

# GROWING TOGETHER

The Self-Sufficiency Group

April 2023

Newsletter



*GROWING TOGETHER Self-Sufficiency group exists to enable and encourage its members to practice self-sufficiency and self-reliance, and maintain a "sustainable life style" in a fast changing worldwide environment*

View this newsletter at:-

[www.ehss.org.uk](http://www.ehss.org.uk)

Indoor meetings are held at 19.30 on the 2nd Wednesday of the month in the:-

Triangle Centre, Liss. GU33 7DX

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**OUR APRIL MEETING WILL BE ON WEDNESDAY THE 12<sup>TH</sup> at 7.30 AND WILL BE ABOUT THE PETWORTH COMMUNITY GARDEN, RUN BY KATE GREEN.**

Before lockdown we had a talk from her and we had a visit planned, so this talk will let us know how they survived that difficult time and how things are now. And we will be visiting this summer. **.BUT BEFORE THAT!**

**PLUS a Saturday: "Lambing Experience"** on the **8<sup>th</sup> of April, at 2pm** the day after Good Friday. We hope this is a good time for you all to come and enjoy the Easter lambs, the herald of spring. The warmer weather, new life and growth.

Lambing with Ellie and Andy Kinnear.

Address.

Orchard Park Farm

Lurgashall

West Sussex

GU28 9EU

Navigate to Lurgashall village green. On entering the centre of the village take the track that runs behind the Noahs Ark public house. (Between the church and the pub) Orchard Park Farm is about 100 yards along this lane on the left hand side. Please read this carefully: due to the main road through Midhurst being closed indefinitely (till all the organizations involved can decide what to do with the façade of the Angel Hotel, the only bit of it left), going east is not so straight forward. Most of us have to go to Fernhurst and then down to north Midhurst, ie Easebourne, and thus through towards Petworth and surrounding areas.

Please don't let this stop you from going to the lambing experience, as it is something most of us will not see anywhere else. Plan your journey, leave extra time and head there... donations please to Andy Tate so he can pass it on to them as a nice surprise!

Unfortunately I am unlikely to be there, as I have a sudden unexpected commitment, which should have avoided the 8<sup>th</sup>... but hasn't.

**Please note: this is for members and their families only..... not the general public, who we do invite to indoor talks.**

## Entry fees:

After much useful debate at the AGM last month, it has been decided to increase the entrance fee at meetings to **£2** for members and **£4** for visitors to cover the cost rises from renting the hall and the speakers. However, it has also been decided to

allow a member to bring a new to EHSS “**first time guest**” at the members fee of £2. We hope you are all happy with that as we feel it is a good compromise which may encourage our members to introduce possible new people to our group.

**For new members:** the hall is open to us from 7.30pm and the talks start at 8.00pm, with a duration of approximate 1 hour. Members pay £2 on the door and visitors pay £4. All are welcome!! Free Tea and Coffee are usually available from 9.00pm.

**As I am still the lucky person who arranges the talks, here are some of the talks and visits we may expect.**

**May** Nick Dobbs from the Countryside Regeneration Trust

**June** Ellie and Andy Kinnear’s beautiful rose garden

**July** a visit to the Community Garden run by Kate Green, in Petworth

**August** Imbrams Farm

**September** tba

**October,** ecologist Matt Phelps from the Knepp Rewilding project.

**November** Alan Williams from the RHS talking about the history of allotments

**December** Christmas Party...which I shall not be arranging!

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**Such a shame we were forced to cancel last months talk, but as the speaker was coming from Dorset, and driving back that night, he and I thought it was best given the weather forecast of possible snow and ice . Apologies for disappointment.**

**Newspaper headline:** “Preparing for Vegetable Shortages” hit the front page of a recent issue of our local paper. This leads into a page 3 article by Kate Green on the wisdom of growing more veggies in your garden to overcome shortages and rocketing prices. This takes me back to my own column here in March of LAST year – how true it proved to be:

*“**Beat the price hoick:** In general, bearing in mind the inevitable predicted inflationary pressures on commercially-grown vegetables this year, I urge you to make a special effort to devote more of your patch to the veggies (and fruit of course) - I feel sure you won’t regret it! It’s still not too late to enlarge your veggie bed - or even dig a new one”.*

Anyway, to return to the local paper... not only does the writer Kate Green do an amazing job running the Petworth Community Garden (whose raised beds were the inspiration for my own!) but she also runs the Trefoil Farm market garden. And if her name rings a bell, it’s because she is the speaker at our meeting this month. So don’t miss it!

Incidentally, adjacent to the Community Garden is the Petworth Men’s Shed, providing excellent workshop facilities for men who love pottering about in a shed. Like me.

**Good news about our FREE outing to Wisley Gardens at 10.30 on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September - we will also have a guide!** My daughter Jan has been a member of the RHS for many years and is a frequent visitor to Wisley (as well as the major flower shows), and she has kindly agreed to show us around, including the latest features. It’s a good time of year to see it, hopefully avoiding the record-breaking heatwave that spoilt our previous visit a few years ago. As I write this, Jan is currently in Tokyo, preparing to take the bullet train to Kyoto to see the world-famous cherry blossom festival – she’s certainly a keen

gardener.



Meanwhile, the Blackthorn blossom along the A272 near our home isn't quite in the same league!

