

# In Touch

Autumn 2017



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# In this issue...

Living & Skills

Joanne's update

Care Services

Out & about

Our property

Our Life Skills

3

4

4&5

6&7

8-11



Rare Breeds Centre

Down on the farm

Educational activities

Schools & groups

12

13

13



Our Supporters

Fundraising

Friends of COT

Volunteers

Scrapbook:

Poultou Wood

Back page:Calendar

14-16

17

18

19



Joanne Creighton CEO

With every edition of In Touch, there seems to be more and more to tell you. It is perhaps fitting that this will be the last publication of 2017, as the jam-packed pages are representative of an equally busy year.

Once again, you will find stories of holidays, days out, service user achievements, exceptional staff efforts, amazing volunteers and big-hearted fundraisers. Anyone wanting to get a flavour of what makes COT so special will definitely find the answer herein.

For me, among the most pleasing stories (and it is hard to choose) are those that relate to staff and service users who have been at the Trust a staggering 25 years or more. What better recommendation can there be of any organisation than that? They will have seen many changes over the years, but I hope they will all agree that the charity's core ethos has been preserved throughout.

On the subject of changes, we have experienced a few in these last 12 months as we continue to get in shape for the challenges that face us. All change is unsettling and disruptive and so I must take this opportunity to thank everyone who has been affected – service users, families, staff and volunteers alike for their patience and support. Indeed, the cooperation we have enjoyed has been truly humbling and tells us so much about the individuals involved. It is hardly surprising that COT is such an exceptional place with such folks in our midst.

Whilst we have celebrated longevity during these last few months, we have also said goodbye to some long-standing and highly-prized colleagues; Anne Crag (Discovery Gardener), Simon Robinson (Head of Finance & Commerce) and Gill Marsden (Volunteer Coordinator) among them. They take with them our heartfelt thanks and kindest wishes for their future endeavours

As Farmer Davy reports in his section, visitor numbers to the Rare Breeds Centre continue to grow and confound our expectations. Even the traditionally quiet times are becoming busier and busier, demanding ever greater effort from the RBC team who keep all aspects of the attraction going. Anyone who was here over Halloween would understand why the place remains popular – in fact, I defy any family to find a better-value half-term treat. In addition to all the usual attractions, there was extra entertainment wherever you looked and the site looked amazing. The only thing that rather ruined it for me was being told by a service user (you know who you are, Emma) that I looked really scary in my Halloween costume. I was wearing a suit.







### Carol Senior—From the office

My word, it is only when looking back over the last few months or so that you realise just how much we have achieved and changed in such a short time.

As you will know, Harrington Cottage closed its doors as a residential home for the last time in July. I am very pleased to report that all the former residents are happily settling in to their new COT homes and so continue to enjoy life in the Trust. Since the new extension at 2 Warren Mews was completed in September, Ben Hillman too is settling into his new self-contained flat. The photo here shows Ben proudly opening his own front door for the first time.

Since the last edition of In Touch we have also been pleased to welcome two new residents and tenants into the Trust. Luke Woodcock became tenant of the new annexe at 3 Warren Mews in July and David Chapman joined the residents of Rosemary Cottage at the end of September.

Following a “call to arms” from Art at the Farm who desperately needed some funding to provide for art materials, several of our senior managers decided to support them by seeking sponsorship for participating in the annual Brighton Colour Run. For those of you (like me) who are uninitiated in these things, the Colour Run involves a walk/run/jog of 5 km while a somewhat gleeful crowd chucks dyes of varying colours over and at you! Not exactly my cup of tea (those of you who know me will quickly realise I am built for comfort, not for speed), but good sports Claire Harman-Stanford, Alan Davies, Michelle McDonald, Jo Booth and Emma Harman-Stanford were all up for the challenge. I can’t conceive what they might have looked like at the end of the run, but this photo demonstrates they certainly looked quite clean and eager at the start!



In recognition of 25 years of service with COT, the Trust held an informal gathering for three members of staff on 29<sup>th</sup> September – one of whom was our very own Fiona Dodge. Fiona celebrated alongside her fellow long-serving colleagues Sarah Bailey and Natalie Erskine, all of whom were presented with gifts and tokens of appreciation from the Trust. The care team also wanted to express their appreciation for everything Fiona does for us, so we got together and after the main festivities made a little presentation of our own – a couple of bottles of wine in a personalised presentation case.

At the other end of the scale we have a host of new beginnings on the staff team. Over the Summer we have been joined by new CSS Manager Elaine Reed. Elaine has been busy getting out and about, meeting parents and getting to know the tenants and is making great strides with the tricky complexities of the CSS rota. Joel Savill was also appointed as the new Manager of Art at the Farm and coped extraordinarily well recently when the artists had to spend a month camping out in the Falcons Centre while heating at the Oast received some badly needed attention.

A few weeks ago the Care Team also welcomed Juliet Pershky on board as the new Work and Employment Officer. Juliet has already started to get out and about meeting people at the various Life Skills projects, in the homes, and in meetings with a few local companies who are already hosting placements for COT service users. Juliet is currently hard at work planning a programme designed to help our people prepare for workplace or voluntary opportunities. She is launching a Trust-wide competition to give the new service a name and branding of its own. Everyone will be invited to chance their arm by putting forward naming suggestions and canny Juliet has already persuaded local businesses to provide a couple of prizes—so do watch out for the details and get those creative juices flowing.

