



# The Friends of Heronsbridge

(Registered charity 1014517)

*Newsletter Autumn 2023*



**October 2023**

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Whether your child is new to the School or has been a pupil for years, we thought we would take the opportunity to tell you about the Friends of Heronsbridge School (FOH).

### *Who are the Friends of Heronsbridge?*

The Friends of Heronsbridge are a small but dedicated group of volunteers, comprising parents, staff, governors and just 'friends', who share Heronsbridge's 'Together we Can' ethos. A registered charity, we have worked alongside staff since 1994, raising money to help provide equipment, facilities, services and those 'little extras' the school budget is unable to meet.

The Friends' committee meet once a month during term time to plan fundraising activities, receive donations and to discuss how the money we raise is distributed. Our next meeting is on Wednesday 8 November at 6.00pm and will be followed, at 7.00pm, by this year's Annual General Meeting (AGM), at which we will elect officers and welcome new committee members, receive reports from our President, Chair and Treasurer, review our activities for the last year, receive our Annual Accounts, celebrate another successful year and look forward to the year ahead. Our AGM is also an opportunity to formally thank the many individuals and organisations who raise or donate money, raffle prizes and other items to the Friends, attend the events we hold (whether fundraising or social), buy or sell tickets for our Summer and Christmas Raffles and, above all, give their time and energy to enable the Friends of Heronsbridge to achieve everything we do. All are welcome to attend the AGM.

Heronsbridge's Head Teacher, Mr Jeremy Evans, is President of the Friends of Heronsbridge. Samantha Lambert-Worgan has been Chair since our AGM in 2021, taking over from Marjorie Nash who had been involved in the Friends since it was founded in 1994 and had served as Chair for half that time. Other elected committee officers are Carol Rule (Treasurer), Siarlot Hall (Vice-Chair) and Jane Owen (Secretary). Whether elected officers or not, all committee members work as a team. There aren't many of us, and not everybody can attend the meetings due to ill-health or family circumstances, but we all work together to ensure our events run smoothly so that we raise as much money as possible for the pupils of Heronsbridge School. Our youngest committee member is Addiena Lambert-Worgan, Sam's daughter. She not only contributes ideas to the discussions, she also represents us at Assemblies. Although not a committee member, Carol's daughter, Diane, also provides invaluable support to the Friends. If you are interested in joining us, or just want to find out more about us, why not come along to one of our meetings?

### *From Where does the Money Come?*

Most of our income during the year comes as a result of our various fundraising events or donations from individuals and companies. We were especially grateful for the latter during the pandemic when we were unable to host in person events. Despite the challenges COVID restrictions brought, and the unavoidable changes we had to make to our fundraising activities, the Friends remained active. During the past year or so, we have been able to resume our annual events, such as our Summer Fête (which raised over £4000) and our Christmas Concert. The Heronsbridge Ball in June added £4500 to our funds and, in March, Hollie Evans, one of our senior pupils, had her hair cut (by Mr Evans) during assembly. Hollie's efforts enabled us to add £400 to Friends' funds and she donated the cut hair to a charity who make wigs for children who have lost their hair due to cancer treatment. We like to keep the 'fun' in our fundraising so, often, the amount we raise is secondary to the enjoyment of the event itself.

Our Christmas Raffle will be drawn during our Annual Carol Concert on Tuesday 5 December. We will be sending two books of tickets home with each pupil shortly after half term. If you would like more (to buy or sell) or are able to donate prizes, please get in touch.

Launched in April 2022, we currently have more than 30 people playing our monthly Friends of Heronsbridge Lottery but there is plenty of space for others to join the fun. Costing £5 per month to enter, the lottery runs from November to July and is open to anybody who would like to support us. Each monthly winner will receive 50% of the total income for that month (usually about £90), the other 50% being used to directly benefit our pupils. Every participant is allocated a number and can purchase as many numbers as they would like. Further details can be found via our Facebook page.

#### *So Where Does the Money Go?*

Every penny received by the Friends is used to directly benefit the pupils of Heronsbridge School. The money is distributed in one of three ways:

**Large Projects:** over the years, the Friends have funded several large projects. These have included the Hydrotherapy Pool and Heron Lodge and, in recent years, we have invested £10,000 in an outdoor play area.

**Provision of Resources and Equipment:** we fund specific items (such as electronic devices, educational toys etc), sports' kits, days' out etc. Recently, we have funded surfing sessions and transport for pupils performing in a Shakespeare festival in Newport (and a trip to MacDonalds afterwards) and paid for the coach to Llangrannog and hoodies for all staff and pupils who went. Last Summer, some of the committee members had the privilege of attending a Mad Hatter's Tea Party, funded by the Friends, that had been organised by Key Stage 4 pupils for their friends in the Senior Department. The Bowls Centre in Bridgend was transformed into Alice's Wonderland, with the staff and pupils dressed as characters such as the Mad Hatter and the Queen of Hearts. The tables were beautifully decorated and the Alice in Wonderland-themed food was delicious.

**Gifts from Santa:** every year, the Friends provide up to £15 per pupil for a Christmas present from Santa (a.k.a. Del Owen).

Since 2021, we have extended our range of activities to include fun sessions for pupils and their siblings such as Play Sessions at Soft Landings Play Zone (two of which were funded from a BAVO grant which also enabled us to hold two Swimming Sessions), Animal Encounters (with meerkats, alpacas etc), Miniature Railway, a Pizza Party and Discos. The Christmas and Easter Play Sessions included some very special guests, Santa and the Easter Bunny. We have been able to donate money to other local charities with the nominal fee charged at these events.

#### *Get Involved!*

- Please continue to support the events organised by the Friends of Heronsbridge (our next is the Annual Carol Concert on Tuesday 5 December – tickets will be available next month - and we are planning a Bingo & Fish Chip Night and a Cambrensis Choir Concert next term): remember, the more money we raise, the more the pupils of the school will benefit!
- Donate prizes or buy or sell tickets for our upcoming Christmas Raffle.
- Suggest fundraising events we could organise.
- Come along to one of our monthly meetings.
- Visit the Friends of Heronsbridge Facebook Page.
- Join our lottery.

**For further information about the Friends of Heronsbridge,  
please contact:**

**Samantha Lambert-Worgan (Chair): [friendsheronsbridge@outlook.com](mailto:friendsheronsbridge@outlook.com)**

**Jane Owen (Secretary): [fohsec542@btinternet.com](mailto:fohsec542@btinternet.com)**