

# Warwick District GREEN SPACES

MAY 2021



## Green Space of the Month Riverside Walk

**This month we are featuring a lovely 3½ mile (5½ km) walk linking Leamington and Warwick following the River Leam, Grand Union Canal, and River Avon.**

You can start the walk at Newbold Comyn Leisure Centre following the path through the woodland and along the River Leam to Jephson Gardens crossing the road to the Pump Room Gardens and re-joining the river at the York Bridge. From there you take York Walk to the underpass into Victoria Park. On exiting Victoria Park, the route crosses over Princes' Drive past the weir and Severn Trent Works onto the River Avon. From there you follow the wooded footpath as it meanders along the river until you reach your final destination of St Nicholas Park.

Riverside Walk is well used and popular with walkers. The path had become overgrown in parts and work completed earlier this year by the Council has significantly increased light and visibility. The programme has also seen the resurfacing of the adjacent footpath from Princes Drive to the club-lands area off Adelaide Road.

The Council has also taken measures to enhance the riverside habitats along the route including the coppicing of trees which has improved the sunlight allowing fauna to establish and reseed. The cut material and felled trunks have all been retained to provide nesting sites for birds and mammals and a habitat for fungi and insects.

In undertaking this work, we are protecting and supporting otters, birds generally and water edge birds nesting sites, butterflies and insects which all need our help. The flight and hunting areas of bats are also improved and native amphibians benefit from some additional quiet refuges under logs and brash piles. We are also doing some over seeding, with suitable wild life friendly mix to help add some more biodiversity.

### Did you know?

You can follow the Riverside Walk west from Milverton Viaduct to get to St Nicholas Park. You can also follow the Riverside Walk East from Jephson Gardens to explore Newbold Comyn.

### In this edition

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## What to look out for in May

The much-welcomed warmer weather means now is the perfect time to explore spring arrivals on walks through our local countryside, nature reserves and parks. Follow your nose to the blankets of wild garlic and sweet-smelling bluebells that are now covering our woodland floors. Look out for swans nesting and signets hatching in Jephson Gardens and more butterflies beginning to make an appearance, including orange-tips and small tortoiseshells. Vibrant yellow gorse flowers are providing plenty of nectar for bees and butterflies and adding a splash of colour to the spring painting that now surrounds us.



## Wildlife Hotel at Warwick Cemetery

Warwick Cemetery's old toilet has been refurbished to create the perfect hotel for local wildlife.

This new, multi-purpose accommodation block acts as a bug hotel, hedgehog house, a place for birds and bats to roost and an overwintering site for butterflies.

Jon Holmes, Green Space Development Officer, is the master of reusing and repurposing materials and this new refuge is a brilliant example of how we can make havens for nature with the things we no longer need.



*"WDC's Assets Team were making plans to knock it down as it no longer served any function and the roof was in disrepair, so I suggested the bug hotel in the old toilet block and the Cemetery Manager and Assets team thought it was a wonderful idea: saving money and improving biodiversity. It took 4 hours to complete and a bit of wizardry on my part as I had all the bits stored."* Jon Holmes

The 'hotel' has been constructed using stored marble grave edging stones, old hanging baskets, drainage pipe rescued from a riverbank, old signage, recycled timber and slabs.

If this has inspired you to make your own hotel for local wildlife, even a small action such as piling up decaying wood in an area of your garden can make a big difference for insects and minibeasts. There's plenty we can do to give nature a helping hand.

We can't wait to see who moves in next!

## Covid-19 update

Our green spaces remain open for you to use and outdoor facilities have re-opened, but please ensure you familiarise yourself with the current guidelines which remain in place until 17 May (when groups of up to 30 can meet outdoors).

To stay safe, you must:

- Limit outdoor groups to a maximum of 6 people (or a larger group of any size of up to 2 households).
- wash your hands as soon as you are back indoors
- keep at least two meters apart from anyone outside your household or support bubble at all times
- take hand sanitiser with you when you set off in case there are no handwashing facilities

Play areas remain open but please ensure you follow safe social distancing and safety information to allow everyone the chance to enjoy them.

For more guidance, please visit:  
[www.warwickdc.gov.uk/parkscovid](http://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/parkscovid)

## Ecofest is back!

### Saturday 4 September 2021

That's right, our flagship eco-friendly event will be returning to the Pump Room Gardens this year. We want to show how easy it is to live a healthy, sustainable, plastic-free life. If you're an individual or company that offers sustainable, eco-friendly products or services, if you make delicious vegan and vegetarian food, have a particular focus on plastic-free produce, or if you can offer taster sessions with a focus on wellbeing - we'd love to hear from you. We'd also like to hear from you if you'd be interested in volunteering at the event on the day. Get in touch! Contact Kate Livingston, Event Coordinator at [Ecofest.warks@outlook.com](mailto:Ecofest.warks@outlook.com)

**ECO**  
**FEST**  
**2021**



# Haddie's Treasure Hunt

Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum's brand-new Treasure Trail is here – a fun adventure trail for the whole family to enjoy!

