

March 2020

Whittington and Fisherwick Connect

Parish Council Magazine

'Two Parish Councillors
visit the HS2 Cappers
Lane construction site'

See page 7

Spring

in the village

Red Telephone Box Acquired

Parish Council acquires red telephone box
– Suggestions for use invited

See page 3

SAVE THE DATE

Saturday 25th April

Community Litter Pick

See page 3

EVENTS

Fundraising

Many of our village organisations are holding
fundraising events in the coming months

Please see inside for details

Your Parish Council

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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.

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Big Red Telephone

Garry Hyde - Vice Chairman

Unfortunately, due to lack of regular use, British Telecom has decided to remove the telephone from the Big Red Telephone Box in Langton Crescent, outside the Village Hall. As it is one of the old-style and to preserve the character of the Village, the Parish Council agreed to 'buy' the Telephone Box for £1.00, and agreed to maintain it.

We have had a few good suggestions as to its possible use, but we do need some more, also some help in cleaning and renovating it, to make it a more attractive Village amenity.

Suggestions as to possible use - as well as offers to help renovate and preserve the Telephone Box - can be made via Social Media, the Parish Council Facebook or Website, WhatsOnWhittington, the Village Hall Facebook site or the Suggestion Box in the Whittington Newsagents. So, thinking caps on and let's see if we can find an innovative scheme for our Big Red?



Men's Lunch Club

Terry Tricker

The Whittington Men's lunch was formed in November 1999 specifically for men from within the community who, for a variety of reasons - such as disability, loss of employment or retirement- missed men's company. The Group aims to provide friendship, and mutual support or practical help when needed. Clearly there will always be a need for a strong contingent of fit, retired men within the Group who would welcome the opportunity to help provide that practical help and support that others might need, whilst at the same time enjoying socialising with male company over lunch'.

Twenty years later in November 2019, over 50 members celebrated their Anniversary. I am sure that Fairy Gopsill, the inspiration behind the setting up of the group, would never have dreamt it would be so successful. Sadly, only

Terry Tricker and John Butler from the original six at the launch group are still around. Terry took the opportunity to reflect on some of the real characters who have contributed to making the group such an ongoing success. The list is endless and of course there are still individuals like Brian Russell who controlled the Village signal box for forty years!

In concluding, Terry spoke about the seventh person who was there 20 years ago, not around the table, but in the kitchen where she has been for 235 lunches. Margo Christie has only missed one lunch in all those twenty years. She was presented with a bouquet of flowers amidst loud cheers and grateful thanks. To find out more about the group and perhaps join the waiting list ring Terry on 01543 432747

New PC Chair Needed! Martyn Bennett says "Goodbye"

Martyn Bennett - Chairman

After five years as Chair of the Parish Council I am standing down to enable a new Chair to lead the Parish Council to even better things! It has been a real pleasure to have been Chair of such an amazing group of Councillors (both past and present) who have worked tirelessly to improve the facilities, the appearance and the wellbeing of Whittington and Fisherwick.

Their support and that of the Community has been much appreciated. I feel the changes we have made, the contacts we now use and the projects we have undertaken have made a real difference to us all. Underpinning all that we do has been our Parish Clerk, previously Janine Arm and now David Walton, whose knowledge, advice and skills have been fundamental to our success.

I thank you all and wish you all the best for the continued success of our Parish Council.



Whittington and Fisherwick Parish Council Welcomes Two New Councillors

Chris Crump and Gemma Giffith

Chris Crump



Hello, I have recently become a Parish Councillor and I am taking this opportunity to tell you a bit about myself. I was born and went to school in Chasetown. I am married to Martin and have three

wonderful sons and four grandchildren, two boys and two girls.

I became a Social Worker in 1996 and specialised in residential homes for children, believing that properly run they can have a positive effect on a child's life. I have looked after tiny children, teenagers, those with learning difficulties and finally ran a drug rehabilitation unit.

I gave all of this up when my mother became ill and my husband was diagnosed with a serious medical condition. After my mother passed away we moved to Whittington and decided to buy the local newsagents.

There are three reasons why I wanted to become a Parish Councillor: Firstly, Martin and I have been made to feel very welcome in the village so I would like to take an active role in keeping the village as lovely as it is. Secondly, I believe that my past work experiences will be useful when looking at issues affecting the Council. Thirdly, I am passionate about participation, especially where young people are concerned, they are our future.

I am very approachable, you can always chat to me in the shop about anything. We have started a suggestion box, do please use it.

Gemma Griffith



My name is Gemma Griffith and I am 35 years old. I grew up in Elford and know Whittington well. When growing up I would come to the village for Brownies and Guides and also did some voluntary work at the hospice.

