

WHITSBURY VILLAGE NEWSLETTER

Issue No 3 Spring 2021



LOCKDOWN EXIT

As we get vaccinated, head out of lockdown and resume unrestricted living there may be some that still need help or assistance. If you do please still use the Whitsbury Helpers we are happy to help as best we can!

Village Information Sources

www.whitsbury.com

Whitsbury Facebook Page

Village Whatsapp Groups

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the spring edition of the village newsletter we have interesting news and articles we hope you will enjoy reading. There is an excellent article by Jon Dare explaining what is happening at this time of year on Whitsbury Farm.

Spring is arriving quickly and there are signs around the village with snow drops aplenty, daffodils and the new shoots starting to grow. We now have a roadmap out of the current lockdown so hopefully we will be able to be with family and friends again. If anyone needs any help please contact a Whitsbury Helper we are still here to help where needed.

VILLAGE NEWS

Village Show

We are currently planning for the Whitsbury Village Show, the date for your diary is Saturday 7th August. The draft show programme can be found on www.whitsbury.com under the village show page. The main categories will not change there are just a few to be finalised. We will do a covid safety review at the end of May, at this stage it does look very positive. We will also have a scarecrow competition, this will be an open competition So any theme is allowed please get thinking!

Sharing Box – Where Is It, What Is It And How Does It Work?

The village sharing box is located next to the old phone box in the centre of the village opposite the Cartwheel. The sharing



box is used to share excess produce or items you think might be of use to others. Through the year there is typically a selection of seedlings, plants, green veg and apples and even excess christmas

chocolates! There are two ways of being notified one is by WhatsApp on your mobile phone, a group has been set up which can be used to let others know that you have put something in. A message can be as simple as 'cooking apples in the box' those on the group can see the message and decide if they are interested. The other is to keep an eye on the box. One thing it isn't is a bin so only items that you think others might genuinely want should be placed in the box. If you would like to be added to the Whitsbury Food Share please contact Andy Foreman or Steve Husher or send an e-mail to admin@whitsbury.com.

Spring on Whitsbury Farm (By Whitsbury Farm Manager - Jon Dare)

It seems to have been a very long winter with plenty of rain and, more recently, some very cold temperatures. But spring is surely coming if it does stop raining and that means there will be lots going on at Whitsbury Farm & Stud. Many of you will have walked up at gallops and the surrounding area and perhaps wondered 'what are they doing up there, or what's that growing out there?', so I thought I'd try to give you some insight of what is happening on the estate.

The gallops form part of a working farm, and the two racehorse trainers and their riders that we have at Whitsbury use them every day, although at this time of year they're not using the grass. The woodchip surface is harrowed twice daily in all weathers to give the horses a firm even surface to train on and for those of you who are up early enough, the horses can be an impressive sight to watch.

Surrounding the gallops, some of the fields were planted to milling wheat in the autumn, which is our main crop, and you will be able to watch it grow as the year progresses. Other fields had overwinter cover crops planted to help with soil structure and to stop nutrient leaching. The presence of these crops over the winter and their subsequent breakdown in the soil encourages a build-up of soil organic matter and micro fauna and aids the following crops' growth. A few of these fields will soon have organic manure spread on top as well, before being ploughed and cultivated to prepare for planting spring barley, peas or poppies. You'll know by the smell when that's happening, but it doesn't last long, and it's great fertiliser!

We have had our sheep grazing various fields too and these move around the farm throughout year. They're grazing stubble turnips at the moment - not a very good example of a field of turnips, but next year's will be better - and they'll move to grass when it starts to grow as the weather warms up. Our cattle are all indoors for the winter, warm and cosy bedding down on last harvest's straw and mares are foaling at this time of the year too, so there are some very late nights/early mornings for those working on the stud looking after the horses. In no time at all the new foals will be gallivanting around the stud paddocks. Spring is always a very busy time of year for farm staff with lots of crops to get planted, fertiliser to put on, animals to look after etc. Not to mention mowing grass gallops and generally keeping the farm and stud tidy. With many more walkers and cyclists coming to Whitsbury Down for exercise since lock down we'd really



appreciate it if you would keep your dog on a lead when out walking on the farm and gallops, to safeguard the riders on racehorses; to protect the ground nesting birds and to stop the sheep or foals being harmed.

