from a Green Loop and how they might use it; thank you to everyone who provided valuable feedback which was taken into account when planning and designing the map.

Cllr Kirsti Wenn, Harpenden Town Mayor, is completing a 'Mayorathon' challenge - walking 15km every month during her Mayoral year to raise funds for her nominated charities Youth Talk and Herts Young Homeless. She has already 'looped the Loop' and encourages everyone to give it a try!

To find out more and to download the walking and cycling maps, visit the Town Council's website: www.harpenden.gov.uk/loop or call in to the Town Hall to pick up a copy.



Harpenden Trust brings youth counselling service to the heart of the community

We are delighted to announce that one-to-one counselling sessions for young people aged 13–25 will soon be available at a dedicated counselling room at the Harpenden Trust Halls. This is the latest joint initiative with Youth Talk, a free confidential counselling service which has been active in St Albans, Harpenden and surrounding areas for 30 years, supporting over 120 young people every week and delivering over 5,000 counselling sessions a year. The Harpenden Trust is a keen supporter of Youth Talk and funded the development of art therapy groups in our Halls.

This will be the first service of its kind in Harpenden, with sessions previously held only in St Albans. It is driven by need; almost 20% of all referrals to Youth Talk come from young people who live, work or go to school in Harpenden.

The Trust has built a confidential space in the atrium entrance of the halls, furnished to Youth Talk's specifications to match the counselling rooms in St Albans. Young people will be able to receive counselling sessions after school hours with qualified counsellors who are experts in working with young people and who are supported by experienced clinical supervisors.

Sarah Holmes, Head of Wellbeing at the Harpenden Trust, said: "We are always looking for ways to bring the gold standard of wellbeing support to Harpenden and Youth Talk offers that."

David Barker, Chief Executive of Youth Talk, explained: "For young people already struggling with anxiety, low mood or overwhelming emotions, even a relatively short journey can feel difficult. Providing counselling locally removes many of these barriers and makes it easier for young people to access confidential support when and where they need it most."

Youth Talk offers up to a year of support where clinically appropriate, giving young people time to build a trusting therapeutic relationship, address the root causes of their difficulties, and develop the resilience and strategies needed for lasting change. By combining the Trust's local presence and community knowledge with Youth Talk's clinical expertise, our partnership aims to establish a sustainable counselling service that makes professional mental health support more accessible for young people across Harpenden.

Find out more about Youth Talk by visiting their website:

www.youthtalk.org.uk

YOUTH TALK
We're listening

Wellbeing is a key part of the Harpenden Trust

The Harpenden Trust offers a huge range of activities and support groups under the umbrella of our Wellbeing Hub. We work in partnership with the Harpenden Primary Care Network (PCN) which is made up of its three GP surgeries. Our aim is to provide social, physical, and peer-to-peer activities and groups to support better wellbeing.

There are a number of activities that are available through 'social prescribing'. This means that the GP practices can refer patients to our activities to make sure people get the right kind of help and support. Referrals can be made by a clinician, GP, nurse, healthcare assistant, pharmacist or anyone who works in the named medical practice.



There are also a number of Wellbeing activities that members of the community can 'self-refer' to i.e. they are open to all. The activities provided by the Wellbeing Hub range from exercise classes, social meet-ups, and trips to art groups, quizzes, and film and games sessions.

Sarah Holmes, Head of Wellbeing from the Harpenden Trust said, "The Harpenden Trust has long been a 'good neighbour' in our community, making us an ideal partner to work alongside the Primary Care Network. We want to connect people to activities, groups, and services and help meet the practical, social and emotional needs that affect health and wellbeing."

Details of all our Wellbeing Activities are available at all GP practices in Harpenden, and you can also get more information by contacting wellbeing@theharpendentrust.org.uk or by calling 01582 363133 and leaving a message.

Clay Sanctuary offers creativity and support

The Harpenden Trust is delighted to offer pottery classes at the Clay Sanctuary as part of its Wellbeing Mental Health Support provision.

The Clay Sanctuary is a group based at the Network Pottery at the Highfield Oval site and offers a series of five-week sessions. Clients are referred to the sessions through the social prescribing pathway (see above). The classes are particularly useful for those dealing with stress, anxiety, depression and other conditions affecting mental wellbeing, as well as those recovering from illness and injury.

"It's a place to be relaxed and creative," explained Sara Hart, the Clay Sanctuary Team Leader and Harpenden Trust volunteer. "It's also a place to maybe make new friends and have a couple of hours away from the business of life."



Classes typically start with a cup of tea or coffee and a chat, and new clients are welcomed in by volunteers. "We make sure that everyone feels comfortable and knows what is going to happen and how the space is set up," said Sara. "Clients are shown how to use the wheel so they can throw pots. We also glaze the pottery so clients can paint it, and hand build other pieces."

There are Harpenden Trust volunteers at each session to make sure everything runs smoothly. There is also mental health support at every session. Patricia Martins, a professional mental health practitioner, paid for by the Harpenden Trust, supports the clients and volunteers to make sure everyone is well looked after. "We try to ensure that we have a mix of ages and genders so that everyone feels comfortable," said Sara.





