

Sparsholt College Hampshire 2019

The College is still in "good shape" despite the uncertainties in the wider political environment and the continuing gloom hanging over public funded services generally. 75% of our student population is 16 to 18 years old and, despite a demographic dip, the number of students attending from that age group this year (2018/19) is virtually identical to last year. The trend in applications for September 2019 has increased from the same point last year, which would appear to indicate that the decline in the number of 16-year-olds in the population has reached its nadir and is increasing once again.

The College clearly makes a significant and positive impact on the lives of these young people and it is always gratifying at the end of year celebrations to have such encouraging feedback from parents and young people, with many young people wishing to progress to the next study opportunity, including a very strong Higher Education offer through University Centre Sparsholt, awarded a very prestigious 'Gold' Teaching Excellence Framework rating (sometimes known as the University equivalent of 'OFSTED Outstanding').

The College has a significant number of Apprentices who are employed in local businesses within Hampshire and further afield. The success of our students is not only their success but is also an important factor in maintaining a sustainable financial position for Sparsholt College, where the situation in other colleges continues to be very difficult.

During the last academic year, the College received an inspection of under 18-year-old Residential Student Services from Ofsted and it was pleasing that the "Outstanding" judgement reflected how responsibly the College cares for students and supports positive behaviours.

The number of subsidised coaches and buses coming to the campus continues to reflect the demand from our students and provides a very sustainable way for over 900 young people to access the specialist services of the College, on a daily travel to learn basis from their homes throughout Hampshire, Wiltshire and Berkshire. The number of 17- and 18-year olds who drive to college continues to be very low. We have some students who travel three hours per day, which is a clear indication of the extent to which we are seen as a college which really meets their needs and where the courses we provide, generally speaking, cannot be accessed elsewhere.

Our emphasis on sustainable land management is very important and at Degree Level it is pleasing to report that, in addition to the Ecology, Conservation and Wildlife Foundation Degrees and Honours Degrees, following extensive consultation we will be reintroducing Foundation Degree and Honours Degree in Agriculture, having withdrawn that program 15 years earlier, reflecting what was (at the time), oversupply in that subject combined with a historical low interest by young people in studying at degree level in that subject.

In terms of sustainable land management, the College hopes to be moving ahead with the new Sustainable Energy and Renewable Environmental Technology building over the next few months, following an extended period of government policy inertia with regard to renewable energy, which has not enabled the project involving the College with Ecotricity to progress.

The College has been very successful in using various grant funding sources to continue to invest in capital infrastructure, notwithstanding the very tight financial situation. The refurbishment of the Equine Centre provided 'a lift' to the external appearance of the main indoor arena building, together with improved welfare facilities for students working and learning at the yard and guests visiting the centre. In January, the College opened the Sir Mark Todd Rider Performance Studio which has provided some state-of-the-art facilities for University Centre Sparsholt Equine Students in particular. The College is also in the final stages of applying for significant Grant which together with some matched funded capital will enable a Planning Application to be submitted in order to extend the Animal Management Teaching Centre within the heart of the campus. The circa £1.5 million

development will provide some improvements to the existing Animal Management facilities and extend the range of species and habitats, for this important area of study. The nature of this development will not be visible from outside the College and will barely be perceptible to anyone using the public footpath through the College.

The College decided not to operate the 'Countryside Day' in 2019 as a Saturday event for a variety of reasons and has instead, diverted the energies into a STEM/digital careers event for circa 1,000 schoolchildren in Year 9 at various schools, who will come to the College on a Thursday in June, to experience what we plan to be three separate Science Fair Zones on the campus featuring various applications of Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths and Digital being used in the "land-based industries". We hope that by featuring such forward-looking technologies that more young people will see that careers in the Land, Animal and Environmental sector are desirable and choose to follow these and study at Sparsholt in so doing.

The Farley Nursery, who occupy land on the campus, have had a very successful third year at their "OFSTED Outstanding" Yurt Nursery which appears to have proved a big hit with parents and children alike.

Tim Jackson – Principal

Ham Green Conservation Group

Annual Report – April 2019

Group Status:

- Group membership is still strong at around 17 people, with attendance at the monthly work days averaging between 8 and 12. However, we could do with 1 or 2 younger (and stronger) members!
- The Group is reasonably well funded at the moment, thanks to the very generous contribution that we have again received from Village Fete revenues. This has helped us to cope with replacement of broken and worn out equipment, as well as general running costs.
- We would also like to thank the Parish Council for their continuing help and support – it is much appreciated.

Main Activities Completed:

- Ongoing maintenance of the ancient woodland, including regular mowing and cutting back along the bridleway and footpath edges, and careful management of scrub and invasive species. We also clear fallen trees and branches, and also carry out pre-emptive cutting and ivy ringing where necessary.
- We have maintained the laid hedge by the footbridge to Stockers Down and, the new living hedges along the North side of the Glade area and further down the footpath, near the old bench facing the Village.
- Coppicing has been carried out in the Hazel area at the Eastern end of Ham Green and, cut sticks have been used to create 2 new benches in this area.
- We have also carried out clearance and coppicing in the area just behind the car park and, have built a dead hedge along the back edge of the car park with the cuttings.
- We have installed a number of nest boxes, to replace the old and missing boxes.
- The Flora Surveys carried out during the Summer, show that we are achieving good results in several areas, where we are encouraging the diversity of wild flowers and feeding plants, for the birds and butterflies.

