

FSPSP 2024 AGM SUMMARY REPORT

Trustees and Supporters

Our Supporter base remains much the same, but there have been changes in our trustees. Martin Lockwood, as churchwarden, replaced Clive Ward as the exofficio Trustee, Clive was then voted on as a full Trustee. Jackie Avery was also re-voted as a Trustee as her tenure as a Founder trustee had come to an end.

Summary of the Year

2023 has been a very successful fundraising year for The Friends, with some exciting and profitable events. The first event of the year was Geoff Harry's Quiz, well attended as usual, with the food provided by the Charities Group and an excellent raffle. The money raised was split equally between the Friends and Vaughan House in Guildford.

Our Easter Market was held on 28 March. Sadly, the weather was decidedly wintery which was very unfortunate for the stallholders on the decking outside the Parrot. They, and their customers, got rather windblown and wet. Our footfall was lower than usual but we had 23 stalls and all those who came enjoyed the day.

The Bulls Head very kindly sponsored a Quiz Night for the Friends on August 1st. This was well supported by 52 people who also enjoyed a meal and a significant amount was raised.

August 5th was the date of the Ewhurst Carnival and again the weather was not on our side! We set up our gazebo in a howling gale and were pleased to have so many visitors during the day. Special thanks go to Connie Watson & Mary McMath who made all the crocus decorations for the gazebo. We offered people to guess how many how many crocuses were donated over the day. The crocus bulbs were to be planted later in the churchyard by children from Rainbows End Pre-school and Ewhurst Infants School. Residents from the Old Rectory were invited to watch, a few residents did planting too. Unfortunately, it looks as if the squirrels have enjoyed many of the bulbs before they had a chance to come up but there have been some flowers.

The Friends and the Ewhurst History Society had a joint stall at the Rectory Fete in September and our banners and activity packs were on show in the church as it was also Heritage Weekend.

We were invited to plant the crocus bulbs donated at the Carnival. The ground was prepared for them so they enjoyed putting a couple of bulbs into a hole, covering them over and watering. Residents from the Old Rectory were invited to come and watch, a few residents did planting as well. Unfortunately, it looks as if the squirrels have enjoyed many of the bulbs before they had a chance to come up but there have been some flowers.

Our big fundraising finale was the Spanish Evening held on November 29th in the suitably decorated Village Hall. Plenty of wine, good food, music, a premier raffle and the support of the village community, all helped make this an excellent evening for those who managed to book a table. A very significant sum of money was raised at this event.

Our Christmas card sales were good this year, with two original cards painted by George Yates. The cards were sold after our services and at the village school Christmas Market where we had a shared stall with the Ewhurst History Society.

Four schools have visited our church this year together with a group of instructors from Sayers Croft. Trustees showed the children around the church and helped them complete our activity sheets. The Bellringers took them into the Bell Tower to find out more about the bells. These tours are an important part of the outreach, essential for our original grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.(HLF)

Update on Heritage Lottery Grant

Our grant application to HLF has had a few hiccups. Firstly, they failed to inform us that FSPSP had been accepted to start an application and then FSPSP were given the wrong form to complete. The closure of HLF for three months over Christmas did not help, but we have finally been given the correct form. However, we have lost three months of the year allocated to complete an application.

Work is well underway to involve village organisations in the proposed drama events that FSPSP plan as a community initiative. We continue to liaise with St Nicholas Cranleigh on the installation of technology to improve the visuals within the church and hope to complete the application by May 2024. We have asked for an extension, if needed, and have been informed that this will be considered.