I moved to the village just over 2 years ago and live here with my husband and my 2 year old son.

I am a serving Police Sergeant with West Midlands Police and currently work on a neighbourhood team in Bilston, Wolverhampton which is a bit of a journey but I like to keep work and home life quite separate. I thrive on keeping busy in life and you'll often see me rushing around the village to different pastimes and commitments. My passion in life is travel and I take advantage of cheap flights and deals, often visiting weird and wonderful places for a few days away from the rat race.

I adore life and try and live every day to the full- it takes a lot to catch me on a bad day.

At my happiest you'll find me with my beloved family or friends or frequenting one of the village pubs - you can't beat a good book, a strong gin and a log fire. I love village life and want to do everything I can to keep our wonderful village accessible and enjoyable for all.

Parish Council Budget, 2020-2021

Chair of the Finance Committee

It is important residents realise that, for every £1 you pay in Council Tax to Lichfield District Council, just 2½p of this is given to your Parish Council in the form of a Precept. Our costs have been kept as low as possible by ensuring our key services are put out to tender. It is also worth remembering that all Parish Councillors are unpaid volunteers.

During the current financial year (2020/21) Whittington and Fisherwick Parish Council will provide excellent value for money for its residents when compared to other local Parishes such as Elford, Harlaston, Fradley and Streethay. In fact out of 25 parishes in the Lichfield District, we levy the 13th lowest level of Council Tax.

The Parish Council is not complacent and wants to offer you the best possible value for money. In November and December we scrutinised all our costs and income to make sure that the overall charge to you is kept as low as possible. In recent years both Staffordshire County Council and Lichfield District Council

have cut back significantly on services such as cutting grass verges and clearing weeds from gutters. The Parish Council felt that it was important to keep the village looking as lovely as possible, so decided to invest in a new maintenance contract to cover the loss of services. This proved to be a good decision after receiving high levels of praise for the improved appearance of the Parish from the Heart of England Britain in Bloom judges.

We have estimated that to maintain the services we currently provide for next financial year we will need an extra £2.68 per household – equivalent to an extra 5p per week per typical household. This will give the Council an extra £2,625 in total for the whole year. Why do we need this?

The full budget details are included on the Parish Council's website. Should you have any questions on the budget please email me via the Parish Clerk.

Extra money for more Grasscutting and Grounds Maintenance	£1,000
Increase in Caretaker costs	£1,200
Inflationary increases based on the Retail Price Index (net) / Other	£425
Total	£2,625

The Anglican Parishes of Whittington, Weeford and Hints

Fr Jason

Home Communion Support

Are you housebound or ill and would value two members of our newly licensed home communion team to visit you periodically to share communion? Then contact Father Jason to arrange fatherjason@fastmail.co.uk

'Home Communion helps me feel part of the church still and is a real blessing to me in my home'

Great British Spring Clean

Garry Hyde, Vice Chairman

Keep Britain Tidy has recently launched its 2020 campaign to Keep Britain Tidy. It runs from 20th March to 13th April and last year over 560,000 'Litter Heroes' signed up and joined forces to collect litter and tidy their neighbourhood. If you want to find out more check out 'The Great British Clean Up' online.

We are asking all residents to simply pick up a piece of litter when you are out and about; also please take any rubbish home with you.

Our next Community Litter Pick is on Saturday 25th April 2020. Meet outside Village Hall. Wear suitable clothing, footwear and gloves please but litter grabbers and biodegradable bags will be provided.

Let's all pull together to make our Villages a nicer place to live in.

Work On HS2 Now Due To Start In Earnest

Cllr John Cannon

Two days after the Government gave the go-ahead the Parish Council Chairman and I were able to visit the Cappers Lane site at HS2 Ltd and Laing O'Rourke/Murphy's invitation. We were joined by representatives from adjoining Parishes and Lichfield.

The ensuing tour demonstrated that the extent of enabling works now drawing to a close is far more extensive than that readily visible from Cappers Lane and will permit the main contractor (Balfour Beatty/Vinci) to establish their main construction site with the minimum of delay once the formal instruction to proceed is received. Because the site is likely to be in use for the next 5-6 years the access slip roads from the A38 have been constructed to permanent Department for Transport standards and designed to accommodate the large transporter vehicles that will be required to bring in the heavy plant needed to construct the track bed,

bridges and related engineering structures. In all probability they would also be retained for future maintenance access.

