

November 2019

Whittington and Fisherwick

Connect

Parish Council Magazine

Senior Citizen's
Christmas Party
Saturday 7th December 2019

See page 3

Autumn

in Whittington & Fisherwick

PARENTS MUST READ

Head of Governors at Whittington School
raises concerns over road safety

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Whittington and Fisherwick
Connect
Parish Council Magazine

Your Parish Council

Martyn Bennett 07973 300346	Wisteria Cottage, Fisherwick martynbennett@yahoo.com
John Cannon 01543 432171	7 Main Street, Whittington jandkcannon@virginmedia.com
Richard Cotterill	32 Back Lane, Whittington richcotty@hotmail.co.uk
John Heeler 01543 304833	28 Church Street, Whittington john.heeler@ntlworld.com
Garry Hyde 01543 433190	11 Neal Croft, Whittington gazmalloy@gmail.com
Andrew Jackson 07753 651 458	Norcis, Main Street, Whittington andrew@andrewjackson.me.uk
Paul Jansz 07899985718	7 Swan Road, Whittington pauldavidjansz@hotmail.com
Chris Millar 01543 433189	95 Back Lane, Whittington chrismillar25@hotmail.com
Jonathan Smith 01543 432002	2 The Coach House, Whittington whitsmith@btinternet.com
Julia Spencer 01543 432238	Crossroads, Back Lane, Whittington julij_spencer@hotmail.co.uk
Connor Walton 01543 432842	Park House, Fisherwick Road connor.walton@lincoln.ox.ac.uk
Anthony Ward 01543 432377	The Bell Inn, Main Street, Whittington thebellinwhittington@hotmail.co.uk
Bob Wood 01543 305668	5 Swan Cottages, Whittington bursley2@icloud.com
David Walton 07703101611	Parish Clerk Park House, Fisherwick Road davidjwalton@aol.com

In line with the Parish Council's desire to engage more with the community you will find reports in this edition from the Chairman of the PC, the Parish Clerk and Chairmen of the main sub-committees. We hope you enjoy reading these reports. As previously, at the beginning of each article is the author's name. Articles written by Parish Councillors represent current policy and are endorsed by the Parish Council. However, views expressed in articles written by members of the community or representatives of village organisations do not necessarily represent current policy and have not been endorsed by the Council.

Have your say...

If you have any comments to make about any of the issues raised in this edition of Connect please do contact any Councillor, the Parish Clerk or put your comments in writing and pop it in the new suggestion box in Chris and Martin's Newsagent on Main Street.

Designed and produced by



STRAIGHTFORWARD
Creative Design Agency

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Christmas Party

Whittington and Fisherwick Senior Citizens' Christmas Party - Sat 7th Dec 2019

We are delighted to invite you to the Senior Citizens' Christmas party to be held in the Village Hall on Saturday 7th December 2019. Doors open at 5pm and the meal will be served at 5.30pm.

If you would like to attend, please complete and return this invitation by the 30th November. Replies please to the Whittington Pharmacy or to John Smith, Field View, Darnford Lane, Whittington.

If you know someone new to the village or anyone who has not received an invitation, please contact John or Rosemary Smith 01543432848.

Would you be kind enough to each bring a small raffle prize?

We look forward to seeing you on December 7th. Please do tell us if nearer the time you find you are unable to attend.

Name(s) attending:

.....

Address:

.....

Any specific dietary requirements:

.....

If you require transport to and from the event, please write your telephone number here:

.....

and we will phone you nearer the day to make the necessary arrangements.



WHITTINGTON CRAFT & COUNTRY FAIR 2019



Sue Walton & Bob Wood

This year's Craft and Country Fair was once again well supported by members of the public and local community. Martyn Bennett (Parish Chairman) acting as Field Marshall soon had vendors suitably sited on their preferred pitches, many thanks to all the additional early morning volunteers on the day for ensuring a warm welcome to our Village Fair site!

The great number of varied stalls on site was down to super-efficient cajoling, collating and marshalling by Sue Walton who, after a number of enthusiastic years of dedication to the fair, has decided to relinquish her position. Thanks for the support Sue we wish you well!

The Samba band set the rhythm, the arena attractions enthralled, the Classic Cars all gleamed thanks to Rob Hilyer and his team, the SDA dancers danced and the Rock Choir sang their hearts out. The Pavilion tea and cakes stall, Scouts' hog roast and jacket spuds all sold out! The Punch and Judy man drew large crowds for all his shows. But the Star of the Show was without doubt the Big Owl in the Falconry Display!