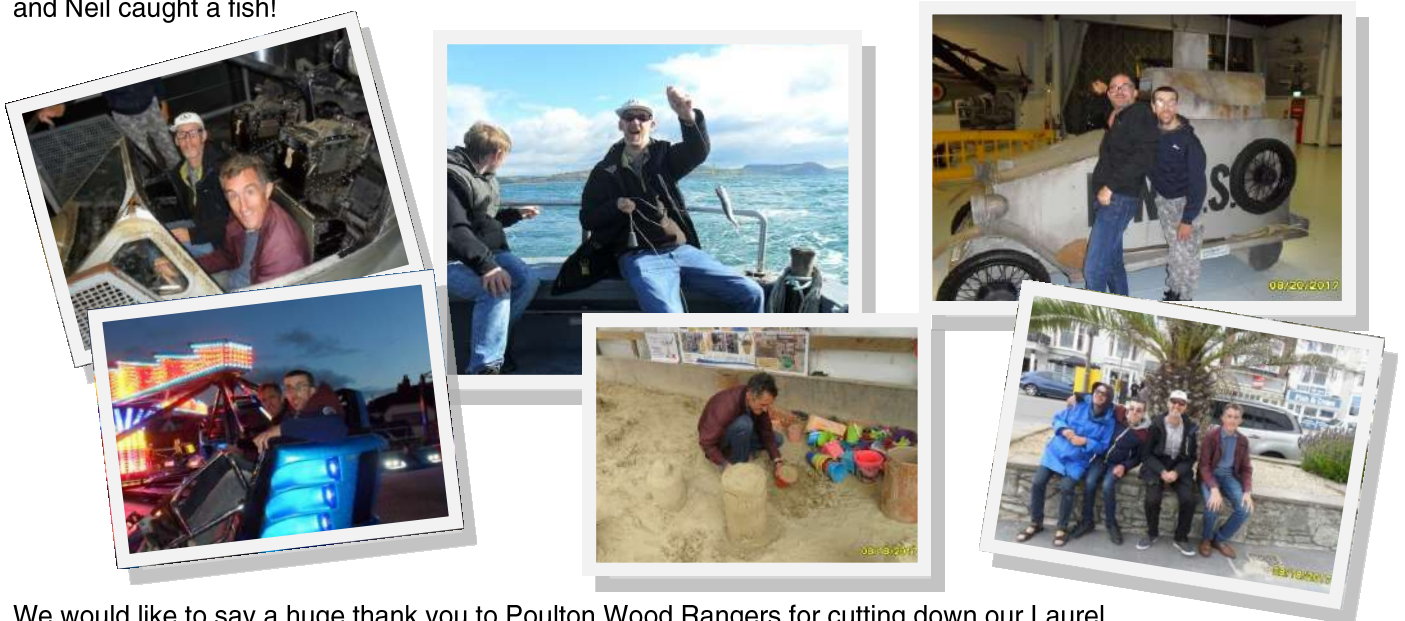


## Sarah, David, Sarah, Daniel, Charles, Neil and Stuart—Old School House

In July Sarah D, Sarah W and David went on holiday to Canterbury. We saw Mamma Mia at the Marlowe Theatre and did plenty of shopping. We visited Canterbury Cathedral and enjoyed our meals out.



In September Daniel, Charles, Neil and Stuart went on holiday to Lyme Regis. We went to Weymouth for the day. We visited the sand museum, sea life centre, went on some rides and had a meal out. We also had a boat trip and Neil caught a fish!



We would like to say a huge thank you to Poulton Wood Rangers for cutting down our Laurel bushes, to Anne & Lynn for volunteering their services to prune and tidy our garden and to DWP for sending a willing and hard working team to demolish our planters and load a skip—all in the hot weather!





## Neil—Beaver Lodge

In August Martin and I went on holiday with Newmarket Holidays. We went to Edinburgh Castle to watch the Edinburgh Tattoo. It was brilliant! I loved the marching bands, the singing and the dancing.

We also went on a guided tour aboard the Royal Yacht Britannia where we enjoyed a cream tea.

On our way home we stopped off at the “Angel of the North” in Gateshead where we had our photo taken.



## Damian—Farm View

I wanted to say a huge thank you to everyone who was involved in organising the “It’s a Knockout” event. We all had a great time and enjoyed the fun and games. Our team the “Blue Wizards” won the “Best Endeavour” award!



## Symon Young—Jasmine Cottage

At Easter I went home and made Easter eggs with my sister Tamsyn and my niece Sadie. I enjoyed doing this but we all got sticky. When we had enough on the tray we left them to set in the fridge. We had to have bought ones for the egg hunt in the garden. After that I made a Danish chocolate cake. I was taught to make this at Seabrook Lodge School when I was a boy and have been making them ever since.

The next time I went home the grass had grown so I rode on the new tractor. I used to have a smaller one but it needed repairing. Sadie helped me use this new one. I like driving the tractor and would like to drive a combine harvester. They are huge and noisy with dust everywhere. There are different makes: Claas are green, John Deere are too, Massey Fergusson are red and New Holland are yellow. So when I see one from the train going to Rye I know which make it is from the colour. In August I had a weekend trip to Holland staying in the Hilton Hotel, Rotterdam. I saw the nineteen windmills along the Kinderjijk Canal which I have visited a lot and always like to see them. I know a miller who lives in one of the thatched mills. I am hoping to have other places to go.





# Living and Skills

## Taking care of our properties

... maintaining and sustaining our homes and our projects

**Jerry Kenward**

Well, the builders are on the farm and it looks like they will not be off site any time soon!

We had to wait until the end of the summer season to get on with a number of projects. These always back up and then need doing at the same time; the first week of September was that time.

The Children's Barn has been improved and by the time you read this it should be back in operation with new enclosures and the raised area for the goats to climb on. It is to say the least, very well built. Our "Meet the Animals" sessions are very popular and the first place many visitors go to. The new area is much better, easier to clean and should allow more activity doing what the RBC does so well. Have a look, what do you think?

