

Lady Bay Community Association Public Meeting Minutes **Wednesday 17th May 2023 8pm**

Apologies: Committee members Richard Arblaster and Maureen Mitchell; Steve Charters, Lady Bay Website Administrator; PC Rob Archer and local PCSOs; Councillor Neil Clarke (County Council Portfolio Holder for Transport and the Environment); Councillor Rob Inglis, Rushcliffe Borough Council Cabinet Member for Community Protection (RI).

Present: 36, including County Councillor Penny Gowland (PG) & Rushcliffe Borough Councillors Richard & Sue Mallender, Reverend Jonathan Mole, Vicar, Lady Bay Church (JM)

Jenni Manning-Ohren (JM-O) from Wild Things Keyworth: How to make Lady Bay a Hedgehog Friendly Community

There are display boards with information in the room. A presentation was given.

Lady Bay is already an environmentally friendly community with the successful Good Weigh zero waste store, the new cycle way along Regatta Way & people looking after hedgehogs in the area already. JM-O & Wild Things Keyworth are happy to be a resource for a hedgehog friendly group in Lady Bay.

The scientific name for the only hedgehog species native to the UK is *Erinaceus europaeus* which is the same as its common name - the European hedgehog. Its protective spines can sometimes be its downfall when, for instance, they cause it to become entangled in netting. It used to be common to see dead hedgehogs squashed by road vehicles. They are nocturnal so were not seen so much alive.

JM-O's interest in hedgehogs was sparked when she saw a mother hedgehog with 2 hoglets in her garden. She helped them by providing a shallow bowl of water as natural water sources are drying up. Hedgehogs have been living alongside humans in the UK for 1000s of years but in the last 70 years the hedgehog population has been reducing. There were 34 million hedgehogs in Britain 34 years ago, there is less than 1 million now.

In 2017 JM-O snapped her Achilles' tendon when she twisted her foot down a rabbit hole & this changed her life.

But back to hedgehogs: On the cover of the Rushcliffe Gardener magazine in 2022 there was a picture of a hedgehog - this is a picture of a non-native pet hedgehog. The article inside the magazine has a photo of a native British hedgehog. There are 17 species of hedgehog on Earth, their lineage dating back to the time of the dinosaurs. Hedgehogs need 'Hedgehog Highways' they need edges and hedges. But many hedges are being replaced with fencing. Hedgehogs like to sleep at the base of mature trees. They need a variety of gardens, 12 -15 in total, through which they forage during the night, fences block access so the hedgehogs end up going on to roads as suitable gardens aren't next to each other. Hedgehogs need connected gardens. Wild Things Keyworth have made little wooden 'gates' between gardens & ramps to allow hedgehogs to get out of garden ponds. People in the community need to be involved. Modern fences often have concrete bases, but gaps can be made in them. When new housing developments are built habitat is destroyed

with the removal of trees and hedgerows.

- **Habitat:** Hedgerow, log piles, wilder gardens, No Mow May, Let It Bloom June
- **Highways:** Access from garden to garden, ramps in ponds
- **Hazards:** Cars, pesticides, litter, ponds, open drains, cattle grids, artificial grass, herbicides, particularly when sprayed on verges and playing fields.

