Autumn Newsletter **October 2023**

Mapperley Park
RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION



WELCOME TO THE AUTUMN ISSUE OF THE MPRA NEWSLETTER!

We hope you like the smart new design.

The cover image, taken by Lisa Eaton, perfectly captures this season of mists and mellow fruitfulness. We'll be needing something equally seasonal for the Spring issue, so if you like taking photographs of Mapperley Park, please do send them to the Editor at info@mapperleypark.org

LIFE, WORK AND FAMILIES is the theme of this issue, as many of us after the Summer return with renewed vigour to school, jobs and other responsibilities.

Some of that activity is represented in articles on three families who made Mapperley Park their home: the Aggarwals, the Junaids and Brian Trotman. Judy Robinson's account of the **Standing In This Place project** shows how creatively lives can be connected across space and time. Time is also marked by a milestone local anniversary; and we're glad that the Coronation did not go uncelebrated either!

The clue is in our name: Mapperley *Park*. No issue of the Newsletter can fail to mention **gardens and green spaces**: see inside for more.

The Spring 2024 issue will be focussing on Health, Well-being and Sport. Contributions of articles and photos on that theme will be gratefully received by the Editor at info@mapperleypark.org

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Welcome



From the chair

WELCOME TO THIS AUTUMN'S EDITION OF MAPPERLEY PARK NEWS. As I write, we are experiencing unusually mild conditions and the trees are starting to display their myriad colours. The brilliant work on tree replacement continues and, in addition to the magnificent planting last Spring, we are working on an extension to the programme in Spring 2024. Thank you to all good neighbours who have kept the young trees watered throughout the summer, and some even planted flowers round them! Although we were disappointed that the Mapperley Park Open Gardens event didn't go ahead this year, it was very encouraging to see that Malcolm Bescoby and Michael Blood opened their amazing garden and raised at least £326 for the charity Emmanuel House.

We held our AGM in April and it was very well attended by residents, local authority representatives and the police. There was a positive discussion of the challenges of anti-social behaviour on the Mansfield Road/Mapperley Park border linked to homelessness, alcohol and drug misuse. The issues were discussed in a very constructive and empathetic manner and we heard from the police and a local authority representative as to what they were doing to address the problems. It was agreed at the meeting to follow up with a formal letter to a wide range of stakeholders including our local MP Nadia Whittome, who has responded positively. We are grateful to local residents for their diligence in submitting a request for a more integrated approach to improving the lives and wellbeing of all concerned.

We continue to lobby the Council for a better approach to leaf clearance both for safer pavements and better gutter drainage. I am pleased to report that Mapperley Park will benefit from an **additional brown bin collection** later this year which will take place on **Thursday 7 December**. Please put this date in your diary.

On that same day, 7 December, we are holding a pre-Christmas drinks and nibbles social event for all paid up members at Magdala Tennis Club on Magdala Road, 7-9pm. I hope that you will come along to meet neighbours and friends.

Paid up membership continues to increase and thank you to those who have changed their fee to £10. We do still need more residents to pay their membership subs to be able to continue our work as a Residents Association.

I want to welcome Ellen Turner as our new Secretary and Nik Ironside-Wood as Community Liaison volunteer and thank all our committee members for their continuing hard work on behalf of us all in Mapperley Park. Howard Davies, David Podesta, Jennifer Guiver, Leena Kore Schroder, Mike Reade, June Greenway, Ellen Turner…thank you.

Special mention needs to go to Leena who has again volunteered to be editor for this newsletter; we are very grateful. We would welcome an approach from anyone who would like to take on this role, as the twice annual newsletter is one of the key priorities for us as MPRA and we can't keep producing it without new volunteers. Please get in touch via **info@mapperleypark.org**

And a special thank you to FHP who continue to support us.

SUE CLAGUE

Diary date for all MPRA paid-up members!

Please come along to Magdala Tennis Club NG3 5DH for Christmas drinks and nibbles

Thursday 7 December, 7-9pm

Good cheer and a warm welcome guaranteed!



