

Warwick District GREEN SPACES

MAY 2020

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How to make a nesting material holder

Our Green Spaces team has some handy tips and crafts for you to try at home this Spring and Summer. In the first video, Lucy shows you how to make a bird nesting material holder for your garden.

<https://youtu.be/JZEIA85r3Rg>



Coronavirus – Advice and Guidelines for Green Spaces

At the time of publishing the majority of our parks remain open and have been looking stunning in the warm spring sunshine. With over 170 green spaces in our district, everyone has a park or an open space to visit within a ten minute walk of their home, so try and seek out the less well known and popular local areas for your daily exercise.

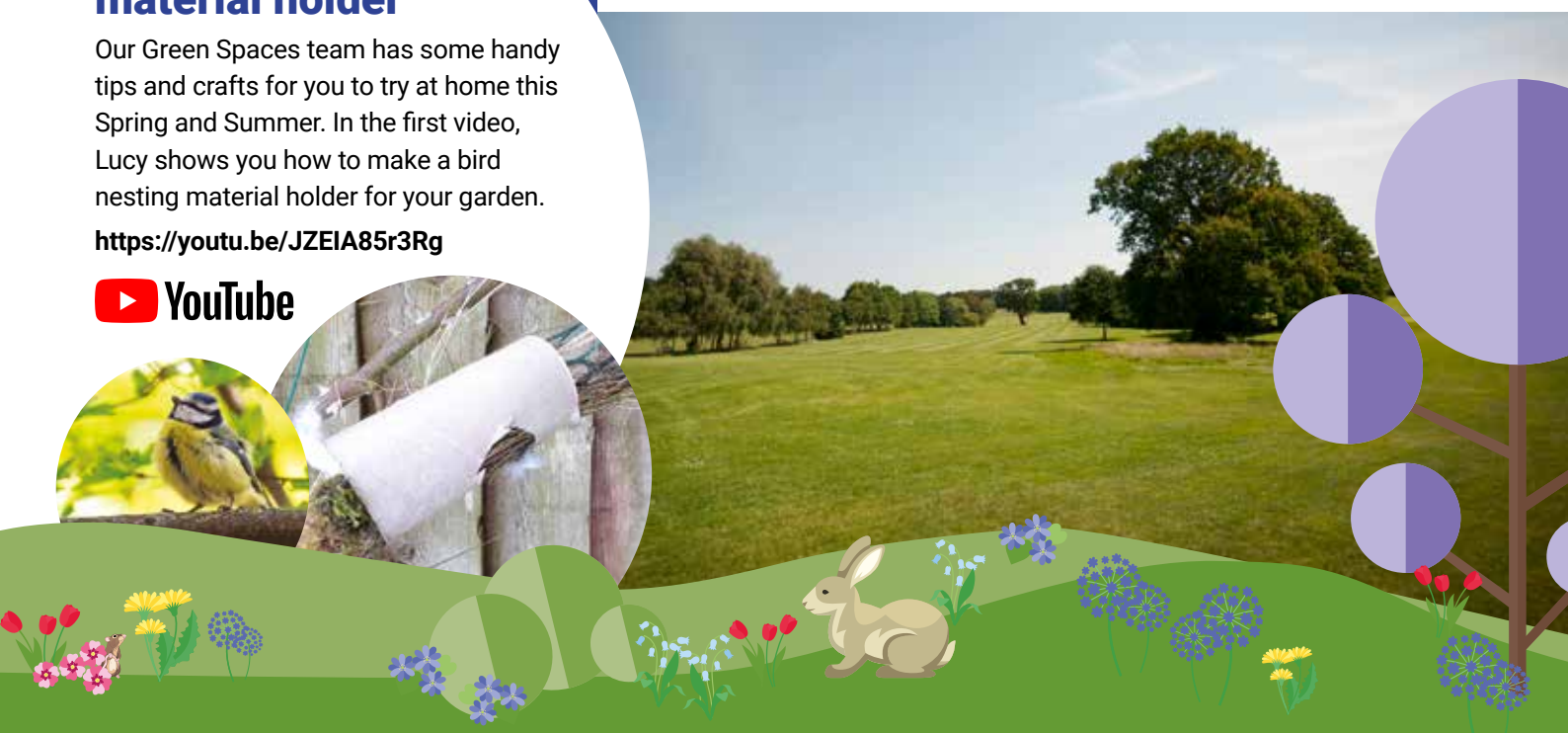
When using public spaces

- Don't travel, stay local
- Only exercise with those you live with
- Stay spatially apart from others – at least 2m
- Remember to smile and say hello

In addition, ensure that you take hygiene precautions when you are outside, and wash your hands as soon as you are back indoors.

