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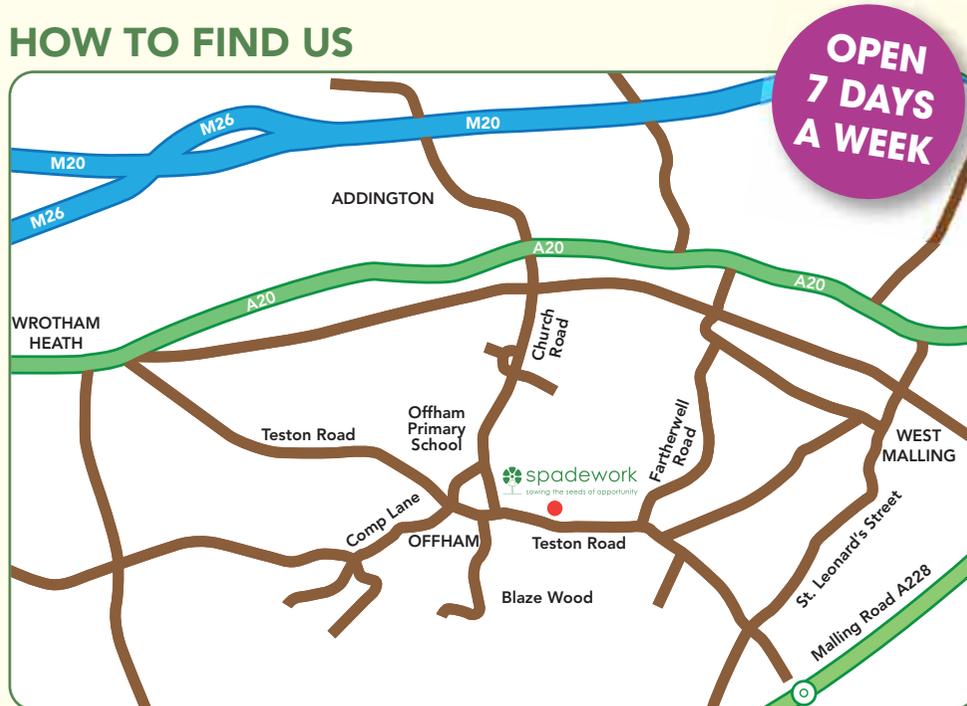
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HOW TO FIND US



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www.spadework.net

Charity No. 291198

Newsletter 2015

NEWS FROM THE TRAINEES

We have all been busy working. In woodwork we have been making planters, fish and sheep for our display garden. In the Café we have been making cordials and cakes. We have had lots of new customers visiting the café, so we have been really busy preparing salads and sandwiches, making drinks, taking orders, serving customers and washing up.

In the Garden Centre we have also been busy. There has been lots of watering to do. We have been planting seeds, taking cuttings, potting on and making lots of hanging baskets.

It is our job to make sure that the plants that we sell are in good condition and look nice for customers.

We have been growing lots of fruit, vegetables and flowers this year which we sell in the shop and on our stall at our Farmers' Markets. We have had to spend lots of time weeding and watering before we can start harvesting the fruit and vegetables.



NEW TRAINEE COUNCIL

We have just elected a new Trainee Council. Our new council members are Dan C, Dan H, Laura, Tania, Steven, Kayleigh and Peter. They will talk about things like health and safety and activities we would like to do. We can tell them about things we want to change and they then talk about this with staff.





WELCOME TO OUR 2015 SUMMER NEWSLETTER

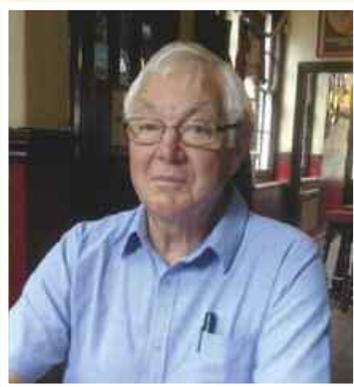
I seem to report in every newsletter that the last few months have been a busy time for Spadework, well these last few months have been no exception!

Earlier this year, we were absolutely thrilled that Tom Tugendhat MBE, the MP for Tonbridge, Edenbridge and Malling, agreed to be Spadework's Patron. Tom is a great supporter of services which enrich the lives of disadvantaged people in his constituency and has pledged his support to promote our Charity.

In February, our Trainee service was formally inspected by Kent County Council. In addition to ensuring that we provide a safe, secure and happy environment, they also assessed the quality of the service and the cost. I am really pleased to say that KCC concluded that we provide a good service, which represented excellent value for money and that no areas were found to require any improvement. I think that this is testament to the hard work and genuine commitment of our staff and volunteer team.