JM-O is particularly concerned about artificial grass: Artificial grass is advertised in the West Bridgford Local News and JM-O has complained to the editor, but the adverts continue. Artificial grass means more plastic in the environment; earthworms & other soil invertebrates, fungi & plants cannot live under the artificial grass & there is no food or no access to food for amphibians, birds & mammals including hedgehogs, it is a 'carpet of death'. You can help hedgehogs by feeding them with dog food and dog biscuits. In 2017 JM-O tore her Achilles' tendon & had to stop & re-evaluate her life. She used to cycle a lot & had to stop, & for 6 months was unable to walk, she was unable to drive for 9 months. She looked after her elderly parents & read a lot of political books & articles. She began to think about people's access needs. JM-O noticed hedges in front gardens had disappeared under hard surfacing for car parking. One of the books she read was 'Linescapes: Remapping and Reconnecting Britain's Fragmented Wildlife' by Hugh Warwick of the British Hedgehog Preservation Society (BHPS), she also read about 'eco bridges' in Holland <https://heavenly-holland.com/wildlife-crossings/> As a result, JM-O set up Wild Things Keyworth; wanting to fill the gap between experts & ordinary people, believing that change comes from within communities through taking people out of their comfort zone. An artist, Liz, helped get the message out, she designed a logo for the group. Wild Things Keyworth has brought people together. Group members have asked developers what they are doing for hedgehogs. The BHPS wants hedgehogs to be protected in the same way as bats, red squirrels etc. Wild Things Keyworth had funding from Severn Trent Water's 'Boost for Biodiversity' scheme. People became 'super hedgehog carers' providing hedgehog houses & bowls of food & water – at least 1 person per road. People made gaps 13x13cm between their gardens, which hedgehogs used the very next evening in some cases. Local knitters were involved, making hedgehog-themed pillar box tops. In 2022 a local 5-year-old started the involvement of Keyworth Primary School. Scouts, Cubs & Beavers joined in from Keyworth & Kinoulton. There was a competition to find the UK's longest hedgehog street & by focussing on one road, Dale Rd, during the Covid lockdown, the street coordinator succeeded in winning the prize. This was achieved by keeping the gaps open, when new people moved into a house with a gap a sign was in place near it to tell the new residents why it was there & to keep it open. Wild Things Keyworth & Dale Rd was featured in The Times, The Mail on Sunday, GB News, BBC5Live, West Bridgford Wire, Notts TV & other media. The prize for the best land art for the Tour of Britain had a similar closing date to the one for the Hedgehog Street prize. Wild Things Keyworth managed to win this prize too in 4-6 weeks. They used an old cricket pitch to make a huge piece of art.

Wild Things Keyworth is helping other areas e.g., Tollerton & E. Leake, & of course, Lady Bay, to become hedgehog friendly communities. Rushcliffe Borough Council (RBC) has committed to do more for hedgehogs. All you need to start is 2 people – one with a drill to make holes, the other a publicist. Wild Things Keyworth used slogans such as ‘Space for Spikes’, ‘Give Them Back Their Pathways’. There is a lot of wider support for hedgehogs, Brian May of Queen; King Charles, who has initiated No Mow May at Windsor Castle; Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust said as part of their Wilder Notts campaign that if 1 in 4 people acted it would make a massive difference; Sir David Attenborough quoted “People Powered Nature Recovery” in the recent BBC series ‘Wild Isles’
A local Keyworth musician, Luke Faulner, has set footage of camera traps of hedgehogs to music. The ensuing short film was shown.

Questions & comments:

RM: Often secondary schools are surrounded by 6-foot-high wire mesh fences. Could schools be involved?

JM-O: Yes, work with schools. Dig a tunnel under the fence!

Has the weedkiller glyphosate been found to affect hedgehogs, as it does bees, earthworms, etc.?

JM-O: Yes, listen to Professor Dave Goulson from the Bumblebee Trust regarding the effects of glyphosate. There are alternatives e.g., organic gardening, using nematodes instead of weedkillers & pesticides.

Glyphosate affects human health too.

JM-O: Agree. Can't understand why it is being sold in supermarkets. People need to become more comfortable with the wider environment. There is no need for pesticides when hedgehogs & bats kill many garden pests.

Farmers & councils continue to use artificial fertilizers & weedkillers.

JM-O: Find out the composition of weedkillers used & complain/lobby.

How can we set up our garden/street?

Go round to others on your street & ask, start with access either side of your garden. Go on ‘Hedgehog Street’ <https://www.hedgehogstreet.org/> to find the numbers of hedgehogs recorded in your area.

Would you have a stall in one of the Lady Bay Open Gardens?

JM-O: Yes

Gill Stevenson, LBCA Committee member (GS): It is on 8/9 Jul

ACTION: JM-O & GS to exchange contact details.