Participants are typically offered two lots of five-week sessions. There is a 'beginners' session that runs on a Tuesday, and then a 'returners' session on a Thursday for people coming for their second or third batch of sessions.

"Clients really seem to appreciate the relaxed vibe," said Sara. "They like the space and peace. It is two hours just focusing on something creative and being able to get away from the world. It's a really lovely and happy place to be."

New class for Arts on Prescription

Due to increased demand for our Friday sessions, the Harpenden Trust has started another Arts on Prescription class on a Tuesday! Arts on Prescription is a supportive and informal group where participants can explore their feelings through creativity and visual arts. Participants are referred to the class by their GP surgery.



The programmes run for nine weeks, and the two-hour sessions are led by an artist and support worker with experience in mental health and assisted by Harpenden Trust volunteers. The group explores a range of artistic techniques from collage to painting and drawing.

Seated exercise gets everyone moving

Seated exercise classes take place at the Harpenden Trust Halls on the first and third Tuesday of the month. They are led by a qualified instructor and are designed to help improve stamina and mobility, as well as strength. They are specifically designed for those for whom standing for a prolonged period would not be advisable.

"These are sociable, friendly, and fun sessions," said Elizabeth Joseph, a volunteer at the Harpenden Trust. "They are designed to encourage people to do some exercise at home."

"Participants are initially offered four sessions," explained Elizabeth. "And then they can be offered four more sessions later in the year. All the sessions are free."

The classes are supported by the Harpenden Trust Transport Team who can arrange transport for those who can't otherwise get there (subject to availability).



The sessions are open to members of the Harpenden Trust Activities Club. For more information, please contact Jon Dicks at the Harpenden Trust on 01582 363134.

Seated Exercise is part of the Harpenden Trust Activities Club.

New time for the Compassionate Café

The Compassionate Café at the Harpenden Trust will now be open on the second Tuesday of every month. The Café is a joint venture between the Trust and Rennie Grove Peace Hospice Care.

The Café provides a space for people from the AL5 area who have been affected by bereavement or any kind of loss. Each session is run by volunteers who are on hand to welcome and speak to attendees. It is a friendly and informal environment where people can come together for a cup of tea or coffee and a chat.

If you would like to drop in, the Café will be open from 10.30am–12.30pm on the second Tuesday of every month at Harpenden Trust's Well Bean Café, Harpenden Trust Halls (above the Co-op), 130a Southdown Road, Harpenden, AL5 1PU.

Frazzled at the Harpenden Trust

Frazzled is a charity set up by the comedian and writer Ruby Wax to help support those who would benefit from a space where anyone can come and be listened to, or simply listen, without judgment or solutions.

The Harpenden Trust runs sessions at our Halls in Southdown every Monday (except Bank Holidays). There is no charge for the sessions, but booking is required as places are limited.

Each session begins with a cosy cuppa at the Well Bean Community Café, then trained facilitators allow people to talk or listen, without judgment or solutions. People can talk about their feelings openly in a safe space.

For more information on how to get involved please visit: www.frazzledcafe.org/harpenden.html

Working together for Wellbeing

We are extremely fortunate to work in partnership with a number of organisations in our Wellbeing Hub.

In this issue we would like to highlight and thank:

Bennet's Club at the Royal British Legion for providing free room hire for lunches and afternoon teas.

The Salvation Army for our joint efforts in running the Memory Lane Café and intergenerational singing.

Network Pottery for its support of the Clay Sanctuary.

What Is The Care Fund?

The Harpenden Trust Care Fund, established in 1948 and funded entirely by Harpenden residents, supports local people in need regardless of age. Seventy five years in, this mission continues through specialist teams offering valued services from weekly coffee mornings to financial aid with school uniforms and essential appliance breakdowns for struggling families.

Can We Help You?

If you know someone who might need help, encourage them to:

Call: 01582 460457

Email: help@theharpendentrust.org.uk

Our caring team will be delighted to help.

Seniors' Coffee Mornings: Good coffee, good company, and a warm welcome

That's what we offer every week at our Seniors' Coffee Mornings - a chance to enjoy a cuppa, have a chat and spend some time with friends.

Tuesdays
Harpenden Trust Centre,
90 Southdown Road
10.00am–11.00am

Thursdays
Salvation Army, Leyton Green
10.00am–11.00am



The Seniors' Coffee Mornings operate in addition to the much loved Well Bean Community Café, open every weekday between 10:30am and 12:30pm.

Christmas Special

During December, we'll have some special musical visitors. **The Grove School Junior Choir** will join us on a Tuesday to entertain us with Christmas songs and carols.

A Salvation Army Trio will entertain us on a Thursday to bring some festive cheer.

Dates to be announced.

Family fun day out at Gulliver's Land

Each year the Harpenden Trust organises a family outing for our community. Volunteer Julia Pryor gave us an update on this summer's fun.

