

Express Buzz

The Beeston Express

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EDITORIAL POLICY

The Beeston Express is independent of any organisation, commercial or political. Our policy is to provide readers with news and information that is fair, accurate and balanced.

We try hard to avoid mistakes, but some may inevitably slip through. If you have any comments to make about the paper, or any complaint, please contact us. We will, as far as possible, try to put things right when the error has been ours.

NEXT ISSUE

Friday, April 25 2008
Deadline for Adverts
Monday, April 21

Busy J25 gets turned on by new lights

PART time lights have been switched on to regulate the flow of traffic joining the M1 at junction 25.

The first set of lights went 'live' this week at one of the busiest junctions on the M1 motorway in the East Midlands as part of a wider scheme to reduce congestion and improve traffic flow.

The 'ramp metering' lights, part of an £18m project at 70 sites in England, have been installed on the M1 southbound entry slip road at junction (J) 25, and a period of testing will now take place.

Congestion occurs near junctions when vehicles attempt to join from the slip road when there is already heavy traffic on the motorway. The ramp metering lights release just a few vehicles at a time; this prevents the merging and motorway traffic from bunching together and forming a bottleneck. Sensors in the road monitor the congestion and adjust the timing of the lights, and traffic on the slip road is monitored to minimise the possibility of queues forming on the local road network.

Although the lights will operate during times of congestion, there will be an initial period of approximately eight to ten weeks where data about the lights will be

collected and analysed so that the settings can be fine-tuned.

Highways Agency project manager Jack Warner, said: "The system is designed so the lights work part-time during times of heavy traffic on the motorway. Motorists joining the motorway may have a few seconds delay at slip road lights, but this short delay will benefit all motorway users by ensuring they can make their journeys safely and reliably.

"While the lights are being tested we'd like to ask motorists to be patient as the settings might not be 100 percent right for the first few weeks. During this time we will analyse the data and correct any problems."

The system has been successfully used on motorways in other parts of the Midlands and the north, where it has been shown to improve journey times on the motorway by up to nine percent. It is widely used in the United States, where it has been used for 40 years, and in France, Belgium and the Netherlands.

Lights on the M1 entry slip roads at J28 northbound, J29 north and southbound and J24 northbound will be switched on throughout April.

Express Survey feedback

MANY readers completed and returned the *Beeston Express Survey* published in the issue of February 14, and we have been feeding results back piecemeal.

Readers have wholeheartedly endorsed *The Beeston Express*, telling us how much they enjoy having a local newspaper once again (*The Beeston Gazette and Echo* ceased to exist in the mid-1980s). Briefly, when asked what they would like to see, readers asked for more pages, more features, improved

distribution and increased coverage – even weekly publication!

In order to develop *The Beeston Express*, the next step is to revisit the business plan for the paper. We are going to need extra help and some changes will become necessary. When numbers have been crunched, we'll let you know what the proposals are, along with a fuller list of reader suggestions and comments for your perusal and delectation!

And the prize draw hasn't been forgotten. Result next issue.

Become a friend of Toton Fields

Open Meeting on Monday, April 28 at the Greenwood Community Centre, Chester Green, Toton at 7.45pm

TOTON Fields is an area of land to the south and west of Banks Road and Manor Farm Park that used to consist of four farms centred on the spot where the Greenwood Community Centre now stands.

The area appears on 19thC maps marked as Toton Fields and has long been recognised as an important habitat for wildlife, with more than 100 species of birds recorded and over 200 species of wild flowers, shrubs and trees.

In order to safeguard the site and enhance the area, local councillors, supported by Groundwork Greater Nottingham, have suggested that the area is given Local Nature Reserve (LNR) status. Broxtowe

Borough Council has asked Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust to prepare a management plan for the site; adoption of the plan will help the area gain LNR status and ensure further protection.

Meetings have been held locally to get the community involved, and a 'Friends of Toton Fields' group has been launched. This is open to local residents and other interested parties to join in and play an active role in the management and improvement of the area.

All are invited to the next public meeting, details above. The management plan will be discussed and local people will be invited to get involved and join the group.

ADVERTISING in The Beeston Express

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Minimum: 3 cm.

Notice Board

(8cm x 8cm Box)
Mono: £45
Colour: £55

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0845 46 47

Queens Medical Centre

0115 924 9924

City Hospital

0115 969 1169

Broxtowe Borough Council

0115 917 7777

Citizens Advice Bureau

0844 499 1193

Beeston Library

0115 925 5168

Train Timetable Enquiries

08457 48 49 50

No holes in this lace group

THE sight of a group of alert and bright-eyed six- and seven-year-olds quietly and diligently bent over their lace-making pillows as they learn the first steps of creating a butterfly in bobbin lace is an unusual one.

But this unusual group of 12 young people at Meadow Lane Infant School was merely the latest in a series of groups of children that have been taught bobbin lace at the school by local specialist Margaret Taylor for 25 years.

With assistance from Ann Degville – herself taught by Mrs Taylor several years ago – the school's lace-making classes have won prizes at international level in competitions organised by The Lace Guild once every three years.

Making bobbin lace involves crossing and twisting cotton threads, wound on a bobbin,

over a pattern fastened to a special 'lace pillow'.

Of the 12 children joining the latest 10-week long course (the option was going out to play), it only took a few minutes application for one or two of the youngsters to establish in their minds the sequence of moves needed for the particular lace stitch they were learning, and could already see exactly how their own piece of lace was forming under their diminutive but no less dexterous fingers.

Mrs Taylor, from Chilwell, said: "This is a good age for them to learn. Up until about the age of 9, children will absorb anything you tell them like a sponge. We also teach any 'special needs' children that are brought to our attention. Making bobbin lace can help them in many ways."

The school pays for the lace-making kit, and Mrs Taylor and

Ann Degville give their time free of charge. "The school does pay any expenses we might have," said Mrs Taylor. "I think we cost them in the region of about £5 per annum. The last time I presented a receipt for payment, it was for felt and wobbly eyes!"

The lace butterfly will take the children between six and eight weeks to complete. In the current class, which has eight boys and four girls, seven-year-old Nicola was enjoying herself, having quickly established the pattern. "This is easy!" she chirruped. "Much better than playing!"

Sitting close by, Murray had personal reasons for choosing to make lace. "My grandma knits," he explained, "and I've done a tiny bit of knitting; I helped her to knit a shirt for my teddy, Checkers.

"I'd never done lace," the seven-year-old boy continued,

"and when I heard about this, I thought it might be related to knitting. I realise now that it's not, but when I've finished my butterfly, I might put it in a frame and give it to my grandma."

Six year-old Megan took a more philosophical approach: "I thought it might be nice to do something a bit different."

Mrs Taylor was starting to think about the school's entry for the next Lace Guild competition. In the year 2000, the school's lace classes worked a prize-winning banner that still proudly adorns the piano in the school hall.