



Happy New Year to all our readers

from Susie O'Hagan, Operations Manager

2022 seems to have come and gone in a flash but at **HANDS TOGETHER LUDLOW** we certainly packed a great deal in. Alongside all our usual activities of walking dogs, collecting prescriptions, feeding people at Community Lunch and Afternoon Tea, running the Good Grief Café, helping people get on-line etc, we achieved so much more...

Since coming out of the lockdowns we've had to grow and develop into a different way of working. We no longer had to be an emergency-led organisation, reacting to an immediate crisis, and we also no longer had lots of furloughed volunteers able to give their time. 2022 gave us the opportunity to take stock of how we run the charity, how we make sure we are identifying the needs of the town and what's needed to be in the best shape to meet them. We were able to really focus on implementing our five-year business plan.

In May last year we held a fantastic AGM and celebration event showcasing our achievements in 2021 and plans for 2022. It was lovely to see both volunteers and beneficiaries from different projects come together for chat, nibbles, and a glass of wine. We also launched new branding and website, held our Jubilee Fete which brought young and old(er!) together up at Helena Lane and took an outing to Attingham Park as part of our Social Prescribing activity.



Our biggest news was perhaps the move to our new building which gave us the opportunity to open a Community Fridge, leading to even better interaction with local businesses and food providers, and extending our reach to a wider demographic in the town. This move also meant we could open a new and improved Men's Shed which is really just a joy to behold and able to accommodate far more than the three people at a time in the old premises.

2022 also saw staffing changes: Sarah moved from an administrative role to be our Finance Officer, Debs joined us as our full-time Administrator, and Nicola as full-time Volunteer Coordinator when Pete moved on. Along with Di and Helen, we now have a robust staff team with clear roles and responsibilities. Working in an office together is helping bring all our projects and activities together.

Of course, more staff and a building necessitate even more focus on funding and fundraising which is where I will be focusing a good chunk of time in 2023. We really appreciate all the local help and support we get in this, whether it's a donation through the Community Fridge when you visit, to a local grant, or Nick running the London Marathon for us. **HANDS TOGETHER LUDLOW** is fundamentally a charity run for Ludlow by the people of Ludlow. Key to this are our volunteers, those who stayed with us past Covid (we couldn't have done all we did last year without you) and those who have joined us since.

2023 looks like it will be just as busy as 2022. Nicola has big plans for how we can better support volunteers and widen participation to provide opportunities to young people and other groups; Debs is looking at improving our marketing and social media to keep you all up to date with our activities; Helen is continuing to support new groups (such as the Parkinson's Support Group) and develop Social Prescribing in SW Shropshire, and Di will be developing the Food Group and links with producers as well all our food offerings.



The use of the new building will continue to grow and develop. Hopefully we'll keep running the Youth Drop-In with South Shropshire Youth Forum and we'll support local organisations by providing office space, a meeting room and much more. We plan to recruit volunteers to cook surplus food into soup and meals for the fridge and provide refreshments for users of the building.

Behind every forward-facing project, we have a lot of back-office activity that's maybe not as glamorous but still vital. We're implementing a new CRM (*Customer Relationship Management*) system and evaluation methodology so we can better measure our impact, continually improving our working practice, streamlining our financial systems, identifying and applying for funding, reporting back to funders, and developing partnerships and networks.



We love to hear from you, so if you haven't yet been by to visit the Shed or the Fridge, please do drop in. You can also contact us using the details at the end of this newsletter.

Best wishes for a healthy and happy 2023.

Susie

Running to raise funds

The London Marathon is fast approaching, less than 100 days in fact, and we are very lucky to have Nick Young running to raise funds for **HANDS TOGETHER LUDLOW**. Nick is part of the Ludlow Runners Club, a small, friendly running club based in Ludlow which Nick joined in 2017. He entered a ballot for the Club's one place allocated to it by English Athletic for the London Marathon on 23rd April 2023. To his great surprise his name was pulled out of the hat! He has been training since before Christmas and runs at least four times a week. If you see him around town, clocking up the miles, give him a cheer!



We asked Nick what he hopes to achieve by running the London Marathon and he said that he had three reasons; firstly, to raise money for **HANDS TOGETHER LUDLOW**, secondly to help promote Ludlow Runners, and thirdly running a marathon is a personal ambition. He will be 68 years and 10 days old on marathon day and it might be his only opportunity to achieve such a goal ... Go Nick, we're right behind you.

Nick grew up in Kidderminster, his father was a carpet weaver, and his mother was a nurse in the local hospital. Nick attended a local grammar school and then gained entry to Birmingham University where he qualified as a dentist in 1978. He worked as a hospital dental surgeon for a year followed by a couple of years in NHS practice. Nick then joined the Royal Army Dental Corps, serving worldwide providing dental care to HM Forces personnel and their families. A career highlight was being appointed an honorary dental surgeon to the late Queen Elizabeth II. He retired in the rank of brigadier from his final position as chief dental officer to HM Forces in 2015.

Nick has always been driven by a strong sense of community support and on retirement he became a non-executive director at Royal Stoke Hospital where he continued to add value to the wider healthcare needs of the West Midlands for a further four years. And then in early 2020 the Covid pandemic was declared and Ludlow's MP, Rt Hon Philip Dunne, invited him to lead an initiative to support Ludlow and surrounding communities with voluntary assistance during the lockdowns. Fortunately for Nick **HANDS TOGETHER LUDLOW** had already quietly been providing such charitable support to the local community for many years. Hands Together was temporarily renamed 'Pulling Together Ludlow', and its committed staff delivered huge amounts of good work to benefit people at all levels within our local community who found themselves in need or distress.

