

WARWICK DISTRICT GREEN SPACES



September 2019

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Green Space of the Month

Radford Road Meadows

Located to the South of the River Leam in Sydenham, South Leamington, this five-hectare nature reserve adjoins Newbold Comyn and consists of flood meadow, marsh, trees and hedgerow. The site was purchased by Warwick District Council in 2017 as an extension to the existing Leam Valley wildlife corridor. At this time the site was added to the portfolio of nature reserves that Warwick District Council manages in partnership with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust to safeguard local wildlife.

Mature oak and sycamore trees grow along the hedgerow boundary with Radford Road, while marsh areas are managed to retain their open character with minimal intervention. This includes the removal of tree saplings and encroaching scrub. Grassland areas are cut on a two-year rotation to ensure that foraging areas and shelter are available for overwintering animals such as bees, beetles, larvae and small mammals.

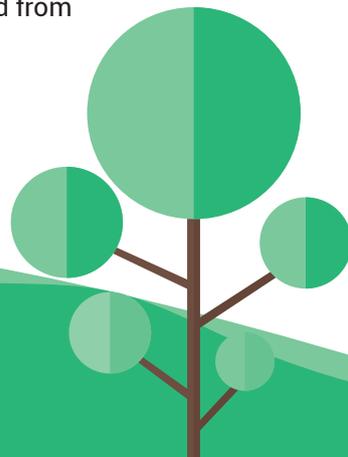
The river provides a perfect habitat for the beautiful kingfisher, and other bird species at the meadows include chiffchaff, cuckoo, nuthatch and kestrel. Butterflies to look out for include Peacock, Small Tortoiseshell and Meadow Brown, with Banded Demoiselle, damselflies and dragonflies often seen flitting around the river area.

Radford Road Meadows relies on volunteers from the local community to help with management. If you would like to get involved please contact Warwickshire Wildlife Trust – www.warwickshirewildlifetrust.org.uk

Postcode: CV31 1LQ

Parking: Radford Road Car Park (next to St Mary's Allotments)

Public Transport: 63 or 67 Bus to Radford Road from Upper Parade, Leamington.



September Events and Activities

Sunday 1 September, 9am start
Kenilworth Half Marathon

Warwick Road, Kenilworth.
Adult race and free fun runs for children with Kids Run Free (starting 11.30am)
www.kenilworthhalfmarathon.co.uk

Thursday 5 - Saturday 7 September, 6pm to 9pm

Moonlit Cinema, Mill Gardens
Thursday Top Gun, Friday Pretty Woman, Saturday E.T
www.moonlitcinema.co.uk

Saturday 7 September, 9.45am-12pm
Sponsored Walk, Victoria Park
A walk to raise funds and awareness for the Multiple Sclerosis Society.
www.mssociety.org.uk



Saturday 7 & Sunday 8 September, 10am-6pm

Food and Drink Festival
Pump Room Gardens
Annual food and drink festival in the heart of Leamington Spa.
www.royal-leamington-spa.co.uk/whats-on/leamington-food-and-drink-festival-2019/

Friday 13 September, from 9am (Race Start 11am)
OVO Energy Tour of Britain
Warwick Racecourse
Warwick Racecourse will be the official start of Stage 7 of the UK's biggest and most prestigious international cycling event with the 120 riders processing through the streets of Warwick.
www.tourofbritain.co.uk/stages/stage-7

Friday 13 to Sunday 22 September
Heritage Open Days
This year's festival includes guided tours of our parks and green spaces.
• Saturday 14 and Sunday 15 September 2.30pm Brunswick Street Cemetery Guided Walk (meet the guide at the central entrance to the cemetery on Brunswick Street).
• Wednesday 18 September 2.30pm Leamington Society Guided Walk – Pump Room Gardens

• Thursday 19 September 2.30pm
Leamington Society Guided Walk – Jephson Gardens
www.heritageopendays.org.uk

Heritage Open Days booklets available from Leamington and Warwick Visitor Centres and Kenilworth Library.

Sunday 15 September, 10am-5pm
Original Bounce
Pump Room Gardens
Giant inflatables for big and little kids!

Sunday 22 September, 10am-12.30pm
The Big Push, Victoria Park
A 5km walk/buggy push to highlight and raise money for maternal mental health and wider work of NCT.
Daniella.abraham@nct.org.uk

Saturday 28 September, arrival from 10am, Walk starts 11am.
Memory Walk
Victoria Park
Charity walk to help change the lives of people affected by dementia, now and in the future. Walk distance 1.5km or 5.5km
www.memorywalk.org.uk/find-a-walk/leamington-spa-2019/

Pump Room Gardens Programme Update

Following The Bandstand Returns event on 15 March this spring, summer has seen some fantastic events taking place on the newly restored Pump Room Gardens. These have included two brand new events organised by the Green Spaces team: Ecofest on 5 May and the (rescheduled) Big Victorian Picnic on 27 July.

Other events at the PRG have included the annual Leamington Peace Festival, Leamington Carnival, Warwickshire Pride and Art in the Park, among others.