From the membership secretary and editor

Following on from Sue's report, I can confirm that membership is buoyant at around 350. However, a significant number (well over 100 in each category) has either yet to settle their 2023 membership, or else not noticed that the sub has increased from £5 to £10 per year. Over the next few weeks I will be delivering letters to those concerned, and thank you in advance if this prompts you to settle your account. I'm afraid that otherwise your name will drop off the membership list, and it would be a great shame to lose you.

It is really quite important that MPRA accounts are kept up to date, as membership fees are our only source of income, and they fund such things as this Newsletter, the tree and roundabout planting, and community parties. It's a shame that we couldn't bring off the intended Hallowe'en family party (too many of you were planning a break away during Half Term), but we hope to more than make up for it with Christmas cheer on the evening of 7 December. Please do come along!

Finally, I continue as temporary Editor of the Newsletter, but live in hopes that some of you will offer to help produce it in future. You will notice the New Look! This has been achieved with the help of Jen Guiver's talented sister-in-law, Ginette Guiver, whom I cannot thank enough: I literally could not have produced this without her. I would also like to thank Lisa Eaton, whose sensational photograph graces the cover. She was a close friend of Brian Trotman (amongst other Mapperley Hall residents), which makes it all the more appropriate that her photo starts off this edition about the people who live and work in Mapperley Park.

LEENA KORE SCHRÖDER



Introducing the new MPRA secretary

Hi, I'm Ellen Turner. I've just taken on the role of Secretary and generally my remit is to arrange meetings, attend and take notes, which can then be shared more widely with members. I'll also be helping to arrange events and generally mucking in, whether that be weeding and maintaining the mini-roundabout, litter picking or writing letters. I'm looking forward to getting involved.

My husband and I have lived on Tavistock Drive for 19 years. We love Mapperley Park, particularly the variety of architecture, the trees that line our roads, and the diverse community. One of our bugbears, though, is the constant threat of flooding at the lower end of Tavistock Drive; indeed you may have spotted me out in heavy rainfall, along with neighbours, looking like drowned rats, frantically raking leaves and silt out of the grates to help the rainwater drain away (see photograph!). We have to be vigilant when heavy rain is forecast, as the road, and occasionally our homes, can flood in minutes. Whilst this is great for community spirit, it is hard, physical work. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank those who join in with this effort – you know who you are!

How to pay your membership or join MPRA

Membership is open to all residents of the Mapperley Park / Private Road and Alexandra Park Conservation Area. The annual fee is £10 per household, and runs from 1 January each year. It is very easy to pay:

For online banking, a BACS payment can be made to Sort Code 20-63-25, A/C 10609080. Please quote your surname and postcode in the reference field. You can set up a Standing Order on 1 January each year, so you don't need to be reminded by the Membership Secretary!

Cash or cheque (payable to 'MPRA') is equally welcome. Please post or drop off your envelope to: Membership Secretary, 2 Alverstone Road, NG3 5DQ. Please remember to include a note of your name and address.

Many thanks! We look forward to welcoming new members, and appreciate the support of those who continue as members of the MPRA.

Now that autumn is here, and leaves are coming down thick and fast, pavements are becoming slippery, so please take care. There is no easy solution to the leaf/water hazards, but your MPRA committee is in contact with the Council to see if more can be done to mitigate the situation.

ELLEN TURNER





Our green streets

The young trees planted as part of the Stump Up! campaign are flourishing. Fortunately for them, we went without a prolonged and parching heat wave this Summer, but the watering efforts of those who live nearby a young tree have also played an important part in helping them to establish. Thankyou very much for your care! And thank you, too, to the Roundabout Gardeners for another season of beautiful colour!



Autumn 2023 schedule: brown bin collection of garden waste

The regular fortnightly collection of brown bins stops at the end of September. In October and November brown bins will be emptied only once in each month. It will be on your regular bin day, and you can check which week it is for your street on the website nottinghamcity.gov.uk, under 'Check My Bin Collection Day'. Finally, we have asked the Council to schedule an extra brown bin collection after the service has formally stopped for the season, and this will be on Thursday 7 December for the whole Mapperley Park area.