We have a lot of work to complete in the spring and there will be some long working days ahead, so those few peaceful evenings when the walkers have all gone and it's relatively quiet on the farm make Whitsbury a special place to be to watch the sun set over Knoll hill.

Wild Flower Verge

On the southern approach to the village between Whitsbury Cross and the Whitsbury village sign you may have noticed a marked off area. This will be managed to promote wild flower growth and, we hope be the start of a wildlife corridor. Typical modern verge management consists of cutting back at random times of the year and leaving the cuttings. These fertilise the ground providing an ideal environment for the more robust growth (nettles, bracken) which outperform the more delicate flower species. The plan is to cut once before the growing season (early February) and once after the wildflowers have seeded (late summer). All cuttings will be raked to the back of the verge under the hedge in an attempt to reduce the fertility. By doing this we hope to see a re-emergence of wild flowers, insects, invertebrates and small mammals that can take advantage of this approach. So far we have cut back the verge and marked it off. We are working with Hampshire County Council to make sure that section of verge is left so we can manage it ourselves. We aim to monitor the changes over a season or two. If successful we will look to extend the approach to a wider length of the verge.

Litter Pick

We are planning a village litter pick as soon as the covid restrictions allow. We will set it up to be covid safe and arrange for areas of the village to be covered by connected groups or individuals. We are also hoping to have coffee and cake afterwards as a just reward! We will post details of the date on the website, Facebook and the village noticeboards.

Village Hall WI-FI

We have very fortunately received a grant from Hampshire County Council to install Wi-Fi in the village hall. This includes a telephone line as well as the broadband and will be available to all Village Hall users. This will allow us to potentially do more in the Hall once it is digitally connected. We are considering coffee mornings with computer surgeries so if anyone has a question or problem they can pop along and get help.

Broadband Improvements

We have received an initial response from BT on our enquiry regarding fibre connections to households, this would provide up to 1GB internet connections. We are currently looking at available grants and will be able to report more in the next newsletter.



Points of contact and Help

Whitsbury Helpers

Andy Foreman 518064

Steve Husher 518372

Charlotte Thompson 518518

Geoff Dominey 518087

Arabella Tregoning 518274

Juliette Knibbs 518838

Parish Council

Graham Thompson 518518

David Bellini 518885

Chris Harper

Hilary Sutton

Geoff Dominey 518087

Council are helping us install a temporary speed check sensor to check speeds through the village. 30 mph whilst the legal speed limit is still too fast for some areas in the village and '20 is plenty'.

Bonfires

Please be considerate over bonfires and where the smoke is heading, so it does not cause a nuisance to those who maybe enjoying their gardens or have windows open.

Ideas for future Articles

If you would like to see something in the newsletter, an observation or query please contact admin@whitsbury.com or call Steve Husher on 518372.

Church Key Rota

We are looking for volunteers to be on the key rota for the church, this involves unlocking in the morning and locking in the evening. Volunteers open/close the church for 3 weeks in the year on a flexible basis. If you are interested please contact Rosemary Druitt or send an e-mail to admin@whitsbury.com.

Community Space

A survey will be sent around the village with a series of questions about village community spaces and children's areas. Please watch out for this and respond accordingly and we can look to see what the current community needs are for a community space, garden, play area or outside meeting place.

Mini Libraries

We plan to start a trial of a mini library soon within the village this will allow users to deposit and borrow books so that there is maximum re-use. We would only deposit books that we were not worried about getting returned but it's a great way of recycling and reusing. More in the next newsletter.

Speeding In The Village

Within the Parish Council meetings we have discussed speeding in the village and how we might determine whether extra signage or measures might help reduce speed. As an equine based village it is important speeds are adhered to and we have some blind bends and steep hills so it can be difficult to see or be aware of horses headed to or from the gallops or out for leisure. Hampshire County

INFORMATION SOURCES

Village Whatsapp Group

www.whitsbury.com

Village Facebook site:
Whitsbury