Take Away Premises Trent Boulevard Parking Problem:

SM asked if anyone from Nottinghamshire County Council/VIA was in attendance to hear residents' concerns. No one has come or sent apologies, though earlier today SM was informed that an officer was coming to the meeting.

Heather Maelor (HM) of Trent Boulevard informed us that she had been raising her concerns to the County Council since winter. The main problem is parking of delivery/collection vehicles coming to the Trent Boulevard take aways at the junction of Trent Boulevard and Pierrepont Rd. All 4 corners are used for pavement parking & parking on double yellow lines causing obstruction to pedestrians, cyclists & other vehicles, Damaging pavements &

increasing air pollution & CO2 emissions as engines are left running. The no. 11 bus is often blocked by these often very large vehicles.

RI met with HM, RM, PG & SM on 28th April on site after the matter was raised by SM at an RBC Town & Parish Conference earlier in the year. RI offered to help, & agreed that a physical barrier to prevent parking is probably the only effective solution; this is within the remit of the County Council not RBC.

HM: Concrete bollards cost £500 for 6 & this would not be an onerous amount for the County Council. If funding was a problem, then money could be raised from the Lady Bay community.

PG: County officers said can't put bollards in place as they might be knocked over! Enforcement of traffic/parking regs isn't happening. Can't get clear answer from Police. Need to go up to the Police & Crime Commissioner.

HM: Parking wardens come & don't issue tickets as they have to give drivers 5 minutes to comply, & the drivers move before then.

PG: Some of the pavement belongs to the premises – that is why it is in 2 colours/patterns.

RM: Drivers drive on the pavement. Senior VIA officers should be here to listen & take action.

There is a campaign about obstructing pavements running at the moment by the Guide Dogs charity as people with visual impairments are particularly badly affected. <https://www.guidedogs.org.uk/how-you-can-help/campaigning/our-current-campaigns/streets-ahead/> We should join in with that.

PG: It is illegal to park on the pavement, but it is not enforced as drivers often have to partly park on pavements to allow vehicles to pass on narrow roads/bus routes.

Erica Iliffe: Shouldn't special criteria apply to junctions?

PG: We need to arrange a site meeting with County/VIA officers, County Councillors, RBC Public Protection Officers & councillors, the Police, LBCA & reps of residents.

RM: The owners of Burg support the placing of bollards on the corner near their premises.

John Osborne (JO): The bollards/barriers could be subsidised/sponsored by Burg & other take aways like Dough & Buns.

RM: A new traffic regulation order takes 6 months to be put in place, because they have to be rubber stamped by the Department for Transport.

PG: Lady Bay Bridge is often closed at short notice so it should be quicker. *There is also the football parking problem.*

RM: If the fines for illegal parking for football matches were increased to, say 3x more, then that would help as currently the fans just pay the fine & it's cheaper for a full car than using public transport.

PG: There is some funding for match day parking if Nottingham Forest FC get planning permission for the ground extension. Forest says that the signage for matches is incorrect so fans park where they shouldn't.

RM: The problem is that all the cars are much larger than they used to be, if people had smaller vehicles, it would be far less difficult for general parking in Lady Bay, football parking & deliveries/collections from shops & take aways.

Friends of the Hook (FrOTH) Report:

Jane Browne (JB) has brought along a display at the back of the room & showed some slides detailing the changes to the Hook over the years.

JB: We have heard from JM-O about the problems wildlife faces. The UK is the most wildlife depleted country in the G7 group of nations. There has been a massive decline in birds, insects & habitats such as meadows.

In 2010 the Hook was made a local nature reserve. Back in 1977 there were about 40 allotments on the Hook. There was regular flooding. There were almost no trees, only the line of poplars along the river Trent & the veteran ash tree.

In 2000 RBC planted some trees after the removal of the allotments.