We were delighted to be nominated by Kings Hill Golf Club Ladies Section as their chosen charity and as such have benefited from a number of fund raising events including a handsome donation raised at the Captains' Charity Day in May with match funding by Barclays Bank.

Our Summer Fair is always one of the highlights of our year and this June's event was no disappointment.



George Harvey, Chairman



The weather was perfect and we had a lovely day, with over 40 stalls and live music throughout the day. Thank you to everyone that came along and supported us on the day.

Also in June we held our thirtieth AGM. It was agreed by the Trustees that our finances have never been so well managed (thanks to Camilla and her team), although sadly we still have to rely on donations to keep going. We are really pleased to have appointed Tracey Thompson as a part time fundraiser. Tracey has been busy helping us to raise much needed funds for essentials such as replacing our old leaking roof (ideally before the winter). We were delighted to have received a £15,000 pledge from The Wolfson Foundation to purchase an Electronic Point of Sale system. This system will help us manage the Farm Shop, Café and Garden Centre more effectively. Our accountants likened our current system to Woolworths 30 years ago, and it will give the Trainees the opportunity to learn about retail using current systems as found in most commercial premises.

On a hot summer's evening in July the West Malling Community Choir, supported by Strings and Things, put on the annual summer fundraising concert, donating all proceeds to Spadework. It was such a treat and I think I can safely say, enjoyed by all those that attended.

Also in July, we held our Trainees' open day. This is a day when Trainees have the opportunity to showcase what they do. Trainees in each department enjoyed showing the many visitors around, including several groups of young people who were interested in training at Spadework when they leave school and college in the near future.

In August, Trainees enjoyed a day of Sport and Team Activities followed by a BBQ. Although there is a lot of fun and laughter, the day does have serious element, particularly around learning to support each other and working as a team.

Please can I take this opportunity to ask you to tell people about us and what we do. We are only able to continue to provide services for people with disabilities through the generous support of the community and people using our services.



MORE NEWS FROM THE TRAINEES

FAREWELL TO DAVID DAVIS

After many years at Spadework, David Davis has left us as he has moved to the Isle of Wight with his family. We wish them well, but we will miss him.

There was a celebration to say Goodbye to David – we had Eccles cakes (his absolute favourite), juice and tea. We made him a card.



OPEN DAY

Open Day was held in June. Some parents, Care Workers and other visitors came to see what we do. Craig showed his father where he works.



FOOTBALL TEAM

Football practice is very popular at lunch time. Trainees get together for a kick around, which is good fun. Danny is trying to get a team together and start some proper training.

GARDEN CENTRE

Whatever the season and no matter what the weather does, we will have something to brighten your garden. We are not just about bedding plants; we also have a wide range of perennials and shrubs and we are extending our range of climbers. Some of our favourites, to name but a few, are the amazing architectural plants such as the giant oat, *Stipa gigantea*, *Angelica* and banana plants, *Musa basjoo*.

Garden essentials, including compost, bulbs, seeds, fertilizers and twine are available to buy. We are now stocking Moulton Mill traditionally crafted tools. They are built to last, with a 15 year guarantee. Items include stainless steel spades, forks, hand tools and secateurs. Glazed and plain terracotta pots are available. We also stock lightweight planters, including vintage dairy milk churns.



BRANCHING OUT

We have extended our Cutting Garden area so we can supply home grown bunches of flowers. All departments have worked together with staff and our volunteers growing plants from seed, bulbs, cuttings and plugs. Look out for alliums, sweet peas, dahlias and gladioli and the wildflower posies are an absolute delight!

As well as our formal cutting area, we have made use of the other beds and borders around the site. Please have a look at the new *Salvia 'Love & Wishes'* in the courtyard beds interspersed with soft, frothy flowers and foliage of *Stipa tenuissima 'Pony Tails'*.

Please feel free to walk around our grounds, we hope you find some inspiration to take back home with you.

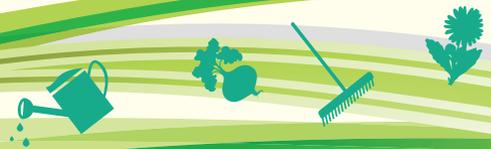


DOWN IN THE VEG PATCH

There is never a dull moment, between watering, weeding and cropping our home-grown produce. As well as supplying our café, farm shop and farmers' market stall, we also supply local restaurants including The Swan. Our mint goes down a storm in their cocktails. Talking of herbs, we are able to supply fresh cut herbs to order daily and you can choose from rosemary, chives, curled and flat leaf parsley, sage, thyme, coriander, bay and dill. We also supply vegetables to St. Luke's weekly market in Sevenoaks.