The car parks were overflowing just after mid-day so quick contingency planning by John Heeler, Darren Martin, Leighton Thomas

and Whittington FC members ensured that traffic flow was maintained throughout.

Joh Turner and the raffle team did an outstanding job to ensure the prizes and tickets were well worth the money for those lucky individual winners!

David Fone did a splendid job recruiting the sponsors for the fair with Sytner BMW & MINI on site, along with Fiocchi whose Shotgun taster range was a great attraction!

The advertising team obviously needs to be thanked as the footfall was best to date.

All in all, the fair brought together the community, showed off the village in a positive light whilst managing to raise in excess of £1.3K to assist with local initiatives in the future!

Situations vacant; 2020 fair planning will be underway at the start of the New Year, there are a number of vacancies on the Fair Committee that require to be filled including raffle organiser and stalls booking coordinator. Your Village Fair Needs You! Contact Bob Wood via the Parish Council if you wish to join our great fair team.



Chairman's Report

Martyn Bennet, Chair of WFPC

I am delighted to say that we now have a full complement of Parish Councillors with two new members joining us from November.

The Parish Council receives a monthly report from our caretaker, Martin King. He goes round the village including the children's play areas, Bit End Field and Jubilee, Swan, and Noddington Parks checking that everything is in order and highlighting any maintenance concerns. The Parish Council then prioritises and acts on them.

If you see anything that is a concern then please either contact your local councillor or the Clerk. Contact details are at the front of every Connect.

The Parish Council will then follow the 7 Cs: Concern raised, Courtesy reply, Consultation, Communication of responses, Cost benefits, Consideration by the PC and finally Completion.

The Parish Council is represented at the HS2 meetings and responds to all planning applications. We are pleased to support environmental developments, the Good Neighbourhood Scheme and the enhancement of village facilities.

We are here to support all in Whittington and Fisherwick.

Parish Council Meeting 7th October 2019

David Walton, Parish Clerk

As well as welcoming Chris Crump and Gemma Griffith onto the Council, the October Meeting also had two very interesting presentations from outside organisations. Firstly, Nicola Lynes explained the "Transforming the Trent Valley" initiative. This has been funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and its key aims are to improve the environment and connect communities within the Trent Valley. The Parish of Fisherwick is within the target area. The second presentation was from James of Tonks Brothers, the Council's Grasscutting contractor, who reported on the work during the last few years in supporting the Council in enhancing the appearance of the Village. James referred to the increasing popularity of the new BMX track but recommended that metal scooters are kept off it due to the damage they can cause. Councillor Bennett thanked both Nicola and James for their presentations, and also praised the other contractors involved in improving the environment.

The Council is also embarking on the next wave of setting priorities. The existing priorities set in 2016 have been met, with the consultation for the new Play Area planned for Bit End Field almost complete. In order to produce the new priorities it was agreed that as well as using social media, there will be a suggestion box placed in Chris and Martin's Newsagents in the centre of the Village, inviting all residents to put forward ideas. The Meeting also expressed support for the work carried out by John Smith and others in arranging the Remembrance Celebrations which take place over Sunday 10th and Monday 11th November. The Council has arranged Road Closure Orders for both mornings, from 9.30am to 12.30pm.

Following complaints about the appearance of the newly installed posts along The Green, it was agreed that from a health and safety perspective that they be removed until consultations have taken place.

Lifetime Achievement Award for fellow Councillor

The Editors

On July 17th July at the George Hotel in Lichfield our fellow Parish Councillor, Garry Hyde, was presented with a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Volunteer Star Award scheme based in Stafford. Hearty congratulations to Garry who does so much voluntary work here in Whittington on behalf of numerous organisations, a richly deserved award.

During his working life Garry was an Inspector in the West Midlands Police. His volunteering covers many areas of village life. He has been instrumental in reforming the Wednesday Club into the vibrant social gathering it is now. For the last five years Garry has also served as Chairman of the Village Hall Management Committee. He has served two terms as a Parish Councillor, is currently Vice Chairman of the Council and Chairman of the Environment Committee. For three years Garry worked tirelessly as Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, which took up a tremendous amount of time but Whittington now has an adopted Neighbourhood Plan giving the village a strong base for future developments.