How Davy and the RBC team managed to put on a spectacular Halloween whilst all this was going on and achieved such positive feedback is anyone's guess. The displays and activities were so good that they must have been a major distraction from the disruption of the build. The restaurant was very busy and managed to keep the queue down—again a magnificent effort from Jill and her team.



The top toilets (at last) are progressing. You would be amazed to know how important the standard of toilets are in feedback from visitors. The old ones were, to say the least, inadequate and past their sell by date. They are now demolished and bigger and better new ones, complete with ground access and 2 mobility friendly toilets / baby change areas, are in the process of construction. With the improvements to the Children's Barn we trust that our increasing numbers of visitors and members will see real improvements.

The mess hut extension (thank you Hitrade) is going up allowing the Farm and Plants and Produce a better area to rest and occasionally work, with more space and better conditions.

The extended mess hut will be available for some night activities for the people we support. If anyone has any good ideas for activities please talk to me or other members of the team, we'd love to hear from you.

Busy times, but worth the effort!





Those of you at the Farm will have noticed the area cordoned off next to the mess hut – we are getting ready for a major development of a new Life Skills Academy on this site. There is still work to do on fundraising but Angela has managed to get so much in place that we are gearing up for this work very early on in 2018 (where did 2017 go!). 'Getting ready', means doing a lot of planning and surveys to make sure we can build. The first stage is a firm specification so we can confirm the costs are affordable and hopefully see what we can put in above the basics.

We are getting on with the extension at Beaver Lodge, again early 2018.

We have consent to build 4 new flats on the farm site, near Farmview. This involves major changes to the power. At present we do not have enough electricity to allow the new tenants to use their TV, IT, washing machines and anything else electrical. We clearly need to sort this out before getting to the build. This will be expensive and not particularly easy. The outcome could have major benefits for the whole site so I will keep you informed of progress.

We recently refurbished a bathroom in Old School House and delighted to hear that Daniel (a resident of the house) said: *"It's been done to the highest possible standard!"*



Can I end by saying a fond farewell to Mick Allum who retired after 30 years with our charity. On behalf of the Estates team, his colleagues and the many people Mick has supported over the years, may I please say thank you to Mick for his years of dedicated service. I think everyone knows and respects Mick. I never, in 12 years (I am just a junior compared to Mick's service!), heard a bad word said about him; everyone simply likes Mick.

Dan Gilbert lived at Homelands early on and clearly remembers Mick lifting him up and down the stairs – before health and safety! He means so much to Dan and he wanted to say thank you and so was the guest of honour at a farewell meal. A lot of people would have liked to join in the farewell meal, but Mick needed a quieter night with the Estates team (a contradiction in terms!). If everyone who wanted to wish Mick well had come along, we would have needed a very big venue to accommodate everyone and again that just reflects how well thought of Mick is. Stories of line managing Mick – well really who managed whom? I never had to chase Mick or wonder what he was doing. He would go quietly from one job to another and it would get done; to a high standard. Mick is simply a pleasure to know.

Could I also thank him for taking our apprentice through her training. Not surprisingly she passed, not only through her own hard work, but also by learning the tricks of the trade from a master! A wonderful partnership (Parker and Lady Penelope was their nickname!). We are going to miss Mick on the Estates team. I am sure I speak for everyone when I say we trust he knows he is welcome here anytime and wish him a long, healthy and happy retirement—because if anyone deserves it, it's Mick.



### A message from Mick....

"I would like to thank all the staff and residents for the lovely words put in my retirement card.

Also a very personal thanks to the Estates team for my farewell meal and the presents from everyone who put into my collection. I worked for Canterbury Oast Trust for 30 years from a time when there was only Homelands and Harrington. I have watched the organisation grow over the years.

I want to say that COT was the best job I ever had and I loved every day at work with both residents and staff. We used to have such a laugh together which made it worthwhile to go to work.

I felt so sad to go but my health got the better of me and at 72 I had to go with great regret. At least my name will always be with COT as I am on the Board of Founder Members.

I will always tell everybody that COT was the best place to work and I would like to say a sad farewell and you will always be in my thoughts."

**Mick Allum**

# Living and Skills

## Our Life Skills Training Projects

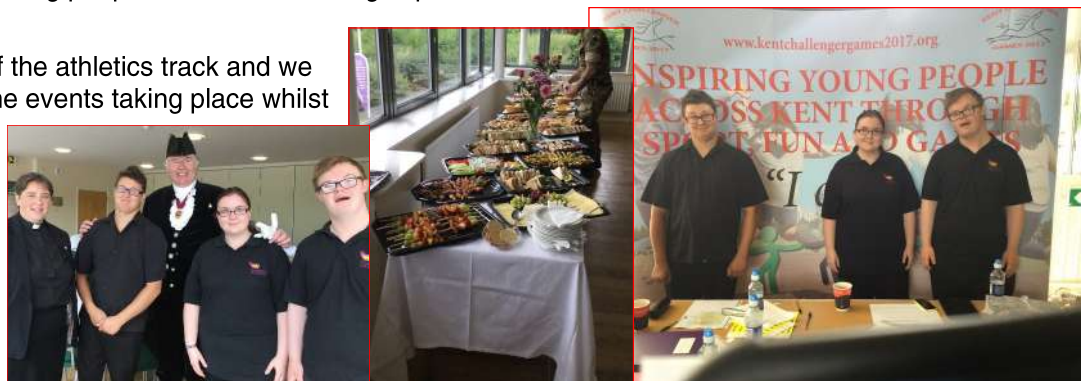
*...gaining and maintaining skills, working as a team and building friendships*

### Jill—Granary Restaurant

Students Faye, Chris and Tom, helped serve a buffet and drinks to the VIP guests at the Julie Rose Stadium when it hosted an event to inspire young people across Kent through sport, fun and games.