Tomatoes, cucumbers, chillies and strawberries are all coming on nicely in our tunnels. Lettuces, beetroot, carrots, spring onions and herbs are being regularly cropped from our raised beds. Broad beans, french beans, runner beans, sweetcorn, chard, kale, brussels, courgettes, squashes, pumpkins, swede, parsnips are all planted out in our field. Please support your local Spadework growers by buying fresh, local and seasonal produce.





CAFÉ



There's a new look to the Tastebuds Café menu. We have kept many of our old favourites, but there will be more emphasis on daily specials and seasonal dishes, all made with home grown local fruit and vegetables, locally caught fish and top quality local meat. Expect to see appearances from Smoked Mackerel Salad with Gooseberry Relish and a delicious Haddock and New Potato Gratin flavoured with our home made Spadework cider, plus vegetarian options like Goats Cheese and Char-grilled Vegetable Ciabatta with Red Basil Dressing. Meat dishes such as Thai Green Curry and desserts like Eton Mess made from our own strawberries will also be featuring! We are also increasing the range of cakes with more three layer sponges with fillings and toppings ranging from fresh seasonal fruits and cream, to salted caramel and apple.

There are some super summer options on the drinks menu, too. Virgin spritzers made with our own home-made cordials are perfect to keep you cool while you enjoy the sunshine in our beautiful courtyard garden. However, if you prefer something slightly more indulgent, try our delicious tropical milkshake made with fresh banana, vanilla and coconut milk or an iced latte, topped with a scoop of locally sourced vanilla ice cream.

After the success of our Soirée Française in April, we have decided to have a number of other events throughout the year. Please keep an eye on our website for further details.

FARMERS' MARKET – Second Saturday of the Month



Spadework has been running Offham Farmers' Market for three years now and it is attracting quite a following. The market is a great way of shopping for the best local produce whilst supporting our charity at the same time. We have a great selection of local food and craft producers who attend the market on the second Saturday of every month between March and December selling a superb range of goods, including meat, beer, preserves, Italian specialities, cobnuts, ready to eat snacks, vegetarian meals and more.



Some of the stalls are run directly by Spadework, with all profits going to the charity. Goods you can buy from our own stalls include locally caught fresh fish, home grown fruit and vegetables, Rusbridge Bakery bread and Winterdale Cheesemakers and of course, locally produced burgers, sausage or bacon baps from our ever popular barbecue. You can get up to date information on our Facebook page [OffhamFMSpadework](#) or by following us on Twitter [OffhamFarmersM](#). Alternatively email farmersmarket@spadework.org.uk and ask to be put on emailing list.



FARM SHOP



Our farm shop will be stocking a great range of home grown and local produce. Fresh fruits and vegetables come up from our veg plot every day. This year the shop will be selling home produced fruit and vegetables, often at prices which beat the supermarkets hands down!

Our very popular elderflower cordial is back in stock. Anyone who has had an elderflower cocktail at the Swan in West Malling will have already tasted it, as they have been using our elderflower and our apple juice in their drinks for a year now. We also make strawberry, raspberry, apple and ginger and other cordials too.

The Farm Shop also sells an ever growing selection of top quality locally brewed beers, most of which are not available in the supermarkets. The most recent addition is a selection of bottle conditioned real ales from Bexley Brewery. These include traditional bitter, a bright, refreshing pale ale and a sharply hoppy golden ale. Plus, the newest addition to their range, a dark well balanced porter.





FUNDRAISING

I joined Spadework in November last year following a long career in private banking! I am sure you can imagine that the two could not be more different. I have to say I have really enjoyed my time so far, it has been an absolute privilege and a pleasure to get to know the Trainees and the staff over the past few months.

We have been prioritising Spadework's needs and will be focusing my efforts on four main fundraising projects. The most important of which is to replace our ageing roof, before the winter sets in. Our buildings are, in parts, more than 20 years old now and the bitumen roof has come to the end of its life and now in desperate need of renovation. It's going to cost around £32,000, but fortunately we've already raised quite a bit, although still have a little way to go. We would really welcome help and expertise from local roofing companies or donations towards our total cost.

I'm delighted to say that over the last two years we've raised sufficient funds to upgrade our Information Technology facilities. This will improve the training we provide for our Trainees and also benefit our commercial operation. We will start this project once the roof is watertight.

We are hoping to install EPOS (electronic point of sale) in the café, farm shop and garden centre. As well as giving our Trainees the opportunity to learn up to date retail skills it will also improve our stock and business management information and as such we will manage our stock more effectively maximising our revenue. EPOS will cost us in the region of £43,000, although the Wolfson Foundation have already pledged a fantastic £15,000 towards the cost.

