

Happy 10th Anniversary



David Harlington, a founding Trustee, is retiring and recalls with pleasure and bemusement the ups and downs of **HANDS TOGETHER LUDLOW** during the last decade.

“Ludlow struggled with the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis. Concerned folk tried to come to terms with life during the years of austerity – much of which was written about. Many different views were debated on what should best be done to help our community.

HANDS TOGETHER LUDLOW – it started with an idea in August 2013. Cathy Pritchard and I got together and developed some concrete practical proposals which were presented to the churches in Ludlow in December 2013. On June 4th, 2014, **HANDS TOGETHER LUDLOW** was launched at a public meeting in the Methodist Church. It had taken a year to develop the idea into an acceptable practical solution to the problem. During the first three years of the project 2014 to 2017 – a lot of moral support and practical help was given from all the churches and from the community at large and the project began to work, becoming a registered charity on March 9th 2017.

The next three years of growth: 2017 to 2020 – what it needed now was some enthusiastic fresh blood which was happily and eagerly forthcoming. The project blossomed, Sue Chantler became Chair and funding was found for an Administrator, Sarah Kellett, from the Methodist Church. The charity became well known for its influence in the community. Three years of influence: 2020 to 2023 – years of austerity were interrupted by the Covid pandemic which exacerbated the needs of the hungry and lonely in the community. A new source of young volunteers was found to supplement the existing older volunteers, who were asked to stay at home. This was a tonic for **HANDS TOGETHER LUDLOW** and set us up for the future.

Where are we now? The problems in society seem to be changing from austerity to levelling up, and from immigration to climate change. It makes me happy to be retiring from an organisation which possesses such energy and enthusiasm for helping our society. It is satisfying to know that Ops Manager, Susie O’Hagan espouses the same core values set out ten years ago, they still apply to the Charity today and it makes me proud to think how professional and well managed the organisation has become. I am delighted that our staff and volunteers are so enthusiastic, that our trustees and local benefactors are so dedicated and generous. I congratulate all of you who work so tirelessly to further the aims of the charity.

Now that it is time for me to retire, I am content in the knowledge that **HANDS TOGETHER LUDLOW** continues to fulfil community needs and is firing on all cylinders ready to tackle the next ten years. Farewell, thank you all and best wishes to everyone.”

The staff and trustees of Hands Together Ludlow wish David all the very best and thanks him for his service to the community. We marked the occasion by presenting him with a plaque made by The Men’s Shed.

New Opportunities

We should have some very exciting news to share with you over the next few weeks, including a new full-time job opportunity to start in the New Year. Keep an eye on our [Facebook Page](#) and [website](#) to keep up to date when new opportunities are announced!

Our new phone number



We are beginning to phase out the Helpline phone number and are using our existing office landline number instead. The helpline number has been used since the first Covid-19 lockdown back in March 2020. During the height of the lockdown, calls were answered 7 days a week by an excellent team of volunteers to help with incoming enquiries. Help varied from providing food and prescription deliveries for those needing to self-isolate, liaising with other organisations to help coordinate further support and providing a friendly ear and reassurance during these difficult times. More recently, calls received are linked to helping to encourage people to get out and about again, often linked to a befriender pairing or attending one of our weekly events.

We are still here, and you can still call us for support, information, or just a chat on **01584 873062** Monday to Friday 9:00-5:00.

An exciting opportunity for women: DIY Days

In response to enquiries by women wanting to develop DIY skills, there will be a women's DIY Day held at the Ludlow Men's Shed premises every Friday from the beginning of January.

David Burton, the Shed Co-ordinator explained "Many women have never had the opportunity to learn to use various DIY tools or equipment, so we will be extending these facilities initially for a three-month pilot period and if popular it will become a regular feature. The sessions will be entirely informal with support and guidance only if needed". For further details email sheds.handstogetherludlow@gmail.com



Company at Christmas



In November's Newsletter, we confirmed we were continuing our Company at Christmas tradition. We would like to say a very big thank you to Ludlow Farmshop who have very kindly donated turkeys and Christmas puddings for our guests to enjoy on the day. One Stop's Groundwork Fund have also donated to allow us to continue this tradition.

We have a handful of spaces still available for people to join us on Christmas Day at Helena Lane. If you or someone you know will be alone this Christmas, please get in touch as we would love to spend the day with you. The day is full of festive cheer and a 2 course Christmas Dinner is provided by our volunteers and staff for only £10.00. Spaces are confirmed on a first come basis once we receive your payment and booking form back. Give us a call or pop in (ASAP) and have a chat with a member of the team for a booking form or to find out more.



Soup and a Roll

Don't forget we are still offering 'Soup and a Roll' every Monday and Tuesday 11:30-12:30! Come and warm up with a hearty bowl of homemade soup and a bread roll or piece of toast for just £1.50. Our volunteer's specialities so far have included Carrot and Coriander, Tomato and Vegetable, and Curried Parsnip.

Need help with living costs?

As Winter is now upon us, we are beginning to receive a lot more enquiries surrounding help with energy bills and tariffs. Shropshire Council have a website where you can check you are getting the right income, check if you are eligible for Council Tax support, how you could reduce your energy costs and much more. All relevant information can be viewed [here](#).



If you are unable to get online, visit Shropshire Local at Ludlow Library or come along to our weekly Digital Drop-In session on a Wednesday morning, 10-12, where our volunteers can provide support and guidance on energy tariffs and further help available elsewhere.



Winter HAF Events in Shropshire

From December 21st to January 5th, eligible children and young people in Shropshire are invited to take part in a range of fun activities through the Shropshire Council HAF (Holiday Activities and Food) Winter programme.

Shrewsbury Town FC Foundation are offering 2 action packed days with opportunities for boys and girls aged 5-11 to take part in multi-sport or football activities at Ludlow Football Club. They are also running education workshops surrounding health, nutrition, and wellbeing to help children lead a healthy and active lifestyle. Booking is required and can be done by emailing admin@foundationstfc.co.uk or via the following link [HAF Programme - Shrewsbury Town Foundation \(foundationstfc.co.uk\)](#)



There are also sessions in Craven Arms and Cleobury Mortimer throughout the Holidays. To find further information on the sessions, please go to [Holiday Activities and Food Programme \(HAF\) | Shropshire Council](#)

Christmas closing dates

Hands Together Ludlow will be closed from **4pm on Friday 22nd December** (No Youth Drop-In that day) for the Christmas period and will re-open from **10am on Tuesday 2nd January**. Please note that the phone line will not be managed during this time. We would like to thank you all for your continued support in 2023 and wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Staff and Volunteer training

There has been no volunteer or staff training to update on over the past month.

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

Soup and a Roll: Enjoy a warming bowl of homemade soup with a bread roll or a piece of toast for £1.50. Served at The Hub every Monday and Tuesday 11:30-12:30.

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

Hands Together Ludlow

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