Our outdoor sports and play facilities remain closed at the time of publishing.

When using public spaces please limit your time, respect the space of other users, and continue to check our website and social media channels for the most up to date information. www.warwickdc.gov.uk/parks



Green Space of the Month

Pageant Garden, Warwick

This quiet oasis in the centre of Warwick dates from the 1850s and was created from a mosaic of surrounding smaller properties which were gradually bought and demolished to create a garden for Pageant House, the elegant gentleman's residence once owned by the Greenway family. Pageant House (4 Jury Street) was built after the Great Fire of 1694 - and hosted a number of prestigious events, drawing crowds from as far afield as America.

The name Pageant comes from the 1906 Warwick pageant, a major historic event performed in the grounds of Warwick Castle with 2000 performers.

The 1400 costumes required were made by an army of 300 seamstresses who were based in Pageant House. The pageant raised enough money to pay for the purchase of the house and its garden by Warwick Town Council to provide more space for key activities at the Court House next door. Today the building houses the local registry office and is a popular wedding venue.

Pageant Garden was revamped in 2009 and remains open to the public today (via the Visitor Information Centre and an archway in Castle Street) and is a much valued green space in the town centre, with views to the castle. It often provides the backdrop for wedding photographs. Pageant Garden is dominated by a huge old sweet chestnut tree, and features a 'love seat' made from a felled Horse Chestnut tree from the garden. It also has a heart shaped flower bed, and hosts regular events including an annual beer festival and national Town Crier competition. The garden is open from 8 am to sunset. Please see our Coronavirus Update on the front page for current information on visiting this green space at the present time. www.warwickdc.gov.uk

Postcode: CV34 4EW



What to look out for in May

Have you looked out of your window recently or ventured out for exercise? You may be surprised that you don't need to go far to see May blooms in all their glory. Some walls are covered in Wisteria, whose flowers droop down in lilac or purple-blue clusters. Many varieties of the climber plant, clematis, start to flower in May and hedges can become walls of pinks, deep blue, purple and white. May is also the month for beautiful rhododendrons, their delicate flowers set off against dark green leaves. Snapdragons are a tall and elegant garden flower with buds surrounding a long stem. They have a range of colours – pink, purple, dark red, white and yellow.

And of course, bluebells – literally blue coloured 'bells' on stems about 30cm high – best seen in gardens and woodland areas.

Don't forget the butterflies - In May you can begin to see the Common Blue Butterfly, a small

butterfly with violet-blue upper wings and grey-beige undersides. The female varies from brown upper wings with an orange crescent found in the south to a blue colour further north.

As we are in the Midlands, see which you can spot!

During May swifts migrate over from Africa in search of nesting sites in our English towns and cities. They are among the last of the birds of summer to arrive and also are some of the first to leave in July. Swifts look at a glance like swallows but can be recognised by their larger size and appear black in most lights.

You may spot them in the evening as they gather in flocks and fly low around the rooftops of houses or hunt for insects over rivers and fields. They fly extremely fast at almost 70 mph!



Fish in Abbey Fields

Fish removal is carried out annually in the lake in Abbey Fields, Kenilworth, usually in early spring. The Green Spaces team works in partnership with Leamington Angling and Environment Agency Fisheries, who kindly donate their time to the project each year.

The fish are removed to stop the lake becoming over populated, as the water is extremely shallow. Without this removal, high summer temperatures and associated low water levels would result in fish struggling to survive. We have avoided this problem for many years by pro-actively managing the fish stock in the lake. This involves securing relevant permissions for their removal, extracting fish from the lake using long netting and electro fishing techniques, and rehoming them into more suitable local waters within the district. The fish that are removed are largely common carp, with a few minors.