"On Tuesday 28th July we took a lovely group of mums, dads and children to Gulliver's Land in Milton Keynes. There were 45 of us, and everyone had a great day! The weather was kind - not one of those scorching hot days we had during this summer - just a pleasant warm sunny day. Our coach driver, Matt, got us all there very quickly, maximising the time we could spend enjoying the facilities at the park and sampling the rides.







It was truly a joy to see how happy everyone was throughout the day, so many smiles from start to finish - especially at the end of the afternoon when we bought everyone an ice cream.

This outing is so much appreciated by families who live on a limited budget which often doesn't allow for treats and days out, and our volunteers enjoyed the day too - thanks Ann, Paddy and Claire for your help and support."

Caring with others

The Harpenden Trust works alongside a number of charities to support our local community. "Two notable charities that we work with are the St Albans Old People's Trust and the James Marshall Foundation," said Nick Luckett, chair of the Care Fund at the Harpenden Trust. "We are very interested in the idea of teamwork between the organisations."



One of the strengths of the Harpenden Trust is its ability to connect and help individuals, especially through its Home Visits team. As Fionna Grigg, Team Leader in the Home Visits Team explained, "Our Home Visitors may see a client who has a specific need that could be helped with support from the St Albans Old People's Trust or the James Marshall Foundation and so we can suggest this to the client and support them through the process. In some cases, the Harpenden Trust's Care Fund can also provide financial support alongside other charities. It's a very positive relationship."

The St Albans Old People's Trust is a local charity which can help people financially who cannot easily afford what they need. The Trust grants can provide free items and services to people aged 60 or over, living within St Albans District, including Harpenden, who are in need, hardship or distress.

The James Marshall Foundation supports financially disadvantaged young people with grants for educational and career development purposes. It helps people aged 4 to 24 years old living in Harpenden, Wheathampstead, Kimpton, Redbourn, Flamstead and Markyate.

There are many benefits to the community of the charities working together. "By having relationships with other charities, we can make sure that our clients get access to the support they need," said Nick Luckett. "The Harpenden Trust can be a source of funding, but it can also be a source of help and support for those we refer onto other organisations. Our personal connection with the clients means that we can help them get the help they need."

For more information, please visit the following websites:

Harpenden TRUST Supporting Our Community — www.theharpendentrust.org.uk

JMF JAMES MARSHALL FOUNDATION — www.jamesmarshallfoundation.co.uk

ST ALBANS OLD PEOPLE'S TRUST CHARITY 222522 — www.oldpeoplestrust.org.uk

Out and about in the Community

The Harpenden Trust has taken part in some key events in the town over the last few months. Two of the highlights have been the Batford Community Festival on 5th July and the Harpenden Community Festival on 5th September.

"We had stalls at both of the festivals," said Nick Luckett, chair of the Care Fund at the Harpenden Trust. "And we were delighted by the fantastic response we got from members of the public who stopped by to chat about what the Trust does and how they could get involved."

Both festivals were hosted by the Harpenden Town Council and had a wide range of organisations and activities.

"We had a record number of visitors to our stall at these festivals," explained Nick. "I must thank all the Harpenden Trust volunteers who were great and enthusiastic ambassadors. And they also ran our very popular Hook-a-Duck for our younger visitors! We always enjoy bringing the Trust out into the community and are looking forward to next year."



Harpenden TRUST

Supporting the people of Harpenden since 1948

SENIORS FAIR

Wednesday 7th April
10.30am - 1.00pm

Showcasing local services and activities

Over 40 organisations attending including charities, voluntary & commercial organisations and social activities.

Refreshments available
(donations to Rennie Grove Peace Hospice)

FREE ENTRY

Come along & discover what's available at:
The Eric Morecambe Centre, Rothamsted Park, Harpenden.

Supporting Our Community
Contact us today
www.theharpendentrust.org.uk
admin@theharpendentrust.org.uk
01582 460457

The Harpenden Trust Annual General Meeting

The Harpenden Trust held its AGM on Tuesday 13th October 2026 at Harpenden Golf Club. The meeting brought together residents, volunteers, donors, and community leaders to discuss and celebrate the work of the Trust over the last year.



Richard Nichols, Chair of the Harpenden Trust, opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and giving an overview of some of the highlights of the Trust's year. His speech was a wonderful exploration of the idea of 'belonging' and how the Harpenden Trust supports and contributes to the Harpenden community.

He said, "Since 1948, for nearly 80 years, the Harpenden Trust has quietly and consistently supported the residents of this town, responding to need with compassion, dignity, and discretion. That trusted good neighbour, powered by over 500 volunteers, and a whole lot of heart."

Some of the highlights Richard covered included:

- **The Home Visits Team made over 600 home visits this year**
- **Around 80 senior residents on the lowest incomes each received an energy grant**
- **Families supported by our Home Visits team enjoyed a summer outing to a theme park**
- **Around 140 Christmas parcels were delivered, with love, across the town**
- **The Well Bean Community Café saw over 150 visitors a week**
- **The Trust helped to launch the Rothamsted Park parkrun, an event that regularly attracts over 400 participants**
- **The 2025 Christmas Appeal raised £60,000 in a genuinely challenging climate**
- **The Harpenden Trust's Carols on the Common saw almost 5,000 people gather to sing together on Christmas Eve**

And looking to the future, Richard highlighted the development of a new Community Garden (see page 1), and a deepening relationship with the charity Youth Talk (see page 3), as well as the Trust's commitment to building a stronger presence in Batford and to supporting a proposed local community initiative behind the restoration of Rothamsted Manor.