Garry's skills at organising and running quizzes for, amongst others, the WI and St Giles Church are legendary. Six years ago Garry joined Tamworth Probud and during this time he has served as Secretary Almoner, Vice President and President. The saying, 'if you want something done then ask a busy man' is certainly true of Garry who is always ready and willing to say YES to any request from mending the vacuum cleaner in the village hall to writing a constitution for one of the many organisations he is a member of. Where he finds time to be a family man with two daughters and three grandchildren is anyone's guess. His wife, Chris, says, "I cannot think of anyone more deserving of this award for the volunteering services he provides". We on the Parish Council agree wholeheartedly with that.



Whittington Wednesday Club

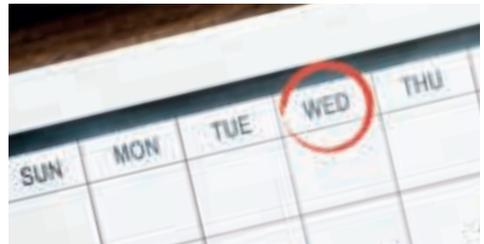
Fred Stack

It only seems like yesterday I was wishing everyone a Happy New Year, now Christmas is just around the corner. How time flies! Cheer up, the Whittington Wednesday Club has lots to offer. If you are not yet a member, but maybe interested in some of the activities listed below, why not pop along and check us out.

- Wed 23rd Oct Dave & Ron, Black Country entertainers and magician
- Wed 13th Nov Talk by Ken Knowles – Lichfield's Town Cryer
- Fri 22nd Nov Christmas Meal and entertainment at the Down Inn, Bridgnorth
- Wed 11th Dec a Visit from Dandy – a very talented couple, well known in the village

During 2020 we will of course have a variety of trips including Panto at Birmingham Hippodrome, our fish and chip lunch, quizzes, speakers and live entertainment.

Should you require any further information please contact Fred Stack 01543 432217. We meet in the Village Hall on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, you are very welcome.



Baxter's Field

Cllr Martyn Bennett, Chair of the Parish Council

The Council has been strengthening its links with other organisations within Whittington and Fisherwick and recently has been engaged in very exciting discussions with Major Mark Woodward and Major Paddy Butler of the Defence Medical Services (DMS) who have suggested working with the Parish Council to develop Baxter's Field. This field is located off Common Lane, opposite the entrance to the Firing Ranges. The field hitherto has been used by local football clubs but they have now relocated and the field is now only used by the occasional dog walker. The DMS would like to introduce fitness equipment and a 200 metre running track to facilitate circuit based training. The DMS have agreed that this is compatible with the suggestion of the Whittington and Fisherwick Environment Group (WFEG) that

they work with the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust. The aim would be to add wildflowers, plants, trees and possibly a pond or ponds to the existing grassland. It would be a great habitat for barn owls, short-eared owls, small mammals and insects as well as skylarks. This scheme would be compatible with the work being carried out at the Golf Course. Subject to further consultations the area could be used by pupils of Whittington Primary School in some shape or form.

This is early days, with further discussions planned but it is considered important by the Council and DMS to consult with residents and encourage more ideas to come forward for discussion. If you have an idea please contact any of our Councillors, or the Parish Clerk.

Whittington and Fisherwick Good Neighbour Scheme

Frank Knighton

The past year to the end of September has been by far the busiest since the Scheme was launched in May 2015!

Figures include:

- 515 jobs were undertaken by volunteers with twice as many jobs completed compared to the previous year.
- 431 of these jobs were for accompanied transport for appointments to hospitals, doctors' surgeries, dentists, chiropodists or to attend other village groups
- 77 were for befriending and home support and the remainder for odd jobs
- The Scheme now has 51 active volunteers who all live locally either assisting those who need us directly and/or ensuring the Scheme runs effectively and efficiently through the role of Duty Officer
- During the year we supported 57 Whittington and Fisherwick residents, the majority of whom are elderly, and most a number of times

In addition to assisting on an individual basis we have developed a programme of social events designed to get folk together and to help combat social isolation.

This ever-increasing demand means WE NEED MORE VOLUNTEERS. Volunteering is a fulfilling experience with the added satisfaction of knowing you are a valuable asset to your own neighbours and community.

Just a few hours a month will greatly help. There is no pressure on individuals as all jobs are sent out by email to all volunteers who then choose which jobs they volunteer for. We provide training to help you start off and will pair you with an existing volunteer to ease you into the job.

So please join our volunteer team. Just call 01543 624410 on Mondays, Wednesdays or Fridays between 10 a.m. and 12 noon or leave a message anytime and we will be in touch to get you started.