Litter-picking matters

There was an enthusiastic response to the suggestion in last Spring's Newsletter that Mapperley Park could do with a litter-picking group, and around a dozen residents, including children and dogs, have come together as the Strictly Come Pickers! We are part of Nottingham's Clean Champions Scheme, which provides us with free equipment and purple bags. When a bag is full, the instructions are to leave it by one of the public street bins in the area, and for the picker to report it to the Council, which then sends a truck (not the regular bin men) to come and collect, ideally on the same day, or as quickly as possible. The purple bags should not languish uncollected for too long, so if you do see one by a public litter bin, you will know why it is there. The pickers hope you don't mind the occasional, but temporary, purple bag beside a public bin, given that the bag is full of rubbish that would otherwise be lying in our streets.

A few kind residents have offered space in their own green domestic bins, to keep the purple bags off the streets. The pickers cannot take advantage of this generous offer, for reason that there would then be no hard evidence of volunteer litter-picking ever having taken place—the purple bags would just disappear into general household rubbish. Upon collection, the purple bags are counted, and the scheme keeps records of which areas of the City take part. It is good that Mapperley Park's community spirit is thus recognised. And importantly, we could not order more free supplies, if there were never any evidence of purple bags being filled up—we have to show that they are being used. Many thanks for your understanding and patience!

The Aggarwal family – a long residency in Mapperley Park

The average duration of home ownership is around 10 years, but Mapperley Park houses are often occupied for much longer. My parents bought 47 Ebers Road in 1966 (for £2400!). My mother lived there until 2021 when she reluctantly moved to live with us in rural Cambridgeshire until she passed away in February this year, aged 92. If there's a club for longevity of residence in Mapperley Park, then at 55 years my mother must surely be a member!



In that house, my parents raised 6 children, all boys. We all went to Carrington Primary School, the cub scouts in Watcombe Circus, the scouts in Sherwood, and enjoyed open-air swimming in the now long-gone Carrington Lido. The library in Sherwood was a regular haunt and provided entertainment on Saturdays. A vivid memory is watching the Apollo 11 splashdown from the Metropole cinema at the top of Sherwood. With so much available within short walking distance, we couldn't have asked for a better location. There were thriving shops at the bottom of the road and we all opened bank accounts with NatWest as our local bank (now Masala Junction). We could walk to school (except High Pavement) and get the bus frequently into town, and 20 minutes by bike could take us into the fields and farms. It was an idyllic childhood for 6 boys!

My father started working in Nottingham as a bus conductor, out of Sherwood depot (half of the building is now a Wetherspoon's pub), and later became a bus driver for the higher pay.

He went on to become a shopkeeper and then a postmaster. My mother left school aged 13 when her mother fell and broke her hip. As the oldest daughter she had to help look after 10 siblings! She worked in the shops and post office on Castle Boulevard until they both retired.

I thought readers might be interested in knowing where we six boys have gone from our roots on Ebers Road. My oldest brother Satish had a health problem and was in and out of the Children's Hospital in Chestnut Grove and later the City Hospital, missing a lot of teaching at Claremont School. Despite this, he ended up at High Pavement Grammar for his A levels, and surprised everyone with 3 A grades and a place at Pembroke College Cambridge to study Maths. Sadly he died young, aged 24, whilst working as an actuary in London.

My second brother Arvind did well at High Pavement Grammar, and went to Pembroke College Cambridge to read Natural Sciences, and then went on to do Chemical Engineering, and has worked in the oil and energy sector for over 40 years.

I am the third son, and I won an 11 plus scholarship to the Nottingham Boys High School, and helped run the Community Service group in sixth form. I gained a scholarship to King's College, Cambridge to read Medicine, and then completed my clinical training in Oxford, before GP training in Cambridge. My wife and I set up as GPs in rural Cambridgeshire. We have won many national awards, but I am most proud of our work establishing an effective alcohol recovery service.

Varinder, the fourth son, was head boy at High Pavement. He too won a scholarship to Pembroke College Cambridge (clearly, the Aggarwal boys like to stick together!) to read Chemistry, and went on to become a professor at Bristol University and a Fellow of the Royal Society in 2012.

Naresh, born in Nottingham at Peel St Hospital, went to the Boys High School followed by City University in London to study Corporate Finance. He is now a Policy Director with the Association of Corporate Treasurers.

