

'loveliest stay for pilgrimage !

ohh it was lovely! volunteer lady was endlessly nice and welcoming, room is huge and comfortable, and little garden became our big love – we spent whole evening and morning there, making ourselves tea again and again and watching all the plants and birds above. people obviously put a lot of effort into this place and I wholeheartedly wish all the best for the barn – it's not easy to keep projects like that running, but I hope this place will get more visitors. def coming back sometime in the future!

Review on Tripadvisor by Kapa H, August 2025

We send warm greetings to all our loyal supporters at the start of our 22nd season! The Committee has been extremely busy over the winter, including exploring more avenues for spreading the word about our wonderful Barn and inviting more volunteers to join our team.

The Barn re-opened on 4 April and our visitors over the Easter holidays enjoyed their stay very much. Our first group booking in the month will be from the 5th Farnham Beavers.

We are delighted to report on the latest exciting news regarding Tanners Hatch Hostel – see Page 4.

Please also see Page 5 for details of our **Annual Review**, which will take place on Saturday, 20 June. We look forward to welcoming many of you at this special event!



Blink and you will have missed it, but we did have a sprinkling of snow at Puttenham earlier in the year! On a chilly January morning Dave Williamson visited the barn to service the new bird feeder (see Page 6) and encountered this frosty scene.

Spring has sprung! A sight to gladden the heart, especially after the exceptionally dull and wet winter – daffodils bringing our lovely barnyard back to life as we approached the new season.



Thank you to Dave Williamson for these photos.

FUNDING FROM SURREY HILLS NATIONAL LANDSCAPE CAPITAL FUND (corrected name)

A wonderfully generous grant was received from the Surrey Hills National Landscape Capital Fund some months ago. We are extremely grateful for this funding, which has enabled us to make a good number of much-needed improvements to the Barn as well as enabling some safety upgrades and helping us increase our marketing.

The following are just some of the items purchased and projects achieved from the grant:

- New pillows, pillow protectors and recycled blankets.
- A set of new Ordnance Survey maps which cover the local area.
- A green pop-up gazebo – ready for future events such as local fetes.
- A large plant container with a difference – to which you can lock your bike!
- A wormery and various other additions for the barnyard – watch this space!
- This seat was also bought for the Barn with the Surrey Hills' funding. Located on the 'North Porch' outside the warden's area, it is bound to be much appreciated by our well-deserving volunteers.
- Money towards social media advertising costs and an advert in The Great Outdoors magazine for 6 months.
- The fire alarm system was upgraded in early February thanks to the grant. Volunteers Martin Barnes and Dave Williamson took down the false ceiling curtains in the office beforehand to give access to the sensor and cabling.
- A new bike repair stand, a wonderful asset which can be used by wardens and visitors alike. We have found the right location in the bike shed (see photo) and Dave Williamson will fix it into the ground shortly. We are celebrating how well we are now set up for cyclists and their machines, electric or manual!



Photos by Dave Williamson.

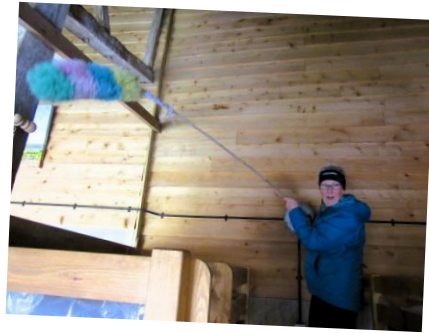
Support always welcome!

Running a small hostel in the Surrey countryside can be a challenge in lots of different ways. The funding described above is an enormous encouragement to our volunteers but we are also most appreciative of all spontaneous donations and membership income. It all helps to keep us on the map! Please therefore renew your membership or consider joining us – form attached.

START-OF-SEASON WORK PARTY

Volunteers worked extremely hard at the recent work party to ensure the Barn was clean and tidy for its first visitors during the Easter weekend. Apparently the weather did include hailstones halfway through so work stopped for a bit – but of course everyone was soon back at their chosen area with a cheery smile. Many thanks to all who were able to help out at this crucial event. Here is a small selection of jobs done by some of the participants, with thanks to Tish Piwowarek for the photos and captions.

'Rosie Hawley and Sarah Cook did a really thorough clean of the dorm - all bunks got moved and cleaned behind etc.'



'Ben Smithies and Hazel Putland laid the membrane and gravel under the porch, however we are about 6 bags of gravel short! Will need more funds!'

'Chris Meeks prioritised dusting down the books and with wording provided by Chris, Joanna Al-Zuhairi added beautiful inscriptions to the new books from Surrey Hills.'



'Dave Williamson after we put up the brand new custom printed map. Involved three of us sticking it down onto a board and then screwing it onto the wall. It was a huge team effort!'

Finally, who like the Editor has accidentally knocked their head on the low beam in the bike shed? Well fear no longer – this ingenious idea of repurposing the insulating wool from Chris Meeks' organic veg. boxes to pad the beams was put into action a few days before the work party!



Photo by Dave Williamson.

TANNERS HATCH – LATEST NEWS

We are thrilled to announce that the team at Friends of Tanners Hatch have successfully negotiated the headlines of a lease for Tanners Hatch Hostel! We at Puttenham Barn Bunkhouse congratulate all involved in making this dream a reality.

Team member Nicole Lazarus (known to many as Nod) has kindly contributed the report below.



