

SILVERTON & EXE VALLEY SENIORS

AUTUMN NEWSLETTER

Earlier in the year it had been hoped that the coronavirus restrictions might have achieved their desired effect by the end of the summer, holding out the possibility of being able to offer some activities in the last quarter of the year. However, National Trust properties (including Lanhydrock) remain closed as is the Brecon Mountain Railway (both outings being due to take place in October) and the Club has been notified by the organisers of the Gloucester Christmas Market (November) that they reluctantly, had to cancel the event this year. That left only the last outing in the programme (Christmas Lunch at the Waie Inn) to be considered.

Even had venues remained open, the planned outings may not have been able to take place as with 2 metre distancing permitting a maximum of about 26 bus passengers, financial viability whittling away our reserves in the order of £200 per outing would have been an issue without a price increase. As for St Mary's Church Hall, we have been advised that the maximum number of people permitted to enter the building under covid-19 regulations is only six which is not much good for Coffee Mornings. Playing whist would have been similarly affected but of course social distancing and the handling of cards would have been contrary to everything which the coronavirus restrictions were designed to prevent.

Looking now at the planned Christmas Lunch outing on Friday 18th December, Blakes are operating coaches again and the Waie inn has two coronavirus compliant sized rooms each able to accommodate 30 diners but which might mean splitting the group – subject to demand. Against the background of warnings of a second surge in the disease this winter and bearing in mind our age group with some people shielding, it seems perhaps over optimistic to hope that the level of risk will have been sufficiently lowered to enable this event and other Club events to take place safely. The decision that has been taken to cancel the outing will, I know, be a big disappointment to many members and their friends particularly those who live alone and are desperate to get out and to renew old friendships but in the prevailing circumstances the Committee and I believe that there is no realistic alternative.

As we have been unable to enjoy any of the varied of outings arranged for 2020 the plan is to rearrange most of these outings for next year and to hope that these will be able to take place. My initial thoughts, subject to better times ahead (in tune with the Prime Minister's statement on the 22nd September) are that the outings programme would not start until April or May (instead of March) whilst the other activities such as coffee mornings and whist would recommence when circumstances permit. Details of the rearranged programme will be advised in December/January and as previously advised 2020 subscriptions will be carried forward to next year when I hope that the Club will again be able to offer existing and prospective new members an interesting and varied programme of activities for 2021.

Martin Clough
Club Secretary

38 Hederman Close Silverton Devon EX5 4HW TEL 01392 860971 martin.mcassoc@btconnect.com