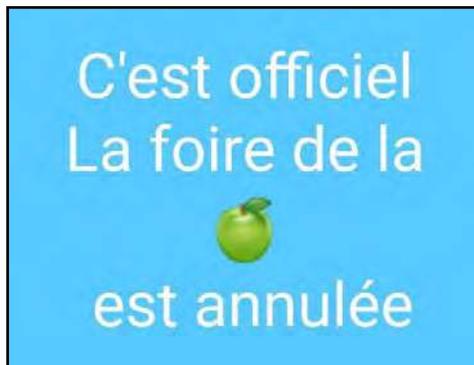




## Fordingbridge Twinning Association News from our European Friends October 2020



The annual Apple Fair (Foire de la Pomme) in Vimoutiers was cancelled this year for the first time since its inception over 70 years ago due to public health concerns. This wonderful event is an opportunity for the town of Vimoutiers and its surrounding area to show off its produce and hold a lively, colourful carnival in which everyone is involved. The Apple Fair is also the annual meeting of Vimoutiers' twin towns from Belgium, Germany and of course, from the UK.



*Apple Fair, 2018 – showing Camembert de Normandie!*

However, there has been a lively exchange of messages of support from each town with updates on the respective progress of the Covid pandemic. In Belgium, all bars and restaurants have been closed, and a curfew imposed on people's movements. In Germany, the second wave of the virus has been attributed to a general fatigue in the population of the restrictions, and especially amongst the younger generation. Each area of the country makes its own decisions to impose restrictions to control the virus which for the most part have been successful. In France, several large cities have had to close all bars, and the number of diners in restaurants has been reduced. A night time

curfew between 9pm and 6am has been declared.

Sontra, Vimoutiers' twin town in Germany, celebrated the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the reunification of East and West Germany earlier this month. It is of particular interest to Sontra as the 'iron curtain' border separating the two countries was only 800m away from the town. There is now a 50m wide 'green zone' running the length of Germany from the Baltic to the Czech Republic which has been designated a national nature reserve to mark the original border.

In 2021, Fordingbridge and Vimoutiers will celebrate their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of twinning, and Sontra will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of twinning with Vimoutiers. We are all hoping that these two celebrations will be able to be held in Vimoutiers next summer – we will be in need of a party!



*Apple Fair – Party time!*

***Please stay in touch and let us know of any news you have from your own contacts in France.***

### **Fordingbridge Twinning Committee:**

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