Jugdeep is the youngest, and after the Boys High School, he went on to study geology at Durham, and gained a PhD at Bristol. After working in New Zealand he eventually settled in California, where he continues to work in industrial laboratories while pursuing his hobby of paragliding.

So, what a lot has been achieved by six boys growing up in a home in Mapperley Park! It goes to show how far you can go, all starting out from Carrington Primary School.

ARUN AGGARWAL

Brian Trotman October 1932 – February 2023

Very sadly, lifelong Mapperley Park resident Brian Trotman passed away in February 2023. Brian grew up at 95 Cyprus Road with his parents Harry and Audrey and his siblings Michael, Marian, Angela and Stephanie. He was sent to Grace Dieu boarding school in Leicestershire in 1939 age 7 at the start of WW2, along with his older brother Michael, to keep them safe in the countryside and away from possible bombings, which was fortunate, as he did recall the destruction when the house at the top of Lucknow Drive was bombed in May 1941. As a boy of 9, he didn't really understand the severity of the war, he told the family in later years.

95 Cyprus Road had its own air raid shelter built at the side of the house. We grandchildren were spellbound to hear the war stories and how our grandparents had it built for the family's safety. Once he had left school in 1949 Brian was soon called up for National Service in Germany - he was very relieved to return home intact at the end of the two years!



He entered the textile industry after returning, securing a job at Meridian Knitwear on Haydn Road with the help of his father, the Sales and Production departmental manager. His first job was floor sweeping and general work. It was made clear by his father, that being a manager's son would bring no benefits to him, as it wouldn't look good! Brian spent his whole career in the industry until his retirement in 1997, working for various knitwear manufacturers heading their sales departments, and supplying big named high street stores across the UK and beyond.

Brian met Vera, a student nurse, in 1956, and they married in April 1958, buying their first house on Calstock Road, Woodthorpe. This was Brian's only home away from Mapperley Park, but soon he was back with Vera and their 3 children Caroline, Stephen and Alison, setting up their family home in 1966 at 40 Richmond Drive. They couldn't have lived in a more perfect place!

For 37 happy years wonderful memories were made for both the children and then grandchildren, the garden being large enough for tennis, cricket and football. Brian took great pride in his lawn, mowing it with neat precision to ensure the stripes were even! He would pay the children a few pennies for sweets, if they helped to empty the grass cuttings at the bottom of the rockery at the very far end of the garden. I'm sure that many Mapperley Park residents can also vouch for the fact that it was a great party house!

Once all the children had flown the nest Brian and Vera continued to live on Richmond until May 2003, when rather reluctantly they decided that they needed to downsize, especially the garden, and so they moved to 23 Mapperley Hall Drive. They settled in well and thoroughly embraced the more manageably-sized garden, and opened it up one year for the Mapperley Park Garden Trail, a proud day for them. They celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary there, a small gathering with their family and close friends. They were lucky enough to sit outside in the garden for the speeches and champagne, which in April was a wonder.

Sadly Brian was left widowed in 2010 when Vera passed away suddenly. After three years of living at no 23 by himself, he was lucky enough to hear through a friend of an apartment going up for sale at Mapperley Hall on Lucknow Avenue. In January 2014 Brian moved into No 2 Mapperley Hall, and enjoyed nine very happy and contented years there. It was the ideal setting for him, as he desperately wanted to stay in the area he had always known and loved best. It was where his friends and memories were, and the familiarity made him feel safe.

It was a great milestone that he reached his 90th birthday in 2022, and he was rather proud of the fact! The family helped him celebrate at Chungs on Mapperley Plains. Even though he was adamant he didn't 'want a fuss', he thoroughly embraced being 'the star of the show' for the day and evening!

A life lived to the full and always with a smile and great humour. A true gentleman. Rest well Dad, thank you.

CAROLINE, STEPHEN AND ALISON

A Mapperley Park family: the Junaids

Hi everyone, we are Ola and Kehinde Junaid and we have lived in Mapperley Park since 1999. We originally lived on Lucknow Avenue (shortly after we got married), for 8 years before moving to our current home on Private Road. We have enjoyed living in the area and would not dream of moving to live in any other part of the city of Nottingham. Prior to moving to Mapperley Park, we lived in Woodthorpe, and other parts of the country. Many years ago we both coincidentally lived abroad in Lagos (Nigeria) after our families briefly moved back there when we were children.

