



Oldland Mill Trust - Spring Newsletter 2025

Patron: Richard Burrows
Registered charity: 1203609

The oldest regularly working windmill in Sussex! Now 322 years old!

Welcome to another edition of our Oldland Mill Newsletter. We hope our news will keep you up to date with everything that goes on at the Mill during the year, as our wonderful volunteers and supporters work hard to keep this historic building in good order and the mill sweeps turning, grinding flour as they were intended to do.

Maintenance

The weather over the winter has certainly been variable! As I write, we are coming towards the end of a long sunny spell with clear blue skies but chilly north-east winds. The Mill is gleaming white in the sun following washing in the autumn and then treatment with Algon, an organic spray which keeps green and black algae at bay, to which the Mill is particularly prone. The grounds are also



looking very well-maintained and wild flowers are being sown on parts of the roadside verge. Despite a lot of rain in December, January and February and some very cold weather at times there has been good attendance at our regular Tuesday and Thursday volunteer days. Amongst various activities, the old cherry-picker has been partially re-hosed to try and stop oil leaks and there have been welding and electrical repairs. The trailer has also been maintained and is ready to pick up the next batch of

local wheat for milling.

Charles plays "Dead Ants" repairing the Trailer lights!

The Storm Hatch is at the front of the mill above the windshaft and allows access to areas that otherwise we cannot reach. This hatch is very heavy to open and close and so we have temporarily replaced it while we work to design a lighter replacement.

Spring Milling

Weather conditions and the availability of volunteers have meant a slow start to milling in 2025 with just two productive sessions so far. Happily, conditions are improving, and more sessions are planned for the coming weeks which we hope will enable us to keep pace with the increasing popularity and demand for Oldland Mill flour.



We had a very busy and successful session on New Year's Eve when 105kg were ground. We filled 3x15kg sacks for external bulk sales and 3x20kg sacks for Oldland Mill flour-packing stock. In fact, this session boosted our flour stock to capacity as our policy is to grind only what is required for projected needs. This avoids packed flour stock approaching our "sell by dates" which is at least three months before "best before dates".

With the weather systems in the early part of the year favouring strong wind conditions from an easterly direction, milling was not feasible due to the mature trees around the mill boundary effectively screening the wind and generating unwanted turbulence. The best winds for milling blow from the south-south-east through to the south-south-west as

this sector has virtually no obstructions.

Fortunately, with a change in wind direction in mid-April our Milling Team was able to mill 42kgs to replenish our stocks.

Safety & Recycling

The Mill Accident Prevention Team (APT) continues to meet four times a year. We have updated our Safety Health and Environmental Policy Statement, which sets out the intent of the Trust to protect volunteers and members of public from harm when carrying out its activities.

We have recently hosted a familiarisation visit by Burgess Hill Fire Service, which will help us better coordinate emergency situations at the Mill.

With the implementation of Simpler Recycling across the UK the Mill has reviewed its current waste management and recycling arrangements and will be improving waste management especially at open events when we generate more waste than normal.

Membership and 50/50 Club

Renewal of annual membership will take place in May, and we hope to retain those who have loyally supported us over the last year. We will continue to promote membership and support of the Mill at all our events during the year.

We currently have 117 members of the 50/50 club and the Volunteer Team conduct the draw (during their coffee break!) on the third Thursday of every month.

The winning numbers for this year to date are:

	Winning numbers		
	1st	2nd	3rd
Jan-25	98	29	83
Feb-25	109	116	28
Mar-25	66	64	34
Apr-25	56	41	107

And in the last 12 months we have paid out a total of £694 in prizes. If you would like to join the 50/50 Club - or increase your number of tickets – please contact me.

Alison White - membership@oldlandwindmill.org.uk

Promotion and Fund-Raising

We have started the year's events with a bang! A very successful Open Afternoon on 6 April attracted 118 visitors and made an amazing £689 for the Mill.



Our mill mice – lovingly created by a number of our volunteers - are continuing to prove very popular. They have generated a following of collectors locally and are producing some significant income!

We are busy preparing for our first Event Day of the year on 4 May. During the day there will be three Morris Dancing Sides, three musical acts and two Magic Shows as well as our usual stalls and children's activities. Lunch will be available courtesy of the Aroma Café in Keymer who proved to be very popular last year. Teas, coffee, home-made

cakes and, of course, the beer tent will be there for the whole day.

We have recently purchased two new sturdy gazebos, one of which will be used for the performers and the other to provide shelter for art works from the Attic Art Club in Ditchling. The club have chosen the Mill as their charity for the year, which is very exciting and we hope financially rewarding for us.

The complimentary minibus will again run every twenty minutes from outside The Thatched Inn at the top of Grand Avenue. This year Age Concern have generously allowed us to use their bus and we are extremely grateful to them.

Programme for our Event Day Sunday 4 May 2025

Mike and Ray 'Two Way Street' 11 - 11.45am

Morris Dancers 12 - 1pm

Lunches available 12 - 2pm

First Magic Act 1pm

Kevin Russell 1.15 to 2.15pm

Second Magic Act 2.30pm

South Downs Folk Singers 2.45 - 3.45pm.

We look forward to seeing you on 4 May and at our other events in 2025. Please tell your friends and families about the Mill events and encourage them to join us.

- Sunday 1 June – Open Afternoon 2 – 5pm
- 6 July – Open Afternoon 2 – 5pm
- 3 August – Open Afternoon 2 – 5pm
- 7 September – Event Day 11am – 4pm
- 5 October – Open Afternoon 2 – 5pm.

Attic Club Art Exhibitions

The Attic Club is a group of around 30 professional and semi-professional artists drawn from the Sussex area. Their work encompasses a wide variety of skills and media from watercolours, oils, pastels, charcoal, pencil, mixed media and work from sculptors and ceramicists etc.

The club will hold two Exhibitions at Ditchling Village Hall this year, from 2–5 May and 22 – 25 August.

We are very grateful to the Attic Club for making the Mill their chosen charity for 2025.

Volunteer Opportunities

Would you like to become more actively involved in caring for the Mill and helping to preserve this historic building for future generations to enjoy?

The Trustee Board is looking for a new Chair – someone to Chair the Board meetings and AGM, who will take an active interest in the Mill and work with the other volunteers to ensure the charity is well-run and the Mill continues to be an asset to the local community. For further information, please contact Andrew Mackay at andrewomackay@gmail.com.



Volunteers at work!

Additional volunteers are also needed to help carry out maintenance work at the Mill, either as weekly volunteers or occasional volunteers to help with other tasks such as summer painting. We particularly need someone with woodworking skills including machine-working expertise. For more information about maintenance volunteering please contact Andy Pearce at a.j.h.pearce@btinternet.co.

National Mills Weekend

Oldland Mill will participate in National Mills Weekend on Sunday 11 May, when the Mill will be open to visitors from 2-5pm and refreshments and home-made cakes will be available. Mid Sussex Amateur Radio Society will also be setting up in the grounds of the Mill for the afternoon and making radio contact with other mills.

Other Sussex mills will also be open during the weekend – follow the link for the list of participating mills <https://www.sussexmillsgroup.org.uk/nmw.htm>.

Annual General Meeting

The Oldland Mill Annual General Meeting will be held on Wednesday 9 July, starting at 7.30pm, at Adastra Hall in Hassocks.

All members are invited to attend. Do come along to meet the volunteers and hear about progress over the last year.

