

NEWS



LEAF

Issue: 1

February 2017

*Welcome to the first edition of Newsleaf
- a newsletter for all members of Team Harrogate.*

We have tended to share news and give updates on projects at our regular meetings. This is useful but not everyone can attend each meeting which is why we have come up with the idea of a bi-monthly electronic newsletter so that we can hear everyone's snippets of news.

Although Harrogate in Bloom (HIB) will be paying for, editing and producing the publication, it is your newsletter so keep the stories coming. We do hope that those members who have websites will be able to create a section where Newsleaf can be displayed so that even more people can hear about what Team Harrogate is doing.

Champion of Champions - Rooting for Harrogate



Being invited by RHS Britain in Bloom to enter Champion of Champions is an honour. It will be a challenge but it is one Team Harrogate is happy to take up for the prestige it will bring.

Harrogate is one of just seven areas chosen to enter this year - we will be up against Aberdeen, Elswick, Hillsborough, Oldham, Portishead and St Peter Port in Guernsey. As the categories will be the same, we asked the judges what they will be looking for and they said: 'All seven of you have been chosen because of the repeated high quality of your award entries. We will be looking for attention to detail in all the marking categories.'

As Newsleaf goes to press we are getting ready to launch our campaign.

We have our logo which you are all encouraged to use along with the text 'Rooting for Harrogate'. We will soon be collecting colourful roundels for you to use for photo shoots. We have also ordered lapel badges and we will be asking town centre shops to display window stickers and use our sticky labels when wrapping a customer's purchase.

This is just the start and we would love to hear your group's plans to get everyone involved.

Awards will be in Llandudno on 27 October. We will let you know our judging date as soon as it is confirmed.

Rossett School's sensory garden

Year 11 students who are working towards a Prince's Trust Achieve Award are developing a sensory garden for Rossett School. Creating this garden will help students with a range of issues including autism and other challenges. It is also to be a quiet space for those suffering loss or needing quiet contemplation.



Work starts on this special garden.

Businesses are 'In blooming'

The continued partnership between HIB and Harrogate Council means town centre businesses can again buy a subsidised hanging basket.

For just £90 each, the Parks and Environmental Services Team will

grow the plants, produce and hang, water and feed and remove in September.

HIB President Pam Grant, said: "Visitors are vital to the local economy so as always we want the town to look its best. Our flower beds, parks and gardens are always stunning but the hanging baskets at shops, cafes, restaurants and offices are always popular and do add something to the front of business premises."

With subsidy by the council and voluntary administrative support from HIB, costs are kept low.

There are 134 baskets available which can be ordered by emailing mee.lynne2@gmail.com



Birds nest with tennis balls

The Pinewoods Conservation Group had help from Pannal Scouts as part of their annual bird box cleaning in early February. Committee member Christine Ward-Campbell who takes a lead on bird boxes said: "With over 60 bird boxes in the woods it can take some time to locate and clean them all, so the help provided by local Scouts is appreciated. It is always pleasing to see how many of the boxes have evidence of nests showing that our efforts are worthwhile."

The various colours of the nests was a surprise to the Scouts with bits of clothing and green tennis ball fur!

Bilton Conservation Group has experimented with bird boxes in New Park's Grange Park for the last three years. All the boxes have

been checked and last year's nests suggest we are achieving the same kind of pattern as Nidd Gorge with about 80 per cent occupation and around 70 per cent successful breeding.

Like the Pinewoods the nesting materials were interesting - a bottom layer of fine moss, overlaid with shredded reedmace leaves and tastefully framed with red tennis ball fluff.



Pannal Scouts lend a hand.



Anyone for tennis!

Great British spring clean

After the phenomenal regional success of the Clean for the Queen campaign, we're now looking to build on this and deliver an annual clean-up every March with Keep Britain Tidy.

The Great British Spring Clean will take place 3 to 5 March with a number of events in Harrogate.

The Pinewoods Conservation Group will be holding a litter pick

on Saturday 4 March from 10am to noon, meeting at the Council Nurseries on Nursery Lane East. Just bring gloves.



Pinewoods off litter picking.

Pinewoods Conservation Group AGM & Discussion

The Pinewoods Conservation Group is holding their AGM on Thursday 9 March from 7pm at the Green Hut at 44 Harlow Ave, Harrogate HG2 0AS.

As well as the normal updates Harrogate Council will update on their 10 year plan for the woods.

This free event is open to members and non-members. More details at <http://pinewoodsconservationgroup.org.uk/events/annual-general-meeting-pinewoods-ten-year-plan>.

New way marker for old pack horse route

The way marker on Bilton Lane at Old Bilton directs visitors along the ancient bridle track that is Milner's Lane. The pack horse route into Nidd Gorge descends to the river which it then crosses on its way north.

Examination of old maps and hedgerow species suggest that this track and hollow way through the Ancient Forest of Knaresborough may be at least 800 years old.

Thanks to help from students from Grove Academy we now have a new way marker to replace one which had succumbed to wind and weathering.



No horsepower - just muscle, skill and spades.

Partnership in conservation

Bilton Conservation Group has worked with the Grove Academy Pupil Referral Unit for five years now introducing their students to fieldcraft and conservation studies in the Nidd Gorge.

Together we have constructed ponds, planted many trees, put up bird boxes and improved wildlife habitats.

This ongoing partnership has been commemorated with the planting of a memorial oak tree at a secret location in Nidd Gorge.



Another beautiful tree for Nidd Gorge.