We are both Consultant Psychiatrists working predominantly with older adults suffering from a range of mental illnesses. Ola was recently awarded a lifetime achievement award from Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust and Kehinde has an additional role as Director of Medical Education in the same Trust. We were both primarily based at the City Hospital, with Kehinde moving to the QMC in 2012, and Ola to Highbury Hospital in Bulwell. Since the Pandemic we now work from home on some days.

We feel very much part of a welcoming community. Our two children have well-established friendships within the area and enjoy the easy access into the City Centre. Our daughter has just left home to study in Liverpool, in many ways it has been an easier move for her than us! Sport is an important part of our lives: our daughter was a competitive rower and enjoys horse riding and our son plays for a local basketball team as well as two rugby teams. Ola has recently started making more use of the Mapperley Park tennis club while Kehinde typically coordinates everyone's activities.



We enjoy the tree lined streets, and just how friendly people are. During lockdown, we acquired a mini schnauzer leading to lot more time spent outdoors, often meeting people on her walks. She is a very friendly and excitable little dog who always wants to say hello. Although we live in the city, we enjoy the countryside right on our doorstep, it's a quick and easy journey for our daughter to get to her horse in stables in Woodborough.

We have been very fortunate over the years to have a very short commute to work, and to enjoy all that Mapperley Park has to offer. We are hoping to get more involved in some local activities as we adjust to a healthier work life balance and enjoy a slower pace of life. Ola has recently semi-retired and taken on the roles as Secretary of the Private Road Estate Members Association, as well as a trustee of a local charity called Improving Lives.

If you do see either of us walking by, please don't hesitate to stop and say hello – our dog Lola might well insist on it!

KEHINDE AND OLA JUNAID

The Moroccan garden open days

What a treat! Malcolm Bescoby and Michael Blood kindly opened their wonderland of a Moroccan garden to visitors on two days in early July. Voluntary donations were sent to their chosen charity, Emmanuel House, which works with people who find themselves homeless, sleeping rough or in crisis. Given the recent concerns about the rise of homelessness on the outskirts of Mapperley Park, it is all the more appropriate that Malcolm and Michael chose Emmanuel House, and a sign of their success that they raised well over £300 over the two days (the total sum is inexact, because many visitors donated directly online after their visit). One thing is clear: much good money was raised, and thank you Malcolm and Michael not only for your charitable work and the hard graft that you put into your Mapperley Hall Drive garden, but for sharing it with us all.









Dancing women

You may have already heard of the arts and heritage project called **Standing in This Place** which grew out of activities and research by the Black-led community group the Legacy Makers and their collaboration with local sculptor Rachel Carter. So how did I become part of this project? And why are two women in their eighties dancing together and being turned into a bronze statue?

Last year, Rachel and the Legacy Makers successfully secured funding from Arts Council England to develop a scale model for a new sculpture which would ultimately become part of the new public park, the Green Heart of the Broadmarsh redevelopment. The project drew in over 200 women in a variety of creative activities including dance, braiding, poetry and stitching. I became one of these women, but had no idea I would become one of the faces of the sculpture.

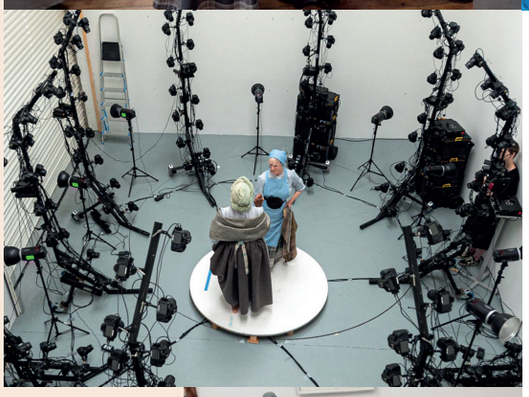
I've always enjoyed meeting new people and have interests in languages, travel and the arts. When I retired from New College Nottingham in 2003, where I had worked in the Adams building, co-incidentally in the heart of the Lace Market, I joined a group for women over 60. They brought women together and we became active in women's rights, organised conversation cafés and outings, and generally supported each other. After a while we decided we would do more than meet and chat twice a month; we wanted to dance. We found dance teacher and choreographer Deane McQueen who agreed to create Movement and Dance workshops for us, more movement than dance in my case! She keeps us fit and flexible, teaches us about using space and what our ageing bodies still can do.