**The March weather** seems to have been conspiring to discourage us from getting out into the garden and catching up with all those overdue jobs. At least we have longer evenings now that the clocks have changed, so that's one excuse out of the way.

Obviously April is the high point of outdoor seed sowing time, so get out those seed packets and read carefully which are described as being suitable for sowing this month. Meanwhile my onion sets, lettuce, radish, parsnip, spinach beet and beetroot are already coming along nicely here, now that the soil temperature is nudging up past 10°C.

**Kites galore:** have you noticed the red kites that seem to be so common this year? Once, forty years ago, I went on a camping holiday in mid-Wales, hoping to see one of these rare and lovely birds in what was virtually their only habitat. Well, I think I did catch one fleeting glimpse, but that was all. Now, with the protection afforded to birds of prey, they are all becoming more common - buzzards in particular, but also red kites. Over our garden we have been watching a pair on most days, and now that the number is down to just one I hope it means they are nesting. I love the way they suddenly steer by twisting those striking forked tails!

**It's ironic that,** barely four hours before that disastrous fire began in Midhurst, Erna and I were actually in the town on a *virtual* tour of all its old buildings, being shown to us by the founder of the Midhurst Museum. We were sitting in the Grange Centre and being shown the museum's wonderful collection of old postcards projected on screen, many of them with a horse and cart included.

Waking up to that dreadful news broadcast the following morning came as a very real shock to us both. Let's hope that the still-standing front wall of the lovely old Angel Inn can be found to be safe enough to be preserved.

*Alec.*

### ***Dru's News***

As usual it's a busy time for me: a friend to stay on her way back to Devon from France; a friend moving house and needing help; dogs coming to stay at the drop of a hat, (two are overlapping tomorrow); putting in my nomination papers for the local Parish Council elections on 4<sup>th</sup> May (wasn't going to stand again, 21 years so far, but hah, why not); making mad dashes to do bits of gardening in what has been a dreadful wet month; norvavirus, both of us, (didn't last long in itself but after effects knocked us senseless for 2 weeks); reading for the rather high brow book club I joined (didn't know it was going to be high brow and big books!), and writing my thoughts on the books for the times I was unable to attend; writing an article for the

Parish Magazine about our latest council meeting, leaving out anything too controversial and putting in what might inform and entertain; getting a roofer to put tiles back on the roof before any more blow off; buying new dahlias to replace the ones which didn't make it thru the winter, my fault; Going to work, now a 30 mile round trip as I can't drive through Midhurst (a 8 mile round trip) which is half an hour each way down country lanes being used as race tracks by frustrated motorists, with frequent hold ups and minor accidents.

OMG, the sun is out... shame about the heavy grey sky behind it and strong winds...

Been buying veg and fruit, eggs and any extra milk needed from Aylings nurseries. Very convenient; a primular or two, a meal from Cook, some dog bix, and points on my loyalty card.

I am continuing to go through all my stuff and weed out what I know I will never need again: knitting needles... my knitting is a disaster. Dress patterns... I will never have large bits of fabric on the floor with a paper paten pinned to them while I pace round with sharp scissors in hand deciding if I have it right before the first cut... books I will never finish because I don't like them, plus ones I

will never read again. Socks with large holes in (small holes ok till they get large) rain coats that just aren't...what a.... getting home and feeling the inner lining damp and clammy. Pots and pans of which I have too many (difficult one this) bedding that might come in handy, but doesn't... just how many duvets do we need? And why keep fitted sheets whose elastic corners have given up?

I still adhere to make do and mend, but sometimes I realize there are not enough years left to do it all! A friend of mine has taken up doing jigsaws, and for a brief moment I thought that it would be fun and relaxing... then reality struck: what on earth made me think I would have time to do that? Usually asleep reading/ tv in the evenings. Up early and out walking, reluctantly attempting domestic chores, including cooking, and going to work... I had two dogs with me this afternoon. I took them out to play in a very wet field and pond. Yes, as one is a Labrador I do mean IN the pond! She was a since to dry off... not so the labradoodle (by her behavior, lots of poodle). She has a lovely wooly coat, which took a lot of drying! Bella the lab has now gone home, tired, and Mabel the doodle is fast asleep on the sofa.... result!  
~Dru

FROM TIDDA

I plan to put in an order to Infinity Foods on the 11th April for delivery on the 14th April, Don't forget anything you order our Group gets 10%  
Orders to [tiddadobbs@btinternet.com](mailto:tiddadobbs@btinternet.com) please or mobile 07765545763

## **NEW TALK ORGANISER NEEDED**

***This really will be the last year I am going to do this job.*** I will be retiring from this role from November 2023 onwards.

**Please someone**, take it on. I feel dreadful about leaving you in the lurch, which is why I have gone on doing it so long... BUT the time has come for someone new.

**From personal experience: It really has to be one person in charge: this really isn't a job for a committee!!!**

**By all means ring for a friendly chat if you are possibly willing to take on this group role.**

~ Dru

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### ***Tickets For RHS Wisley***

We have an RHS card to share which will admit up to 2 of us with a 30% discount. At £14.95 each full price entrance that's a total saving of £8.97. So that's a large chunk of your £15 EHSS membership fee for 2023 ! Alec has them. 01730816316

*This membership card entitles us to entry at any RHS garden. So if you are off on holiday in the UK, look and see if there is an RHS garden near your destination.*