'This photo was taken at the initial Tanners' planning weekend held at Puttenham, with tremendous help and support from Chris Meeks, Morag Warrack and many other members of the Puttenham team. The aim was to explore whether we thought it feasible for Friends of Tanners Hatch to take over Tanners and run it. The conclusion of the weekend was "Yes, let's have a go!"

This is from our very last morning at Tanners before the YHA closed it last October. So despite our happy faces, this was the day we had to walk away, not knowing if we would ever, ever be back!'

'On Tuesday 31 March, Friends of Tanners Hatch signed the Heads of Terms document on a 25-year lease with the National Trust for Tanners Hatch Independent Hostel. Nod and the whole team are

incredibly happy about this milestone. In case you hadn't heard, the YHA closed Tanners last October. Next steps for the Friends are to instruct lawyers and to finalise a full lease. This is expected to take a month or three, all being well, so we are very hopeful to have the keys some time this summer. After that, we hope to be welcoming individual travellers, families and groups to this magical spot on the North Downs, just outside Dorking.



The hostel will be completely volunteer-run. It needs a lot of restoration, being a 500-year-old grade II listed building. At some stage it has been painted with modern paint that doesn't allow the building to breathe. This has been causing damp inside and cracking on the outside, so one of our first jobs will be to use specialised equipment to strip off the bad paint, let the hostel breathe and dry out, and then limewash it.

We are extremely busy sorting out listed building permits and insurance, sourcing furniture, pots and pans, mattresses, laundry contractors, designing a website, getting a fire risk assessment, having a tree safety survey, learning how on earth to do social media etc etc.

These are all things that the original Puttenham team did 20+ years ago and we are so grateful for all the guidance and inspiration that Chris and everyone at Puttenham have been able to give us.

We look forward to holding all sorts of events to connect our two hostels, possibly starting with a bike ride from one to the other.

You can email hello@tannershatch.org or visit www.tannershatch.org to get in touch or find out more.'

VOLUNTEER VACANCIES

Company Secretary. Are you able to help us by taking on this voluntary role, albeit only short-term, for our small charitable company? The key duties involve submitting documents annually to Companies House and the Charity Commission, and updating occasionally as necessary, plus a willingness to attend quarterly Trustee meetings (currently two a year at Puttenham Barn, the others via Zoom). Interested? Please contact our Honorary Treasurer Martin Barnes, phone 01483 424767 or email martinb@puttenhambarn.uk, who will be happy to explain more.

Minutes Secretary. A new voluntary role where we seek a supporter with a positive outlook who is able to draft minutes and agendas for our Trustees meetings held quarterly. For further info, please feel welcome to contact Chris Meeks: Phone 01483 422774 or email chrismeeks44@gmail.com

FUTURE EVENTS

- Our **Annual Review** will take place on Saturday, 20 June at the Marwick Hall in Puttenham. We also have two reasons for celebrating – our own 21 years of operating the Barn and the wonderful recent achievement by Friends of Tanners Hatch – see Page 4.

The programme for the day is envisaged as follows:

- 1.45 pm - Supporters welcomed at Marwick Hall with cold drinks and biscuits
- 2.15 pm – Puttenham Barn Bunkhouse Annual Review
- Presentation by Nod (Nicole Lazarus) of Friends of Tanners Hatch on the journey the Friends group have come so far and how our two ventures can work together into the future to mutual advantage.
- The meeting to conclude with vegetarian refreshments and singing of a number of live folk songs, with all welcome to join in.

Prior to the above, as in previous years, the Barn will be open over lunchtime from 12.30 for supporters to view and enjoy a DIY picnic if they wish.

- We hope to be at **Puttenham Fete** this year, with our new gazebo from the Surrey Hills funding. Do mark the date in your diary: Saturday 13 June.

CHARLES BONE, PPRI, ARCA, Hon FCA

Long-term Puttenham resident and renowned artist Charles Bone sadly passed away in March, just months before his 100th birthday.

Paintings by Charles included village scenes and indeed we were delighted to be gifted a framed print of St John the Baptist Church, which also features a corner of our Barn, by a supporter. This is now on display at the Barn.



MORE ENHANCEMENTS INSIDE AND OUT

New and improved lighting in the communal kitchen area



Thanks to an anonymous donation, volunteers will no longer need to balance on precarious ladders to change over the regularly failing fluorescent tubes in the kitchen area.

Our fire engineer has replaced the old tubes with much more efficient LED lighting.

Bird feeder proving popular with our avian friends

Volunteer Dave Williamson was again busy in his home workshop during the winter, building this lovely bird table for the barn garden. Dave says he was keen to try to pamper our resident robin as well as hide a bright, blingy drain cover in the wildflower plot near the bike shed.

Dave commented that it cost nothing to make as he found an abandoned, broken and incomplete one discarded in a ditch and was able to use it as a donor unit to finish the project.



Apart from mealworms, Dave has been ordering 'no grow' seed, which means it has been prepared so that if any falls onto the ground below, it won't sprout. However, our volunteer 'Head Gardener' Hazel Putland says she isn't fussy and would be interested to see if some strange plants start to sprout in the wildflower plot!



And here is a lovely scene captured a few weeks later by Hazel – the feeder proving popular with four blue tits in view, including one flying off with a seed.

~~ Newsletter contributions welcomed by Hilary – support@puttenhambarn.uk ~~

*This newsletter is published by Project Oasis North Downs,
the registered charity that manages Puttenham Barn Bunkhouse*

Web site: <https://puttenhambarn.uk>

Contact: tel 01483 811001 or e-mail support@puttenhambarn.uk