



HCO NEWS - SUMMER 2021

What a year this has been so far! Winter returned with a vengeance in April, with record low temperatures and frequent frosts, followed by the wettest May since 1967! Sadly, the pandemic continues - ushering in even more new words and phrases - Delta variant, Red - Orange and Green destinations plus a Roadmap that seems infinitely variable! But at last, the vaccines, produced at near miraculous speed, are providing some protection. Hopefully, things are on the up!

One thing is certain though, we are very fortunate to live in a community that really cares; many of you have become volunteers engaged in everything from transporting hospital patients to staffing vaccine centres to just doing what they can to help neighbours and those less fortunate than themselves. One thinks in particular of the community response to the cloud burst that hit in late June this year when water again threatened several shops near the junction of Parklands and Keymer Roads, just some seven months after the last more serious flood. Thanks to local villagers who united in an effort to push back the water, the flooding was avoided. It was nevertheless noticeable that the seasonal flooding, despite the weeks of rain in May, was considerably less than in previous years. We feel certain that the work of HKD Transition and HCO within the Natural Flood Management Group to 'slow the flow' reduced the flow through Spitalford Bridge, thus allowing the surface water to escape.

In further news, we exited 2020 having organised a late evening Christmas shopping and Street Food event which was enjoyed by many, all socially distanced of course! The event was so popular that it was repeated in June this year and looks like becoming a regular treat.

The immediate area around the War Memorial in Keymer was looking a bit unloved after the winter and the wet spring, and needed some TLC! An appeal via our HCO Volunteers database quickly produced three volunteers who have taken on the task. There will be a major effort again before Remembrance Sunday so we will be appealing in the autumn for a larger group to tackle the overgrown slope behind the memorial. HCO arranged and majority funded the refurbishment work of the Monday Group on the large notice board at Chancellors Park. Subsequently, the three rather tired oak notice boards with maps of the village on by The Hassocks, the



green outside Age Concern and on Keymer Parade, were expertly refurbished by Stuart from the Hassocks Repair Café. Nice one Stuart!

Littering in our lovely village is an ever-present problem - solving it starts with raising awareness. HCO, the Parish Council and Downlands School together recently ran a competition, within the student body, timed to coincide with Earth Day 2021. The object was to design a striking poster that would get the message across. Four excellent posters were judged equal winners and these have been produced in poster format and are displayed throughout the village. Congratulations to our winning designers; Haris, Olivia, Orla and Sophia. Special thanks to Downland's Gail, Tracey at HPC, Amanda of HCO, and Paddy, the railway station manager, who together enabled this community initiative.

Two of our winning posters displayed at the station:



As ever HCO volunteers have tended the various beds and planters that do not come under the Parish Council maintenance programme. This year a major undertaking was to refresh the large planters on the station platform, Catherine, Liz, Paul and Anne spent a productive afternoon at the station removing the weeds which have grown since their last gardening session and planting the shrubs in the large planter which Liz had organised from South Downs Garden Centre. They'll be doing the same for the smaller planter shortly. A great improvement to the station in time for the return of passengers!

Before:



After:



Our Village Discount Card, in support of our high street, continues to attract new businesses. We welcome the new owners of Hassocks Hardware and the new Aroma Café & Kitchen in Keymer.

We also welcome a new initiative led by Frances and Laura called Hassocks Youth Projects (HYP), which HCO is very pleased to support; HYP aims to offer bespoke events to the youth of Hassocks community. They hope to be able to start offering events from September 2021 (subject to ongoing covid restrictions) and are currently planning to launch the following events:

- Accompanied bike rides - a selection of cycle rides for various ages, hosted and accompanied by a Cycling UK certified instructor. Two different routes total time three hours including initial bike safety check and rest stops along the way. Sessions will be held at weekends or during school holidays.
- Baking Fun - a series of one hour baking / cooking classes held after school.
- Code Club - learning computer coding skills during a series of one-hour sessions held after school.

We take safeguarding very seriously and all event hosts will be DBS checked accordingly.

Thanks are also due to Laura for her brilliant work in integrating the HYP website with our own and at the same time completely revamping our website to also include the facility for new and existing supporters to donate on-line. All being well our new website will be online during August.

Finally, do stay well and enjoy the Summer!

Kind regards from the volunteers at HCO and your editors, Erika & Bob.