Is Your Child Safe Or Up To Dangerous Practices?

Garry Hyde, Vice Chairman

I was beginning to think we had seen the last of the small metal empty cylinders of laughing gas around the village but how wrong I was!

This morning in Noddington Park I found FOURTEEN used cylinders and two deflated balloons strewn about the gate area at the entrance from Noddington Lane.

These are extremely dangerous and harmful things to use. The contents if used improperly can kill. They can also cause severe allergic reactions. It really is no 'laughing matter' that young people think that their use is just a pleasant pastime.

Is it your child at risk? Do you know if your child is involved?

I do not want to scaremonger, but does it take a death in our Community to bring this message home?



Environment Committee; Report Of The Recent Meeting

Garry Hyde, Chair of the Committee

Countryside Fair; following another successful Countryside Fair, plans are already in place for next year. Any minor issues raised at the 'Wash Up' meeting are being addressed. An amount of the funds raised will be available to be distributed to groups within the Parish in the form of grants.

Representatives from Whittington and Fisherwick Environment Group (WFEG) are fully co-opted members of the Committee and the Parish Council works with them regarding environmental issues. There is an ongoing initiative for a plastic free Parish and recycling.

Heart of England Britain in Bloom; the entry this year produced a Gold Award and the judges commented favourably on the improvements made since last year; especially to the horticulture and the much improved state of verges and gutters.

Council Priorities:

1. The new children's play area on Bit End Field for the younger members of the community
2. Consideration of 'gates' to delineate the village approaches
3. Consideration of outdoor fitness equipment
4. Traffic Issues in Common Lane
5. Heathland restoration and use of Baxter's field in Common Lane (see article on page 8)
6. Paths and cycle ways

These initiatives have been identified as possible ways to improve facilities in the village. Further information can be obtained from the minutes of the meeting on the Council website.

Recreational Issues; all the recreational areas are discussed. New benches and picnic tables have been installed in Swan, and Noddington Parks, Bit End Field and The Croft.

New Sub-Station; A new electrical sub-station will be installed in the wooded area in Peregrine Close. This will provide a more resilient supply to all the residents AND make it easier to re-route power if there are electrical breakdowns. All work and costs will be undertaken by Western Power.

Grounds Maintenance; As well as the need to cut all the grass, a mammoth task in itself, a new contract was drawn up this year to maintain verges and clear weeds from gutters. This is no longer undertaken by the County Council. This has been a very successful project, will be repeated next year and may well be enlarged.

Highways and Associated Issues; Problems such as the traffic outside the school at certain times, the Dog Crossroads, speeding traffic, parking and overhanging vegetation are part of our ongoing agenda.

Litter; the next Community Litter-pick will take place on Saturday 9th November. We will meet in the Village Hall car park at 10am. Black bags and litter 'pickers' will be provided. Please wear suitable clothing and footwear; gloves are not provided. Help us to keep the village and its approaches litter free.

If any resident has any comments, favourable or otherwise, or any suggestions or initiatives please contact the Parish Council.

Whittington's Children's Playground

Cllr Julia Spencer

We now have an exciting and imaginative design for a new young children's playground on Bit End Field. A consultation event to get comments and ideas took place on Saturday October 19th at the Village Hall. The design is also available to view on the Parish Council website, all suggestions welcome.

The next step is to apply for funding so that we can make the design a reality! There will be news on progress made in the next edition of Connect.



Whittington Cricket Club

John Butler, Club Secretary

Another challenging season for the Club has just finished. Due to restructuring of the Birmingham League down to two divisions the first XIs have opted to go down to Division I next season. The second team have had a strong season to maintain their place, with the 3rd finishing 8th in their Division.

During the season, the club was proud to announce the beginning of involvement in women's cricket. In 2020 the club will be returning to compete again in the Lichfield and District Sunday League, a valuable training ground for younger players looking to move into senior Cricket.

In 2018, the introduction of the England and Wales Cricket Board driven "All Stars" was a great success. This was repeated again in 2019, with the club having over 90 youngsters aged 5 -8 years attending over eight Fridays. That

also generated huge support from parents and friends, which helped bring them all into the Whittington cricket family.

At the recently held Junior Section Presentation Night, the excellent news was announced that Whittington had won the "All Stars Organised Club of the year Award", a real boost for Whittington and all who had contributed to the success to it.

The Junior Section overall had another busy season, with age groups being run through from Under 11 to Under 17, with soft ball cricket also being played by younger boys and girls.