We work very hard to cover the shortfall in funding the Trainee element of our service through our commercial activities. Sadly the commercial side is not quite enough and we still have a shortfall. So our 4th project is to start a 'rainy day' fund or provision for future replacement. This will help us to plan for major repairs and future replacement for items such as the roof and wiring.

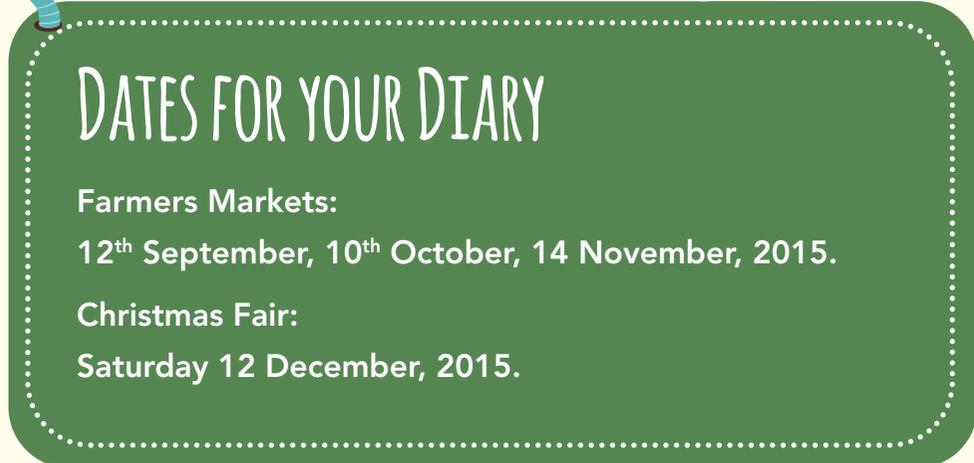
If you'd like to make donations towards any of these projects, there are a number of ways to do this and you will find all the details on our website www.spadework.net or please ring us or speak with a member of staff on site.

It is of course thanks to all our wonderful supporters that we are here. We are so grateful for every donation, no matter how big or small. I've seen first-hand what a difference it can make. On behalf of everyone at Spadework, thank you for your generosity.

Tracey Thompson

SPECIAL THANKS

A very special thank you and well done goes to Chris Pitman who ran the London Marathon on behalf of Spadework in a very respectable time of 4 hours and 33 minutes, raising £540.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Farmers Markets:

12th September, 10th October, 14 November, 2015.

Christmas Fair:

Saturday 12 December, 2015.



FRIENDS OF SPADEWORK



Dear Friends

A big thank you to all of you who have supported our Tombola and Bric-a-Brac stalls at the Christmas and Summer Fairs at Spadework. Our aim continues to be to raise funds for social activities for the Trainees and, with your continued help, we have been able to fund their Christmas Parties and Summer Outings over a number of years. We want to carry on doing this and you can help.

This year the Trainees have chosen to go to Eagle Heights at Eynsford and we hope they have a great day to remember.

In previous years they have enjoyed days out at Drusillas Animal Park, Hastings, Cobtree Park and a trip on the river. The Christmas Party is always a great success. We also pay for regular newspapers in the mess room and we have recently purchased a digital camera for their use.

By donating Bric-a-brac or Tombola prizes or purchasing quirky items from our stall you are helping us to give the Trainees a special treat. Please contact us (details below) if you have items you no longer want but we can sell at the Christmas Market.

If you can do a bit more - collect items for us from your friends, help us sort and price our items, spare an hour to help us serve on the stall – Father Christmas hat and seasonal jumper not obligatory but it makes us laugh!

If you are unsure about making a commitment, stop by the stall and talk to us about our work. We are a small independent group of family, friends and carers and, just like you, we want to make a difference.

We are a friendly bunch and welcome new faces.

We meet at Spadework three or four times a year, to plan our activities (optional extras – a spot of lunch in Tastebuds Café and a browse around the nursery).

If you are not sure what to give someone for Christmas – surprise a friend with a year's subscription to the 100 Club. Or treat yourself next time you visit Spadework. You can join at any time. You never know – you might be lucky and every penny we raise goes directly to the Trainees.

Pick up a form at the Spadework Office. Alternatively send details (name & address) with a cheque for £12 in favour of "Friends of Spadework" to Richard Thomas at 2 Vaughan Avenue, Tonbridge, Kent TN10 4EB.

Draws are held each month with three prizes, the value of which is determined by the number of members. That's thirty-six winners every year!

If you feel inspired by the work at Spadework and would like to be involved – even in a small way in supporting the Trainees further, we would really like to hear from you.

Whether you can spare some time to help or give donations - any support you can give The Friends will be gratefully received.

For more details about The Friends, please contact Jean Thomson via Spadework on 01732 870002 or e-mail friends@spadework.org.uk

