



Dear members

As you will all be aware, the rise in numbers being infected with Covid 19 has led to increasingly stringent measures being taken, both here and in France, to control the spread of the disease.

Whilst our planned visit to Oignies is still over two months away, the view of the Friends of Oignies Committee and our French counterparts is we would not be allowed to travel to Oignies or hold group activities once there.

Our hosts have invested a great deal of time and effort in planning their hospitality but like us, they have reluctantly come to the same conclusion; we cannot proceed with a visit in May.

This is a great disappointment to us all but the decision is out of our hands.

When restrictions ease we would like to arrange social events to cheer us all up, and we will be in contact about this at an appropriate time. We will also continue to make arrangements for the French visit to Buxton next year as planning always starts well in advance.

Depending on how things progress, we may consider alternatives to the cancelled visit, such as a visit later this year, possibly in October, or in 2021 in addition to the French visit to Buxton. There are past precedents for two visits in the same year. We would also welcome any thoughts, or ideas that you may have. Please send them to friendsofoignies@gmail.com

You are also probably in regular contact with your French hosts and are aware of the very tight restriction they are living under. Contact from us is very welcome, whether electronically or by post.

Finally, many of us are in high risk groups and subject to requests to self-isolate. If you are in a high-risk group (or even if not) and would like help with shopping, someone to shout at from a window, or anything else, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will do what we can.

Keep busy and stay safe,

Derek Thomas