One day Deane asked for volunteers as she had been approached by sculptor Rachel Carter, who wished to run a series of movement sessions that would bring together women from both British and African-Caribbean backgrounds. They would explore the experiences and connections between white cotton mill workers and black enslaved women on cotton plantations. We were encouraged to share our own histories and join in with conversations prior to the dancing sessions. The discussions touched all of us who took part and during the fourth session, which was the most surprising for me, I was chosen along with Louise, to model for the final sculpture. I'm not the best dancer nor good at holding a pose but felt proud to represent our group and dance with Louise.

Rachel explained the process we were going to use whilst we had dress fittings and had the chance to meet the stitchers who designed a compilation of 18 historic dresses, displayed on miniature wooden mannequins just 12 inches tall, from which the main costume was inspired. I was fascinated by the photogrammetry which came next. It was an early morning start as we all boarded a minibus to travel to the foundry in Stroud to spend the day in the adjacent photography studio with its 160 cameras held in a special rig. The 3D imaging process was fascinating and more new experiences were to follow as the scale model of the statue was completed and went on display at events and exhibitions in several galleries and venues across Nottinghamshire. It's now on display in a new exhibition at the Museum of Making in Derby until the end of this year.

It's reaching an exciting stage as word spreads about the project and more people get involved. The Legacy Makers and Rachel have been fundraising for the last 12 months to raise the funds needed to have the sculpture realised in bronze at life size. They have had some amazing support locally from groups clubbing together to become Bronze level donors, from individuals such as Sir Harry Djanogly and organisations such as Nottingham Civic Society. They are so close to their target, so do check out their website and please donate if you can.







I'm unsure how I'll feel when the sculpture is installed in the new public park in Spring next year. To be turned into bronze and come face to face with myself as a statue will be a unique experience, and I feel honoured to be chosen to represent the contributions of so many women who gave their blood, sweat and tears to add to the wealth and prosperity of this city we call home. We are grateful to be walking in their footsteps, to be Standing In This Place.

To find out more about the sculpture and heritage project check out **www.standinginthisplace.co.uk**

JUDY ROBINSON (with input from the sculptor Rachel Carter)

Mapperley Park Tennis Club Centenary



1932

Reaching one's 100th birthday is no mean achievement and on the 2nd July Mapperley Park Tennis Club celebrated this milestone in a big way. Former Davis Cup players, Danny Sapsford and Dominic Inglot, were the headline act, with inspirational coaching clinics, a fastest service competition, and an entertaining exhibition doubles match with two of our members. We invited Nottingham City Councillor Pavlos Kotsonis (leisure and culture) to present a specially-made commemorative plaque, which was accepted by Andy Lusis, whose research had ended doubts about our year of formation.



When a group of enthusiasts gathered to give life to a new tennis club in 1923, they were able to lease two grass courts and a pavilion on a ground, at the corner of Carisbrooke Drive and Mapperley Hall Drive, where four courts had been laid out at least 15 years earlier. The land was then owned by tobacco manufacturer John Player, and brewer James Shipstone bought the land in 1925 and helped it to flourish with a generous approach to the rent.

By 1932, the club had three courts, and in 1937 converted one of them to a good quality hard court at a cost of £500. In 1950 the ownership of the ground was secured, largely through the efforts of club president Sydney Browne. The fourth court was acquired in 1954, and the following year an influx of new members from the defunct Clumber club brought our membership up to 91. A record high of 257 members was reached in 1984. Steady improvement of the facilities has brought all-weather courts, a new clubhouse, floodlights, a practice wall and a mini tennis court. More recently, we have introduced cardio tennis and pickleball.