The Club most certainly does not stand still in any way. Particularly during the autumn and winter months, the Pavilion is available for hire, so if you have an event coming up, do please contact us and we will do our utmost to help.



The Anglican Parishes of Whittington, Weeford and Hints

Christmas 2019

Fr Jason

Sunday 15th December

11.00: Barn Nativity at Sheepwash Farm,
Whittington for young and older alike

Sunday 22nd December

9.30: Eucharist for the Christmas
Shepherds and Yule log, St Giles',
Whittington

15.30: Parish Carol Service with Christingle
and mince pies, St Mary's, Weeford

18.30: Traditional Candlelit Nine Lessons
and Carols, St Giles', Whittington

Christmas Eve - Tuesday 24th December

16.00: Carols and Christingle for all, St Giles'

20.00: Christmas Eucharist, St Mary's

23.15: Christmas 'Midnight Mass' Eucharist,
St Giles'

Christmas Day - Wednesday 25th December

8.45: Traditional Said Eucharist for
Christmas Day (BCP), St Giles'

10.15: Carols, Prayers and Presents for
Christmas Day, St Giles'
(No Eucharist)

New Year's Eve - Tuesday 31st December

22.45: Celebratory Snacks, Prayers and Bells,
St Giles'

Sunday 5th January - The Feast of the Kings

9.30: Eucharist for The Kings, St Giles'



St Giles Hospice 'Light up a Life' Service

Gary Young, St Giles Hospice

Whittington holds a special place in the hearts of everyone at St Giles and we are delighted to invite our friends and neighbours along to our 'Light up a Life' service at the hospice on Thursday 5th December, starting at 6.30pm.

The outdoor service at our Fisherwick Road hospice is always a highlight of our year as people come together to remember family, friends and colleagues at this festive time.

If you would like to dedicate a light on our Christmas tree and write a message for the Book of Memories you can do so before November 22nd, and at the service you can see your light being switched on and view your messages in the book.

St Giles Hospice Director of Fundraising, Elinor Eustace, said: "Our 'Light up a Life' services give

families the opportunity to come together to celebrate the lives of their loved ones and the chance to support the work of the hospice. We are delighted that Light up a Life means so much to people in our local community and the services are open to anyone, not just those people who have been supported by St Giles."

Dedications can be made online at www.stgileshospice.com/lightupalife or by calling 01543 432538.

Everyone who dedicates a light will receive a special Light up a Life card, featuring the name of their loved one, their personal message and this year's Light up a Life poem. The Book of Memories can be viewed at the hospice all year round.

Sunbeams at St Giles

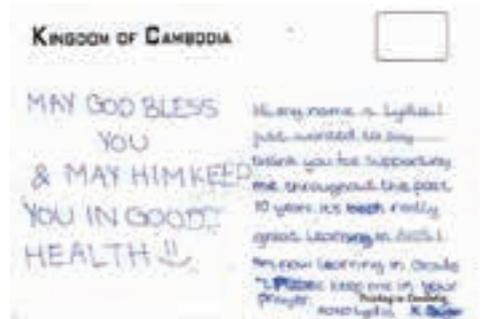
Megan Barr

Many thanks to all those who gave so generously in memory of Anne Colgrave. We were able to send the amazing sum of £1000 to Cambodia to help fund the secondary education of Lydia Kumongy. She is now 11, and has sent a delightful thank you card for our support.

We are now well into the Christmas season, and planning our festivities. Christmas comes early at Sunbeams... this year we start to tell the story on Wednesday December 4th and Jesus will be born on Wednesday December 18th, followed of course by a Birthday Party in the Church Hall!

Anyone is very welcome to come along to Sunbeams... we are also meeting on November 6th and 20th. We love meeting any children from newborn to school age, along with a grown-up of any age, in the church from about 10.30 for songs, instruments and adventures, and then

in the church hall from about 11.00 for drinks, play and crafty things to do. Feel free to come to either or both parts... do contact Megan (432605) or Sue (319613) if you want to know more. It's a lovely relaxed place for new Mums and their little ones to get to know each other.