We had a wonderful view of the athletics track and we were able to see some of the events taking place whilst serving.

A fantastic job was done by all and the guests, including the High Sheriff of Kent George Jessel, took time to chat with us all and to say how much they appreciated our work!



We were all very keen to be part of the Hitrade “A Million Thanks” day so we could say thank you to them for everything Hitrade does for us. Nikki, Lucie, Tina and our students worked extremely hard on the days leading up to the event and we are extremely proud of them. On the day they all looked so smart and served tea and coffees with their homemade biscuits, then helped serve lunch which included their delicious quiches, potato salad and coleslaw which they had made.

They all then cleared away the Falcon Centre and helped wash up at the end of the day. It was an extremely hot day but they all worked tirelessly.

A big thank you to them all for all they did!

### Michelle—Art at the Farm

Art at the Farm are pleased to now have Joel Saville on board as the manager. He has settled in really quickly and is working with the team to drive Art at the Farm through the next few busy months.

We did a colour run to help raise funds for materials and were supported by the Trust and many people sponsored us - for which we are grateful!

We are now back in the oast after we've been working in the Falcons Centre temporarily while our new heating system was being fitted. A huge thank you to our friends at Hitrade for working so hard in the shop to raise the funds needed to do the work - it means we can work through the winter in comfort! Whilst in the Falcons, we made good use of the farm and did several projects relating to everything we have on site. We also had a visit from a bird of prey very kindly brought down by farm staff. We are very grateful for this and one

of our artists held a Falcon—to his great delight!

We are pleased to say we have been accepted to exhibit at The Beaney, in Canterbury during 2018. We are also attending the Wealden Midsummer Fair June 2018 - so we have much to do!

Alongside this we are creating a display window for the Coterie Tea Room's entry into the Rye Christmas Window competition – we're all hoping for a win!



Our colour runners—Emma, Jo, Alan, Michelle & Claire



On the 1<sup>st</sup> July I took up my new post at Canterbury Oast Trust as life skills manager of the Coterie Tearoom in Rye. I have joined a committed and loyal team of staff and dedicated and talented students. I am extremely excited to have taken this opportunity on and look forward to the months ahead with enthusiasm and dedication. I walked into a newly refurbished Tearoom which clearly has had heart and soul go into it and has changes made which will help our students in developing their skills. I hope you agree it looks amazing!

Hot and cold drinks are now made to order from the tearoom. This frees up the students in the kitchen who are always busy producing cakes, scones etc - using locally produced products. It has been great fun for all sourcing local produce and working alongside the local companies who can supply ingredients for our products.

We are extremely excited to be stocking and using Northiam Dairy Ice Cream (mostly because we get to sample it!) but also because it is really popular. Thanks to our trusty friends at the Granary restaurant, who kindly lent us a lovely ice cream freezer, we were able to serve the ice cream direct from the tearoom.

The menu has had a complete overhaul and is receiving some really positive feedback—with the cheese scones, falafel sandwiches and all the homemade cakes getting top reviews. Tripadvisor has been kind to us and people are expressing their opinions with comments like:

**“Really impressed with the service and quality of food served in this tearoom.”**

**“Would we recommend Coterie Tea Rooms ..... Definitely.”**

**“Thank you to all the people who served us, and all the staff preparing the food. Great job.”**

**“We ordered ham salad sandwich in granary which was excellent.”**

We have recently won a Tripadvisor excellence award. This is hopefully the way forward and we hope by starting to use social media we can attract more positive reviews and get some good publicity not only for us but COT in general.



So if you are out in Rye with family and fancy somewhere different for lunch and want to come and see some smiley faces—then please come to us! We do take away if you are in a hurry or if you would like an event catered or a cake to celebrate someone's birthday please get in contact - or pop in!

### Lynn —Poulton Wood

Hi All, it's been ages!

Last time on the brink of spring and now on the brink of winter. Last time the buds were breaking and now the leaves are falling. The rangers are all splitting and bagging, sawing and kindling ready for the upsurge of cold customers searching for winter warmth. For now though the fruits of autumn are upon us. The ground strewn with windfalls, the polytunnel still yielding green tomatoes, chillies, peppers and squash, we've pressed apples, mashed grapes, made chutney and there's cider and wine on the go in the classroom (shhh). Last week we had pumpkin soup 3 days in a row alongside ginger cake and pumpkin muffins, courtesy of our very own Mrs Doyle, Maggie Burchall, from whom we all benefit greatly on a weekly basis. Thanks Maggie you are our bake off champion.



We've begun another project similar to the bird and butterfly projects we've done in the past. This one is fungi. All the rangers choose a fungus each, draw it, learn about its weird and wonderful characteristics, cut it out of wood and paint it, after which they will be fixed around the place (the fungi that is, not the rangers) to enhance the wondrousness of the Poulton Wood site, as were all the birds and butterflies that came before. It's a great indoor project to fall back on whilst the winds are whistling and the snow is drifting as predicted for this coming harsh winter.

No coppicing this year so we are aiming to concentrate on our hedgerows which range from being wild and woody to completely threadbare. We also have our willow to harvest with the prospect of the Friends of COT arriving in January to learn the intricate weaving technique required to create willow stars, which should be fun. We've had a bit of a setback with our willow domes! They have been so stricken with aphids that the sooty mould attack that followed has left them looking like they've been on the periphery of a forest fire! We've cut them back, hosed and scrubbed them but they don't look good. Hopefully they'll recover otherwise it'll be thinking caps on to create another masterpiece on the mound.