This year, hundreds of fish were removed in early March and were found new homes. The project went well, with Fisheries scientist Ian Welby on hand to show members of the public some of the fish, and pass on details about what was happening and why it is important.



The Hitchman Fountain, Jephson Gardens

Surrounded by lawns, mature trees and beautiful flowerbeds the Hitchman Memorial Fountain can be found in Jephson Gardens, Leamington Spa, near the entrance off The Parade. The fountain was designed by John Cundall and erected in 1869 in memory of Dr John Hitchman, a medical pioneer and philanthropist.

Hitchman trained as a surgeon's assistant and ran practices in Clemens Street and on the Parade, as well as being a staff member at the local Warneford Hospital. A colleague and contemporary of Dr Jephson, Hitchman set up the Labourer's Relief Fund to provide work for the poor; this included the building of pathways and digging of the lake in Jephson Gardens.

Built in a Gothic Revival style, the Hitchman Memorial Fountain, with its intricate stonework was categorised as a Grade II listed building in 1970. The fountain stands on a quatrefoil within a circular base with four buttresses from the central column with square plinths which are capped with a pyramid. It's a beautiful feature at all times, but especially in all its glory with water cascading.

In addition to the Hitchman Memorial Fountain, the Jephson Gardens also houses fountains in the Garden's lake.

The first was placed there in 1926, and another in 1927, the fountains were based on those found in the grounds of Hampton Court, but the original jets have since been replaced due to maintenance issues.



A day **in the** life of

Eleri Usher, Designer

Tell me a little about your position and what you do on a day-to-day basis?

As one of the designers in a small team, I create visual concepts to communicate the Council's message to the public. The variety of work is huge - one day I could be working on a catalogue for the Leamington Spa Art Gallery and Museum, or the What's on Guide for the Royal Spa Centre, and the next I could be designing a logo, creating graphics for an exhibition or even clothing and promotional goods, not forgetting the monthly Green Spaces newsletter!

What's the most satisfying part of the job?

I think I'm really lucky to get to see the finished project, like a bill board or brochure out in public view locally. That's one of the best things about working for WDC rather than for an agency, where you don't often get to see the finished product in the local area.

What key skills do you need to succeed at your job?

Creativity and vision. You need to have an open mind and be receptive to new ideas.

What would you be doing if you had chosen a different career path?

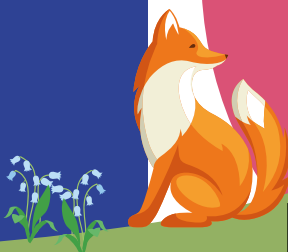
Probably something where I can make things, but still be creative and artistic. I'd love to work in stage and theatre, designing and making costumes or props. My dream job would be making prop wands for Harry Potter!

What's the most unusual design brief you have ever had?

I don't think I've had anything unusual to do, but creating dog poo stickers for waste bins is probably one of the funniest things! In a previous job in London I've had to create building wraps covering whole office blocks for multinational companies. It is very strange seeing your artwork blown up that huge!

Joke of the Month

Why did the tree get stumped?
It couldn't get to the root of the problem...



The coronavirus outbreak must have had a big impact on your work?

A lot of our work is based around events in the Art Gallery and Spa Centre and wider district – all of this is on hold until this situation is over. Thankfully we still have plenty of work to do, such as communicating with the public via newsletters and social media.

Which famous person would you choose to self-isolate with?

Definitely Jenson Ackles from Supernatural, he'd be very good in a zombie apocalypse.

Which is your favourite green space in the district?

Priory Park in Warwick. I love it there because it is always very quiet and beautiful. We collect conkers there in the autumn and it's just very peaceful.

To sign up to this e-newsletter, please visit:
www.warwickdc.gov.uk/gsnews

For more information about green spaces in Warwick District please visit:

 greenspaces@warwickdc.gov.uk

 www.warwickdc.gov.uk/parks

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