Finance Committee Report

Martyn Bennett, Chair of Finance C



For a relatively small Council we are fortunate to have sufficient funds to provide a wide range of value for money services. As well as meeting the day to day running costs such as regular Grasscutting and other Grounds Maintenance costs, we also ensure that we place funds in “earmarked” reserves for projects such as carrying out tree surgery work, looking after the recreational areas, and carrying out capital projects. Currently we have £47,270 in earmarked reserves. Very recently we have completed the transfer of a small piece of land from the Cricket Club which means that we now own the freehold of the land at the entrance to Jubilee Park. In addition, we have spent approximately £4,000 renovating our children’s play equipment at Bit End Field, Swan Park and Noddington Park.

I am pleased to say that the £10,000 we have spent replacing and redesigning the BMX Track at Jubilee Park seems to have been very well received by users and parents alike. The old track had been criticised by recent independent Safety Reports as being inadequate and a grant from Groundworks was applied for and awarded. This award was for £10,000 and ensured we got a

better track than would have otherwise been the case.

This year for the first time the Council put money in a budget for specifically cleaning gutters, weed control, and cutting back overgrown hedges obscuring road signs. Some of these jobs used to be done by the County Council but, due to their budget pressures, are no longer being carried out to the standard we would like. This work no doubt contributed to our Gold Award in the Britain in Bloom scheme. The Council will be examining whether to enhance this budget for the next financial year. Money has also been spent supporting WFEG in their wonderful project at Swan Meadow which produced a lovely display of wild flowers this year.

Last but not least, thanks must be given to Councillor Bob Wood who coordinated the delivery of the Countryside Fair this year, producing a profit of over £13,000. This will enable the Council to continue its practice of inviting applications from community voluntary organisations for grants. Applications will be open from December and the application form can be found on the Parish Council website.

Dog Waste Bins

Cllr Chris Millar

During the summer the Parish Council became aware that the dog waste bin on the canal side by Whittington Bridge was overflowing and dog owners had been forced to leave their parcels on the grass beside the bin. This was discussed at the recent Parish Council meeting.

The Clerk has been in touch with LDC about the possibility of extra bins. A decision on whether to install extra bins will be made at the November meeting. If you see any of the dog waste bins overflowing please report it using the following link:

<https://www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/report>



Whittington School Nursery - September 2020

Denise deBorde

Did you know that Whittington School Nursery provides all day childcare for 3 and 4 year olds in a school environment during term time?

Applications will soon open for children to join our lovely village Nursery in September 2020. For any prospective families wishing to visit our setting, meet our staff and see our current children 'in action', we have an open morning on Thursday 14th November 2019 at

10am and again on Thursday 9th January 2020 at 10am. Please contact the school office on 01543 432487 or email nursery@whittington.staffs.sch.uk to confirm your attendance at either event.

In the meantime, don't forget to check out our website at <http://www.whittington-school.co.uk> to see what your child could discover at Whittington School Nursery.

Whittington Flower Club

Rosemary Smith

The Christmas Demonstration this year will be on Wednesday 27 November at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall, when Michael Bowyer will be coming from Salisbury. He is a National Demonstrator and the stage will be stunning at the end when all the designs will be raffled.

Friday 6th December - an evening of Festive fun and Flowers for our members.

Wednesday 22nd January - we have Rosemary Hughes giving a talk on Royal Maundy Traditions.

She makes the posies each year for the Royal Maundy Service and will demonstrate the making of one.

Wednesday 26th February will be a Practical Workshop

Wednesday 25th March sees a return of Tony Brown, another national Demonstrator

Please contact Rosemary 432848 or Pamela 304990 for more information about the Club or look at our website.

Whittington in Bloom

Mike Kinghan



As most of you probably know by now Whittington was an entrant in the Heart of England in Bloom Large Village category this year for the second year running. On our first attempt last year we achieved the Silver Gilt level, but were delighted that this year we achieved a Gold by some margin and the judges commented as follows:

"The judges felt that the improvements the Committee had achieved in such a short period of time were incredible and in most cases excellent. It was a pleasure to be shown the outstanding work carried out by a dedicated team of volunteers - an excellent effort and worthy of a Gold award."

The highlights which particularly impressed the judges were:

- High standard of horticultural schemes
- Excellent standard of grounds maintenance / cleanliness
- The large number of planted troughs and colourful garden displays
- Swan Meadow wildflower project and other wildflower seeded areas
- The large number of environmental projects operating within the village and surrounding areas.
- A strong team of committed volunteers
- Excellent communication channels used by the group
- Significant amount of funds raised to enhance the village and improve the environment

The judges tour included visits to Woodhouse Community Farm, Swan Meadow, St Giles Hospice garden, Middleton Bridge Garden, Main Street and Jubilee Community Orchard. In addition to which there was a stop at a private garden owned by Nigel and Mary Lawson, which resulted in the couple being awarded the regional Special Prize for Horticultural Excellence. Over the last 25 years the Lawsons have lovingly created a sunken woodland garden with terraces, well stocked banks and borders and two streams leading to a pond at the bottom. The judges described it as "a truly amazing garden maintained to perfection and worthy of the award."

