

October 2011

***Mildmay Place and Bowers Road
Royal Wedding Street Party.***

The Linda Hogan Community Fund granted £248 to Mildmay Place and Bowers Road residents to help them organise their street party to celebrate the Royal Wedding in April.



Organiser Tina McWilliams contacted us early in the year to say one of the elderly residents had told her there had always been street parties for occasions such as this when she was a girl. Tina asked if we could help. We told her that as funding had to be paid into a bank account, Shoreham Parish Council might be willing to partner her and hold the funds for the residents. The parish council were delighted to help.



The event attracted over 100 guests aged from four years to over 80, was an outstanding success and enjoyed by all. Everyone helped to organise it and thoroughly enjoyed the day. Community friendships have been extended between individuals that were previously not known to each other, despite having lived closely together for 17 years.



The event set out to create a day of celebration for all members of the community. They tell us that one of the most rewarding aspects was in the planning and organising which started in January 2011. This phase ensured that everyone within the community had the opportunity to put forward their ideas and contributions.

Jobs and tasks were shared out among all: erecting bunting, table decorating, compiling a village quiz, organising 'Shoreham Brides' photo board, tug of war games - the list goes on. Everyone felt valued and included during this special time.

The group were contacted by Radio Kent who visited one week prior to the event for a live radio interview about preparations. The group managed to seize the live air opportunity to thank and acknowledge the Linda Hogan Fund. Radio Kent were so

impressed with the setting and with what the group had achieved that they returned on the Royal Wedding day itself, where the group gave another four radio interviews during the day. They were there from 6:30am right through until 2pm.

The BBC News website and the Sevenoaks Chronicle attended in the lead up to the event and again on the day itself. Follow up interviews were also provided to Kent on Sunday Newspaper and a further visit has since been received by Radio Kent to discuss 'neighbours'.

Tina told us "On a personal note for me the success story of the day was to see the older generation becoming so involved. They were delighted to be valued in both the benefit of their experiences that they could offer us and also the practical support that they were able to contribute. Some of these individuals do not have frequent contact with others. I can see they are continuing to benefit enormously from the social domino effect this event has had. We are looking forward to many more events and occasions where we can continue enjoying the ongoing success of our day".

Following on from the event there have been two BBQs and a Sunday lunch. There is also a summer picnic and theatre trip planned.