Future Activities:

- We will continue to improve the cleared areas, with selective planting of specimen trees and, encouraging the growth of clumps of nettles, burdock, thistles and dog's mercury, to provide food for birds and butterflies, and cover for small mammals.
- During the Summer we plan to further improve the amenity value of Ham Green, by installing more benches and stools in carefully selected areas. One of the benches will be carved from a large fallen tree.
- Later in the year, we would like to improve Winter access by hard surfacing the worst of the muddy areas along the bridleway. This would be a major project, requiring some outside assistance, with the appropriate machinery.

Finally, we would like to again thank all those who have sponsored or donated to us during the year, and especially the Parish Council and Village Fete for supporting us so well – without all of your help, we would probably not be able to continue the good work that we do at Ham Green Common.

Thank you all very much.

Terry Dunn – Group Leader

Sparsholt Women's Institute

Our Women's Institute continues to enjoy the facilities of the Memorial Hall and are grateful to the Memorial Hall Committee for the excellent standard of upkeep. Our year runs from the birthday meeting in March so in 2018 we enjoyed our usual educational and stimulating monthly talks which are continuing throughout 2019.

Our 2018 entry in the Littleton Show, where the theme was 'One Hundred Years of Women's Suffrage' saw us in second place by only one point. The October Jumble Sale was a success. In December we sent several beautifully presented baskets for the Winchester Group fundraising sale of Christmas gift baskets at St Maurice's Covert. In March we celebrated our one hundred and second birthday with many guests from other Winchester Group WIs. Also, in March there was another successful Jumble Sale. We are making a visit to BOAZ in June and planning our entry for the 2019 Littleton Show where the theme this time is 'Best of British'. We are quite a small WI with twenty-six members, but everyone is very enthusiastic and supportive appreciating the opportunity of friendship and learning that belonging to our WI offers.

Only one thing causes us anxiety and that is the issue of parking. Our meetings are held on a very regular basis but there have been times when people attending have found great difficulty parking because the space reserved for hall users is being used by other groups. It would be so helpful if others needing parking could bear our dates in mind and try to plan round them. This conflict of interest is most likely to happen at our birthday meeting in March where we have guests coming from afar and the March and October jumble sales.

Freda Bates, President

Sparsholt Memorial Hall – Annual Report 2018

It has been another good year for the Hall. Our letting income has increased, and our costs have been lower than in previous years. That said, we have not undertaken major project work this year. We continue to have many regular users such as: the WI, Pilates, the Parish Council, Church FOSS, "Messy Church", Badminton, Fencing and Cubs. Recently "Enjoy Raw Foods" has started to use the

Mosaic Room for its company meetings. We continue to have regular Brownie visits during the school holidays and host other events including: WI Jumble Sales, Harvest Supper, Samaritans Quiz Hight, Shady Greys (fundraiser for the Hall), Shop AGM and Race Nights, School events.

As always special thanks go to Liz for all her work in keeping an eye on the users and the Hall generally during the year. She has additionally this year been ensuring that the new white clothes for the round tables are kept freshly laundered for our hirers.

The telephone box has now been renovated by the Shop and has enhanced the look of this area. We have been working on new signage for the Hall (and School) which will also improve the general environment. This work has been supported Irene Minn's family.

Inside the Hall, Debbie completed the pelmets for the new curtains so that the inside of the Hall is also looking smarter. Another improvement internally is the round tables which were bought this year – these have proved popular for events in the Hall. Thanks to Wendy for arranging an HCC grant that enabled us to invest in the new tables.

We are also fortunate to have a table tennis table for hirers to use – space in our store room has been available by disposing of some unused tables.

As always, Marie has done a great job of maintaining the War Memorial on behalf of the village. Terry has once again done sterling work in keeping on top of the ongoing maintenance issues and has also arranged for the gutters to be cleared. The new signage is up and again Terry has managed this project for us with clam and dedication.

The Hall is showing a profit for this year, mainly due to the increased amount of letting income and less expenditure on projects. We have also had a contribution from the school and a share from the Village Fete as well as the HCC grant.

Roger has not only done a fine job again of keeping us up to date with our income and expenditure but has also taken on the bulk of the work concerning the renewal of our contract with Hampshire County Council (HCC) for usage of the Hall by the school. This is our largest source of revenue, but as budgets are tight, the negotiations were tougher and more protracted than usual.

Finally, thanks to all members of the Committee for their time, support and achievements during 2018. I would also like to give my personal thanks to Sue for continuing to keep me on the straight and narrow and to Fred Blakemore who has been our auditor for many years and now stands down.

Richard Summerfield, Chair