On the playing side, we have run teams in the Notts Leagues since 1946. Our men's team was given a flying start by taking over from the old Victoria club in Sherwood, several of whose players joined MPTC. The team went on to finish as Division 1 runners-up in 1952, a feat not matched again until 2011-12. Coaching has been a feature of the club since the 1970s and has been boosted by occasional events like July's.



Cynthia Lindo, whose organising skills did so much to make the celebration a success, invited past members to the event. The best known of these, former Notts County and Scotland international footballer, Don Masson, who won the club singles championship three times in the 1980s, couldn't make it, but sent his best wishes.

MPTC was formed at a time when tennis was booming and spreading to social groups which previously had been largely excluded. Nevertheless, it was likely that in the years before the war, and for some time later, the club was dominated by wealthy local families, giving it an air of exclusivity. This has gradually changed, so that now a small tennis club, run by volunteers, is making efforts to reach out to the wider community.

ANDY LUSIS

Celebrating the coronation

A right-royal party to celebrate the coronation of King Charles III was held on the lower slopes of Mapperley Park at Kenwood Court. Royal versions of the games 'Who Am I?' and 'Charades' were played with gusto, the wine flowed, and the food and company were excellent.



There was, of course, a Royal Toast, and all were in fine voice for the National Anthem. As the MPRA was not able to organize a community event, individual coronation celebrations in Mapperley Park would qualify for a charitable donation in their name. Therefore, £100 was duly sent by MPRA to FareShare: a nationwide network of charitable food redistributors, taking good quality surplus food from the food industry to donate to local recipients such as school breakfast clubs, lunch clubs for the elderly, homeless shelters, and community cafés. Thank you, Kenwood Court, for choosing such a worthy organisation, and we're glad you enjoyed your celebration!

The Grassroots Garden at the edge of Mapperley Park

You will find the Grassroots Garden midway down Hungerhill Road, around the side of the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Refugee Forum (NNRF) complex and behind a large gate. Through the NNRF's Garden Project and the efforts of garden volunteers, this well-hidden patch of land has been transformed from an overgrown brambly slope into a vibrant urban oasis.



The garden in its summer glory

Since 2021, a group of volunteers consisting of NNRF clients – that is, asylum seekers and refugees – and non-clients, mainly local residents – has dedicated hundreds of hours to the garden. We have cleared brambles and nettles, bindweed and sticky (goose) grass, built gravel paths and steps and railings from scratch (consider a moment the mechanics of building flat stable steps from paving slabs and random bricks into a muddy slope), dug and lined ponds, erected a shed, turned railway sleepers into raised beds, roofed a shelter, installed a watering system, and procured, propagated and planted innumerable seeds, seedlings, bulbs, shrubs and trees.



Early path in March 2022

With the garden infrastructure largely in place, the focus of labour is regular weeding (is it possible to dig out all the bindweed?) pruning, watering, and harvesting a cornucopia of lettuce, beans, potatoes, courgettes, pumpkins, tomatoes, strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, apples, pears, and hazelnuts. In the café, where flowers from the garden adorn tables, this bounty becomes stews and curries for volunteers and for clients waiting for appointments with NNRF advisors.

The Grassroots Garden hosts an incredible diversity of fauna as well as flora. Dedicated wild areas have been left untouched for insects, birds and bats, and the ponds have attracted dragonflies and damselflies, frogs (from wriggling tadpoles in the large pond earlier this year!), newts, and ducks. Last summer's corn thief may have been a badger; there are plans to install wildlife cameras.



September 2023

Research shows that gardening is good for mental health, and that tending growing things is particularly important for people living with trauma and uncertainty. Imagine the impact on your mental health of abandoning your home due to war or torture, enduring a brutal journey into the unknown, and then waiting six months or longer for a decision which could send you back to the horrors you escaped. During this wait you are prevented by law from working, making you dependent on state support; you are vilified by the unkindest social and political commentators; and you are subject to constant scrutiny as though you were a prisoner. You are not living so much as existing in a hotel room.