Looking back on the spring and summer we have had quite a few events of note. We had a very successful Bluebell Cream Tea and a wonderful Woodland Open Day. Both events were well attended and greatly appreciated by all who came along and enjoyed. Sabotage Theatre staged another of their mesmerising performances at the wood.



They really are a sight to see and though the story is always a little strange and obscure their use of masks and mime are outstanding. We hosted the Trust party once again which was such a good fun night despite the pouring rain which I know kept many people away, the band was superb and the whole site looked absolutely magical.

Kent Ambassadors joined us for a day's work raking the meadow which we are trying to restore to a wildflower meadow with the help of Kent Wildlife Trust, though it'll be a long process, especially seeing as the remainder of our Christmas trees have finally begun to thrive, and their plot is right in the midst of the meadow! The Ambassadors are always good fun to have around. They worked really hard making a big difference and providing us with the excuse for a lunchtime cook out which everyone always enjoys.





Another cook out was enjoyed when we had the mobile sawmill in to mill oak planks. Big thanks to Nick and Catherine Brewer of Brewers Decorators who generously donated £2,000 for the mobile milling service. Nick and Catherine (and their beautiful new puppy Emma) dropped in to the wood to see some of the work being done. We now have planks to keep our customers in carved signs and furniture for years to come!



The rangers had a day out at a local hop farm watching the process from the dragging of the bines off the poles through to the drying and baling. We do this every year with a different group courtesy of Hilary's family who own the farm and it's always a really interesting day. Another day was spent as a volunteer group for Kent Wildlife Trust pulling up silver birch on Hothfield Heath. It was good for the rangers to see how land can be managed in different ways for different reasons so big thanks to Ian Rickards KWT wildlife sites officer for facilitating this. Another group of rangers, by popular request on a rainy day visited St Leonard's Crypt in Hythe.



We have hosted 6 community placement police officers so far this year, all of whom have been inspired with each one saying that what they have come to understand whilst working with the rangers will help them when out there policing in the community. Because of the amount of placements we take we have been nominated for a financial award from the police property fund, which, if we get it, will enable us to fit some bird box cameras an exciting and fascinating prospect which we've wanted to do for a long time.

Some completed projects - The vardo (gypsy caravan) is now completely restored. This project has taken months and has been led by Pete Morley our longest standing volunteer working alongside Alan Smith one of our rangers, both of whom have shown real dedication and commitment as piece by piece, week by week they have lovingly worked on this little caravan to restore it to its former glory. Well done guys. Other projects completed have been the rebuilding of the timber store to house our newly milled planks which was a brilliant job well done and an outstanding memorial bench for Dave now in situ down at the farm.

Aside from these bigger projects the rangers have continued to turn out many a bird and bug box, wedding cake stands from log slices (very on trend at the moment), a fantastic bar made from pallet wood, 3 legged stools, hazel hurdles, several successful charcoal burns, many carved signs and one buzzard chick successfully fledged (not entirely our doing though we did detour the path to facilitate).



A huge thank you as always to all the brilliant volunteers that bring themselves wholeheartedly to Poulton Wood every week and enable us to achieve so much. One of our volunteers Andrew Littlewood sadly died earlier this year and has been a huge loss to all of us. He brought compassion and humour and wonderful stories with him each week and in his memory we have decided to hold an 'Andrew Littlewood Memorial Cricket Match' in the field every year. We think he would have liked that.

Next week we have Wyvern school visiting with a group of students to join us for the day (I feel another cook out coming on) and in a couple of weeks we have Sandgate Primary School visiting en masse.

I'm going to stop now because I'm becoming a bit overwhelmed with our own productivity, but before I do I'll just mention Dennis Potter who came up to show us the original 1917 Land Sale Catalogue of 2,282 acres of Lord Deedes' estate divided into lots of which Poulton Wood was Lot 31:  
**Fantastic!**

*A favourite GAME COVERT, well laid out with rides for shooting, and occupying a fine sunny position on the south slope of the hill and containing  
27 acres 2 rods 28 perch  
£347*



## Davy—On the Farm

It's been a while since I last wrote an article for In Touch, and so much has been going on that it's a job to know where to start, however, in the more recent past .....

Visitor numbers to the RBC continue to grow. To date we're up by more than 20% compared with the same period last year (which was already a record breaking year), so it would seem we're getting things somewhere near right! Also, this year we got another brand spanking new tractor! I bagsied first go!



As I write this we're just clearing up after the Halloween half term, which, judging by the feedback we've had from visitors, has gone splendidly. The star of the week was definitely Siana, who this year took on the character of 'Effel Fartwaffer', a formidable, crazy, elderly lady. Effel, despite her outlandish behaviour and attempts to give some of the young men "a lovely, big smacker on your chops!", soon became everyone's favourite 'Granny'.

The lovely lot at Hitrade donated a hefty sum so we can refurbish the Children's Barn. The work has dragged on somewhat, but we're almost there. As soon as we can get the 'Meet the Animals' offer out of its temporary home in the cattle shed we'll be straight into the creation of this year's Santa's Grotto. Having lost a week of build time so far already it's going to mean a few late evenings I suspect!



Along with the building works in the Children's Barn, we've also been having a new toilet block built up at the top outdoor play area (at long last!), and an extension built on the Farm and Horticulture Mess Hut. These works should be completed by Christmas.



The cows are in-calf, and the rams are in with the ewes at the moment—doing what rams do best! So, all going well, we should have a pile of lambs ready for the Easter weekend at the end of March, and calves for early summer.