The Care Fund

Nick Luckett, Head of the Harpenden Trust Care Fund gave an overview of its activities over the past year and stressed the importance of teamwork.

The Care Fund offers practical and financial help to people in the Harpenden community. It runs weekly coffee mornings, organises many other regular activities, and can provide financial aid for specific needs. It connects with well over 200 members of the Harpenden community.



Each year, Team Leaders in the fund put together a plan, agree a budget with the Trust's Finance Director and then deliver various activities. The Care Fund volunteers meet regularly to review, celebrate, and plan ahead.

From time to time, the Care Fund receives requests for financial assistance, and it also supports other local initiatives. For example, it made a donation towards the Salvation Army's Christmas Day lunch, which welcomes anyone in Harpenden who might otherwise be lonely on Christmas Day.

The Care Fund works closely with several partner charities, including Harpenden Helping Hands, Harpenden Money Advice Service, the James Marshall Foundation, the St Albans Old People's Trust, and the Salvation Army, where it runs several events

It also supports individual families in financial need in the town and works with other organisations such as Harpenden Town Council to help those in the most need.

Wellbeing

Sarah Holmes, Head of Wellbeing gave an overview of the work of the Wellbeing Team at the Trust.



For the last four years the Trust has worked with local GPs in the Primary Care Network, delivering wellbeing support to the patients they refer. The Trust now offers 23 groups and activities, nine of which need a referral.

Referral numbers are up – almost double between July and September compared to last year and the Trust has created more course spaces to keep up with demand.

The Wellbeing Team at the Trust is also delighted that Pottery and Arts & Crafts sessions have remained and developed when a previous outreach project ended.

The Wellbeing Team at the Trust would also like to thank Network Pottery, the Salvation Army, Bennets Club at the British Legion, Everyone Active, Padel Pass, and the Town Council for hosting, volunteering and supporting them.

The Harpenden Trust Activities Club (HTAC) goes from strength to strength. It was founded in 2025 to support the Trust's work with older residents who have become isolated and lonely. The HTAC now has around 285 members, including 30 who joined between June and August. There are teas, films, lunches, social meet-ups and exercise classes.

And a big thanks goes to every volunteer who supports clients at the Wellbeing activities. The approach is unchanged: practical, compassionate support that helps people feel connected and better able to move forward.

The Community Fund

Steve Pryor, Head of the Community Fund updated the meeting on developments across the town.



Since 2008 the Community Fund has awarded over £1.3m to over 260 projects for organisations, charities and schools in Harpenden. Last year it supported 12 organisations which saw residents of all ages benefit.

Last year it supported the community by:

- **Providing Citizens Advice with laptops**
- **Supporting the Hornbeam Hedgehog Sanctuary**
- **Helping Harpenden Rovers Football Club re-establish the football pitches at Acres Corner**
- **Contributing to other charitable groups such as cancer support groups**
- **Helping Network Pottery to purchase additional equipment**
- **Supporting Young Enterprise at Harpenden secondary schools**
- **Supporting the Lea Primary and Sauncey Wood Primary Schools to install new play equipment**
- **Helping Harpenden Mencap install garden pods**

Volunteering

Volunteers are at the heart of the Harpenden Trust and Pat Ring, People Director, gave an update on the people who make the Trust so special.



Over the past 12 months, the Trust has had 178 approaches from people interested in volunteering, resulting in 81 new volunteers joining.

The volunteers have joined almost every area of the Trust and have taken on a variety of roles. We have new drivers, befrienders, designers, and couriers, as well as people who have joined our safeguarding and communications teams. We also have new volunteers involved in IT and data protection and our Annual Appeal.

Pat announced the Harpenden Trust Long Service Awards, with a Special Award for Judy Halsey, who has been a wonderful Team Leader for the Harpenden Trust Coffee Mornings for 40 years!



Pat concluded by saying, "Volunteers have helped neighbours, supported families and local organisations, brought friendship to those who needed it, raised money, delivered parcels, made phone calls, driven people to our activities, and helped with organisation and administration. And, perhaps most importantly, they have helped make Harpenden, a community where people look out for one another."

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Closing remarks from the Mayor

The AGM ended with a heartfelt vote of thanks by Harpenden's Mayor Cllr Kirsti Wenn.

Kirsti commended all the speakers and the wider Trust for the wonderful work that it does. She said, "What you do is turn the town into a community, and turn willing hands into a lifeline for those in need."

Kirsti also presented the Trust with an original artwork by Grace Elgey, a talented young artist from the town. The painting, which will take pride of place in the Harpenden Trust Halls, depicts a range of people in the Harpenden community who have received help from the Harpenden Trust.