The newly refurbished bandstand has seen a wealth of local acts performing, including Joe Dolman, Levi Washington, Sambassadors of Grove and Royal Spa Brass as well as poetry and talks.

We hope you have managed to make it to some of these! If not, remember to check out the Leamington Food Festival on 7 and 8 of September, and Original Bounce on the 15 - our last events of the season!



What to look out for in September

Look out for the first signs of Autumn, the temperatures are getting lower and the leaves in our green spaces are turning to beautiful shades of yellow, russet or red.



Early September is prime-time for foraging for blackberries and other fruits such as elderberries too.

Bird nesting season will have finished and some of our seasonal birds will start their migration to warmer climes. Watch out for huge flocks of swallows getting ready for the 6000-mile journey to South Africa.

Many butterfly species continue to fly through September and beyond, look out for varieties such as the Small Tortoiseshell and Red Admirals in our parks and gardens.

The renovations of the bowling greens in preparation for the Commonwealth Games in 2022 are due to start this month. We have appointed our Green Spaces contractor idVerde to undertake the very important specialist task of relaying two of our greens, as the current surfaces are on a slight slope (apparently!)

With the football season in full swing, club football is being widely played on our green spaces, with opportunities for a more informal kick around using our newly installed goals.

Shortly we will be starting to cut the yew trees in the cemeteries.



It was a lucky 13 for the Green Spaces team with the recent announcement that Jephson Gardens has won an impressive thirteenth successive Green Flag Award, the international mark of a quality park or green space.

At the same we also got the news that Crackley Wood in Kenilworth and Oakley Wood near Bishop's Tachbrook were also awarded prestigious Green Flags. Both woodlands are owned by the district council and maintained in partnership with the Warwickshire Wildlife

Results!

Trust and the Friends of Oakley Wood and Crackley Wood. This is the second year in a row that we have received three green flag awards for our district!

Congratulations also go to Foundry Wood on Princes Drive and Myton Pools off the Myton Road who received Green Flag Community Awards from Keep Britain Tidy. These spaces are maintained and cared for by their respective Friends Groups of volunteers for the enjoyment of local residents and visitors.

Pond Creature Competition - our winners!

In August, the Green Spaces team ran a competition at Art in the Park festival in Leamington to fill our 'Green Spaces pond' with lots of amazing creatures. The pond was quickly filled with beautiful and quirky fauna – but only six creatures could be selected to feature in our newsletter this month. Here are our wonderful winners!

Water mite (silver spider legs) - Louie, aged 7

The Golden Heron - Oliver, aged 10

Frog with top hat - Theo, aged 9

Dragonfly - Olivia, aged 3

Jellyfish - Akaal, aged 6

Scary newt - Jodie, aged 18

Thank you to everyone who participated, and well done to our winning entries!



A day **in the life** of

Jay Wheatley, Managing Director,
Green Space Leisure, St Nicholas Park



How did you get involved in the fun park at St Nicholas Park?

I have a fairground background and grew up with travelling rides on the fairground circuit. My family were based in Leicestershire so I remember days out at St Nick's. There's been a fairground here for well over 40 years, and our family knew the people who used to operate it, with the Peter Pan train ride and other attractions. Around 25 years ago, my dad saw an advert in the World's Fair, asking for new operators. He was getting fed up of setting up fairs at muddy bonfire events, so we applied for the contract and my brother and I joined the business.

How has the fun park developed since then?

When we took the site on we very quickly had to get a new train running on the existing tracks in time for the new season at Easter. We still have the original train in our yard – the Mississippi Train! As time went on we gradually moved away from travelling to focus on our permanent site here and we've been making improvements and adding new rides each year. We now operate four sites as well as St Nicks, and put around 75% of our profits back into the business each year.

What does your job involve?

Our offices are based in Barwell, near Leicester, but I often have to jump in the van and travel over to mend rides – we're grafters even though I'm now a director! We make the most of the winter months, carrying out major work and maintenance while the fairground is closed.

What's the most challenging part of your job?

The weather – and there is nothing we can do about it! It makes working out the cash flow tricky.

What do you do with your free time?

I bought a house 18 months ago, and because it needs renovating we've been living in the annexe while I try and complete the work in my spare time. It's turned into a bit of a long term project and I'm looking forward to getting my life back once its finished. I have three boys, who are used to visiting sites with me during summer holidays – they are lively and have plenty of personality!

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

Definitely something practical. I'm a licensed HGV driver, my brother and I have all sorts of certificates – we can operate cranes, forklifts – I even got my welding certificate when I was 14.

What would you do if you won the lottery?

How much are we talking?! I'd travel again – but not in fun fairs, I'd travel the world! I'd pay my mortgage off and make sure my kids could go into the business if they wanted.

Which is your favourite green space in the district?

It's got to be St Nick's because we are so well established here, I'm interested in finding out more about our customers and what they enjoy. I like the strong relationship that we have built up with the Council to create and maintain a nice clean park that visitors will come back to time and time again.

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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