

## Buzz

# New Nature Conservation Strategy is launched *by the Editor*

IN Broxtowe, we might consider ourselves fortunate to live so close to a major city yet within easy reach of so many green open spaces and parks, woodlands, wetlands, grasslands and the like.

In recent years, awareness of the need for conservation has intensified due to a number of factors and, with it, recognition that a coherent strategy to protect our treasured wildlife havens locally would be necessary.

With this in mind, Broxtowe Wildlife Forum launched the new 5-year Nature Conservation Strategy for Broxtowe last week.

The first local nature conservation strategy was introduced in 2001. It defined its aim as being "to conserve and enhance the borough's natural heritage for the benefit of people and wildlife."

This original 5-year plan, which expired in 2006, formed the background for

the creation of the more 'action-based' approach launched last week. Produced by Broxtowe Borough Council and Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust on behalf of the Wildlife Forum, its objective to provide a "considered and coherent way forward in enhancing local biodiversity". It details each and every area important for wildlife across the borough and sets out specific actions and targets for locally led partnerships, which will be monitored by the Wildlife Forum.

The 2009-2014 strategy was officially launched by the Leader of the Council, Cllr Michael Rich, following an introduction by the Mayor of Broxtowe, Cllr John Longdon, at the Wildlife Forum meeting held at Attenborough Nature Centre.

Cllr Rich said: "Broxtowe Borough Council has a duty to look after the natural world for many reasons, but it

has a statutory duty to have a strategy for conserving biodiversity.

"This strategy is not a council document, it is owned by Broxtowe Wildlife Forum, demonstrating that we can only make a difference by working in partnership with the people who have made it possible."

He continued: "This is a landmark document by which we can all assess the rewards of our present and future efforts. We are stood in arguably the best wildlife site in Broxtowe, but even this is subject to change with the flood relief project, and it is up to all of us to manage the change for the benefit of wildlife. The Nature Conservation Strategy is one way of helping us to do this."

Cllr Rich then introduced a speaker from the Friends of Bramcote Ridge, one of the oldest established 'Friends' groups in the borough,

founded 10 years ago.

Spokesman Norman Clyde-Watson said: "In the 10 years we have been in existence, we have worked with the council to make Bramcote Ridge what it is today, and our group now has about 60 members.

"We've been awarded lottery funding and we've put benches in place. We keep the site neat, tidy and free of litter whilst at the same time protecting the wildlife corridors, planting hedgerows for butterflies and recording and monitoring wildlife."

Forum members met Misty, a screech owl from the Rushcliffe Barn Owl Project, during a break for refreshments.

## Snippets

### Building work to start at Treetops

BUILDING work on the new day care centre is to start at Treetops Hospice, Risley, on November 30, 2009.

Part of the Final Challenge fundraising effort is a 'Buy A Block' appeal. People are invited to 'buy' as many building blocks as they wish for £5 a block. Their name will be added to the Block Appeal Book, which will be kept at the hospice.

For more details of the appeal, contact Kate Shaw or Lily Grant, Ripple Appeal, Treetops Hospice, on (0115) 939 4551.

### Planning applications

A REVISED planning application has been received by Broxtowe Borough Council from Truman Investments for permission to demolish 'The Happy Man' public house at 87 Hickings Lane, Stapleford, and construct seven dwellings.

At 130 Wollaton Road, Beeston, Mr H Howton has applied to the council for a Change of Use from Pharmacy (Class A1) to Takeaway/Restaurant (Class A5/A3).

### Electronic speed signs

MORE flashing speed signs will appear on Nottinghamshire roads as the County Council has decided to pay for 27 more signs and allow parish councils and other organisations to install them as well.

The 27 new electronic 'Your Speed' signs that warn drivers if they are going too fast will be installed by the end of March. They will cost £200,000 and will be placed on busy 30mph roads with a proven speeding problem.

However, organisations that would like a sign on a road that does not meet the above criteria will now be able to pay for a permanent or mobile one themselves.

Cllr Richard Jackson, Cabinet Member for Transport and Highways, said: "These signs have been shown to reduce drivers' speeds by up to five miles per hour. We have a limited amount of money to spend, so need to prioritise the roads most in need. But where there are roads where residents feel very strongly that there is a local problem that one of these signs could help with, we are going to allow them to be installed on the highway, as long as they can fund it and use it properly.

# 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.*

## A Modern Solution to an Old Problem?

RECENTLY, on a trip through the local park, the children's playground was

full of small children and toddlers with their parents and grandparents. One of the play items is a large dish-type swing about 4ft in diameter that the kids lie in, and can swing back and forth.

A large bovine-looking slack jawed youth in his late teens, about 6ft 3in tall, was lying in it swinging back and forth violently, such that the whole thing was shaking. Nominally, he was not doing anything wrong other than being there in the first place.

Some of the parents had to prevent their offspring from walking in front of the swing and being demolished; other kids could not understand why they couldn't use it. But in our usual British way, people were ignoring the issue in the hope it would go away.

However, one grandmother finally approached the oaf as he stopped swinging. She went over and said to the lad as he lay in the dish, "Look, you know you shouldn't be in here; it's for small kids". As he lay there, he looked her straight in the eye from his chip-induced moon face and, oozing threatening body language, slowly lifted his index finger to his lips, held it there for a second, and then put it back down without making a sound and continued to just lie there.

In the other corner of the park, two other lads of similar age but at the opposite end of the weight spectrum were sat in the playhouse smoking what my father used to call a reefer. One of them was wearing skinny jeans with the backside round his knees

showing his pants, and sporting a rolled up gents broly and a badly-dyed girls bob-type hair cut, the other wearing a hat that would have doubled as a giant's tea cosy. I asked them if they were eight years old and were in the right place, to which one said "yes". So I asked how many other tattooed eight year-olds they knew who smoked joints, to which they replied, "lots". When again asked to move, they just sat there. They did not rise to the bait or get cross; they just ignored it all as though asking them to move was an infringement of their human rights. When I explained later what I had seen to someone I know, it seems that in the vernacular they were attempting to 'hot box' the Wendy house.

Now, I know that teenagers can be difficult, but it wasn't that long ago that if yobs were being yobbish and someone said "sling your hook" you might get some abuse, but ultimately they would go, as they normally knew what was appropriate behaviour and where the boundaries were. Now I don't care how touch feely we are supposed to be about such youths, these three clearly had no respect for anyone or anything, and would not respond to reason, sense or sarcasm. If the police had got them it would have been a slap on the wrists and an Outward Bound course to allow them to get in touch with their feminine side, or everything attributed to long-standing physiological trouble caused by a savage paper cut they suffered in an art lesson

at school, so no action could be taken.

Faced with such behaviour, I found it difficult to know how best to deal with it. Whilst I am not a violent person, I was briefly of the conclusion that, in such circumstances, the only answer may be that some people just need a good kicking. But with hindsight, a more moderate solution would perhaps have been a swift dose of pepper spray. It would have been enough to get these idiots moving, dealt with their Advanced Level insolence, and have limited lasting effects other than an unfortunate reminder of their own stupidity.

A modern equivalent of the old fashioned clip round the ear, perhaps.