Previous discussion with Balfour Beatty/Vinci has indicated that most of this year will probably involve site set up activity and other preliminary works forming part of their contract, with major construction activity planned to start towards the end of the year or early next. It also seems likely that, to maximise the use of the line trace itself as a haul route, the bridge structures along the route will be constructed relatively early on. Now it is clear that HS2 will proceed we will now be seeking to re-establish our regular meetings with HS2 Ltd and their contractors to obtain more detail on their precise programming intentions. As always we will keep you fully updated on developments.



The 'Moments that Matter' Garden

Karen Tatlow

A very exciting project in support of St Giles Hospice in Whittington has been launched recently by two local horticulturalists. Karen Tatlow and Mike Lote. 'The Moments that Matter' garden has been designed in collaboration with St Giles and celebrates the important moments that happen when family, friends and communities come together and memories are made.

The garden will be showcased at the RHS Malvern Spring Festival in May and will help build awareness and raise the profile of St Giles Hospice. Creating a show garden in support of St Giles is a unique and innovative way of talking about and promoting the work they do, achieving greater exposure to a new and wider audience, allowing them to share their story, increase their support base and connect with potential beneficiaries.

After the show the garden will be dismantled and brought back to Whittington, where it will be rebuilt in the grounds of the hospice, to create a space where families or the hospice community can spend time outdoors. With wheelchair access

and raised beds, there is even room to take a patient bed into the garden.

Several local companies and companies with local connections have come together to support Karen and Mike, some manufacturing the bespoke features in the garden, some donating building materials and many contributing with financial sponsorship. But building a garden is an expensive business. They are still looking for help and would encourage any businesses interested in supporting the project in any way to get in touch. Decorative metal Sunflowers made for the project are being sold for £20 each, with 50% of the proceeds going directly to St Giles and 50% going toward funding the building of the garden. Sunflowers can be purchased on line at www.stgileshospiceshowgarden.com/buy-sunflowers/.

Anyone interested in learning more about the project can find out more at the dedicated website at www.stgileshospiceshowgarden.com or by contacting Karen at karen@karentatlowgardendesign.co.uk or 07432 646275, or by contacting Mike at mjlgardendesign@yahoo.co.uk or 07862 251262



Run by Local People
For Local People

Good Neighbour Scheme

Terry Tricker

A main objective of the Good Neighbour Scheme is to reduce social isolation in our community and tackle loneliness that can negatively impact on many people's mental and physical health. Taking people to hospital/surgery or having their hair done helps, but meeting people, whether outside or at home, is the only way to make a real difference. Over the 5 years since we started, we have been able to do more and more. We try to have a big get together every couple of months but would like to start more regular informal get togethers over a cup of tea or coffee.

Major social events can be expensive and with many of our clients on a basic state pension, we try to subsidise them. We have been very fortunate to have had a significant amount of financial support from our local community. This includes the Parish Council as well as local charities, groups and businesses, which has been fantastic. Just recently, despite strong competition,

we have been recognised nationally with a £500 grant from the National Lottery Community Fund. We had applied for funding for our Summer Social to be held on the 29th August this year. This is always a special event as it brings together all our clients with all our volunteers so we can thank them for their enormous efforts on behalf of the community throughout the year. With over 100 expected again this year the Village Hall Committee has let us have their super facility free of charge.

We need more volunteers to help with such schemes so how about contacting us if you think you could help? We could always do with more volunteers, not just drivers, although they are crucial - but if you want to support isolated people in our village ring the Duty Officer on Monday, Wednesday or Friday between 10 and 12 noon on 01543 624410.

Whittington Village Hall

Garry Hyde - Chairman Village Hall Committee

Whittington Village Hall is a resource which is available for use by all village residents. It is used amongst other things for parties, keep fit classes, classes for young children and dance classes for the older residents.

Indeed some of you may use the hall on a regular basis. The Hall is managed and run by a team of Trustees and has a committee of 12 people who meet on a monthly basis. The Trustees have responsibility for the financial and administrative management of the hall and are governed by Charity Commission Guidelines.

- Do you want to see the hall continue as a resource to the village?
- Do you have free time to give to the management of the hall?
- Do you have financial or accountancy skills?
- Do you have IT skills?
- Do you have marketing skills?

If you answer yes to any of these questions then please give Garry Hyde, the Chairman, a call on 01543 433190 to look at your options. As with all committees there is a need to have succession planning in place and with an ageing committee (they will not mind me saying that) we need to make sure we are prepared for the future.

Celebrate Easter 2020 at Your Churches

Fr Jason

Palm Sunday - 5th April

Receive your palm cross and set your eyes upon the Easter journey ahead.