Other Voices

Several volunteers also spoke at the AGM, giving unique insights into how the Trust operates and what volunteering means to them.

Our thanks go to:

- **Tom Abbott who spoke about the Home Visits Team**
- **Sue Cumming who spoke about parkrun**
- **Steve Jupe who spoke about Wellbeing**
- **John Michalik who spoke about Utilities Grants**
- **Rich Pinder from Frazzled and the Transport Team, who spoke about why he volunteers**

Thanks also go to Patricia Martins who spoke about her work with the Trust in her capacity as a mental health practitioner.













Photographs by Steve Lynes www.stevelynesphotography.co.uk

THE COMMUNITY FUND

What is the Community Fund?

The Harpenden Trust Community Fund was established in 2008 and relies entirely on the income from a substantial capital donation made by the Abbeyfield (Harpenden) Society. None of the monies received from the annual Christmas Appeal are used. We provide financial support for community projects in the Harpenden area with grants specifically designed to develop, improve or enhance their work or facilities. Since 2008 the fund has provided over £1,300,000 to over 260 projects.

Can we help you?

To find out more about the Community Fund or if you would like to apply for a grant from the Harpenden Trust, please visit:

www.theharpendentrust.org.uk/how-we-can-help/community-fund

How have we helped?

During the first half of 2026 the Community Fund has seen a smaller number of grant applications than expected but the ones received and confirmed are for projects of significant benefit to those using the facilities.

Manland Primary School

The existing PE shed needed considerable renovation work which was critical to protect the extensive sports equipment. The pupils have benefited considerably from having this facility at the school.

Harpenden Mencap

The Community Fund has provided funding towards a Garden Pod at Harpenden Mencap's Batford site. This has been of great benefit to both Mencap staff and the residents living there. The project has been so successful Harpenden Mencap is now looking to provide a similar facility at its Carlton Road site.

Harpenden Rovers Youth Football Club

The club has done a tremendous job in renovating the pitches at Acres Corner on Harpenden Common which had not been used since COVID. The Community Fund was pleased to support this project and to provide funding for signage situated at the entrance highlighting the support given by the Harpenden Trust and Harpenden Town Council.

Harpenden Trust helps local schools

The Harpenden Trust Community Fund is delighted to have contributed towards the installation of an artificial grass play area at the Lea Primary and Nursery School.

The timing was perfect as it is in a shady area and provided somewhere for the children to play in this summer's heatwaves. The school organised a most impressive open day which was very well attended and demonstrated how popular the new area is with the children.



We were also very pleased to have helped fund the construction of a new climbing frame for Sauncey Wood Primary School.



The PTA should be praised for their fundraising towards the project and the pupils expressed their thanks by giving the Trust a lovely enormous thank you card!

Parkrun goes from strength to strength!

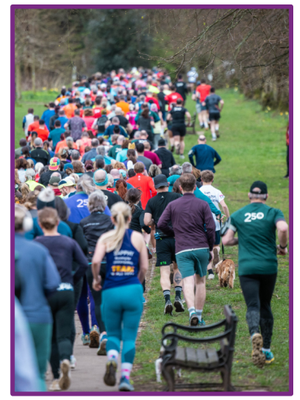
The Harpenden Trust is delighted that the new parkrun in Rothamsted Park is proving to be a great success. The Harpenden Trust Community Fund awarded a grant to the organisers to help with set up costs, and members of the Harpenden Trust community have participated in running, walking, and volunteering at the events.

The event, which takes place every Saturday morning at 9am, is a free timed 5k run or walk. It is open to everyone in the community; there is no time limit to complete the course, and all are welcome.

The parkrun passed its 6-month anniversary in October, and at that time it had seen 26 events, with over 11,000 crossing the finishing line.

Richard Nichols, chair of the Harpenden Trust said, "It is wonderful to see parkrun thriving in the heart of Harpenden and we are delighted to have played a role in bringing the event to the town. The Harpenden Trust Community Fund is committed to helping projects that can have a real and positive effect in our community."

For more information, please go to www.parkrun.org.uk/rothamstedpark/



WHAT'S ON AT THE HALLS – NOVEMBER 2026

Below is a list of activities which take place at the Harpenden Trust Community Halls.
For information regarding timings, fees and availability please use the contact details shown

Harpenden Trust Centre – 90 Southdown Road (opposite The Plough & Harrow)
Harpenden Trust Halls – 130a Southdown Road (above The Co-op)

ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

Hurst Children's Theatre Group
Theatre and Streetdance classes for children 3-18 years
www.hurstchildrenstheatregroup.com
hctg@live.co.uk
Tel: 07568 363104
Wednesday & Friday afternoons/evenings

Mini Professors
Science Classes for Pre schoolers 2-5 years
www.miniprofessors.com/stalbans
stalbans@miniprofessors.co.uk
Tel: Professor Tash 07921 172382
Monday & Friday mornings

Little Kickers
Fun filled football classes for 18 months - 3.5 years
www.littlekickers.co.uk / jlustigman@littlekickers.co.uk
Tel: 020 8440 6195
Monday mornings