We've had a few people leave us recently. Simon Robinson (RBC boss) and Anne Cragg (Discovery Gardener/ Butterfly Lady). Simon and Anne will be greatly missed by all—some photos of Anne's emotional last day are below! We're now recruiting for a newly created post of Head of Visitor Engagement and a new Discovery Gardener. We're also looking for a permanent Accredited Tutor for the farm Life Skills as Julie Wooding is going on to pursue her passion for floristry—whilst still remaining with the Trust on the flexi bank. Have fun Julie!





### Schools, volunteers and new species...

During this year's school season (January - July) we welcomed 139 schools and nursery groups to the Rare Breeds Centre, of these 39 also took part in our educational activity sessions. New this year, and available free to download from our website (<http://www.rarebreeds.org.uk/schools-nurseries>), are pre-visit and post-visit KS1 worksheets to support school visits to the farm. This autumn term we sent out a new leaflet to all the schools in our local area to encourage more visits during the cooler months.



As always, I am rather grateful to all the corporate volunteer groups who have helped out on the farm, with a variety of tasks including meadow raking, weeding, mulching hedgerows, ditch clearing, seed sowing and painting. Huge thanks go to all those from Department for Work and Pensions, NatWest, SGN, Cello Health Insight, Laing O'Rourke, KCC and AXA for your hard work and willingness to get a little muddy!



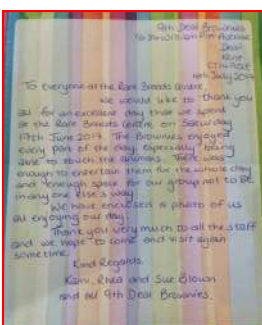
We have recorded new wildlife species on the farm which means all of our work is reaping rewards. Our weekly butterfly surveys have proved even more fruitful again this year, our butterfly numbers have been steadily increasing with a total of 5389 butterflies from 24 species counted in the 2017 survey period compared to 1387 butterflies from 19 species in 2014 when we first started the counts.



While out on one of the butterfly counts, a Greater Butterfly Orchid was spotted by the sharp eye of Roy, one of our keen volunteers. Whilst not the sort of butterfly we were looking for, it was the first time this orchid species has been recorded on site.

I am also extremely excited to say that I have also recorded the presence of the Hazel Dormouse on site; In Britain the Dormouse is a fully protected species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act and a special licence from Natural England is required even to

monitor them. As such I have been training under the Kent Mammal Group dormouse training scheme alongside a license holder and was able to check presence or absence on site. In the winter (and under my own license) I plan to set up nest boxes to monitor more fully under the National Dormouse Monitoring Project.



We had some very happy visitors to our Rare Breeds Centre recently.

The 9th Deal Brownies wrote to tell us how much they enjoyed their day on the farm.

We liked their letter so much we thought we'd share it with you all.

### Lena—Schools and Groups





# Our Supporters

## Fundraising

...families, friends, fundraisers, funders and volunteers

### Emily & Angela — Fundraising

Following on from their successful Valentine Tea last year, Paul and Helen Sanderson once again opened their home in July to family and friends to enjoy afternoon cream tea and sell plants from the farm and their neighbour Sheila opened her garden for visitors to enjoy. A fantastic day was had by all and a huge thank you to Helen, Paul and Sheila for raising an incredible £679.



Kevin Gallagher, Andy Hoffman, Tim and Simon Collins took part in the London to Surrey 100 mile bike ride raising £1454.25 between them.

William Purnell completed The Bob Graham Round, an incredible endurance challenge comprising of a 66 mile route across 42 peaks in the Lake District raising a fabulous £321.

Pete and Veronica Brown held the Cornerways Charity Shindig in their garden in August to celebrate their wedding anniversary and decided to support COT and the Alzheimer Society. Live music from three bands, afternoon teas, a COT plant stall manned by the lovely Anne Cragg, a charity auction and a wine bar raising an incredible £1,000 for us which will be match funded by Basepoint. Pete and Veronica came to the farm with Sue and Rose who helped on the day to present the cheque.



Once again the Falcons centre was bursting at the seams with over 130 quizzers in 12 noisy teams competing for the Nurse Plus Shield. This is the 10<sup>th</sup> year Nurse Plus has kindly sponsored the quiz so a massive thank you, once again goes to Mary Harvey and the team in Ashford, or as we knew them for the evening The Nurse Plus Ninjas.

A brilliant fun evening was had by all with everyone's favourite round the "what's the next line" finishing the quiz with us all singing along with big smiles on our faces.

It was The Old Scholars from Old School House who took the title and £832.20 was raised on the night which, when match funded by Basepoint will total £1664.40. Thank you to everyone who came along and supported the evening and to Jill and Carl for giving their time to sort out the nibbles and look after the bar.

The newly refurbished Falcons Centre was looking wonderful which is all thanks to our Problematic Pop quizzers Ken, Debbie and Chris Chappell and Jim Graham who made it their last project raising £15,000 for the works. The Quizzers are already on to their next project raising funds for specialist IT equipment for our new Life Skills Academy when it's built next year. They are already off to a brilliant start with their most recent quiz at Buxton raising £3,000! In November 2017 it will be 25 years since their very first quiz held in Chris' old school.







Richard George kindly chose to support COT during his time as Captain of Tenterden Golf Club. In August Richard along with his wife Sarah, hosted a fabulous day of golf at the Club to raised funds for us. The day started with torrential rain first thing, but fortunately gave way to beautiful sunshine giving the golfers time to dry out by the time they reached the 18<sup>th</sup> hole!

