

Chairman's report 2022 / 2023

Welcome everyone and thank you for attending this year's Friends of Crockerne AGM. The AGM is the PTA's only formal meeting of the year which covers committee election, Chairmans report and Treasurers annual financial report.

2022 / 2023 brought us a change in our headship where we welcomed Sue Elliott to the Crockerne family. I'm sure many share my thoughts in that we really saw a dramatic shift in the morale and the school environment. She led the school with compassion and integrity and a wonderful healthy mix of passion and focus while rolling up her sleeves and getting stuck in. She really got to know the staff, parents and children too even though she knew she was here for a short time. I cannot thank Sue enough for her brilliant ideas and resources which have undoubtedly helped raise the amount of money we have this year. We had such a successful fundraising year in 21/22, one I was convinced would be hard to replicate or repeat. That said we have again hit an all-time record amount and I am delighted to say we raised just under £13,000. £1800 increase on last year! What an incredible achievement for our humble little school.

Overview of the year

The events

This year saw the return of the Easter Egg Hunt, a fundraiser that all the children welcomed back. We have also steered away from the events which take up a huge amount of manpower, organisation and effort, these are namely the Summer and Christmas Fayre. We held smaller versions of both this year that took place straight after School for a couple of hours which proved to be a lot less work for those of us involved. The kids appeared to have a wonderful time especially with that wonderful Snow Machine, the Pill Owls and the gorgeous Signing Choir. We had a lovely simple summer event planned, again with minimal stalls which proved to be a complete washout due to the hideous weather, that being said, our parents braved the rain and came in their hundreds and showed the support that makes Crockerne so brilliant. Our continued relationship with Ben and Steph at Bags 2 School provides a great boost to the funding pot and the new Hot Choc Friday and Ice Cream sales saw funds trickle in throughout the year making us over £1300 by selling these refreshments. We are always looking for new ideas for fun events for the children, whether that is a Movie Night or a Discos, making sure we get the right balance between fun and fundraising.

Grant Fundraising

We were incredibly lucky to receive a grant from Medlock to go towards our ongoing wish to rectify the KS2 Fort flooring. This is a huge expense so a work in progress. We are very grateful to **Annabelle Foot** for her outstanding efforts to secure the grant. We will be continuing to seek out grants for our projects moving forward.

Ongoing projects to fund

Nursery and the Early Years areas had a little overhaul over the holidays providing the children with a new sand pit area and mud kitchen exploration area. We hear they love it, which is the sole reason for doing these little jobs. There are still benches and seating to paint (weather always depending) and other areas that are in need of improvement, but this again will be work in progress as we do an overview of the school and allocate where to spend. We are also looking at a potential 'Scrap store' style provision for exploratory, independent and imaginative play.

Fundraising

As well as the previously mentioned events, the online purchasing app, Easy fundraising is proving to be a gentle trickle of funds. This, along with match funding is such a simple way to earn money for the charity. Huge thanks to **Jenny Lake** at Lloyds for match funding £500 against our recent event. We will continue to advertise these avenues.

Where has the money gone?

Ruth has laid this out in her report, so I'll leave this to her to explain. (Please see the Treasurers report)

The working of Friends

The website is proving to be a great success and a much simpler way to document payments. The card machines have been a game changer at our events too. The Whats App year groups have continued to be a great source of communication along with Facebook and Twitter which are appearing to be a successful way to distribute information to a wider audience and encourage the village to attend external events.

I am very excited to be welcoming **Emma Bray** to the school, already displaying her extremely friendly and enthusiastic passion for not only a thriving 'Friends of' but a wealth of knowledge and expertise that Crockerne can only be grateful for. I am very much look forward to working with her if I am elected again this year.

Although I am the Chair, I do not stand here alone. In fact, it's because of the unbelievably gracious and quite simply formidable team of people I have alongside me which has, without any doubt, made for the success of this Friends team and its fundraising to date. Everyone needs a wingman and I have nothing but praise and admiration for mine. **Poppy Coley, Ruth Cotton, Lisa Davidson, Kelly Temple, Caja Price** and **Annabelle Foot**. They are accompanied by our team of regular volunteers who are equally brilliant and they are **Karen Whittle, Kat John & Sian Bannister**. Thank you, ladies, for always juggling your time to help and your unwavering support. Our wider group of volunteers are invaluable with their help when they are not working / juggling life & families. From sewing metres and metres of fabric to setting up and packing down, these are all jobs that don't just happen on their own. I would also like to extend my thanks to the ladies in the office, **Zac Coley** our Chair of Governors for being a reliable source of guidance and not forgetting our dedicated **Sonya Crutchley** who continues to be the lifeline and incredible link to the school and staff. I must also mention my poor husband **Phil Kaszubski** who again is an honorary Friends member by default and is often dragged into executing my ideas. Firstly, for his brawn but secondly because he saves us so much money doing lots of jobs we'd have to otherwise call someone in to do. I can't thank him enough for his time and skills, let alone the savings we are able to make. I couldn't do what I do without any of you.

Current Committee

Chair – Charlotte Kaszubski

Co Vice Chair – Lisa Davidson & Kelly Temple (Stepping down)

Secretary – Poppy Coley (Stepping down)

Treasurer – Ruth Cotton

Co Social media role – Annabelle Foot & Caja Price (Annabelle Stepping down)

With every Year 6 bunch we see move on comes the end of an era with their parent involvement. After finally seeing their children pass successfully through the school, Lisa & Kelly bid a fond

farewell to Crockerne and Friends. Over the years they have both held officers positions and have been monumental in the raising of funds. We are going to miss their enthusiasm and knowledge of our wider parent demo graph and thank them sincerely for their tireless efforts in supporting Friends.

It is also with a heavy heart that my brilliant Secretary Poppy is herself standing down this year. I have had nothing but sheer dedication from this wonderful lady and I will certainly miss our problem-solving conversations and her willingness to 'make things work'. Thank you, Poppy, sincerely, for everything. We are also losing Annabelle who has been an instrumental part of the wheel making sure our comms have been reaching our parents. Often going above and beyond in seeking funding through grants and contacting companies to help us with our problematic issues. Thank you so very much.

Anyone wishing to step up into a role currently filled or would like to fill an unfilled role can be nominated shortly at today's AGM.

It has been my absolute pleasure to lead the Friends team again this year and whilst it's not without its challenges, it's so worth it to see the impact the work we do has on the school and more importantly the children. To see the little ones swinging in a hammock, playing in the new Sand pit, reading in the belle tent screams exactly what this school is about. Whilst our humble little school isn't bright, shiny and new like so many others around us, nor do we have the latest tech or brand-new play equipment, what we are is a reflection on reality and this village. Pill always seems to be classed as the underdog and our school and our kids are often looked upon as the same. We all know that you do not measure anyone's worth by what they have. What we do have in an abundance is a collective staff group who really care about the children in this school and go way above and beyond to make sure our children are safe, happy and loved. Surrounded by a true sense of real life, will help our kids grow into well rounded, kind human beings who will be able to step alongside anyone from any walk of life. With strong values and the want and need to be better makes us all mighty and we have an enormous amount to be proud of. I for one am unbelievably proud my daughter is a Crockerne Kid and although we don't have an endless supply of funds, we do have plenty of good will and an incredible community and that is invaluable.

Charlotte Kaszubski
Chair