

Buzz

Flying the flag on Armed Forces Day

MEMBERS of the Beeston branch of the Royal British Legion stood proudly to attention as the Mayor of Broxtowe, Cllr Pat Lally, raised a specially commissioned Armed Forces Day flag on Beeston's central flag pole on June 21.

Cllr Lally had just addressed the crowds gathered in Beeston Square as the flag was raised in honour of the contributions made by all those who serve – or have served – in Her Majesty's Armed Forces.

As Beeston raised the flag, 450 local authorities and more than 3000 businesses and schools throughout the country were also honouring the country's servicemen and women.

Perhaps more significantly, Armed Forces Day flags were being flown where British servicemen and women are still serving overseas, including Afghanistan, Iraq, Cyprus, Germany, Gibraltar and the Falkland Islands.

Cllr Lally said: "The men and women of our armed

forces make huge personal sacrifices to defend the UK, and their efforts deserve support and recognition. Flying this new flag gives us the chance to show our appreciation for the important job they do – a clear message of gratitude that will be appreciated by all service personnel.

"The purpose of Armed Forces Day is to celebrate what our veterans have already achieved as well as what our current serving personnel continue to achieve."

A second annual Armed Forces Day was also held on Saturday, June 26, to honour the British Armed Forces of the past, present and future.

Snippets

Annual Cancer Research UK Garden Party

THE Annual Garden Party held to raise funds for Cancer Research UK will be hosted by Kath and David Jenkins at 21A Grasmere Road, Beeston, Notts, NG9 3AQ on Saturday, July 3, between 10am and 4pm.

Your £1 admission will allow you to enjoy a cup of tea or coffee as you browse around stalls that will include plants, books, cakes and bric-a-brac. Those who like to take a bit of a risk with their disposable income will be able to purchase raffle tickets or have a go on the tombola.

Garden Party for Cardiac Care Unit

A CHARITY garden party will be held at Wollaton Road Methodist Church, Beeston on Saturday, July 10 from 10am to noon.

Stalls will include refreshments, cakes, hand-made greetings cards and bring and buy. All proceeds are in aid of Nottingham Trent Cardiac Care Unit.

Garden Trail raises more than plants!

THE Beeston and Chilwell Garden Trail held over the weekend of June 19 and 20 raised £4,400 for various charities – an increase of £500 in the funds raised in 2009.

The sun shone as 607 people visited the local gardens open for the event. Visitors could partake of cream teas, ice creams, fruit kebabs, fruit juices or other refreshments as they perused what has been achieved by the enthusiastic application of green fingers in each of the gardens, perhaps wistfully acknowledging to themselves that a lot of work is involved in maintaining a garden to a very high standard and thinking 'if only'...! However, no doubt a number of visitors simply relish the opportunity to have a look at other people's gardens and revel in the discernable ambience that this annual event creates.

In many of the gardens, the garden's owners had set up extra attractions that included woodturning demonstrations, bookstalls, model railways, plants and crafts for sale, children's activities and live music.

If you missed the Garden Trail this year, make sure it goes into your diary next year!

Coffee Evening raises funds

A COFFEE evening organised by the Wesley Guild at the home of Margaret and Ray Hollingsworth on June 22 raised £126 for the Chilwell Road Methodist Church charity for the year, the Women's Friendship Group.

The Free Ranger...

Our monthly columnist shares his thoughts with us...

THE Free Ranger lives in Attenborough, but asks to remain anonymous so that he can share his opinions freely about local matters that affect all of us.

Please remember, however, that the opinions he expresses are his own, and do not necessarily reflect those of The Beeston Express.

If you wish to comment, please write to the address on page 2.

It's been a bad week

AS I sit down to write this, England has just been humiliated by Germany in the World Cup. Earlier in the week, my employer told me they were changing our pension fund and, as a consequence, my planned early retirement date will no longer be allowed and will be put back five years – despite the fact I have been saving extra into the scheme for twenty years. Next came the budget which has put my state retirement back by at least another two years, and cost me, as a cautious estimate, about £200 per month in extra taxation, extra national insurance and lost services.

Now I can't pretend I am badly off and I can't pretend that all of this, with the exception of my company pension issue, is going to be a life changer. I am the classic 'comfortably off'

middle-income person who gets hammered in every budget and I have just learnt to accept it, but I always have a moan first.

However, what I have found more depressing this time is that it seems that, to try and help reduce the budget deficit left by the last government, those a lot worse off than me are going to suffer a proportionally greater loss than those at the top of the income pile.

It also seems to me that the changes appear to target children and children's services more than other sectors.

Recent statistics show that about 22 percent of children and approximately 20 percent of the old are living in poverty. For one of the richest nations in the world, despite the deficit, these are shameful statistics.

Now I have no problem in supporting those who are

poor or have specific needs, but I am not sure that well-off pensioners, those with an income of over £40k, need either a £200 winter fuel allowance or a free bus pass, yet these seem to have escaped so far. I read in the press that if you are a family with a single income of about £25k to £35k, you will lose more money than a family with two people working earning £45k – £60k or even £80k. It is also reported by a children's charity that many kids who are in poverty will be losing their free school meals, which for some is their main meal of the day.

More locally, the first cut to come forward will be the loss of free swimming for children (I'm not sure whether this will be extended to the pensioners' free swimming). It has been reported that there has been a 30 percent increase in the number of

children going swimming across the country since free swimming came in. That has to be a good thing, swimming is an excellent exercise, it keeps kids off the streets and has proven health and safety benefits.

I am all for shared pain in the straightened circumstances we are in and the cuts were inevitable given the mess created by the last lot.

But the gusto and relish with which the coalition is wielding the axe to some of the most vulnerable appears to me to be with a fervour just too far on the wrong side of enjoyment to be palatable.