



Shenley Park

Newsletter January 2024

Happy New Year and Wassail!

We started the year in a great way with a dry Wassail. We have been soaked many years but this year the rain eventually stopped and 60 people came to help us bless the orchard and hopefully ensure a good crop of apples.

Wassailing is an ancient tradition and part of the ceremony is to gift the wildlife pieces of toast that is hung on the trees to be eaten by a variety of creatures that make up the biology of the orchard.

Here is the next day with the toast still intact.



The orchard looks particularly majestic at this time of year with the bare branches, especially in the low winter sun.

We have many trees that are at least 70 years old. On their trunks grows moss and lichen which is a very slow growing plant that covers the tree without causing any harm.



Did you know that lichen is used as an environmental indicator? If the air is very badly polluted with sulphur dioxide there may be no lichens present, just green algae. If the air is clean the lichens will be abundant.

We will be starting our winter pruning programme shortly. If anyone would like to come and join us weekdays get in touch via shenleypark@gmail.com



2023 saw our appeal for used plant pots and what a response we had, thank you to all of the donations left by the Walled Garden gate. We can still take more so as and when you are having a clear out please bring any plant pots to us. They do not have to be cleaned, leave them by the Walled Garden gate.

We have many plans for 2024, do keep visiting the website for news of events. We are finalising our programme which will start with an Easter hunt on Easter Sunday closely followed by blossom day.



Enjoy the park.