Now, thanks to FrOTH, there are many trees, this has improved the area for wildlife. Lady Bay Birdwatchers have recorded 89 spp. of birds, including rare visitors, both feeding & nesting. FrOTH took advice on planting for butterflies & other insects. 21 spp. of butterflies have been recorded. There is regular monitoring weekly from Apr-Sept. FrOTH are developing wildflower meadows. In the last 3 weeks badgers, roe deer, foxes & stoats have been seen.

FrOTH are planning to have a noticeboard with an interpretive map, (a slide was shown) this will include advice for Hook users on protecting the wildflower meadows, nesting birds & small mammals. FrOTH have discussed their concerns with Paul Phillips, Environment & Sustainability Officer at RBC, & a plan to have a Protected Wildlife Zone has been made. In the protected area riders will be asked not to exercise horses & dog walkers asked to keep their pets on a short lead.

Dog fouling is a problem on the Hook; wheelchair users have reported instances of dog faeces on the wheels of their wheelchairs & a recent spray paint (non-toxic) campaign found 94 instances of dog fouling. The Hook is one of RBC's places with a Public Spaces Protection Order (Dog Control). This includes:

- Dog fouling– owners are required to remove dog fouling (usually using a bag) and place it in a suitable bin.
- Means to pick up. - A person in charge of a dog must have with them an appropriate means to pick up dog faeces deposited by that dog.

Small children may be frightened of loose dogs or ones on long leads.

FrOTH members have talked with the stable owners who have agreed to tell riders not to use the paths through the Protected Wildlife Zone. RBC have been asked to mow an extra path for horses near the riverside. FrOTH have also asked RBC for an additional dog dirt bin.

FrOTH had a stall on the Hook on Sunday 14 May & received no negative comments about their plans. People are understanding when they know why changes are being made.

Questions & Comments:

Dogs do disturb nesting birds & wading birds.

At Rushcliffe Country Park they have signs coloured red, amber & green showing restrictions in different areas.

JB: There will be signs to indicate the area in the Protected Wildlife Zone.

Thanks to FrOTH, really appreciate what has been done.

JB: Volunteers are welcome, FrOTH has regular conservation work parties, on the 1st Sunday of the month 2-4pm.

AOB:

Musicworks, the Heron Music Café: JO: Have a National Lottery Fund grant to sustain the group for another year. See

<http://www.musicworksnet.co.uk/the-heron-well-being-music-cafes/> for dates.

Adbolton Lane Playground: RM: Being refurbished to include more accessible equipment, bigger & better. Cost is £80,000. Timescale of 4 weeks.

Overhanging Hedges: Sian Trafford, Chair of LBCA (ST): Reminded people to keep hedges overhanging pavements & footpaths cut back as these are a danger to people with visual & mobility impairments & can cause an obstruction.

5G Mobile Phone Mast: *What has happened about the recent application for a mast?*

RM: There have been 3 applications for a mast near the Rutland Stores, each time Nottinghamshire County Council Highways have objected because the associated cabinets restrict the view of drivers, pedestrians & cyclists, so the applications have been refused.

What about the effects on health?

SM: Planning permission cannot be refused on anything but planning reasons such as aesthetics, obstruction.

Adbolton Cottages: Chris Trafford, LBCA Committee member: *What is happening to these as only 1 of the 4 is occupied?*

PG: The Grantham Canal Society may be having 2 of them in future to give them a base at the Trent end of the canal.

Lady Bay Post Office: ST: Please use the post office for banking and posting, many bank branches are closing but you can still use the post office. Use it or lose it! See leaflet at the back of the room.

Volunteers Needed: ST: We need volunteers to deliver the LBCA newsletter & Lady Bay Arts Trail reported that they were short of people to staff entrance points this year. Please volunteer for this & other events.

Camera at Junction of Trent Boulevard/Lady Bay Bridge/Radcliffe Rd:

CT: Have seen consultation on whether there should be a camera to catch out drivers going into the yellow cross hatched box, it is impossible not to in certain circumstances.

PG: This is incorrect. There is to be a camera installed to catch out illegal left turners from Trent Boulevard.

Meeting closed 9:50