Ballet with Zoë
Fun and friendly ballet classes for all children 2-5 years
Watch from the side or join in with your little one
balletwithzoe@gmail.com
Friday afternoons

Acro Dance Class
Acro Dance is the perfect blend of dance and gymnastics.
No experience needed — just come ready to move! Ages 6 – 13 years
www.harpendendance.com
Thursday afternoons

ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN & ADULTS

Penny Waterman School of Dance
Ballet and Street Dance/Jazz classes for ages 3 – 8 years
www.pennywaterman.com
admin@pennywaterman.com
Monday afternoons

The Dance Studio
Ballet, Tap, Modern, Jazz & Acro dance classes
www.thedancestudioherts.co.uk
miriam@thedancestudioherts.co.uk
Monday and Thursday
afternoons/evenings & Saturday mornings
Tues & Weds evenings & Saturday mornings

Qi Kwan Do Harpenden
Learn self-defence techniques Ages 8+
adam@qkduk.com
Wednesday evenings

Jado Kuin Do Harpenden
Martial Arts classes Ages 3+
www.jadoherts.uk / info@jadoherts.uk
Monday evenings

EXERCISE & DANCE CLASSES FOR ADULTS

Movement for Memory - Imagination Dance CIC
Gentle dance-based sessions for those living with memory loss or cognitive impairments
www.imaginationarts.co.uk /
info.imaginationarts@yahoo.com
Tel: 07394 934911
Monday mornings

Keep your Fitness - for ladies 50+
Low impact exercise classes
www.harpendenfitness.com
susie.odell@live.com
Tel: Susie 07958 921291
Tuesday & Thursday mornings

Flow & Ashtanga Yoga
Flow Yoga Monday mornings & Tuesday afternoons
Ashtanga Self Practice Wednesday mornings
celiacaplan@gmail.com
Tel: Celia 07952 525297

Zumba Harpenden with Jennifer Davies
Latin inspired cardio dance workout
Zumbadancingjen@gmail.com
Tel: Jen 07825 892890
Tuesday evenings & Saturday mornings

Push Me Fit Pilates
Small group classes
pushmefit.herts@gmail.com
Tel: Marta 07769 661177
Wednesday mornings

Clement Pilates
Matwork Pilates for all
julieclementpilates@gmail.com
Tel: Julie 07801 967369
Wednesday mornings

Classes with Rachel
Pure Stretch, Retro Aerobics & Body Tone
classeswithrachel@gmail.com
Tel: Rachel 07855 946555
Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday mornings

Zumba Gold with Andrea
Zumba Gold class for active older adults
boggo1@mac.com
Tel: Andrea 07816 916756
Monday mornings & Tuesday Mornings

Vinyasa Yoga Flow
Transformative dynamic classes
imogen@lunalondonyoga.com
Tel: Imogen 07980 575454
Monday & Wednesday evenings

Line Dancing
Line Dancing for Improvers
www.berniejes@icloud.com
Tel: Bernie 07850 160294
Friday mornings

Vinyasa Yoga
A dynamic and rhythmic style of yoga
Tel: Julie 07525 051829
Friday mornings

Awareness Yoga
Yoga classes available for men and women of all ages and abilities
www.awarenessyoga.co.uk
Tel: Frances on 07896 294243
Thursday evenings

Jazzercise
Dance class for adults - learning dance sequences to strengthen, stretch and exercise body and mind in an informal, fun atmosphere. Some mat work also included.
Please contact philippajodonovan@gmail.com
Thursday mornings

Ballet Tone
Exercise class for adults using ballet technique to improve posture, strength, flexibility and balance. Includes centre work and some mat work.
Please contact philippajodonovan@gmail.com
Friday mornings

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR ADULTS

Harpenden German Class
For adults wishing to improve their German
Contact Robyn on robyn.emerton@gmail.com
Friday mornings

Bridge for Beginners
Learn to play bridge
richard@templeandco.com
Tel: Richard 01582 762727
Monday & Thursday afternoons

Harpenden Learning for Leisure
Daytime, adult educational courses
www.harpendenlearningforleisure.org.uk
enrol@harpendenlearningforleisure.org.uk
Wednesday mornings & afternoons
Thursday afternoons

Harpenden u3a
A variety of activities for individuals
https://u3asites.org.uk/harpenden/home
Tel: Judith 07593 579415
Tuesday afternoons
Tuesday mornings & Thursday afternoons

OTHER ACTIVITIES FOR ADULTS

Creative Sewing
Come and join in the wonderful world of sewing
email: shani.vermaak@gmail.com / Tel: 07543 876992
Tuesday mornings

Southdown Marquetry Group
Make a masterpiece with wood veneer
Tel: John on 07981 142099
Wednesday mornings

Sing with Tim - Men's Singing Group
Designed for all voices and skill levels, our sessions focus on the joy of music and community.
All welcome, no auditions or experience needed.
https://www.singwithtim.com/singing-groups-1
Tuesday mornings

