



Mansfield District Council
Creating a District where People can Succeed

Cash prizes up for grabs for tenants' best kept gardens

Mansfield District Council is hoping for a blooming good response to its Best Kept Garden Competition 2013.

The Best Kept Front or Back Garden competition is open to all Council tenants in the District. A total of £600 prize money is available, with the winner receiving a first prize of £300, second prize of £200 and a third prize of £100.

Judges will be looking for the following criteria:

- Overall design and appearance
- Choice and quality of plants to give a year-round interest
- Health of plants (free from pests and diseases)
- Cleanliness and tidiness of the garden
- Lack of weeds
- Plants that attract birds and insects
- Water conservation (mulch, ground cover and water recycling)
- Evidence of environmentally-friendly gardening techniques (chemicals and pesticides)

To enter the competition, fill in an entry form, which are available from the Housing desk at the Civic Centre or online at www.mansfield.gov.uk/parks

Please ensure that fully completed entry forms are returned by 1 July 2013. Judging will take place between Monday 15 July and Friday 2 August 2013.

Winners will be notified of the results of the competition in mid-August and will be invited to the Civic Centre for a presentation of both certificates and cash prizes.

Portfolio Holder for Tenancy Services and Special Housing Needs, Councillor Mick Colley said: "This competition is an exciting new initiative involving the great outdoors, which is open to all Council tenants. I would encourage people to get out into their gardens and discover the satisfaction of creating a space that is both attractive and environmentally-friendly. Gardening offers people many benefits including reducing stress and keeping fit. Hopefully, the competition will encourage new gardeners, while also appealing to those who already have established gardens."

For more information about the Council Tenants Best Kept Garden Competition, telephone 01623 463 463 or email parksandopenspaces@mansfield.gov.uk

Cllr Yemm takes the Chair

Mansfield District Council last night (14 May) appointed Cllr Julia Yemm, ward councillor for Sherwood, as its new Chair of the Council for the year ahead. Cllr Andy Wetton, ward councillor for Meden, was appointed as Vice-chair.

The appointments were made at the Council's Annual Meeting, where Cllr Brian Lohan was presented with a past Chair's medal and thanked for his services in the role over the past year.

The Chair and Vice-chair are responsible for upholding and promoting the principles of the Council's constitution and presiding over meetings, so that Council business is carried out efficiently and with regard to the rights of the elected members and the interests of the community.

Commenting on her new role, Cllr Yemm said: "I'm extremely honoured to be elected as Chair of the Council. I assure you I will work hard to carry out the role to the best of my ability."

The Mill Dam

We are sure many will have seen the efforts of the Environment Agency (EA) to remove the silt from the silt trap. It has obviously been a disaster.



The attempt to pump the silt into a large bag went very badly. The bag was not placed on a membrane and so slipped into the river causing damage to the water vole habitat that had been clearly noted in a survey that had been carried out and supplied to the EA. In recovering the bag it split and quantities of silt went into the river. Men without safety clothing were in the water to help the recovery. Eventually the bag was placed on a sheet and posts were put along one side to prevent it slipping into the river again. As water seeped out of the bag it was allowed to flow over the already damaged water vole habitat.

Apparently the wrong sized pipe was used (4 inch instead of 18 inch) to pump the silt causing the pump to stall. The hydraulic system from the equipment burst and fluid flowed into the silt trap. There was no spill kit on site to prevent or clean up the fluid and it polluted the main dam and went down stream.

The plan was to remove some 200 cubic meter of silt and take it off site. It was very obvious that when the bag had dried out and cut open the silt was only a few inches high and totalled at the most some 5 cubic meter. One lorry would have been enough to take it off site. Of course only a fraction of the silt was removed and the task still needs to be completed.

The meeting that had been convened by the EA for the Partnership for 25th March to discuss the funding application for the removal of silt from about half the main dam has never been held and at the date of writing (10th May) has not been reconvened. No details have been made available by the EA to the three other members of the Partnership on progress of lack of it. Rumours are that the funding is not currently available to carry out the work this year. We are not even sure if an application to the Water Framework was ever made.

EA had planned to use some of the funding that was available to de-silt the dam last summer to de-silt the silt trap. We now fear that all of it was used to remove just the few cubic metres. The EA brought in a "specialist" to supervise the project and it is not evident if this was on secondment or on a consultancy basis.

The flow of hydraulic fluid and quantities of silt into the water and damage to the wildlife habitat are matters that would have brought others before the courts. The EA have since returned to site to completely ruin the water vole habitat and rebuilt that section of the river bank. Again no communication has been made by the EA to other members of the Partnership.

The Friends of The Carrs are saddened by the events as are the Wildlife Trust who offered to supervise the work. Some of their staff have been deployed to carry out various surveys in the area at the request of the EA. The Partnership was agreed to get the Mill Dam de-silted. The 4 members are Mansfield District Council who own the site, Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, The Friends Of The Carrs who are a voluntary group constituted to enhance the Carrs for the public and The Environment Agency who are a government body responsible for the Rivers and are paid from the public purse

The Wildlife Trust have written to all Friends Groups in the MDC area to state that they have withdrawn their support as they were not getting paid by MDC. This is not good news. At a meeting some

Walking on Water

Last night, we went for a walk around the Carrs, to see what work had been taking place recently. What a mess!

The river is still silted up and there's a shopping trolley in the water, as well as lots of rubbish, plastic bags, cartons and branches. It's a stagnant disgrace. No work appears to have been done to the main area where the ducks and swans are. There's some shuttering up further round, close to where the concrete blocks were and some trees have been chopped down, but that's all we could see. It hasn't made any difference to the cleanliness of the water or to the depth of it. We actually saw one duck "walking" on the water because it was standing on the silt just below the surface.

People who are connected with the Friends of the Carrs should be ashamed that this has been allowed to happen. It used to be beautiful to walk along the river. Now, it's just a mess, with fewer birds than ever.

I suspect that even the poor swans will leave soon and find a nicer, cleaner stretch of water on which to raise their young. That would be so sad. We were quite excited when we saw the work beginning and, due to the bad weather, we have not been over the Carrs for a few months, so you can only imagine our disappointment when we went over the weekend. We can only hope that the work has not finished and that it will be carried on later in the year. So much was made of the de-silting programme and it was a real disappointment to us when we saw it, or rather didn't see it!

Please, make this beautiful area picturesque again. Make the people of Warsop proud of it and proud to show our friends from out of the village the beauty of the Carrs, instead of making us feel ashamed and having to make excuses for the disgusting state of the place.

Jenny Kimberley - Warsop Resident.

months ago an officer from MDC said one alternative was to fill in the Mill Dam and grass it over. FOTC are a pressure group and are powerless to force response and actions from the other members of the Partnership.

Friends Of The Carrs are to meet our local MP and ask him to obtain answers to our questions and we will keep the people of Warsop informed through this publication.

FRIENDS OF THE CARRS