The trail will take around an hour to walk, and takes you through the Jephson and Pump Room Gardens, drawing your attention to things you may not have noticed before, alongside activities, and interactive features, all beautifully illustrated in an easy to follow booklet!

What's even better is that the Treasure Trail is completely free and available to pick up from the Sales and Information Desk at the Royal Pump Rooms - so grab your copy today!



# Pump Room Gardens project update

On Saturday 24th April a great number of us tuned into The BandStand Together online concert, which featured some brilliant performances by local musicians. The selected songs were dedicated by local people to someone who has made a difference in the community or had a particularly difficult time due to the pandemic. Although we were unable to come together around our newly restored bandstand, the concert was the perfect moment to pause for reflection and to look forward to the time we can come together to enjoy live music again.

Thank you to all who have supported the project and tuned in on the night.

If you missed the concert, you can still watch it here:  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZZPMA1sfhZY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZZPMA1sfhZY)



# Leamington in Bloom Photo Competition 2021

"Seasons in Leamington" is the theme chosen for this year's Leamington in Bloom photo competition which is open to all keen photographers. If you enjoy capturing the changing colours, light and scenery of our beautiful town on your camera or smartphone, you can enter your shots for the chance to win the first prize of £50. Two runners-up will also receive cash prizes and the best compositions will feature in the Leamington in Bloom calendar 2022.

Photos must have been taken between 1 September 2020 and 16 August 2021, and should be submitted to [admin@leamingtonspatowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:admin@leamingtonspatowncouncil.gov.uk) There is a maximum of 3 photos per entrant. Please include your name, address and contact number as well as the location of your photos. Winners will be chosen in late August and, if circumstances allow, will be invited to a reception with the Mayor at the Town Hall.

Get clicking on your walks, runs and wanders around Leamington and share your shots showing lovely Leam as the year rolls round!



# Nature photo of the month

This wonderful photo was taken by Jessie, who has been lovingly keeping an eye on this swan and her 7 cygnets at St Nicholas Park. Thank you for sharing Jessie!

If you would like your photo to feature in July's newsletter, please email it to [greenspaces@warwickdc.gov.uk](mailto:greenspaces@warwickdc.gov.uk), with the subject 'Newsletter Photo'.

- Please only send one photo at a time, but feel free to share a new one each month!
- Your photo must be of something in nature and/or one of our green spaces.
- Please include your name and 1-2 sentences explaining where you took your photo, which will be included in the newsletter if your photo is selected.



# A day **in the** life of

## Sally Larke, Learning & Engagement Officer

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

I'm Learning & Engagement Officer at Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum. My job is to help different type of people understand and enjoy the wonderful collection through engagement and events. This can range from Arty Tots to lectures and everything in-between.

### What do you like best about your job?

I love the combination of working with beautiful art & museum objects with the joy of working with lots of different types of people.

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

Flexibility, energy, organisation and being good with people.

### How did you get into this line of work?

I had an unusual route into this job. I studied art education and then became a primary school teacher. I'm also a ceramic artist and completed an MA in Contemporary Craft in 2010

### What's the funniest/ strangest/ most memorable thing that has happened to you in your career?

Dressing up as a chicken for a video at the start of lockdown.

(Thanks for sharing the photo with us Sally!)

### What advice would you give to someone interested in your career?

There are lots of different routes into a job like this and get as much experience as you can.

### If you were a tree/ insect/ animal, which species would you be and why?

I'd be flowering cherry tree as I love them and spring is my favourite time of year.



### When you were younger, what did you want to be when you grew up?

I wanted to run an ice cream van! (I still kind of do want to do this)

### Which is your favourite green space in the district?

I couldn't possibly say, it would be like choosing a favourite child.

### If you could have dinner with anyone from history, who would you pick and why?

Bernard Leach (a famous potter) - I'd like his view on contemporary ceramics.

### What would you do if you won the lottery?

Go on a world tour of Art Galleries.

### Where would you most like to go on holiday?

Cornwall (always)

To sign up to this e-newsletter, please visit:  
[www.warwickdc.gov.uk/gsnews](http://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/gsnews)

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

 [greenspaces@warwickdc.gov.uk](mailto:greenspaces@warwickdc.gov.uk)

 [www.warwickdc.gov.uk/parks](http://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/parks)

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