Thanks to everyone who helped and supported the effort this year. Many people contributed, but the efforts of the Parish Council to clear the gutters were vital. Next year we would hope to maintain our Gold status, and improve our score further – but we again we will need the help of the entire village. Please watch for news of working parties, litter picks and other events and activities as we develop our plans for Heart of England in Bloom 2020.





Whittington And Fisherwick Fairtrade

Steve Barr

October saw the 25th Anniversary of Fairtrade in the UK and worldwide and it is over seven years since Whittington and Fisherwick became Fairtrade villages. The Parish Council renewed its commitment to Fairtrade in the summer and Whittington School achieved Fairtrade status earlier in the year.

For 25 years Fairtrade and its supporters, including many in our villages, have been fighting against poverty and inequality, making a real difference to the lives of farmers and workers. From working with businesses and governments, teaching about Fairtrade in schools, campaigning and lobbying, to choosing Fairtrade in the shops, we have all been part of this journey. The Co-op has always been at the forefront of the Fairtrade campaign and free copies of their food magazine may still be available in the village store. The newly reopened Dog has also agreed to continue being a Fairtrade pub (as is The Bell).

The bigger and better Whittington Fairtrade 2020 calendar – a joint venture with the Good Neighbours Scheme - is now available, with stunning pictures of the village and surrounding area – a real bargain at just £6.

Looking ahead, here are a couple of dates for your diary. Back by popular demand at the Christmas Market on Saturday 14th December – the bottle bag draw. Every one a winner! If you have any spare (empty!) bottle bags you could donate, please contact Steve or Meg. Fairtrade Fortnight 2020 starts on 24th February, and we will be flagging it up with our usual coffee morning (again in conjunction with Good Neighbours) on Wednesday 19th.

Contact Steve or Megan Barr on 01543 432605 or stevebarruk@yahoo.com if you would like to know more.



Ukulele Group

Sue Evans

Small and friendly ukulele group would like more members.

We meet in the Maurice Fisher Lounge (next to Whittington Village Hall) on the 2nd and 4th

Wednesday of the month between 11.30 and 12.30. Music provided. Beginners welcome.

Thank You To The Good Neighbour Scheme

Charles and Angela Hartley

This wonderful scheme aims to offer solutions delivered by a dedicated group of volunteers to all those villagers who face problems of various kinds.

We are particularly grateful to those who helped us when Angela was diagnosed with cancer. Initially reassuring us and explaining how the system worked and then providing dedicated drivers who took us to the hospital in Birmingham where Angela's treatment took place. The diagnosis of cancer was bad enough in itself without the additional anxiety, worry and stress

of negotiating the city traffic in order to find the hospital, which we had never visited or even seen. Our previous rare visits to Birmingham have always been on the train. The drivers provided us with a warm friendly taxi service, staying with us at the hospital and removing the stress of ploughing through public transport timetables. We offer a big thank you to all those who helped us out at a very worrying time, not forgetting all those duty officers manning the telephone system who received our calls for help.

Whittington Primary School Children

Amy Hawkins

The Year 6 Children at Whittington Primary School took part in the Buchcraft experience at the end of September. As part of the 3 days experience, the children got 'back to nature' through a number of hands on activities and experiences whilst sleeping in the great outdoors. On arrival at the camp, the children were put into 'tribes' before they set off looking for fire wood and were shown various techniques for fire lighting. Fires lit, the children cooked lunch whilst choosing their tribe names and decorating their tribes flags. Shelter building was next, the children worked together to build somewhere to sleep. As the sun began to set, the children enjoyed singing and listening to stories around the campfire.

Early the next day, the children learnt survival first aid skills. These were put to the test when they discovered their teachers in a make believe plane crash! The children jumped into action, administering first aid then working as a team to evacuate their teachers out to safety on stretchers! The staff were hugely impressed with how well the children put their first aid skills into practice under pressure.