Over 40 golfers took part with the most 'senior' player being in his 90's, with the youngest under 10 years old – so a great day for all ages! COT students from the Granary Restaurant, together with Richard's wife Sarah, provided on course refreshments and had a chance to see teams tee off down the 12<sup>th</sup> hole's beautiful fairway.



Chris and Neil—working hard!



A welcome snack at the 12th!

The amount raised on the golf day was doubled by Basepoint Folkestone resulting in a tremendous total of over £5,000 for us.

We are very grateful to Richard for choosing COT as his charity and to everyone who took part. We really enjoyed being part of the day. It was great experience for our catering students as well as raising a magnificent sum for our charity.

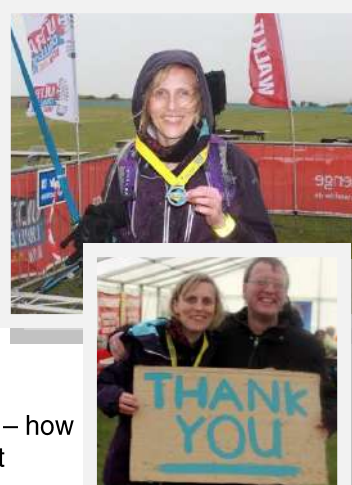
**It's heartening to have so many people doing brilliant stuff to help raise funds for us! Here's a couple of their own stories...**

### **Esmee Russell—Conquering the Isle of Wight Challenge**

It's hard to describe how it feels to walk 66 miles in one go. We set off at 7.40am on Saturday morning and the first 30 miles were actually quite pleasant; great views along coastal paths and through woodlands and lovely chats with fellow walkers. We reached half way around 8pm Saturday night and after a quick refuel we realised we had to do it all again – but this time it would be harder.

At this point the sun had set and the aches and pains were beginning to set in. Walking through the night was a challenge – at times I had to focus on just putting one foot in front of another to ensure I kept going and walking a mile seemed to take forever. Then the sun rose and finishing became a reality. With about 15 miles to go I knew I could do it - I blocked out the pain I was feeling and focused on what it would be like to cross the finish line. At around 1pm on Sunday, 29 hours after I started this challenge, I crossed the line to a huge round of applause.

I can honestly say this is the toughest thing I've done but it was for such a great charity – how could I not do it?! Through walking 66 miles I've raised over £1,000 for Canterbury Oast Trust, which will provide much needed support for the people they support.



### **Amelia King (Aged 11) - Dan Black Belts Task!**

Myself and my mum are testing for our 2nd Dan Black Belts in Karate and one of our tasks we had to complete was to raise money for a charity of our choice.

We chose Canterbury Oast Trust as we have spent many hours at the Rare Breeds as a family since I was little. I think it's a brilliant place! To raise money we held a Quiz night at our local hall in Ashford and lots of people showed up to show their support! I was Quiz Master and read out the questions and had to control the crowd! We sold lots of tea and baked lots of cakes, with help from my family and we also had a great raffle with local businesses and neighbours donating goods to this wonderful cause! We raised £517! All we have to do now is smash our gradings!

I hope this money helps to support the adults that make the Rare Breeds such a wonderful place to be!



# Our Supporters

## Fundraising

...families, friends, fundraisers, funders and volunteers

### Emily & Angela—Fundraising



It was great to join the Rotary Club of Sandwich at their annual Duck Race on August Bank Holiday. The race attracts 1,000's of entries with each little (yellow plastic) duck carrying its own number as it's released onto the river.

The race kicks off the Club's fundraising efforts and, I am delighted to say, President Tony Alexander has chosen COT as his charity of the year! The Club's next big event will be their annual golf day on the 18th May 2018 at Princes Golf Club in Sandwich. So all you golfers out there please reserve this date in your diaries to join the Club for an exceptional day of golf and help raise funds for COT!

Despite a rather soggy day, the beautiful canopy in Poulton Wood provided protection as Nick and Catherine Brewer (and their tiny puppy Emma!) were welcomed to the wood by the Rangers. Nick, a Director of Brewers Decorator Centres, visited to present us with a donation of £2,000 from Brewers to pay for a mobile sawmill facility.

The sawmill has enabled the Rangers to make good use of some Oak trees which had been coppiced as part of our woodland management scheme. The resulting sawn wood will provide us with material for the training project for years to come—to make signs, tools and craft works to sell and to help maintain our buildings too. Nick and Catherine had the opportunity to see some of the milling works in process.

The day ended around a fire for a fabulous 'cook-out' in the wood! Our heartfelt thanks go to Nick, Catherine and everyone at Brewers Decorators for their tremendous support.



Well.....we did it! We gained the most votes in the East Kent area in the national Freemasonry Tercentenary Vote - securing a donation of £25,000 towards our new Academy from the Masonic Charitable Foundation. Roger Odd and Mark Bassant from the Province of East Kent visited Harrington College to give us the good news! A thousand, well actually 25 thousand, thank yous to everyone who voted for us. Our award was presented to us by the Provincial Grant Master Geoffrey Dearing. Our heartfelt thanks go to the Foundation for their tremendous donation and to the Province of East Kent Freemasons for putting our charity forward.



As you will know, this year we have been working hard to raise £350K needed to build our new Life Skills Academy at the farm. This planned new facility will provide the staff, students and volunteers of Harrington College with a new purpose built facility— their current home was originally a stable!

We've received tremendous support for the Academy project from family, supporters and charitable trusts. All have been impressed by the current work and success of Harrington College and excited by our plans for the future of our IT training.