Popular Walking Path

In 2016 the Millennium Path was being well used and much appreciated but walkers and local residents made a further appeal for us to look at the section from Millennium Path up into Bilton Fields and Nidd Gorge. This is decent walking when the weather is dry but after prolonged wet weather it can turn into a mud bath. The problem may be an inefficient land drain which blocks

easily, but that is a major issue beyond our capabilities and resources. We decided to lay a medium-weight boardwalk running alongside the footpath to provide an alternative dry walking surface. Knox Saw Mills were very helpful and sponsored our efforts by supplying and delivering free timber for the job.

The new surface stood throughout last year before the vandals decided to attack it and break it up. However, undeterred we had a small team recently repairing and strengthening it to make it more robust.



The vandalised path...



...now fully restored.

Children's art competition

Last year, HIB art competition for children aged 3 to 11 had over 600 entries which was fantastic.

Entry packs have been delivered to all Harrogate schools, nurseries and playgroups. The little ones have a picture of the town centre to colour in. The older children are being asked to design a colourful flower bed and the

winning design will be recreated in the gardens outside the Victoria Shopping Centre.

All children taking part will receive a certificate at the awards ceremony being held on 1 April at West Park United Reform Church. The winners in each age group will receive a family ticket for the Harrogate Spring Flower Show and a mug showing their winning design. We are grateful to The North of England Horticultural Society who sponsor this competition. For more information email harrogateinbloom@mann.so



Young bloomers 2016.

Fabulous Valley Gardens

Congratulations to the Friends of the Valley Gardens (FOVG) who have received a Heritage Lottery Grant of £89,200 towards the restoration of the Japanese Garden which will be done in partnership with Harrogate Council who also helped with the lottery application.

FOVG are also planning to restore the Green Park entrance to the Valley Gardens. They plan to reinstall the Edward VII Memorial Gate, originally sited outside the Rose Garden on Kings Road. £60,000 is needed and they have already raised £30,000. All proceeds raised from Valley Gardens 40s Day on Sunday 18 June will go towards the project.



Diary date for Easter Sunday
Easter Egg Treasure Hunt 10am
onwards, starting at the Pump
Room.

Check out the Friends' website
for more news and be amazed
at an aerial video that has been
offered to FOVG to use free
of charge on their website by
David Bridgen of Dronecam
Solutions Ltd of Harrogate.
It is breathtaking and the Valley
Gardens look pristine. If I were
getting married in the Sun Pavilion
I would use a link to the site on
my invitations!

FOVG would like to thank all
members of Team Harrogate who
attended the consultation in
October regarding using the Valley
Gardens for large events. As
we know FOVG have concerns
and the outcome is awaited from
the Council.

www.friendsofvalleygardens.co.uk

Buy from the best

Harrogate Council's Central
Nursery Team is busy producing
summer plants for bedding
schemes across the district,
growing them from seeds
and cuttings.

But did you know that you too
can buy from this award winning
team? The nursery sells spring
bedding plants and has Tete a Tete
and Jetfire daffodil bulbs planted
up for just £1.50 There are
other floral containers (from £6.00)
- excellent gifts especially for
Mother's Day. Summer bedding
will be for sale from Tuesday
30 May.



The staff also produce wildflower
plugs to order for community
groups and conservation groups
and you can discuss requirements
with Nursery Manager Barrie
Stringer on 01423 841145.

The nursery can provide baskets
and containers for private
contracts for hotels, pubs and
restaurants. Orders need to be
placed in April with Barrie who
will be happy to discuss colour
and content.

Woodlands Community Garden

We meet to garden the last Sunday
of every month between 2pm
and 4pm and weekly on Fridays
between 9am - 10am. Our garden
is behind Woodlands Road
Methodist Church on Wetherby
Road.

- Join us for our Stargazing and
Wildlife Evenings.
- Stargazing: Saturday, 18 March,
6pm. Come along and use
telescopes, weather permitting;
do space related crafts and
experiments; and enjoy a bring
and share meal.
- Wildlife: Saturday, 13 May
6pm. We hope to detect bats,
find out more about the moths
in our gardens and meet crows
and ravens. There will be a
bring and share dinner.

Contact Catherine Baxter or
Nicola Blay for more details:
celbaxter@hotmail.com,
nicolablax@gmail.com



*Open Country help with hedge
cutting.*

Yorkshire in Bloom 2017

YIB is a brilliant voluntary
organisation that regionally
administers the RHS Britain in
Bloom campaign which itself is
Europe's largest horticultural
campaign.

Harrogate has won YIB 33 times
and we still get a thrill when we
win but it isn't all about being
competitive. Entering encourages
civic pride, raises community
spirit as well as an interest in
horticulture and leads to lasting
improvements.

New initiatives for 2017 include
'Grow Your Community', aimed
at fledgling groups who want the
recognition of being an award-
winning community without the
pressure of judging. There's a new
category for allotment sites too,
assessors will be looking for sites
where plot holders have worked
together to achieve attractive and
productive sites which are well
managed and cared for.

Other YIB categories include
commercial, education,
community areas, and for those
urban areas in need of a little
bit of encouragement to 'bloom
up', there is always the
RHS 'It's Your Neighbourhood'
campaign.

Harrogate recently attended a
'meet the judges day' for Britain
in Bloom which was really
useful. Entrants in YIB 2017 have
the same opportunity to meet
the regional judges on Saturday
11 March from 10am-3pm at the
Tithe Barn in Poppleton, near York
YO26 6LF. Everyone is welcome.
Just turn up, no booking required.
Full details at
www.yorkshireinbloom.co.uk



"Communities Growing Together"