

November 2023

Welcome to our Autumn Newsletter to update you on a few items of interest connected to The Friends Group and the Priory. It also includes enclosure forms for our New Year Social and Membership renewal for 2024.



“Friends” News -

First, some future dates for your diary:-

Following the success of the New Year Social earlier this year we have decided to repeat this, rather than having a social in the run up to Christmas. We would, therefore, like to invite you to join us at **“The Friends New Year Evening Social”** which will be held on **Friday 19th January 2024** details are on the enclosed ticket application form. Hope to see you there! Please return as detailed by 9th January 2024.

Our **Annual General Meeting** will be held on **Friday 15th March 2024**, we hope to see you there.

We have also booked Fletchers Lea for a **Spring fundraising evening** on **Friday 19th April 2024** – book the date, more details will be via email and at the New Year Social.

We have enclosed two forms with this Newsletter which helps save postage, and some members do not have email. One is for the New Year Social, the other is the **Membership Renewal Form for 2024**. Details for renewal are on the form and we do hope you will support us again for another year.

We are pleased to say that the Amelanchier tree planted by Friends in November 2022 the Priory grounds for the Queens’ Canopy project is doing well, autumn colour now showing. The hanging baskets on car park lamp posts which we fund as part of our commitment to Ware In Bloom have looked good, thanks to ground staff for watering.

Whilst on the subject of Friends funding projects here is an update - you will remember that in our November 2022 Newsletter we reported that the Priory History board sited on the front drive had deteriorated since we last funded this in 2009 and that we would set aside funds to renew this. The new text and lay-out has been drawn up in order to bring the information provided more up to date. This is taking a little longer than anticipated but is now moving forward. We are anticipating that the new board will be completed and installed within the next few months.

Another project which will be discussed at our next Committee meeting is a replacement metal bench for the small circular paved area on the back lawn, in front of the plane tree.

Our fundraising stall at the Ware Week Fete day was successful and well attended, thanks to the volunteers who helped set up and run the stall. We raised a total of £220.00.

Despite the best efforts of Ron Baber and Matt (Priory groundsman) unfortunately the Swift boxes which were installed by Friends in 2020 on Fletchers Lea building were not used again this year – at least, not by swifts! Ron reports that Blue Tits took up residence in one and wasps in another!

Some time ago in 2020, in fact, we decided to provide some Gosselin photos of the Priory for the corridor at the Priory. Since then however, a definite decision of their suitable location has been “on hold” but hopefully we will soon be able to report further.

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If you have any comments you would like raised at our next Committee meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024 please contact the Secretary – Jay Salter - Jaymike88@rocketmail.com

Please do visit our website <http://www.friendsofwarepriory.org.uk> which Ron Baber updates from time to time.

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Priory News –

The upgrade throughout the Priory building is still in progress but will soon be completed. The conservatory has had a makeover and is looking very nice.

Fletchers Lea is to have infra-red heaters installed to be more Eco-Efficient, air conditioning is also being considered.

As many of you may know the Lido re-opened this summer and the total refurbishment has made it surely a place to be proud of. Further improvements are being made, during the closed season, to the toilets and some landscaping will be undertaken. Check it out next summer!

The plane tree, adjacent to the river at the rear of the Priory, is due to be ‘tidied up’. Work will begin on 20th November. We are hoping that one of our committee members, Dennis Day, a gifted wood turner, will be able to use some of the wood, if it is suitable, to make a bowl as a gift to Ware’s French twin town, Cormeilles-en-Parisis. This will be presented in March 2024 when a civic visit to Cormeilles is scheduled. The skate park has had some additional groundwork done this summer and the children’s play area is a safe and exciting place to spend an afternoon. Following this, the road to the Bowls Club will be resurfaced.

Two Electric car charging points, open to the public, have now been installed in the Priory car park behind the Museum.

At the moment in early stages, consideration is under way regarding provision of new toilets and a Café hub. More news on that early Summer 2024.

Your committee sends best wishes to you all and we look forward to seeing you at the New Year Social.

Janet, Jay, Margaret, Sylvia, Dennis, Kate, John, Rosemary,

Chris, Vicki, and our Town Council representative Graeme Hill.