

The Woodhouse Centre News

For members, volunteers and supporters

October - December 2021



COVID Safety Guidance

To help prevent the spread of COVID, we have the following precautions in place:

- Masks are to be worn when entering and moving around the Centre. When the shed is “full” masks should also be worn – particularly if the door is closed.
- Use hand sanitiser provided when entering the Centre and during sessions. Tables & chairs will be wiped with sanitiser after each session.
- Rooms will be ventilated; members should dress warmly, or request our heated pads when seated.
- No one should come to the Centre if they have COVID symptoms or have tested positive for COVID.
- A register of attendees will be maintained. Anyone who has attended and later tests positive should let Dee or Sarah know.



Our priority remains the health of our members, staff and volunteers. We will continue to comply with Government regulations and may need to re-introduce distanced seating in the near future.



Dave & Daniel with Bug Hotels



Limpsfield Fair: Helen, Judy, and Sherri

Sales and Markets

Despite recent storms, a few big Market events held recently have been very successful. The Autumn Market earned around £1,000 in sales, donations and the raffle. The recent Love Oxted sale (27 Nov) brought in over £260 – even though Storm Arwen nearly blew the house down. The following week added £200 at the Limpsfield High Street Christmas Fair. The Oxted Country Market has been busier and busier as Christmas approaches: Lorna Edser and Sue Farrell sold £136 in goods on Friday 10 Dec, which is our highest taking at OCM yet! If you’d like to help out at a Market stall, let Dee or Sarah know.

It’s been tough to track and collate items sold – especially with so many sales and so many volunteers helping – we’ll get our data together for February’s News. There’s been clear interest in: Christmas decorations, hats and mittens and wrist-warmers, and all manner of gifts (aprons, bookmarkers, earrings, bird boxes, hand-made greeting cards). Thanks to everyone who’s made items to stock sale tables, helped to set up & take down gazebos, and welcome members of the public who visit our stalls and buy products.

Commissions continue to pour in: upholstery, caning, cushions and projects for Men In Sheds. If you know anyone with upholstery skills who’d like to get involved, let Dee or Sarah know. Tandridge Voluntary Action has been advertising for an upholstery/caning volunteer for us since May, but no nibbles yet!

The Woodhouse Centre News

For members, volunteers and supporters

October - December 2021



Christmas Wreath Workshops 2021

Despite the cold, wet weather outside, the atmosphere at the Woodhouse Centre was full of Christmas cheer at our first wreath workshop. On 27 November, 12 members of the public joined volunteer Naomi Cragge, who ably demonstrated how to cover a metal wreath ring with bunches of foliage held by wire, and then everyone got stuck in, with pine needles and berries flying!



Once the foliage was secure, everyone decorated their wreaths with orange slices, cones, cinnamon sticks, baubles, and ribbon. Prosecco, coffee, mince pies and cake fuelled the creativity as amazing wreaths were produced. At the end of three hours of effort, the exhausted participants went home saying the workshop was 'amazing', 'excellent', 'fantastic' and 'good value for money'. It looks like we might have to do it again next year!

Members had a go themselves when the workshop was repeated on Thursday 2 Dec in the Centre (as shown in this photo). Thanks to Naomi and to Sue Farrell for organising it all.

Upcoming dates: 	Thur 16 Dec Woodhouse Centre's last day & Members' Celebration	Fri 17 Dec 9.30 - 11.30 Last Country Market before Christmas	21 - 23 Dec 4-7pm URC Christmas Tree Festival	Tues 4 Jan 09.30am Woodhouse Centre reopens!	early Feb (tbc) Helper's (Volunteers) Lunch Dee will confirm	early Feb (tbc) High Sheriff's visit

Look who's turn it was to have a big birthday!



Members, volunteers and Trustees gathered on Thursday 25 November for a surprise celebration of Dee's 75th birthday.

Everyone wrote little messages or decorated crafty triangles, which Max and Judy strung together to make a long and lovely bunting. Cakes, cups of tea, and prosecco were shared – and three cheers to Dee, marking her birthday, but also thanking her for her years of service and her friendship.



Notes from the Board of Trustees

We've been very focussed on the recruitment drive to hire a new manager for the Centre. We created a pack for prospective candidates, then advertised on the Charity Jobs website, Tandridge Voluntary Association, Surrey County Council, LinkedIn, our own website and many local Facebook groups. After advertising for a month, we were delighted at the quality of the applications we received. We've shortlisted and interviewed candidates, and will shortly invite 3 finalists to interview in early January. We hope to make an offer before the end of January. The Trustees have been very impressed by the calibre of applicants, and touched by their interest in The Woodhouse Centre. Several applicants have visited the Centre, and remarked at the warm welcome they received from everyone.

Our other big priority has been the legal structure of the charity, but we're still waiting to hear back from the Charity Commission. Meanwhile, we've been continuing to support staff, volunteers and members with ideas, workshops, and sales or craft events.

Financially, we are in good shape. At our last Board meeting, Sophie updated that our overall loss for the year-to-date is now £5.4k (from £7k loss reported in Sept), which is down to a combination of income from sales and donations. We've recently had some significant donations from local organisations – Age Concern, the Rotary Club are two of the larger contributors.



Woodhouse Centre marks Remembrance Day

Creative minds got together to fashion this eye-catching display in Morrison's to mark Remembrance Day. Poppies and poppy-making has long been an important activity at The Woodhouse Centre, although this has stopped due to the materials being non-biodegradable. The idea originated from Michael Bull, Morrisons' Community Champion, the mannequin was loaned by La Maison in Oxted, and Maribel Skelly designed the top and skirt. Members got involved to attach the poppies, but huge thanks and congratulate to Judy for taking the lead, which achieved a great result.

Symbols of Community & Creativity

Oxted United Reformed Church (URC) invited The Woodhouse Centre to display a decorated tree at their annual Christmas Tree Festival.

Led by Sarah Spires, volunteers and members created the tree and its decorations with thoughtful touches that both look lovely and represent all of the people and activities of the Centre and Men In Sheds. Sarah has a written description that explains each of the elements – ask to see a copy. The festival is held Tues 21 Dec - Thurs 23 Dec, from 4-7pm.





News from the Shed

- Our MIS was featured in the Selsdon Gazette. The editor contacted us after Shedders had a stall at Selsdon Woods Open Day in September
- Shedders are working on a big commission for Matt Baker, whose company is working to encourage bio-diversity in London, has ordered 40 bug hotels! If this goes well, he'll be back for more!



On a serious note, all of us at The Woodhouse Centre recognise that this time of year is difficult for many people, and especially for those who live alone or are separated from friends or family for various reasons. Here are some tips you can share or try yourself:

- **Plan ahead for your day** and how you will spend it, choosing activities or foods or people that will put a smile on your face, and avoid anything that triggers sad feelings
- **Spend time getting absorbed** in a book, a puzzle, a magazine, a TV or Radio programme
- **Do something crafty:** make something nice for yourself or a friend, try something new
- **Call on a neighbour or friend,** even 5 mins on the doorstep could be a nice lift to spirits
- **Exercise / fresh air:** get outside if you can, or do some stretching at home, exercise is good for the mind
- **Find out what's happening** in your community, such as special carol services, Christmas Lunches (St. Mary's Church in Oxted is hosting Lunch this year in the community hall)

Take care, and we'll look forward to welcoming you in 2022!