Gardening enables us to be mindfully productive outside, to nurture living things and be nurtured in turn. The Grassroots Garden is a place of connection with plants and with people too. There is a large patio with tables and chairs for socialising over a cup of tea or lunch on nice days, and seating by the ponds for quiet conversation or silent reflection. This garden provides asylum seekers and refugees not only a refuge from persecution but a place in the ecosystem, a place of belonging.

Although the Grassroots Garden is not open to the public, you are welcome to get involved by donating time or plants. There are outdoor and indoor volunteer roles available through the NNRF, which you can read about here at **www.nottsrefugeeforum.org.uk/get-involved**. Submit the online form and Meisha the Volunteering and Engagement Coordinator will contact you.



A young fig tree

Two dwarf figs trees were planted in the garden this summer. Many NNRF clients have arrived from warm dry climates and some have expressed interest in cultivating figs and olives, or lemons and oranges. The UK is too temperate for lemons but you may have noticed that fig trees grow surprisingly well in Mapperley Park.

HEDLEY EMMENS

At Nottingham Refugee Forum, we believe everyone deserves a chance to feel safe and live with dignity. We provide a welcoming community space, specialised advice and support to families and individuals who seek asylum or live as refugees in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

www.nottsrefugeeforum.org.uk

Report from Councillor Leslie Ayoola, Mapperley Ward

TRAVELLER ENCAMPMENT In April travellers set up an illegal encampment on the Cavaliers and Carrington Cricket Club. After residents collectively contacted Councillors, by the morning our team of Community Protection and Police were able to bring a swift end to the encampment. Our CP team with our Police partners increased patrols in the area to reassure the local community and mitigate any anti-social behaviour. Our Senior CPO expert in illegal encampments advised and supported the cricket club in taking action: they obtained VRMs for all the vehicles on the site for Police to follow up. We have also conducted a ward walk in Mapperley Park in September to listen to residents' concerns and place them into our casework system for resolution.

TUDOR HOUSE HOTEL Following concern from the community we can confirm that NCC uses this hotel to house homeless individuals and on occasion, families. NCC has a duty to provide temporary accommodation to homeless households in priority need. However, the rapid increase in demand for homelessness means supply is outpaced. National factors such as high rents and a shortage of affordable homes result in homeless individuals and families staying in temporary accommodation for longer periods. We can confirm that there have not been any safeguarding issues around families placed at this hotel by NCC. We are currently asking neighbouring authorities for the numbers of homeless individuals whom they are placing at this hotel. NCC takes homelessness very seriously and an extensive range of quality services is available. Sadly, the same level of service is not always provided by other authorities. Adult Social care will only place citizens in a hotel whilst assessments are carried out and are very rarely more than for three nights. Our Community Protection Officers and Police Colleagues are trained in issues relating to homelessness, which are discussed at NCC's Neighbourhood Action Team meetings. Councillors have called for a multiple-agency meeting to help find solutions to the ongoing challenges.

TREES As per the schedule of tree planting that started in 22-23, there remains further trees to be planted this year.

COMMUNITY SPORT The Mapperley Councillors had the pleasure of part-funding a series of women and girls cricket sessions which is scheduled to start this month of October:

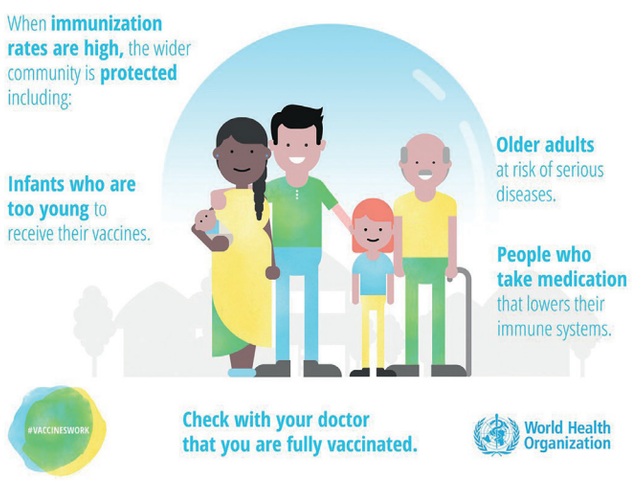
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Frontline health and social care workers

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People aged 16 to 64 who are carers

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