



More than £8,000 was given to 21 local good causes when The Old Spot Trust held its first Awards Evening.

The event took place at Highnam Court, near Gloucester on Wednesday 27th May 2009.

More than 100 people attended – from representatives of charities, community groups and organisations benefitting from Awards to civic dignitaries and other distinguished guests.

They were welcomed by Trust Chairman, Rob Ayland, who said the event was the culmination of just under two years of hard, but thoroughly enjoyable work by Trustees and Friends of the Old Spot Trust.

“It was in the Summer of 2007 that some friends and I discussed the possibility of doing something to help Gloucestershire and celebrate all the fabulous things that we have here,” he said.

“From its environment and wildlife to its people and places, we are fortunate to live in such a beautiful part of the country. In forming the charity, we wanted to work with local people and encourage community spirit and charitable support.”

“One thing that’s very important to us is that we’re all volunteers. We organise all our fund-raising events - and things such as this evening - in our own time. We’re fortunate to be helped by another small group of volunteers who we call the Friends of The Old Spot Trust. They are mainly our families and friends and they give us their time or help in kind. You will see a number of them here this evening. For larger events, we’re also able to rely on a wider group of volunteers. We are very grateful to all of them for their help.”

The presentation evening was hosted by BBC Radio Gloucestershire’s Head of Programmes, David Aston, who was helped by Trustee Hilary Allison.

Cheques were presented to recipients by people who have supported the Trust:

- Roger Head who generously let the Trust use his home, Highnam Court, for the event
- Sara Burton who arranged for her and her colleagues at Cheltenham accountants Grant & Co to raise money by donating funds rather than sending Christmas Cards and setting up a Piggy Tuck Box
- Paul Gurney of Newent-based butchers Gurney’s who donated meat in the form of an Old Spot pig for an Old Spot Pig Roast at our launch to local businesses last year
- Paul Davies of Gloucester-based Sprinters, part of environmentally-friendly printers Severn Print, who printed some Trust materials free of charge

Cheques were given to:

The [Spring Centre](#) in Quedgeley which supports children with special needs and disabilities throughout Gloucestershire. Some of the children have Cerebral Palsy, Down's Syndrome, Autism, Muscular Dystrophy, sight, hearing and learning difficulties, physical and mental disabilities as well as rare chromosome disorders and undiagnosed problems. The Centre provides vital support for the entire family. The Old Spot Trust grant will fund a new games table for the children.

[Longlevens Rugby Football Club Under 9's](#) is a highly successful team run by volunteer coaches and administrative staff. The enthusiasm shown by every one of the 16 players is infectious and the highlight of their week is the weekly Sunday morning match. The Old Spot Trust grant will help fund next season's new Team Kit.

[Gloucestershire Animal Welfare Association & Cheltenham Animal Shelter](#) has been helping animals since the 1930s. As well as stray animals, it takes in dogs, cats and small animals from owners who can no longer look after them for a variety of reasons and aims to re-home them. It also educates people in correct and appropriate animal husbandry through humane education programmes. The Old Spot Trust grant will go towards buying an agility course to build for the dogs in the Centre's paddock. This will help with exercise programmes and aims to stimulate them.

Motor Neurone Disease (MND) is a debilitating illness for which there is no cure. Life expectancy is between three and five years and, as the illness progresses, people are robbed of their ability to walk, talk, eat and move their upper and lower limbs. The cruel twist is that the brain is unaffected so the person affected is fully aware of their progressive deterioration. The Gloucestershire branch of the [Motor Neurone Disease Association](#) helps sufferers and their families throughout the county. The Old Spot Trust grant will help towards funding three motorised wheelchairs for sufferers.

The mission of [The Wiggly Worm](#) is to motivate individuals and organisations to choose to improve their lifestyle whilst valuing the diversity of others and their community environment. It aims to develop a Dads' Cooking Scheme with Coney Hill Children's Centre. The Old Spot Trust grant will go towards running these and helping Dads to develop a healthier lifestyle for their families.

The [Pied Piper Appeal](#) is a Gloucestershire charity which is helping relieve sickness in children by providing child-friendly equipment over and above what's supplied by the National Health Service. Battledown Children's Ward at Cheltenham Hospital is a busy outpatient ward where children attend for appointments, tests and minor operations. The current waiting area doesn't have facilities for children with special needs. It's hoped such an area would enhance and compliment the hospital experience for these children and their families. The Old Spot Trust grant will be put towards buying play equipment for them.

[Teckels Animal Sanctuary](#) is a welfare centre which takes in dogs or cats looking for a home. They don't discriminate against old or sick animals which means they can spend quite a long time there waiting for the right home. The centre also provides volunteer opportunities for adults with special needs and learning difficulties as well as schools and colleges. The Old Spot Trust grant will go towards helping make sure this valuable work continues.

The [James Hopkins Trust](#) provides nursing and respite care for severely disabled, life limited and life-threatened children aged under six in the county. They need nursing care around the clock. This level of care is provided in the home or at Kites Corner, its multi-sensory day centre and gardens. The Old Spot Trust grant will help fund a newsletter to give people important information about its work.

