

December 2024

Where did 2024 go? Susie O'Hagan, Operations Manager.



It is really hard to believe that we have already reached the end of another year and a huge thank you has to go out to the 100+ people who have volunteered their time to help us deliver all we that we do.

Alongside delivering our projects and providing bespoke one-to-one help, we have welcomed new trustees as well as new staff in Andy and Teresa, and moved our gaze towards the help we can give to other groups in town.

In March Andy set up Ludlow Community Support Network, bringing together third sector groups and organisations involved with providing support to the community. It is hoped that this network can help us all work together to avoid duplication, identify gaps and find solutions by joint working, effective signposting and pursuing joint funding opportunities.

In the summer we undertook the Volunteering in Ludlow survey and Teresa has been working hard to plan a pop-up event to showcase all the amazing things volunteers do in the town. We know how difficult and time consuming it is to recruit and train volunteers and we are well placed to help others to do this by sharing information, signposting and providing training. We are planning to develop this area of our work more in 2025.

We also had the opportunity to make Julia's Food Projects Coordinator role full-time this year. She has overseen the continued development of our Community Fridge, which is visited by around 200 people a month, many of whom come weekly. Community Lunch continues to be very popular with 30+ people being fed each week. Our partnership with the Town Council on a Shaping Places project will have some exciting news in the new year about recipes and workshops. Julia will also be working closely with the Food Bank and the Foyer, amongst others, on this project.

Abi launched Hands Together Ludlow on Instagram this year and has done training in telling our story and developing case studies in video which will enable her to develop a bank of reels for us to use to share our work and support funding bids. Much of the work done behind the scenes by Abi and Sarah goes unnoticed but is vital to what we can do, how well we are known and how efficiently we function. Charity finances aren't glamorous but can be complicated and we take them every seriously both in terms of how we spend funds and how we account for them and Sarah works hard to keep it all in hand. Our Friends scheme was launched this year (something else Abi and Sarah keep an eye on) which we hope will continue to grow. Many thanks to all those who have joined so far. www.surveymonkey.com/r/FriendsHTL

It's not possible to mention all the organisations and people who support us in ways both big and small. Every one of them is vital to our sustainability and ability to help the people of the town. We really believe

it takes a whole town working together to build and maintain an equitable, safe, empowering and future-focused environment for all and we look forward to continuing to work toward this with you all next year.

I will soon start compiling our annual report with the detail of what we have done and achieved in 2024 which will be available electronically, and in print, in time for our AGM in May. In the meantime, we will keep you updated on our socials and here in the Newsletter. Have a lovely Christmas one and all.

Company at Christmas tradition

Bookings for this year's Company at Christmas are now closed. We look forward to seeing those who have booked for some festive cheer on Christmas Day!

Don't forget that our Open Table of donated surplus will be open 9:30-12:30 on Christmas Day at Helena Lane. Come and see what last minute supplies you can grab for a £1 minimum donation.

Mark Mantle, Volunteer of the Year!

Ludlow Men's Shed's volunteer, Mark Mantle, has won the UK Men's Shed Association award as Volunteer of the Year!

Mark travelled down to London on 19th November to attend the award ceremony at the Speaker's Chambers in the House of Commons where the various finalists were welcomed by the Rt Hon Sir Lindsay Hoyle MP.

On winning the award Mark said, "I am thrilled to receive this award and while pretty nervous about going to the prestigious State Rooms it's been an honour to represent Ludlow Men's Shed and the UK Men's Shed movement". Ludlow Men's Shed Co-ordinator, David Burton, stated "What a huge achievement for Mark, he has had a difficult past and he deserves the recognition after the enormous amount of time and effort he has put into the Shed project – fantastic".

Since Ludlow Men's Shed was formed in 2021, the Shed now has over 40 members and has grown to be one of the largest of the 1,100 Men's Sheds in the UK! The members have access to a wide range of wood and metalworking equipment, as well as a social space to enjoy refreshments within the Hands Together premises.

You can hear a bit more about Mark's award through this link - [Top awards for Shropshire's Men's Sheds volunteers - BBC News](#)



Staff and Volunteer training

Over the past month, staff and volunteers have taken part in Induction training, Level 2 Mental Health Awareness training, Basic Food Hygiene and Level 2 Event Planning.

Borrow my Chef



Next year we be launching a fun new project, Borrow my Chef!

We thought that all the wonderful restaurants around Ludlow who are always keen to support us, but never have surplus to donate, could perhaps supply expertise instead. Our Food Coordinator, Julia, has started contacting local restaurants; the project has been met with a great deal of enthusiasm and excitement. The support we have received so far has been amazing; we will give all of the details after the event! The guest chef appearance will not be advertised in advance as the meal they cook will still be a part of our Community Lunch, only using surplus and cooked for those who regularly attend.

We are excited about the up-and-coming kitchen capers, how will the chefs cope with only using surplus, only knowing on the day what there might be, just as our fantastic regular volunteer cooks do week after week! We will definitely keep you posted, be sure to keep an eye out for updates!

Pension credit reminder

A reminder that if you are over state pension age, you have until December 21st to make your claim for Pension Credit. Thanks to the Pension Credit backdating rules, it is possible to apply for Pension Credit and have the claim backdated by up to 3 months - so long as there is entitlement during that time. You can check if you're eligible by following the link [here](#). If you are eligible, you can apply by ringing 0800 991 234 (Monday-Friday 8am-6pm), print out and fill in a paper application form, apply online by following this [link](#).

Hands Together Ludlow can provide assistance with filling in a form online to those who are unable to do so. These appointments are held on a Thursday morning with a volunteer. To make an appointment, please call the office on 01584 873062 or pop into the building and speak to a member of the team.

Christmas closing dates

Hands Together Ludlow will close at 4pm on Tuesday 24th December and re-open at 10am on Monday 6th January. We would like to wish all of our volunteers, trustees, supporters and Friends a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. We are very excited to see what 2025 has in store for us!

Some events this month (more information available on the Events page of our website)

Lucky Dip Social Lunch: Every weekday from 12:00pm – 1:30pm. Come along for a light meal and good company.

Help Hub: Wednesday and Thursday mornings by appointment only. Support available for online forms (strictly not Personal Independence Payment (PIP)).

Mindful Colouring: Every Tuesday between 11am-12pm at our Social Space. Supplies provided by Hands Together Ludlow.

For more details of any of our events please call **01584 873062** or visit our website: [Events \(handstogetherludlow.org.uk\)](https://handstogetherludlow.org.uk)

HANDS TOGETHER LUDLOW is grateful for funding and support provided by the community and many other organisations, such as Millichope Foundation and the Hall Garth Trust.



HANDS TOGETHER LUDLOW

connecting our community

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