Guitar Group
Guitarists simply enjoying the experience of playing together with acoustic, electric and bass guitars.
Contact 07598 956976
Monday evenings

FREE COMMUNITY DROP-IN CENTRES

Citizens Advice St Albans & District
Free, confidential and independent advice
www.citizensadvicestalbans.org.uk
Wednesday 10:30am - 12:30pm

Computer Friendly Drop-In
Find a solution to your Windows, Apple or Android issues. Appt or just Drop-in
admin@cfsta.org or Tel: 01727 617359
Thursday 10:00am - 12:30pm

THE WELL BEAN COMMUNITY CAFÉ

The Well Bean Community Café: at the centre of the Harpenden Trust

The Well Bean Community Café is based upstairs at the Harpenden Trust Centre at 130a Southdown Road and is open to everyone from 10.30am-12.30pm, Monday to Friday. It is run completely by volunteers and all money raised goes directly to supporting the work of the Harpenden Trust.

Julia Pryor, Café Team Leader, explained why the Café is so popular. She said, "It's a lovely, friendly space and there is always a good selection of homemade cakes available. The volunteers are always keen to chat, and of course there is great coffee!"

The Café is run on a donation-only basis; customers can pay whatever they can afford. "Everyone should be able to treat themselves," said Julia. "By having it as donation-only it means that people can come and have a cake and a couple of cups of coffee and to be honest, no one notices what people give."



The Café has become a key part of the Harpenden Trust and because it is located at the centre of the Trust premises it has become a focal point for a lot of the Trust's activities. "Many people attending classes or activities at the Trust Halls pop into the Café," explained Julia, "Trust volunteers often use the space for meetings or informal chats, and lots of members of the public visit us regularly."



The Well Bean Community Café has also been instrumental in building relationships in the community, as Julia explains, "One of the best things about the Café is that we can see friendships forming over the coffee. We've seen people meet each other and become real friends and that is wonderful."

There are about 50 volunteers who support the Well Bean Community Café in a range of ways, some of whom have been involved from its launch three years ago. It has become a popular and much-loved part of the Harpenden Trust, and we look forward to many more years of coffee and friendship!

Bakewell Shortbread Recipe by Pat Ring



Shortbread base:

200g plain flour
175g chilled butter, cubed
25g caster sugar
45g semolina
Pinch of baking powder

Filling:

200g seeded raspberry jam
2 medium eggs + 1 egg yolk
100g caster sugar
100g ground almonds
½ tbsp almond extract
100g unsalted butter

Topping:

30g flaked almonds
1 tbsp granulated sugar

Oven: 180°C /160°C fan / Gas Mark 4

Tin: 318 × 216 × 18 mm

Method

1. **Prepare the tin:** Grease and line with baking paper, leaving a 1–2cm overhang.
2. **Make the base:** Blitz all base ingredients in a food processor, or rub the butter into the flour by hand before mixing in the remaining ingredients.
3. **Bake:** Press the mixture firmly into the tin. Bake for **15–18 minutes** until lightly golden. Cool briefly.
4. **Add the jam:** Spread evenly over the base once cool enough.
5. **Make the filling:** Beat the eggs and egg yolk with the caster sugar, ground almonds and almond extract.
6. **Brown the butter:** Melt the butter gently in a pan until golden and nutty-smelling, taking care not to burn it. Pour immediately into the egg mixture and beat well.
7. **Bake the filling:** Pour over the jam and bake for **15 minutes**.
8. **Add the topping:** Sprinkle with flaked almonds and granulated sugar. Bake for a further **15 minutes**, until golden and set. ***Tip:*** *Allow to cool before cutting into squares or slices.*
9. **Cool:** Remove from the oven and leave to cool completely in the tin on a wire rack.
10. **Turn out carefully:** Place a board over the tin and turn over. Remove the baking paper, then turn back onto another board or serving plate. Avoid lifting by the paper, as the shortbread may crack.
11. **Slice and store:** Cut into slices once completely cool.

    Freezing: Freeze in a suitable container, use baking paper to layer between slices.

OUR VOLUNTEERS

Why Volunteer?



Make the most of your spare time
Even a small amount of time can have a big impact. Whether you can offer an hour now and then or volunteer regularly, your support helps brighten someone's day and strengthens our community spirit.

Use the skills you already have
Whether you enjoy chatting, organising, writing, designing, or helping behind the scenes, there's a role to suit you — from supporting clients to helping with events, fundraising, administration and organising.

Meet people and build new friendships
Volunteering is a great way to connect with friendly, like-minded people and often leads to lasting friendships.

Feel appreciated and make a difference
Every role matters, whether public-facing or behind the scenes. Your time and effort genuinely help others.

Build confidence and try something new
Gain new skills, enjoy new experiences, and develop a real sense of achievement along the way.

Give something back to your community
Help make Harpenden a warm and welcoming place for everyone.

Take pride in what you do
There's real satisfaction in knowing your contribution helps others and keeps vital services running smoothly.

Meet some of our wonderful volunteers!