We are indebted to the people and organisations that have pledged their support to the Life Skills Academy project to date. We are now within touching distance of our target and so are encouraged to push on knowing that it won't be too long before we can begin the work to build this much needed new training facility for the people we support.



Friends have been active this year, mainly driven by the fact that in the previous 12 months we gave away almost more than was left in our piggy-bank. We're always delighted to give out the money but are aware that it needs to be replaced so we can continue to fund social, leisure and activity occasions for COT residents and tenants. The real joy is that so many of you are keen to help us.

So: we ran a couple of **Tombola stalls** which brought in just over £500 – prizes donated by many of you and we're very grateful that you keep us supplied. Don't stop! Christmas will clear us out again and Easter will soon be here. A **Coffee Morning** in Ruckinge Church raised £120. We organised a **Sewing Room Sale**, to sell unwanted fabric, wool, craft materials etc. To cut a long story short we can report an income of an amazing £1004! The Raffle at the **Volunteers Lunch** raised a further £409. **Silcocks Farm Shop** in rural St Michael's sells books for us and also donates money from the children's games on their Open Days. If you get a chance, go and buy their organic rare breed meat, fresh and frozen - really good – their homemade cheese and other local produce. Delicious. A local hotel has a charitable foundation which runs **Lunches** and then donates the food costs back to your charity. We took up their offer in June and again in October, with 87 people enjoying their lunch, and gained £1300 for Friends of COT. They were really sociable occasions with lots of happy, friendly chatter. It was lovely to welcome old and new members of the COT 'family' as well as friends of Friends who cheerfully agreed to be 'invited' along. I must mention Anne and Brian Squires, who not only ran a hugely enjoyable game at the October lunch but also persuaded their Romney Marsh luncheon club to 'change tables' and come to our lunch instead – all 14 of them. Well done! **We're planning another lunch or afternoon tea in the spring, let me know if you're interested and I'll make sure you get the details, in case it misses In Touch.**



The BIG NEWS is that the **Summer Raffle** raised £3114. We had 5 fantastic prizes – all given free of charge – and we drew the winning tickets at the Volunteers Lunch. The first prize was won by a COT staff member; 2nd a COT tenant; 3rd the Aunt of a COT tenant; 4th a volunteer in the RBC shop; 5th the owner of a small local business. I should like to thank Sarah Fairbairn who donated the 1st prize – a holiday villa in Salcombe, Devon – and also my son Richard, who – entirely of his own initiative - obtained that donation for us. I've obviously done a good job in bringing him up!

The **Christmas Gift Market** will be over by the time this magazine arrives but we're hoping for a successful and profitable weekend. Last but by no means least, there'll be a **Concert** in St Mildred's Church, Tenterden on Sat 16th December with the **Kent Police Male Voice Choir**. They will be joined by the Queens Regimental Association Corps of Drums for what promises to be a very special part of the programme. A booking form for tickets is enclosed in this magazine. Please come!

**So how have we spent the money?** On weekly Zumba sessions, much enjoyed and great activity for everyone; on quarterly Discos – 68 residents & tenants came to our last disco - record numbers so everyone clearly continues to enjoy these; on entering teams in the annual "It's a Knockout", run by the Lions but with much effort by Janet Shears, Sandra and Martin Bieri; on buying, wrapping and giving Christmas presents at the COT party; on putting on yet another musical evening, always well attended, and by funding many special days and holidays including Banger Racing and the Hollies Night.



It's hard to raise the money - although **regular giving** makes it easy for you, contact Martin Bieri 01233 730345 - but it's so satisfactory when we can spend it on the residents and tenants of COT.

### Martin Bieri—Mariners

Parents sponsored a celebration dinner at the Mariners on Wednesday 8th November, recognising that five of the residents have been with the Trust 25 years and more! Pictured, Louise, David, Rachel, Lynn and Katrina. Very broad menu covering English, Indian and Chinese cuisines!



### Elizabeth Emson—Volunteers' Lunch

As always, it was a huge pleasure to be present at the Volunteer's Lunch. We get to meet new friends and old ones too, people from all over the Trust – gardeners, artists, educators, farm workers, Hitrade, Friends, trustees and service users – all of whom give so much of their time and energy for the benefit of COT.

In addition to a splendid lunch with great food and great company there was, of course a magnificent raffle and Joanne spoke of her sincere appreciation for the work of the volunteers and their enormous value to the Trust.

Thank you to Gill Marsden and all who helped to make this such a wonderful occasion.









## COT Events Calendar

**Keep this calendar handy to stay up to date with everthing that's going on at COT.**

For up to the minute updates see our website calendar at [www.c-o-t.org.uk/calendar](http://www.c-o-t.org.uk/calendar). Or for more detailed info on RBC events go to [www.rarebreeds.org.uk](http://www.rarebreeds.org.uk).

### November

18th-19th: Rare Breeds Centre, Christmas Market.

### December

2nd-23rd: Rare Breeds Centre, Truly Magical Christmas.

.....Jingle bells, jingle Bells! Christmas is coming and Father Christmas and his friends will be at the Rare Breeds Centre for another season of festive fun!

14th: COT Residents' and Tenants' Christmas Party.  
22nd: Life Skills Projects close for the holidays.

### January

2nd: Life Skills Projects re-open after the holidays.

26th: COT Board of Trustees Meeting.

### February

Time to get fit for summer...

RUN - CYCLE - SWIM?

Why not get fit by taking on a challenge and raise funds for COT at the same time!

### March

23rd: COT Board of Trustees Meeting.

From 26th: Easter fun on the farm at the Rare Breeds Centre

### April

Remember to catch the Bluebells in Poulton Wood!

Buy your summer bedding plants from Plants and Produce



Canterbury Oast Trust &  
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