8.00: Palm Sunday Said Eucharist at St Giles', Whittington

9.30: Palm Sunday Parish Eucharist at St Giles', Whittington

11.30: Palm Sunday Parish Eucharist at St Mary's, Weeford

Monday of Holy Week - 6th April

A vibrant contemporary worship focussing on the Easter Message.

19.00: Contemporary Praise and Worship for Holy Week at St Giles', Whittington

Wednesday of Holy Week - 8th April

A timeless devotion followed around the world.

19.00: Stations of the Cross Devotion at St Mary's, Weeford

Maundy Thursday

A day of symbolic and beautiful liturgy highlighting the Christian message.

Am: Chrism Mass at the Cathedral with the Bishops- see the Lichfield Cathedral website

20.00: Maundy Thursday Eucharist, Stripping of Altars and Tenebrae at St Mary's, Weeford

Good Friday - 10th April

This most holy of days invites you to reflect on our loving God.

8.15: Pilgrim Walk to Lichfield Central Hall starting at Whittington Pharmacy

19.00: Liturgy of the Cross at St Giles', Whittington

Holy Saturday - 11th April

Hugely symbolic service with candles, fire and water.

19.00: Contemporary Praise and Worship for Holy Week at St Giles', Whittington

Easter Day - 12th April

The principal festival of the Christian year praising The Risen Lord.

6.15: Traditional Dawn Eucharist for Easter Day at St Giles', Whittington

8.00: Parish Eucharist for Easter Day at St Giles', Whittington

11.30: Parish Eucharist for Easter Day at St Mary's, Weeford

Everyone is warmly invited to these special services

Make your Easter special this year!

The Care Quality Commission says St Giles Hospice is Outstanding

Gary Young

Whittington based St Giles Hospice has received an 'Outstanding' rating from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) – the independent regulator of health and social care services in England. St Giles Hospice, which provides individually-tailored care both on-site and in patients' own homes, is one of just a handful of hospices to ever have been awarded the highest possible accolade.

Under the new CQC inspection regime, hospices are also subject to the same level of scrutiny as hospitals, making this outstanding rating incredibly special. The CQC praised St Giles for its "compassionate" range of speciality services. Inspectors highlighted how staff treated patients, families and carers with dignity and kindness, stating: "People were truly respected and valued as individuals. They were empowered as partners in their care, practically and emotionally, by an exceptional and distinctive service."

Jo Maidment, Chair of Trustees at St Giles Hospice, said: "We know that our staff and volunteers strive to deliver outstanding care every day, but to have this acknowledged by the CQC is truly wonderful and a very exciting start to 2020!" Helping more than 7,000 people a year facing the challenges associated with a potentially terminal illness, St Giles staff were also commended by the CQC for aiming to "make every day meaningful for people who used the service" and "consistently displaying determination and creativity" in delivering care. Dr Emma Hodges, Chief Executive of St Giles Hospice, said: "This fantastic achievement is testament to the hard work, compassion and unwavering commitment of our staff, volunteers and not forgetting, our loyal supporters – without whom this would not have been possible."

Proposed New Children's Play Area

Garry Hyde - Vice Chairman

We are still progressing the new Children's Play Area although it does seem our progress has been slowed due to ecological concerns. We have managed a lot of meaningful consultations and have some good, new and innovative ideas of the wants and the needs for the new play area.

We have started on our design concept, which was given a 'thumbs up' at our open morning in the Village Hall, when a model of our proposals was available. Currently we are having to re-evaluate the location in the little used wooded area of Bit End field. This re-evaluation is to ensure not only the safety of the users but also the need to ensure that any works do not have a detrimental effect on the trees and flora of the area. We are also having to consult with the Lichfield Planning Department to ensure

we do not breach any Planning restrictions. Unfortunately, all these hurdles take time to cross, but we are very hopeful to start work on the site in the near future. Once again our thanks go to everyone who has supported the project and given their time and effort to see it start to become a reality.



Woodhouse Farm and Garden CIC

Annamarie Stone

Here at the farm we have been enjoying the year round benefits of Project Pigsty. Log fire lit, we welcome visitors to peruse the produce and enjoy the homemade treats on a Friday and Saturday. We have also rented the new facility for birthdays, anniversaries and other small family parties as well as meetings and projects.

2020 sees us turning our attentions to some of the older buildings on the farm. Our Community Interest Company Status does allow us to apply for some grants but does not guarantee anything and renovating grade 2 listed buildings means like for like replacement which can be costly. March 28th sees the first of our fundraising events with a Spanish Evening consisting of a three course meal and free glass of sangria on arrival. Our second event will be a barn dance in July date to be confirmed (once Mr Stone and volunteers have cleared it). All money raised from these events will be put into buying materials for the renovation which will create a workshop, wood store and project room while preserving the history of the farm.

