

Chairman's Remarks

Throughout the last year the work of at Carillon Cottage has continued to provide a focus for our commitment to serve Christ through service to our community. The work is entirely dependant on volunteers and I would particularly like to acknowledge and thank the large number of volunteers who offer their time and support in a wide variety of ways.

We have been pleased to welcome Pauline Chandler who joined us during the year in the role of Team Leader. I also pay special thanks to Mike Grierson who has served as our Treasurer for a number of years and kept our accounting records so well. Mike has recently retired from this role and I welcome Unni Buschmann-Brown and Sharon Price who, between them, have now taken over this role from Mike.

The activities of the Cottage are covered by Toni Buckley below but, in addition, we have made good progress with a number of property maintenance and improvement tasks and this work is ongoing. Our website continues to be developed and provides an important information channel for our work.

Our AGM in April 2019 was well attended and the Management Committee, which includes representatives from Tidebrook and Stonegate, met quarterly while the standing committee also met in the intervening months.

Details of the Open Gardens weekend are covered below, but I would like to add my thanks to all those involved in organising such a successful and financially important event last year.

Finally thank you to all who have supported Carillon Cottage in the past and we hope that this will continue in the future.

Michael Hardcastle
Chairman

Report from Carillon Cottage Team Leaders

During the past year our Volunteer Driving Scheme was used by a total of 91 clients involving a total of 490 lifts by our volunteer driving team. The demand for lifts to hospital appointments has for the second year overtaken the requests for lifts to more local appointments. This year we gave an average of 22 lifts per month to hospital appointments and 19 local drives per month. We currently have 3 residents who we provide a high level of support to.

The Jigsaw Library and Wheelchair Loan Scheme continue to be much appreciated services and the twice monthly Hearing Aid Maintenance service provides a well-used forum for those who need replacement batteries, tubes and minor repairs/cleaning of their hearing aids. This year we have provided training for five volunteers from Ticehurst Community Friends and helped them to set up a monthly session in Ticehurst. We are providing on-going support and supplies to them for the foreseeable future with the benefit that they can assist us, if our volunteers are absent through sickness or holiday.

Wealden District Council in partnership with voluntary organisations has set up Wadhurst Dementia Forum with a view to making the village a more dementia friendly place. Representatives from Carillon Cottage have joined the Forum which is currently working on a series of initiatives to celebrate National Dementia week in May. The Cottage hopes to organise a 'Bake Off' event to raise funds for dementia charities.

This year we have had to ask the majority of our volunteer drivers to renew their certificates with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). We would like to thank everyone for cooperating with this onerous but necessary task and welcome four new drivers to the team.

In line with our strategy to publicise our services as widely as possible, we launched the Carillon Cottage Facebook page. This sits alongside a couple of other Wadhurst Village information groups and has proved very successful in communicating with younger members of the community. We feel that recently there has been a greater understanding and appreciation of what Carillon Cottage is doing in and for the Wadhurst community.

Open Gardens 2019

Our most successful year yet! We raised £5097 towards the annual running costs of Carillon Cottage. We were blessed with good weather, amazing volunteers and lots of visitors from near and far. This really has become a much-loved annual village event and we are so grateful to the very many folk who open their gardens to provide a different choice every year. Special thanks must go to those who provided delicious cakes and those who ran the refreshment venues. Also, our plant stall was a huge success, the “pre event” stall outside the Cottage a week before whetted the appetite for the main event. Thank you also to Green Lizard who sponsored our banners.

Open Gardens now has its own Instagram and Facebook page and has an entry in the National Gardens Open Scheme handbook and website.

Toni Buckley

Vice Chair Carillon Cottage Management Committee

Friends across Wadhurst

Friends Across Wadhurst continues to offer supportive reliable relationships through our befrienders, for people who would otherwise be socially isolated and lonely.

We are encouraged that new befrienders continue to come forward and that FAW continues to hear of new clients through many external agencies to whom FAW is now well known. The FAW website, www.friendsacrosswadhurst.org.uk has also enabled us to become more widely recognised.

In the last year some thirty FAW befrienders have regularly visited their clients, some of whom have been visited for over 3 years and where true friendships have developed.

The numbers of hours that the befrienders give cannot be over-estimated. Well in excess of 1000 hours of visiting have taken place this year. A number of befrienders have also visited their client on Christmas day and on their birthday. The importance of a regular conversation with a friend is now acknowledged to be significant in the improvement of the health of the client and their dependence on other agencies.

All befrienders receive appropriate training and support by their coordinator.

If you would like to meet to talk about becoming a befriender do please contact me on 0739 899 1095 or email me on friendsacrosswadhurst@gmail.com.

Lesley Thompson 6th April 2020