THE HISTORY OF THE “HATCH AT THE HILL”

The “Hatch at the Hill” has been in existence for a number of years now and was originally only open on a Sunday morning during the football season to provide the junior footballers and spectators somewhere to buy hot and cold drinks, snacks and hot food.

With the advent of Parkrun at Pomphrey Hill the hatch opened for an additional couple of hours on a Saturday morning selling hot and cold drinks for the runners taking part and on a good day homemade flapjacks. As the popularity of parkrun increased, we branched out to provide hot food to those wanting it in the form of bacon butties, sausage baps and egg rolls as well as hot and cold drinks.

With the expansion of Carsons & Mangotsfield Cricket Club’s youth side and the number of youth team evening matches being played during the summer increasing the hatch opened on those evenings to provide some light refreshments for those wanting them.

The 2019 – 2020 football season saw 3 adult football teams making Pomphrey Hill their home ground on Saturdays so the hatch hours increased from the few hours in the morning for the parkrun to being open all day to provide refreshments for all those using the site whether it be parkrun, football or members of the local community making use of the outside space. Throughout it has remained open on Sundays for the junior footballers and their families to use and then in March 2020 just as it eventually stopped raining and it looked like there might be some football played at Pomphrey Hill we had “LOCKDOWN 1” and everything closed.

During this time there was a noticeable increase in the use of the outside space by the local community whether as somewhere to walk dogs, to exercise or just to get out in some fresh air locally and feel safe. As a result of this increased footfall and as we gradually came out of Lockdown back in July 2020 we decided to open the hatch on a more regular basis and kept this going during the summer months providing seating and tables (when the rules allowed) for people to sit and enjoy the fresh air while having some sustenance and still keeping themselves safe. The re-opening of schools in September and return to work for a number of people meant that trade at the hatch declined during the week to the extent that we made the decision to close the hatch on weekdays but keep it open at weekends.

Then came “Lockdown 2” in November 2020 and with everything once again closed but take-away allowed we decided to re-open the hatch again on weekday mornings as well as at weekends and have kept it going since then. In spite of it being winter and the weather not being at its best this has been a popular move with local people and “The Hatch at The Hill” has been well used and supported. The plan is that we will keep this open on weekday mornings as well as at the weekends as long as there are people wanting to make use of it.

