

Carillon Cottage Report for the year to 31st December 2020

Chairman's Remarks

During the extraordinary year of 2020, the important work of Carillon Cottage has continued to adapt, develop and thrive - helping the church live out Jesus's commandment to love our neighbours as ourselves.

I would particularly like to thank the many volunteers who have made this possible and our Team Leaders, now numbering 5, the ideal number to cover the working week. I also thank Barbara Stevens for her service to the Cottage over many years as a Team leader, and who retired from this role during the year. The team is led by Toni Buckley, who outlines some of the achievements below.

There have been many challenges during the year and with the cancellation of the Open Gardens fundraiser event combined with significant additional covid-related costs, our finances were put under pressure. However, this has largely been mitigated, thanks to many donations received, plants sales by Jaime Grounsell and 2 grants from Wealden District Council – we are very grateful for this tremendous support which has meant our finances remain in good shape. Thanks too to our Treasurer Unni Buschmann-Brown and Sharon Price for managing our finances through the year.

Work has been going on throughout the year behind the scenes on maintenance and improvements to the property, including a new shed erected in memory of our past Chairman Gerry Wooding Jones, and funded by his family and friends, for which we are most grateful.

Since the Cottage opened 20 years ago, the garden has been maintained by a small group of volunteers led by Garth Cooper and Bob Lloyd. They are taking a well-earned retirement and we thank them for their many years of service. We would welcome any offers of help in the garden.

New ways of working have meant some additions to our IT equipment, generously funded by Wealden District Council.

The Friends Across Wadhurst initiative is currently suspended but it is hoped that this will be relaunched later in 2021. This was set up over 5 years ago by Lesley Thompson and has been a great success in providing thousands of hours of much-valued friendship to members of our community. A huge thank you to Lesley and to fellow-coordinator Linda Forrest and their team of volunteers, for their great work.

Finally thank you to all who have supported and continue to support the work of Carillon Cottage – it would not happen without you.

Michael Hardcastle

Chairman, Carillon Cottage Management Committee

3rd May 2021

Report from Carillon Cottage Team Leaders

After two decades beavering away it has taken a pandemic to place Carillon Cottage firmly at the heart of life in our villages. With a little tweaking of our existing services, we were able immediately to rise to the challenge of coordinating the volunteer effort to help people shielding and in 'lockdown' in their homes.

150 people responded to our Facebook posts for additional volunteers, and publicity invited those who needed help to contact us.

Between 23rd March and 27th July our volunteers collected 281 prescriptions, delivered shopping to 193 homes, delivered hearing aid batteries to 45 people, and carried out 131 other tasks. We worked closely with Wealden District Council Covid Hub, Wadhurst Parish Council, Jempsons, the surgery and the

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pharmacy during this time to ensure that all those who needed help received it. We also had regular calls from Councillor Bob Standley from East Sussex County Council, to express his thanks and ask if there was anything we needed to enable us to continue the work we were doing.

By the end of the year, with another lockdown during the month of December, we had collected 359 prescriptions, delivered shopping on 218 occasions, done 92 drives to hospital appointments and 64 drives to surgery and other local destinations: Earning the nickname of 'the Carry-On Cottage' along the way!

I would like to thank everyone who has made this year so rewarding and challenging. My fellow Team Leaders, who staffed the phones so valiantly from home and all the willing volunteers who signed up to help. We have had many phone calls and letters of thanks from those we helped who were so appreciative of the assistance they were given. We were also delighted to be presented with a Local Heroes award by Wealden District Council recognising the work of managers and volunteers involved in ensuring that everyone in our community was looked after during a difficult year.

Toni Buckley

Vice Chair Carillon Cottage Management Committee