Want to know more about what is happening on the farm, buy tickets for our up and coming events or get involved please email annamarie@woodhousefarmandgardencic.org.uk. You can also check out our Facebook, Instagram or web page www.woodhousefarmandaredencie.org.uk.



Whittington Wood

David Walton, Parish Clerk

Whittington and Fisherwick Parish Council own beautiful woodland within the Parish that can be accessed from Falcon Drive. The canal forms one boundary with the other three sides formed by housing. A path has been created through to the canal boundary. In 2000 the Parish Council acquired the Woodland from McAlpines, the developers of the Birds Estate, and money has been set aside specifically for maintenance of the woodland. This money is held in the Parish Council's accounts, as an "Earmarked Reserve". The woodland is being

managed to improve wildlife value and amenity and is managed by Mike Tarbuck and a group of local residents who attend to the Woods most months. There is a Woodlands Committee chaired by Martyn Bennett, the Chair of the Parish Council, and comprises of members of the working party.

Come and have wander around as it is well worth a visit. We do ask dog owners however to clear any dog mess as there are children who like to run around.

WHITTINGTON CRAFT & COUNTRY FAIR

2020

SATURDAY 5TH SEPT

Giant Tomato Grow-off 2020

Frank Bartlett

Come on you gardeners, this is the competition to test your green fingers.

The rules are simple:

1. Tomatoes must be grown from seed in the Parish.
2. We will provide three specialist seeds, but you may grow others of your choice (You can find a range of options on eBay).
3. Tomatoes may be grown by any method.
4. Tomatoes will be judged solely on weight at the Countryside and Craft Fair.
5. Half of the entrance money will go to the winners together with certificates of achievement and half will be donated to the Air Ambulance Service.
6. There will be adult and junior (14 and under) categories.
7. The entry fee will be £1 (adults) and 50 pence (juniors). For this you will receive three "Belgian Giant" tomato seeds and written advice about how to grow "The big one".

To enter or for more information contact Frank Bartlett on 07909920198 or frankbartlett28@hotmail.com or call at 1, Barleycroft, WS14 9LY.



THE WHITTINGTON SPRING BALL

IN AID OF WHITTINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

**SATURDAY
2 MAY
7PM**

WHITTINGTON VILLAGE HALL

TICKETS £40 EACH

**FREE DRINK ON ARRIVAL - 3 COURSE DINNER
- LIVE BAND - BLACK TIE - CARRIAGES AT MIDNIGHT**

**RESERVE YOUR TABLE OF 10 OR 12 BY EMAILING
WHITTINGTONPTA@GMAIL.COM**

All proceeds to enhance the children's learning experience at Whittington Primary School.

Sunbeams at St Giles

Megan Barr

The Baby and Toddler group, Sunbeams at St Giles, has been growing lately in more ways than one! After welcoming Liz and Jonathan Smith's new grandson into the world at the beginning of the year, we have been exploring how both we and some small animals and even plants and seeds are growing all the time. Last autumn we were generously given a quantity of bulbs by WFEG which we planted round our 40th birthday tree. This is on the Lichfield side of the church hall, and the bulbs are well up now and should be in full bloom by the time you read this. We do hope you will pop round to see them.

We have also recently added a baby bouncy chair to our collection of toys and equipment, and were delighted to see young Ellis Hughes using it so happily on its first outing! (Ellis's dad used to come to Sunbeams, then called Pram Service, when he was a baby too). We always welcome any babies and toddlers, with a grown-up, from anywhere in the area...we meet in St Giles Church at 10.30 and go over to the church hall at about 11.00, and you are very welcome at either or both parts. Our upcoming dates are Wednesdays March 11th and 25th, April 22nd, May 6th and 20th, June 3rd and 17th, and July 1st. Just come along, or if you wish contact Megan (megbarr@yahoo.com), or Sue (07540 447478).



Whittington Flower Club

Rosemary Smith

We have a big demonstration coming up on Wednesday 25th March.

When Tony Brown will be doing 'For the Love of Flowers' at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall. Tickets £10 for visitors, £5 for members - which includes refreshments - available from Rosemary 432848 or Pamela 304990, or at the door subject to

availability. The AGM is on Wednesday 22nd April at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall followed by a talk about the Lichfield & Hatherton Canal Restoration Trust. The new programme can be found on the web site www.wfas.org; we have lots of interesting events for 2020/21.



The Staffordshire Regiment Museum

Rosemary Smith

So many people who live in the village have not yet visited the Museum which is between the Golf Club and the Barracks off the A51. It contains many interesting exhibits and outside the trench system is particularly fine. A new addition is the children's play area, and the air-raid shelter always gives a surprise.

It is open every day 10 till 4, and has some special events throughout the year, including:

13th April: Easter Monday Discovery Day
15th May: Hanson's Valuation Day
13th/14th: June WW2 Weekend
12th July: Car boot sale
5th & 26th August: Summer Holiday Discovery Days

More information on the web site www.staffordshireregimentmuseum.com



Whittington Wednesday Club

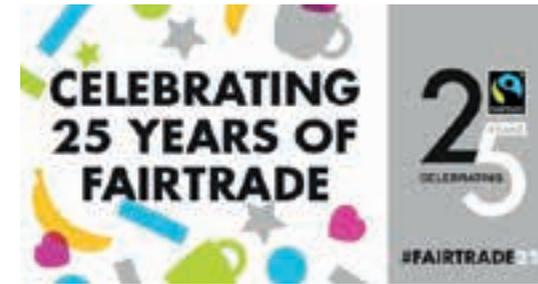
Fred Stack

The New Year started with our annual trip to Birmingham Hippodrome to see Snow White, followed by a meeting and our 'free' after Christmas lunch. March 11th sees us enjoying our Fish & Chip lunch, when the first fees of 2020 fall due, (3 x £10 for the year). We have a film show on 25th March – Downton Abbey.

Hopefully 8th April will bring spring-like weather to cheer us through the Club's Annual General Meeting, which will be followed by a social afternoon. Members are asked to give some thought to joining the Committee as we will have several members standing down and they need to be replaced if the Club is to continue. We are looking forward to a return visit from the Guide

Dogs on 22nd April, a Social afternoon on 13th May. Richard Winterton will be coming along to talk to us.

You do not have to be a member to attend our meetings, just pop along and sample what we have to offer. Who knows, you may recognise many of us. Don't wait, come along and join our happy friendly group. Should you require any further information please contact either Christine Jones on 01543 433190 or Fred Stack 01543 432217. We meet in the Village Hall on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays, you are very welcome.



Whittington And Fisherwick Fairtrade

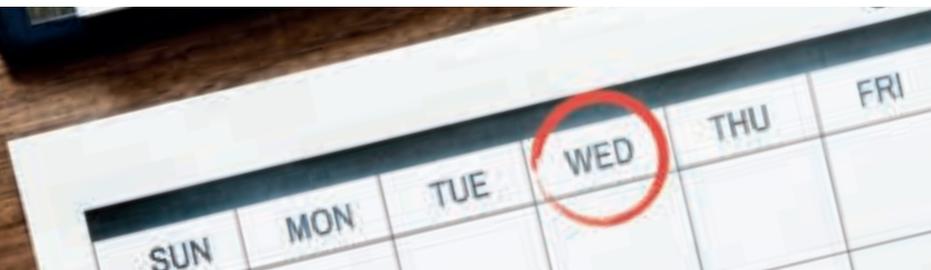
Steve Barr

If all goes to plan, you will be reading this during 2020 Fairtrade Fortnight, which ends on March 8th. Many of you will have enjoyed the cake morning (with possibly a cup of tea or coffee) which heralded its arrival and was generously supported by both Tamworth (Whittington) and Central England (Boley Park) Cooperative Societies. It was run in conjunction with Sunbeams at St Giles and the Good Neighbour Scheme, so a real community event for all ages.

Our next event is an all-day-er on Saturday 9th May at Woodhouse Community Farm and Garden, where Annamarie and her helpers will be serving Big Breakfasts in the morning and Tempting Teas (more delicious home baked cake!) in the afternoon to celebrate World Fair Trade Day. They were rushed off their feet last year, so extra help is being drafted in. Why not join the merry throng, and enjoy a walk round the farm to see the animals and the walled

garden as well? Beyond that, the ever popular Fairtrade wine tasting at the Cricket Club is just over the horizon on Tuesday 7th July. It will be more of the same in many ways, but with a few changes to keep up the momentum, and you can certainly expect plenty of Fairtrade wine and local food. Please contact Steve or Meg early to reserve your tickets and avoid disappointment. Finally, two pieces of good news. The Plough at Huddlesford is under new management but has renewed its support for Fairtrade, and homemade Fairtrade goodies will be back at the monthly Village Market - due to restart on the Bell car park on Saturday 18th April.

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



Whittington W.I.

Anne Hiskins

At The Countryside Fair in September the annual cake competition was to bake a chocolate Battenberg cake. The winner was Moira Wood from Lichfield.

A visit to Tutbury Castle was enjoyed and was a very special day as Leslie Smith took on the role of Peggy Knight, an unsung heroine of WW2 who kept herself very private but did such an amazing job. Leslie gave a very emotional talk and we enjoyed afternoon tea. We have also had a trip to the Wedgewood factory and visitors centre. Afternoon tea was served on the best Wedgewood china. Two members went to Llandudno on a County holiday; they were blessed with perfect weather. During the holiday there was a visit to the original WI first started on the island of Anglesey. The book club and lunch outings are still going on and the darts team are looking forward to their first matches in the league. If any ladies would like to try their hand at throwing a dart the team often meet in The Bell, please contact the WI for further information.

More recently we catered for a hot lunch for the Good Neighbour Scheme which was very successful and also held a Murder Mystery evening. This was a lot of fun and supper was also included. In December we had a flower arranging meeting, when we used empty wine bottles to attach our flowers to. There were little fairy lights inside the bottles and all looked very pretty.

We now have a new programme of speakers and events beginning in March. Big quiz and pudding night is to be held on Saturday April 18th at 7.30pm in the Village Hall. Bring your own drinks; there will be plenty of puddings. Tickets cost £8. Contact Anne on 01543432256 or Sheila on 01543264938.

Anyone interested in joining us please come to a meeting, held on 2nd Wednesday of the month in the Village Hall at 7.30pm. Information from Anne on 01543 432256.



Girlguiding Whittington

Nikki Crane - District Commissioner

Girlguiding Whittington is going from strength to strength. We currently run a Rainbows unit, 3 Brownie units, 2 Guide units and a Ranger unit across the week and have lots of girls on the waiting lists.

We are always looking for new helpers, in particular both Guide units would like new volunteers. If you think you would like to have lots of fun and enable Girls to participate in wide and varied activities then please get in touch at whittingtondistrict@yahoo.com

VOLUNTEER VACANCY!

Do you remember the fun you had as a Rainbow, Brownie or Guide, or did you miss out on that and would like to join now? Vacancies have arisen for leaders in Whittington.

We have a friendly and enthusiastic group of girls aged between 5 and 14 who love to do a wide range of activities from adventurous to craft, cooking and games as well as nights away.

You don't need any particular experience to run a unit, just enthusiasm and commitment.

You will be fully trained and supported by our Division Team.

The units meet on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

If you would like to know more please get in touch whittingtondistrict@yahoo.com

Visit girlguiding.org.uk



1st Whittington Scout Group – Beavers Fun and Friends – Woodpecker

Harvey Baran

After many years of much love and laughter it's time for Squirrel, Badger and no.11 to hang up their 'neckers'. Squirrel and co are synonymous with Beavers and have certainly embraced the motto of 'Fun and Friends'. So many of us in the village started our scouting journey with Squirrel at the helm. When I first started Beavers as a quiet, shy, nervous chap I was frightened of what to expect. Soon with encouragement I was off doing all sorts of exciting adventures, highlights being: a night away as a Knight and making armpit fudge!

Here I am now 17, having been a beaver young leader for 3 fun packed years. I love seeing how the beavers grow, overcome hurdles and are so excited to see what the Wednesday evening will hold. I'm hoping this has reminded you of your childhoods or your children's beaver adventures. Would you like to help the next generation of beavers to make memories? We really are a scouting family with plenty of help from our committee, the cub and scout leaders and our young leaders. We meet on a Wednesday 6 to 7.15pm. Interested? Why not come along?

Contact Skip (Dave Holder 01543 432009 or email holderhouse@sky.com) or Amanda, committee member (01543 301444 or email amanda.baran@ntlworld.com)



Can You Help Keep Our Village Churchyard In Good Order?

Fr Jason

St Giles' churchyard is an immensely important place for very many villagers. Through the hard work and dedication of volunteers it is kept as a beautiful place. However, the churchyard needs additional care from contractors which costs about £800/annum. Further, the skips for churchyard refuse cost around £800/annum. All of this has to come from church funds given primarily by those who give regularly. To help keep the churchyard in good order we are looking for support.

There are two key ways you can do that:

* If you are a regular visitor to the churchyard, please take all refuse (dead flowers, wrappings etc) home with you rather than putting it in the skip.

* Make regular donations for the upkeep of the churchyard to help us pay for the required contractor element. Contact Fr Jason for details.

Whittington and Fisherwick Charities (Fund)

John R Smith

The Whittington and Fisherwick Charities (originally the Poor Fund) is controlled and managed by the Community Foundation of Staffordshire (CFS). The CFS manages a number of funds in Staffordshire and, amongst other things is responsible for promoting the Fund, administering and investing the Fund capital. Local Funds, in particular Whittington and Fisherwick, have 'Trustees' or Donor Panel members who monitor or audit how the Fund is running, offer advice and suggestions on improvements and have the authority to make decisions on how distributable funding should be applied.

We are pleased to announce that Fred Stack has recently joined our Panel; Jonathan Smith, Glenda Leach and John Smith being the other Panel members. All are members of our community. The Panel meets twice a year (May and November) to review applications for

funding from both individuals and community groups.

Individuals within the community may apply for funding on financial needs (you might not have sufficient money coming in to cover the cost of rising bills), social needs (relates to the social aspects of a person's life that are needed for wellbeing) or medical and health needs. The Fund makes set awards of £100 per annum but as a couple you may complete one application form, include both names, for a maximum of £200 per couple. Further information and application forms are available on line staffsfoundation.org.uk, email office@staffsfoundation.org.uk or tel. 0178 5 339540.

Groups, Clubs and Organisations within the community may apply for funding, though it is necessary to hold a bank account. Contact details above.

Calling All Budding Photographers

Steve Barr & Megan Barr

Have you seen this year's stunning Whittington Calendar – a joint venture between Whittington Fairtrade and the Good Neighbour Scheme? In addition to the beautiful picture of poppy fields on the front and back cover, it features a full page local view for each month -most people's favourite is shown above! – and reflects the changing seasons.

It includes scenes from the heart of the village and a little further afield and even some aerial views. All the photos in the 2020 calendar were taken by Whittington residents. We are now starting to plan the 2021 calendar and would welcome contributions (landscape format) over the next few months from amateur photographers in the area. Please contact Steve or Megan on 01543 432605 or stevebarruk@yahoo.com



New House Building In Whittington - Myths And Rumours

Garry Hyde, Vice Chairman

Lichfield District Council have been conducting a **Plan Review of their Local Plan, which will aim to create a new Local Plan to provide the Planning Framework for the district until 2040.**

This plan involves all elements of growth, housing, employment, facilities and sustainability. Part of the CONSULTATION process involves Strategic Housing Land Allocation.

Despite any fears and rumours circulating concerning the building of housing, as far as Whittington and Fisherwick is concerned the only addition to the last plan is a PROPOSAL to include land off Huddlesford Lane within the Parish Boundary and remove it from the Green Belt. This would allow for possible future housing development.

Currently the only accepted building would be INFIL, in line with the Neighbourhood Plan, and

is proposed for the Old School site and possibly Blacksmith Lane. The Consultation ran until 24th January 2020 and various open meetings were held, attended by residents and Councillors. The views of the Parish Council were submitted in line with the comments contained in the Neighbourhood Plan.

There are no current applications for building on the site in question and there will be no publication of any revisions of the LDC plan until May 2020. The plan does not get automatic approval and would still be subject to scrutiny and comment/objections.

We await the publication of the revised proposals before the Parish Council considers its options.



Whittington/Heart of England in Bloom 2020

Mike Kinghan

Get ready for Heart of England in Bloom 2020! Whittington and Fisherwick Environment Group and the Parish Council will be joining forces again this year to enter the parish for the HEiB competition for the third year running. Having achieved Gold status in 2019 we'll be looking to maintain that status this year and even improve on last year's mark (189 out of 200). The ultimate would be to come top of the Large Village category - the competition is fierce but we'll keep trying!

As last year the three core themes are Horticulture, Environment and Community. We performed slightly less well on Horticulture than the other two themes so that is something the organizing Committee will be giving special attention to this time round.

There was a fantastic effort by residents, businesses, volunteers, community organisations along the route and elsewhere last year and it would be great to see at least the same level of support this year. Please look out for notices about Working Parties and Litter Picks. If you would like to join the organizing group or have

ideas about improvements please contact Mike on mike@wfe.org.uk

WFEG have been busy planting bulbs, round the village, especially Burton Road, planting new fruit trees at the orchard, sowing native flower mixes along Fisherwick Road, by Common Lane (with schoolchildren) and at Swan Meadow as well as planting native flower plugs at the orchard and Common Lane. A shallow pebble pond is being created at Swan Meadow. The Parish Council are continuing the clearing of gutters and kerbs alongside the more traditional verge cutting and tree maintenance.

The HEiB judges visit this year is likely to be on the morning of 7th July, and as before includes a 90 minute whistle-stop 'tour' of key features of the village. The tour route is yet to be decided but is likely again to involve the 'spine' of the village i.e. Common Lane, Main Street, Burton Road and also Fisherwick Road as far as Fisherwick canal Bridge. The date and route when finalised will be advertised in the Lichfield Mercury village column, village Facebook sites and websites and posters/leaflets



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