Teachers Mr Gibbs and Mrs Hawkins then filleted fresh salmon for lunch, and a few brave volunteers stepped forward to take on the 'fish

eye eating challenge'- Ant and Dec would be proud! Once fed, the tribes headed back into the wilderness to work on their camouflage skills to see who could stay concealed the longest. Our final evening gave the tribes the chance to dazzle the camp with their performances. Once a tribe was crowned, hot chocolate and brownies were served to all for their superb efforts and once the final camp song was sung, sleep was upon all.

All the teachers were incredibly proud of how the children worked together as a team- whether it was taking part in a game, washing up after dinner, or singing around the campfire, they did a fantastic job of living out in the wild!



Mobility Scooters And The Pavements Of Whittington

John Butler

Mobility and an increasing lack of it, has been a lifelong problem for me, my attitude though has always been that, " there are always others worse off".

My family regularly remind me, quite correctly, that to continue walking is an essential part of life's rich pattern.

However, 6 months ago I took delivery of a battery powered mobility scooter to enable me to move around the village a little more easily. People are generally very kind, helpful and constantly offer encouragement. What has come as a real surprise has been the difficulties I have experienced actually moving around our pavements.

The scooter is fitted with stabilizers, nevertheless, overcoming lumps, bumps, holes

and finding curb drops has been an unexpected challenge. Working out the best route from A to B is not as easy as you might think. But the greatest challenge has been negotiating my way around vehicles which are parked halfway across the pavement and hedges which have not been cut back. All of these things make what should be a simple outing into a challenging and often dangerous obstacle course.

Overall, it really is an excellent way of increasing one's mobility. If you are thinking of going down the mobility scooter route, the actual process of driving and riding such a machine is in itself really pretty simple. Just be prepared to have to overcome some of the hazards I have described.

Whittington W.I

Anne Hiskins

Since the last edition of Connect Whittington WI have been quite busy.

Unfortunately the sausage making experience was cancelled through lack of support but we did go to The Coffin Factory in Birmingham, this was not a gruesome place, far from it. The company of Newman Brothers was founded in 1882 and then turned to making cabinets. In 1894 they moved to Fleet Street in the Jewellery Quarter of Birmingham to specialise in coffin furniture and closed in 1998 when cheaper more modern materials were being used. We saw the heavy presses and were told how the young boys were set to work in the acid room which was a very dangerous environment. Having worked our way through the different floors of the factory we ended up in the sewing room and saw all the satins and lace and rows of sewing machines, originally the machines were Singer but then they replaced them with more modern German machines. This was a very interesting outing.

We sponsored the cake competition at The Country Fair and had 20 entries, it was a good turnout, the judge had her work cut out tasting all the cakes. The winner was Lynette Collinson, second was Brenda Phillips and third was Simon Collinson.



‘Mind the Child’

David Phillips, Chair of Governors, Whittington Community Primary School

The placement of a school within any village community makes it an essential part of that community, so much so that for our village school the word ‘community’ forms part of its title.

Many current parents were once pupils at Whittington Community Primary School and I feel sure that they will reflect on the changes that they have seen over the years in that regular trip up or down Common Lane.

One sure aspect of change has been the increased traffic through the village, up and down Common Lane, linking to the main A51. The traffic, especially at the start and close of the school day is causing an increasing problem that needs addressing and controlling.

As Chair of Governors at the school I have voiced my opinions and written to parents and carers on more than one occasion, asking for their support and consideration when parking.

Yellow lines to restrict parking or solid white lines to advise of the need to not park, to assist traffic flow, are there to be adhered to and not to be ignored. Those road markings are ignored much too often and it is clear that a potential accident has been narrowly averted on many occasions. Action is needed to ensure that there are none in the future.

I have witnessed ‘road rage’ as vehicles are unable to pass, due to the white lines or bus stop being parked on, with the offending vehicle owner demonstrating their total disregard for the danger and inconvenience they cause. This has to stop and it needs the support and cooperation of all village car users by the school.

Another ‘hidden danger’ is the reckless nature of car users who sit outside school, waiting for



their children, with their car engine idling. Fumes fill the air around school and you can be assured that the health of the school's children is being put at risk.

Public Health England, in their report of March 2019, state that air pollution is the biggest environmental threat to health in the UK, with between 28,000 and 36,000 deaths a year attributed to long-term exposure. It is our responsibility to not allow the children at our village school to become one of those statistics.

If you wait for your child outside school please switch off your motor vehicle and keep our village air clean and safe.

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Please be aware that the shop is located on the first floor via a staircase. If access is an issue we have a ground floor room available where products can be brought down for viewing by our dedicated customer service team.