Therefore, when Nick heard that he had won the ballot for a place in the London Marathon his choice of where to direct his fund-raising efforts was made very easy. He'll run the London Marathon on 23rd April 2023 to raise money for **HANDS TOGETHER LUDLOW**!

I am sure that he can count on your full support. Here is the link to his fundraising page if you would like to sponsor him: [Nicholas Young is fundraising for Hands Together Ludlow \(justgiving.com\)](https://www.justgiving.com/Nicholas-Young-is-fundraising-for-Hands-Together-Ludlow)

Company at Christmas

It was all hands on-deck on Christmas Day at Helena Lane. The amazing volunteers, who happily gave up their time to make it a special day for the local community, worked tirelessly in the kitchen to serve up a scrumptious lunch with all the trimmings.

Christmas is a time for laughter and happiness and the local community were certainly given plenty of that. Whilst the party-goers enjoyed their lunch they were entertained by a solo harpist who created a festive atmosphere by playing a variety of Christmas music, and Amy Evans serenaded them with Christmas carols. Huge thanks to both of them.

A cheery vibe continued throughout the day with Santa appearing bearing gifts, which had been kindly donated by Home Instead. Home Instead provide private home care and created a lovely idea called 'Be a Santa' gift giving scheme which aims to touch the lives of people within the community who may be lonely or not receive a Christmas present.

During the day, the volunteers also manned the open table, which was full of goodies that were free to anyone. It was a huge success and had many takers. A big thank you goes out to all the local donors.

The day provided an optimistic vibe and everyone was in good spirits. The volunteers were incredible and created a well-organised, fun day full of merriment and magical moments, spreading joy and happiness to all those who attended.

No pressure for next year everyone!



Ludlow Parkinson's Support Group

Ludlow Parkinson's Support Group (LPSG) had its first meeting in October 2022 and has met monthly since then. It is a friendly informal group and it is affiliated to Parkinson's UK so members can access the support, information and research they need. But mostly the group is about having a friendly chat over a cuppa and cake.

Our 2023 meetings will have occasional guest speakers starting with Dr Katie Miller talking about the new Archaeology Lab project based at Ludlow Library.

Dates and venues for 2023 meetings are as follows, starting at 10.30am to 12noon:

17th January at Clifton Court *(at the top of Old Street, Ludlow)*
15th February at Clifton Court
21st March at The Clive
4th April at Clifton Court
16th May at Clifton Court
20th June at The Clive
25th July at Clifton Court
15th August at Clifton Court



For further information please contact Helen Vaughan
helen.vaughan@handstogetherludlow.org.uk

Introducing the Shropshire Local Directory

There are so many ways of using the internet to find out about local services and community groups that it can be confusing. The Shropshire Local Directory contains information about support organisations throughout Shropshire. <https://shropshire-directory.co.uk/> is hosted by the Qube, a voluntary sector lead organisation supporting social prescribing.

**SEARCH
LOCAL**

It was developed by Shropshire's Community Development Team to help Healthy Living Advisors access information that can help them with social prescribing, but anyone can use it, in two ways:

- It can be used to look for an activity or service in any location in Shropshire. Simply enter a key word, for example 'tennis' or 'dementia' and your postcode and the directory will tell you where the nearest group/service is located and how many miles away it is from your postcode.
- It can also be used to add information and tell other people about any groups or services you run. If you've searched for your group or activity and it's not listed, the website has a link where you can download a form and email it to the directory administrator. Information can be changed and updated in the same way.

Upcoming events

Ludlow Men's Shed: Monday to Friday from 10.00am to 3.00pm at 15 Lower Galdeford, providing companionship and woodcraft activities for men.

Good Start Together Toddler Group: Every Thursday from 9.30am to 11.30am at the Methodist Church. [Participation by referral only.](#)

Community Lunch: Every Tuesday from 12.30pm to 2.00pm. £3.50 for a two course meal. Please encourage people who would benefit to book their place through the helpline.

Midweek Movers: Every Wednesday from 2.00pm to 3.00pm at the Helena Lane Day Centre, chair-exercise classes for people with limited mobility. (In partnership with Age UK.)

Afternoon Tea: Every Wednesday from 2.00pm to 3.30pm at the Helena Lane Day Centre, to help and encourage socially isolated people to regain independence.

Good Grief Café: Normally the first Wednesday of each month from 3.45pm to 5.00pm at Bill's Kitchen (next to the Assembly Rooms), offering mutual support for those who are mourning the loss of a loved one. [Next meeting Wednesday 1st February 2023.](#)

For more details of any of these events please call the **Community Helpline: 01584 817250.**

HANDS TOGETHER LUDLOW is grateful for funding and support provided by the community and many other organisations, such as Marches Food Matters, Hall Garth Trust and Burford Trust.



**COMMUNITY
FUND**



**HANDS
TOGETHER
LUDLOW**
connecting our community

Hands Together Ludlow
15 Lower Galdeford, Ludlow, SY8 1RU

Community Helpline: **01584 817250**

email: volunteer@handstogetherludlow.org.uk

website: www.handstogetherludlow.org.uk

registered charity no. 1171979



@Hands2GLudlow



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