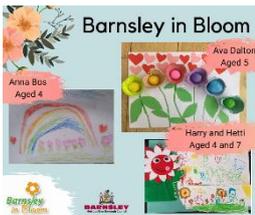


Barnsley Virtual Poster Competition

Every spring Barnsley in Bloom team run a children's poster competition with our primary schools across the borough. The winning posters are used as Barnsley in Bloom publicity during our Yorkshire in Bloom summer campaign, sponsored by the local shopping centre... however this year we haven't been able to run the competition in the usual way.



We had a think around how we could still get our young people involved in thinking about their environment and focus on the nature around them during Covid 19 lockdown... the Virtual Poster Competition was born.

Entering on line, also gave us the opportunity to widen the age range and include a secondary school age group 12 to 16, along with our usual infants & juniors categories.

We had over a hundred online submissions, and some incredible art work, and what a challenge for us to choose our favourites. We managed to choose a 1st, 2nd & 3rd for each category. All the winners will receive certificates for Barnsley in Bloom and a large number of Highly commended will also be sent out..... we'll celebrate the winners look out for our social media links.

(Jo Birch – Barnsley Parks Supervisor)

Picture Right: VE Day Celebrations Allerton Bywater, courtesy of Gail Vickers Allerton in Bloom (May 2020)

NEWSLETTER

Keeping Yorkshire Blooming

June 2020

Hello!

Who could have imagined, even a month ago, what would become 'normal'? It is astonishing how quickly we have adapted to staying at home, social distancing, and in many peoples case, how quickly we have learnt so much new technology and used in ways so that we keep in touch with each other.

It seems from our 'Inbox' that many of you Bloomers have found imaginative, and rewarding ways to still keep busy and complete those jobs that in previous times were so straight forward. Even though practical, community gardening is difficult, you have certainly not been idle and there will be many great stories to tell in the next few months, I am sure, so please do keep them coming. If you have any pictures or stories please send in and we will share.

John

Co-Ordinator YiB





June Month is Wellbeing in your garden



Celebrate the role gardens, plants and the environment have on our health and wellbeing. Gardening can positively contribute to our quality of life. We should think of our gardens as mindful spaces. If you find your garden is a place for respite, relaxation and getting away from it all, then there is plenty of science that proves why gardens are good for you.

Nature's restorative

Nature captures our attention with colour, shapes and repetitive patterns, called fractals. But colour affects our emotions: plants such as intense reds, oranges and yellows may excite, make you feel happy and help you recharge. Paler colours, blues and greens are thought to be more relaxing and calming – ideal for mindfulness time.

Fractals are found throughout nature such as the patterns in green ferns and the branching in trees. We are drawn to fractals because they're easy to process, so looking at them gently takes the brain 'offline', allowing it time to recover



Positive Power of Birdsong

Recent research shows that birdsong can relax us and help us recover from stress. Your garden is a ready-made stress-free space providing food, shelter, and nesting sites for birds. Restore your mind by simply

going outside, closing your eyes, and listening to the different birds around you.

Listening to birdsong is soothing, with some birdsong potentially being more restorative for you than others. Hearing a variety of birdsong is thought to be more beneficial for restoration than hearing just one type. Listen out for the songs of these birds: dunnock, blackbird, robin, and wren as these are all said to have positive restorative powers.

Growing Your Own Food

Some edible plants are packed with essential vitamins, minerals, fibre and phytochemicals (Plant chemicals), but low in fat and calories. This makes them a vital constituent of a healthy diet helping to reduce the risk of cancers and heart disease.

Nutrient power is super charged when you grow a range of crops and eat them freshly harvested.

Additionally a wide variety of edible flowers and herbs along with the many different colours of fruit and vegetables will deliver unsurpassed flavour and variety all year round.

Stimulate the senses

Spending at least two hours a week connecting with nature helps to restore your mind. The more senses you unlock, the greater the benefits.

A garden is a sensory treat, full of colour, patterns, sounds, smells, textures and tastes. As it grows and changes around us, it takes our



senses on a journey. Springs raindrops patter rhythmically on trees, warm summer breezes carry scent, autumn leaves

crinkle underfoot, and winter frosts draw incredible patterns. Simply enjoying these natural sensory experiences has been shown to boost our wellbeing.

Impact of scent

Garden fragrances have a potent and emotive influence on us, and they also have therapeutic qualities.



Seek out nature's scents in your garden.

How do they make you feel? Scents unlock powerful memories, improve your mood, others increase alertness, reduce stress and anxiety and can even reduce our blood pressure. Scented plants like lavender and rosemary have therapeutic qualities, they attract pollinators, are used in cooking and can help to boost your wellbeing.

Try growing a prostrate rosemary in a hanging basket, scent at head height will help boost your brain and improve memory.

Being in a Garden feels Good

Just a few minutes among the leaves, flowers and wildlife can distract us from everyday life. Being in a garden feels good, can tune us, soothe us in the present and connect us to the natural world. Even the smallest garden can help calm a stressed-out mind.

Stress Reduction Theory focuses on how spending time in natural environments, such as your garden, reduces physiological stress and negative emotion.

Attention Restoration Theory focuses on how natural environments distract attention, allowing the recovery of a tired mind.

Gardening activities such as weeding and watering can help put you into 'flow state', immersing you fully in the present and further distracting you from the daily grind.



Excerpts taken from June edition 2020



Thurnscoe Flower Park Volunteers

Article supplied courtesy of Pauline Phillips



The first week of our lockdown we found really difficult as like many others we are not sure what we could do safely. We are a small group of volunteers, the majority of us over pension age.

As my husband Graham and myself live within the park we decided to have a bit of 'a potter' in the park on our usual volunteer day and see how it went. We found people kept their distance and called to us in passing, so decided to try to encourage a few more volunteers.



Whilst cutting the grass we found loads of small birds' nests had been 'ragged' out of the trees either by the squirrels or the Jackdaws so Dave made us some bird boxes which other volunteers put up in the trees. He has also made us an owl box.

To keep Dave's involvement with the volunteer group in the park we will be doing Saturday mornings volunteering now as once the building industry get back to work, that is the only day that he can help and **he says he likes putting back into the local community.**

We have also had a young man doing his volunteer hours with us for his Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.



So since Covid 19 arrived it has resulted in us getting a new regular volunteer, plenty of new bird boxes and many new people walking in our amazing park, and also we receive loads of lovely feedback from local residents.



The grass in the park had got really long as it is usually cut by the sit and ride mowers and these were no longer cutting grass. We liaised with the parks services who the cut what grass they could get to with a tractor.

I then mentioned on facebook that we would be continuing our usual Wednesday morning volunteering in the park and would be cutting some of the grass that the tractor had missed. This resulted in a resident (Dave Smith) asking if he could bring his mower too. Together Dave and my husband managed to cut most of the grass that the tractor could not reach and the park once again is a pleasure to walk in.



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