Barnwood Community Partnership uses volunteers and helps local residents to get involved in helping to make Barnwood a better place in which to live, work and play. It's due to move into an office so that it has a proper base from which to do this. The Old Spot Trust grant will be put towards providing this much-needed facility for the community.

[Cinderford Rugby and Sports Club](#) provides sporting opportunities for 250 young people. With its 100 volunteers, the club plays a vital role in helping young people develop fitness, discipline and community & team spirit. The Old Spot Trust grant will be put towards transporting the players to away games and help disadvantaged young people buy kit.

The [Gloucestershire Chest Fund](#) helps people suffering from chest diseases. It aims to buy special medical equipment not usually funded by the NHS and, where possible, also provides finance for research into chest diseases, particularly Tuberculosis, which is now becoming more prevalent. The Old Spot Trust grant will go towards Endobronchial Ultrasound equipment to help with the early diagnosis of lung cancer without the need for invasive surgery.

The [Gloucester & District branch of the Alzheimer's Society](#) supports local people affected by dementia. The branch is keen to set up a 'Singing for the Brain' group as this has been found to have a really positive effect on people with dementia. The Old Spot Trust grant will go towards hiring a room & providing refreshments for this.

Gloucester Gang Show is an annual theatre production run by Gloucestershire District Scout Association to teach Cubs, Scouts, Explorer Scouts, Leaders and Guides key life skills through a theatre production. It involves a six-month intense rehearsal period, with a minimum 5 hours' commitment each week. The Association has to hire stage weights and stage braces each year and The Old Spot Trust grant will go towards buying these.

The Crowley O'Shea School of Irish Dancing is a new not-for-profit school of dancing. The school has 17 young students. The Old Spot Trust grant will help buy Irish Dance dresses.

The [Forest of Dean Sea Cadets](#) is an independent, voluntary uniformed organisation open to young people between 10 and 18 years, including a junior section for those between 10 and 12 years of age. It aims to provide fun, friendship, adventure and new skills through water and land-based activities. Due to increasing numbers, the unit needs more training space and is now fund-raising to buy its own building. The Old Spot Trust grant will go towards this.

The church roof at All Saints Church in Longhope is being repaired. To help raise funds, a community cookbook – 'All Saints All Sorts' – is being produced, with all recipes given by local people. It has involved the school and other local organisations. All recipes use locally grown and bought ingredients, so involving village businesses too. The Old Spot Trust grant will go towards printing the cookbook.

For the past 20 years, [The Family Haven](#) has run a day centre in Gloucester to provide practical help and support to deprived and vulnerable families with pre-school children.

Clients are often families living in bed & breakfast, those with mental health issues, victims of domestic violence and children with special needs. The centre will put The Old Spot Trust grants towards its nursery one-to-one sessions and outreach service.

[Alderman Knight School](#) is a special school in Tewkesbury which focuses on the needs of children between 5 and 16 years with learning difficulties, complex needs and autistic spectrum disorders. The Old Spot Trust grant will fund an out-of-hours trip for 10 pupils to Croft Farm Water Park in Bredon's Hardwick. They will take part in activities such as windsurfing, sailing, canoeing and kayaking.

[Hanover Lodge](#) is a sheltered housing complex at Cashes Green, near Stroud. A number of its 35 residents have disabilities. The Old Spot Trust grant will be put towards an on-site meeting and community room for its elderly residents this.

The [Tirley Village Committee](#) would like to improve its kitchen facilities and provide an outside play area for its Mother & Toddler Group. The Old Spot Trust grant will contribute to these things.

The [Priors Park Neighbourhood Project](#) aims to improve quality of life for people living in that part of Tewkesbury. The Old Spot Trust grant will pay for a Pony Day when youngsters from there will go to Twyning Riding Stables for the day. As well as the basics of riding, they will learn how to care for and respect the animals.

After the cheques had been presented, Trustee Rob Keene urged people to help support The Old Spot Trust and its role in Gloucestershire.

"We can't really stress enough that we really need to get more people - individuals, groups or businesses – involved in helping to raise money for The Old Spot Trust," he said. "As Trustees, we do whatever we can but there is a limit to what we can do on our own."

"You might have some money to give and want a charity to donate it to. Perhaps you have a charity of the year at work? If so we would love it to be The Old Spot Trust. You might be taking part in some sort of sponsored event and decide that The Old Spot Trust will benefit. On the other hand, you might want to take part in some of the fundraising events we organise throughout the year. If you think none of our events are for you, you might want to suggest an event for us to run. Do let us know."

Fellow Trustee Caroline Rawlinson thanked everyone who had been involved in making the Awards Evening possible. They included:

- Phil Hanman of [Hanman SPLiT](#) who had donated Old Spot Trust plaques
- The Crowley O'Shea School of Irish Dancing for the entertainment
- [Bowden Hall](#) for use of the lecterns
- [Snappers](#) for their photographic services
- [Gloucestershire Event Hire](#)
- [Ooh La La Catering](#) for refreshments
- Friends of The Old Spot Trust.

Please view the photo gallery.