Back in June the Harpenden Trust celebrated Volunteers' Week by showcasing a range of fantastic volunteers across our social media platforms. Here are just some of the highlights:

Helen Nelson is the Befriending Co-ordinator and also a Befriender. The Befriending Service provides regular company to older people on their own who may struggle to get out or who have little contact with relatives. Befriender volunteers call or visit their 'Befriendees' around once a week. They may have a chat, a cup of tea, or go for a gentle walk or accompany them to one of the Harpenden Trust activities. It is a valuable service that keeps some very vulnerable people connected to the Harpenden community.



"It's not just about offering friendship," explains Helen. "A lot of the time people will be reluctant to come to an activity as they don't know anyone. But if they have their Befriender with them then they have a friend that they can go in with. And that makes all the difference."



Gerard Stubbs is a member of the Audit, Risk and Governance (ARG) Committee. This committee is crucial as it supports the Harpenden Trust to operate within the relevant legal and regulatory frameworks. It also supports the Harpenden Trust Board by reviewing and recommending changes to the Trust's internal controls, financial reporting and risk management enabling them to be carefully managed and to a high standard.

"Basically, what we are trying to do is support and help the Harpenden Trust grow safely," says Gerard. "We are very aware that we are in uncertain times and there is more need than ever for the Trust and the services that it provides. We look at the here and now, but we also look at where we should be in three years, or five years and even beyond that. We are very clear that we need to support the sustainability of the Trust."

'Bingo Pete' aka Peter Tonathy, is a popular figure with clients of the Harpenden Trust's Activities Club. "We run the Bingo once a month at the Lea Springs Extra Care Scheme," says Peter "It's great fun and a great way for people to meet up and socialise."



The Bingo sessions started out as something just for Lea Springs residents with support from the Harpenden Trust, but it has now expanded and is open to all members of the Activities Club. "We have people coming in the minibus and some making their own way there," says Peter. "We have people who come with their Harpenden Trust Befrienders, and those who just walk from their rooms, it's a real mix." Each session lasts about an hour and there are four games and of course prizes. "I do all the Bingo calls," smiles Peter. "We've even adapted some of them to reflect members of our group which everyone can have a laugh about."

To find out more about volunteering for the Harpenden Trust, please contact admin@theharpendentrust.org.uk

CAROLS ON THE COMMON

Christmas Eve Carols on Harpenden Common – join us at 6pm

Which sound do you most associate with Christmas? Sleigh bells? A favourite Christmas tune? The smoke alarm announcing that the pigs in blankets are finally ready? The rustle of Quality Street wrappers before breakfast?

In Harpenden, another festive sound is fast becoming part of the Christmas tradition: the 6pm Christmas Eve countdown to the start of Carols on the Common.

Carols on the Common is a community event that brings together Harpenden residents of all ages. It is free, short and sweet, and takes place early enough in the evening for everyone to join in. Picture grandparents, parents and children singing together; school friends dancing in circles with the sort of energy the rest of us can only vaguely remember; neighbours meeting for an early evening drink before gathering for a festive singalong.



Last year, nearly 5,000 people gathered on the Common near the Harpenden Arms to sing their hearts out. Talented local musician Tim Sutton, together with his band and singers, will be back again this year to lead the festivities and help us all keep on track. If you don't know all the words, don't worry. Digital and printed song sheets are provided. So even if your knowledge of Christmas carols begins and ends with Mariah Carey, you'll be in safe hands.



This year will be the third Carols on the Common, and we're hoping to make it the best one yet. We're rotating the layout by 90 degrees so that more people can get closer to the stage, and we're adding extra speakers to improve the sound. With a bit of luck and a little less wind, everyone should hear better than last year - when the sound was reportedly better in West Common than at the Harpenden Arms end. Ah well, that's Harpenden for you.

Carols on the Common is supported by the Harpenden Trust and helps raise awareness of its Christmas Appeal. We'll never know exactly how much of the fabulous £60,000 raised by last year's Appeal can be attributed to Carols on the Common. But an event created by the community, enjoyed by the community and supporting a community cause can only help. We can't promise snow, starlight or perfect pitch, but plenty of Christmas spirit is guaranteed. So put Christmas Eve in your diary and join us on the Common.



As the event continues to grow, we're on the lookout for new marshals and volunteers. The role involves festive cheer, mild organisational competence and significantly less responsibility than Santa. Please email **admin@theharpendentrust.org.uk** to find out more.

Happy Christmas from the Carols on the Common team! We know it's a bit early, but events on Christmas Eve have to be organised by people who think about mince pies all year round.

CONTACT US - WE'RE HERE TO HELP

www.theharpendentrust.org.uk

admin@theharpendentrust.org.uk
halls@theharpendentrust.org.uk
minibus@theharpendentrust.org.uk

01582 460457

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

For donations please scan this QR Code

To give £5, £10, £20, simply text HARPT5, HARPT10 or HARPT20 to 70085

Call in at the Trust Centre (weekdays 10am-12pm)

Harpenden TRUST

Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR

The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

Company Number 5951591
Registered Charity Number 1118870

Need help or want to help? Please get in touch

SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY