



## MILL ARMS UPDATE

Here we are in July 2020, and after what for most of us will be one of the most trying and stressful times in our life, Boris Johnson has given the go-ahead for hospitality to reopen on 4th July, with just eleven days notice for us to prepare and comply with the extensive guidelines issued.

Many of you will be aware from either passing by the Mill Arms or seeing our postings on Facebook that we have spent many days over the past fifteen weeks doing lots of jobs around the pub so we are ready for your return. A new path has been created from the back car park; all of the public-facing areas in the pub have been repainted, repolished and revarnished; we have replaced the windows in the function room and tackled all those behind the scene jobs that are hard to complete while open every day.

We do not believe, given all of the new processes we have to put in place, that opening on the 4th July is the right thing to do. This is a very hard decision to make, not least because the economic ramifications for us, as for many businesses, is potentially devastating. However, for the safety of our staff and you, our customers, we will not be bounced into a feel-good date by Boris Johnson, and will only choose to reopen once we are confident we can keep you and our staff safe by having all of the necessary precautions in place.

As a business woman and landlady it is my desire to continue running the Mill Arms for many years, and so there are many factors to consider in the timing of reopening. Rest assured we will reopen in the coming weeks as soon as we are confident that it is both safe and sustainable. Once that date is known, we will announce it across social media and at the front of the pub.

We have truly missed all our customers, and I know the team and I cannot wait to welcome you back, but please bear with us for a few more weeks.

Gina

## BROUGHTON COMMUNITY SHOP AND POST OFFICE

Throughout the period of lockdown, Broughton Community Shop has been delighted to be able to provide a really successful telephone ordering and doorstep delivery service to those in the village and local communities. As lockdown began to ease, we opened our doors to visiting customers in the mornings whilst still doing deliveries – it has been great to see faces again! Unsurprisingly we are now seeing a significant increase in footfall through the shop and a decrease in the number of telephone orders and deliveries – so another operational model is in effect from Monday 29th June. Flexibility has certainly proved to be our middle name!

For those of you who have not yet visited the shop (behind the Village Hall, High Street, Broughton), we believe you will feel very comfortable with the Post Office and shopping experience due to the social distancing and hygiene measures that are in place to keep you and our volunteers and staff as safe as possible.

We have been very fortunate that our suppliers have consistently supported us and, although we occasionally

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## GRUCK RACING

This year's Gruck Racing event, due to take place on 2nd August, has been called off due to the current pandemic.

We are very sorry to do this because it would have been our 20th year, but hopefully we can continue in 2021.

Keep well!

Tony Stemp  
Mottisfont Cricket Club

## The Acorn

*The Acorn* continues to be half its normal size because there are still no activities and events that we can cover. However, in due course this will change, so if you are planning anything that you would like to publicise across the parish, get in touch at [acornnews@mandercom.co.uk](mailto:acornnews@mandercom.co.uk).



Hello everyone,

I hope you and yours are well, and that you're managing to navigate your way through the latest lockdown rules and possibilities. I have to say, it has been lovely to be able to re-open the Abbey to visitors, including of course some Parish Pass holders, who have availed themselves of our special booking system for you. Just a reminder if you would like to use your Pass, it's still free for you to visit, but you do need to email [helping.mottisfont@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:helping.mottisfont@nationaltrust.org.uk) or ring 01794 344 001 to book a slot.

Our members and other visitors have also all had to book, which is of course proving a very good way to manage capacity in the car park. We started with small numbers, just to be sure that we could welcome everyone safely, and we've had great feedback from visitors that they feel very safe and secure, and have really enjoyed being able to visit again. They have loved seeing the roses, which have given great pleasure even if their surroundings aren't quite as manicured as normal. Even though the roses were early, it's still beautiful in there.

We've been able to increase our daily numbers gradually, and now have our shop, and the kiosk and ice cream horse box open, which have also met with visitors' approval. I met a lady with a home made scone in one hand and an ice cream in the other who was so excited, she didn't know where to start! "Look," she said, "food I haven't had to make myself!" She went on to add that if I could only sort her out with a haircut, her life would be complete – sadly, our service doesn't extend that far!

We will certainly continue with the booking system for the foreseeable future, and I hope after that, as it very much alleviates the issues we've had in the past with not knowing how many people will turn up and when. I feel confident that we have not caused issues for the local community by reopening, and hope that you agree.

Meanwhile, our countryside sites and car parks have been open for a while now. We don't have all of our rangers back from furlough quite yet, but those that we have are doing tree inspections and managing what we can. As for many organisations looking after countryside areas, Ash Die Back is a particular concern for us. We will do what we can with limited resources to deal with fallen trees and hanging branches, but please do be aware that we may sometimes have to close areas that we can't get to at present, just to keep the public safe. If that does happen, we'll let you know, but please don't ignore signs and closure measures if they are in place, as they will be there to keep you safe.

It's with sadness that I must write that this is my last Acorn entry as General Manager for the Mottisfont & South West Hampshire group of National Trust properties – and this time I really mean it! I was due to move on in May, to take up my new role as Chief Executive of the children's creativity and skills charity, Artswork. I've pushed that back to mid-July so that I could support the property team through reopening. We will also be hearing more in July about the National Trust's plans to save significant costs, necessary as the charity has lost so much income because of Covid-19. This may involve redundancies from the property team, we don't know yet – it's another way in which these are strange and difficult times.

For me, it's an odd time to leave, but I'm pleased to be handing on the portfolio to a great new General Manager, Vicky Fletcher. She joins the Trust from Oxfordshire County Council, and brings a great deal of experience around particularly the countryside and environment. I'm sure she will introduce herself in the next issue of Acorn, and she's already said that she's looking forward to getting to know people from the village.

It's been lovely working here over the last decade, and getting to know some of you. Mottisfont and Dunbridge will always have a very special place in my heart. I wish you all the best in the future, and you never know, may turn up to the village fete when you're allowed to have it again!

With all best wishes, and au revoir for now,

Louise  
**Louise Govier**  
**General Manager, Mottisfont & South West Hampshire National Trust Group**

## Household Waste Recycling Centres

To use the Casbrook Household Waste Recycling Centre at Bunny Lane, you now have to pre-book a 30 minute time slot for your visit.

Bookings will generally be made online on the TVBC web site, but arrangements have been made for a telephone booking line for residents who do not have access to the internet. Those wishing to book a slot will need to provide their name, car registration and, for online bookings, an email address. Bookings will be limited to one slot per household per week, and can be made up to seven days in advance.

The start date for the HWRC Vehicle Registration Scheme has been postponed. The new start date for the scheme will be announced when confirmed. You can still register your vehicle now, before the scheme starts.

## The Thomas Dowse's Charity What do we do? Can we help?

The Thomas Dowse's Charity is able to provide grants to individuals, up to the age of 25, living in Broughton, Bossington, Mottisfont and Dunbridge, for educational purposes towards the cost of such things as uniform, school trips, music tuition, overseas educational trips, swimming lessons, transport to educational establishments, laptops and books. Applications are treated in strict confidence. Applicants must demonstrate need, but there is no means testing.

In the current circumstances the Trustees are not able to meet, but are still able to consider any applications for grants. Please email the secretary for an application form or collect one from Broughton Primary School, St. Mary's Church (Broughton) or Mottisfont Church (if they are open).

Applications received will be circulated to Trustees for consideration and applicants will be notified as soon as possible.

Email address: tinastuart1-at-gmail-dot-com.  
(remove the dashes, and change "at" to "@" and "dot" to ".").

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experience shortages of goods that tend to be in short supply elsewhere, our Manager is working very hard to fill the gaps.

Sadly, the coffee shop is still closed but our amazing cakes from Mimi's are available to take away – worth coming to the shop just for these!

### Opening hours

Weekdays

9.00 – 1.00pm: Shop and Post Office open

2.00 – 4.00pm: Shop open, PO closed

Saturdays

9.00am – 12.30pm: Shop open, PO closed

Sundays

9.30am – 12.30pm: Shop open, PO closed

Telephone ordering and doorstep deliveries (available only to the housebound and those households that are isolating):

Telephone number: 01794 502495

Weekdays only: 9.00am – 1.00pm

Doorstep deliveries: Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays (not Tuesday or Thursday), after 4pm

For the foreseeable future, we will not be taking cash at the retail till.

Whether you are coming to the shop or ordering from home, we are very grateful for your continued support. Thank you.

## VILLAGE HALL NEWS

One of the things we were concerned about with lockdown was the reduced revenue, through cancelled bookings and the fact that there would be no village fete in August. However we have been successful in gaining a £10,000 grant through the government's Business Support Grant Fund. This fund was set up initially to support businesses during the current crisis, but was extended to allow community groups to apply. This fund will see us through the next few months as we still have expenses with no income.

We were also successful in our bid to the National Lottery to make some improvements to the hall and outbuildings. The floor in the main hall has now been sanded and sealed. Work is in progress on re-furbishing the old toilets to provide much needed storage, and plans are in hand to provide a new wheelchair ramp on the south side of the hall. We hope all this work will be completed in time for the hall to be re-opened. Obviously we will adhere to government guidelines as to when we can safely welcome people back into the hall.

Alan Lawrence and Russell Cox have been doing a grand job in keeping the grounds outside neat and tidy. If you feel the need to run around the Village Hall field with your dog, we are happy for you to do this, but please bag any mess and take it home with you.

Village Hall Committee

## STOCKBRIDGE MUSIC

Due to the current lockdown, it will of course come as no surprise to you that our plans are somewhat up in the air. As things stand, we are hoping to squeeze all of the scheduled performers into the latter part of the year, social-distancing rules willing. You will find full details of the five fantastic events planned for the 2020 season at [www.stockbridgemusic.uk](http://www.stockbridgemusic.uk). It is just the dates that are not, as yet, confirmed.



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I would like to give a special mention to the ticket holders for the Brompton Quartet concert. Thanks to your generosity in not asking for a refund, we have been able to pay the majority of the ensemble's fee. And because musicians have little or no income at the moment, we also decided to use some of our reserves to pay a large portion of Gesualdo Six's fee in advance. We hope you'll agree that this was entirely the right thing to do in these uncertain times.

Tim Lowden

## From the Rector

If previous months have been about coming to terms with the shock of the lockdown, this last month has been about coming to terms with something different. Now that some of the lockdown restrictions are being lifted, we are now faced with the shock of a changed reality. Hopes that we had clung to that everything would soon get "back to normal" have been shattered by the stark realisation of what the new normal is going to be like.

In just that same way as going shopping is now a different experience, so visiting a church is now a different experience too. At the time of writing, places of worship are now allowed to reopen for private prayer only. This means that we are still unable to gather for public worship, use the building for social gatherings or welcome tourists. Inside church buildings, many areas are closed off, in order to prevent them from being contaminated and so reduce the scope of the task of daily sanitising objects and surfaces. This is not the way that we want our church buildings to be, and yet is the compromise that we must accept to be able to safely use them for their primary purpose.

This tension between doing what is necessary to control the virus, and what will enable the resumption of normal life, is wound tightly across many new emerging divisions in our society. There are the Stay-at-homes, pitched against the Crackers-on.

## TEST VALLEY 2020 BOROUGH OF CULTURE

Test Valley 2020 Borough of Culture was to be a year long cultural celebration across the Borough incorporating concerts, workshops, exhibitions, fetes and events led by and for the community. The vision was to inspire creativity, innovation, joy, emotion and expression everywhere!

The festival has been on hold since March due to Covid-19 restrictions. Therefore the organisers, Test Valley Arts Foundation (TVAF), have decided to extend the programme into 2021 to allow for the rescheduling of events and for the momentum to build once more, when it is safe to resume activities.

However the festival is poised to resume promoting any events which are able to go ahead during 2020 over the coming months. As we emerge from lockdown, culture in all its forms will provide an important opportunity for people to both express themselves and find a way of reconnecting with thoughts and emotions that have been seriously shaken.

The divergent views on the economy between those who live on fixed incomes and those on an earned income. The differing needs for physical space for those who live urban and rural lives.

All these tensions, set to a backdrop of challenging personal circumstances and uncertainty for the future, married with our national sense of entitlement and exceptionalism that leads to the conclusion that "the rules don't apply" are resulting in a fragmented society.

However, in spite of the divisions, the challenge we face affects us all, and no-one is able to overcome them alone. At a time when society is undergoing rapid change, we need to be careful not to lose our sense interdependence, and instead work towards common goals and the common good.

## MISSING DOG FOUND

On Monday 15th June a dog walker was met near the Mill Arms, very upset because the one of the dogs she had been walking had slipped its collar and lead. The dog's name was Luci and she was a small grey Italian Greyhound. She had run off down the track towards the sub-station and railway.

We said that we would look out for her while we were out. Later that morning near the village hall we met a man on his bike, a friend of the owner, also out looking, so we took his phone number and said we would put a message on our local WhatsApp group.

Many people in the village promised to look out for Luci. The owner and friends put up signs and left water, food and bedding around for her. There had been a sighting of her in Spearywell near the orchard.

On Wednesday morning, we got a text from a friend to say she had been located.

He texted the following: "We cannot thank you enough. You and your local friends are the kindest people we have ever met. The help we received from everyone was amazing. Please can you post a message on the group to say she has been found. We will return tomorrow to remove all the signs we put up and make sure we haven't left any other trace. Thank you once again."

What a great community we have!!

Margaret Astur