

Leisure

Running for Charity

BEESTON resident Stuart Baird is raising money for Sands, the stillbirth and neonatal death charity, an organisation that offers support follow infant death during pregnancy or after birth. Stuart told *The Beeston Express* "On 2nd January 2009 very close friends of mine lost their son, Thomas, during labour. Four weeks later, my brother and sister-in-law lost their daughter, Grace, three days before she was due to be born."

These two tragedies within a very short space of time had a huge impact on both families and both found a lot of comfort and support from Sands.

"In order to celebrate the memory of both Grace and Thomas, as well as giving

practical support to those who may find themselves in a similar situation, I have decided to pull on my running shoes and run the Robin Hood Half Marathon on the 12th September." Stuart added.

Sands was founded in 1978 by a small group of bereaved parents devastated by the death of their babies and in particular by what they felt was a complete lack of acknowledgement and understanding of the significance and impact of their loss.

Over the past 25 years the charity has supported many thousands of families whose babies have died, offering emotional support, comfort and practical help. Sands has worked tirelessly with health

professionals to revolutionise the care bereaved families receive in hospital. Sands has fundamentally changed the way in which bereaved parents and their babies are cared for.

In spite of medical advances, many parents, their families and friends continue to have their lives quite literally turned upside down by the death of their baby. 17 babies a day are either stillborn or die within the first twenty eight days of life, over 6,500 babies dying every year. Rates of stillbirth have remained relatively unchanged for 20 years and in fact are increasing.

To sponsor Stuart, visit www.justgiving.com/Stuart-Baird1

Wildlife Watching

Local news and views of the natural world

SOME good news on the local wildlife scene.

Readers may recall that the sand martin colony by the Beeston canal in the Rylands has been featured more than once in this column, with particular emphasis on the threat to nests from being blocked off by moored boats.

This year British Waterways installed signage prohibiting the mooring of boats on this stretch of towpath during the nesting season but, as was pointed out here a few weeks ago, these signs did not cover all of the towpath where the sand martins nest.

After a meeting with British Waterways at the site they have now agreed to not only extend the area covered to include all of the canal wall in which sand martins have been regularly nesting, but to also install

an extra sign to ensure that boaters can be in no doubt that this stretch is 'off limits' to boaters during the nesting season.

This is a very welcome development and British Waterways must be commended for responding in this way. The signs that have already been put in place were positioned without those responsible for doing so being fully aware of how much of the towpath wall is used for nesting. Now that they are, it is planned for the whole of this area to be covered by a mooring prohibition with the new notices put in place well before any birds arrive next year.

Although this year's nests will now be empty, sand martins can still be seen in the area as they build their up reserves for the long flight

south in the coming weeks. Any that return to nest next year will have their chances of successfully rearing a brood increased by the work that British Waterways are proposing.

Toton Sidings

Another (potential) good news story is at Toton sidings where there was a furore over the sudden destruction of woodland last winter. Following the intervention of local politicians, notably the former Broxtowe MP Nick Palmer, the Forestry Commission has ordered that the area in which the trees were cleared should be re-planted.

Many would contend that it would have been better if the trees had not been felled at all and the timing of it, during one of coldest periods in a very cold winter, was a particularly cruel blow for the wildlife that was using the woodland. When the re-planting goes ahead, however, it could offer an opportunity to make the area even better for wildlife than it was before.

The woodland that had developed on this site consisted almost entirely of silver birch. This is the most pioneering of our native trees

Cricket

Success for Beeston and Toton Sycamore

DESPITE a broken ankle in a pre-season friendly for skipper Dave Hoon, Beeston and Toton Sycamore 1st XI, under the early season guidance of vice-captain Phil Fullwood, blazed a trail at the top of Division G of the South Notts Cricket League by winning their first 13 matches of the season, finishing the season with 14 victories in the 16 matches played to become champions.

With a magnificent team effort all season, six players managed to score over 200 runs, with Dennis Burrell scoring 209 and Rob Darby 373. Dave Hoon scored 205 runs, Steve James 321 and Phil Haywood 220. Andy Burrell added 426.

Keeper Steve James was the only centurion of the season, with a not out score of exactly 100. Another 11 half-centuries were scored, Rob Darby leading the way

with four (86, 57, 56 not out and 56); Andy Burrell scoring three (84, 75 and 52) with Dave Hoon (95), Tom Fullwood (66), Phil Fullwood (64 not out) and Dennis Burrell (62 not out) claiming one each.

Much like the runs, wickets were shared amongst the bowlers, only Dave Fawcett (33 wickets at an average of 13.97) and Lashaune Weir (32 wickets at an average of 17.28) claiming over 20 victims. Only two bowlers managed 5-wicket hauls – Niall Jacobsen 5-18 and Lashaune Weir 5-26.

While the 1st XI were enjoying their successes, the 2nd XI had a more difficult season, managing only five victories in the 15 matches played and finishing 7th in Division K. Leading run scorer for the 2nd XI, by over 200 runs, was Ian Day with a total of 355 runs which

included 4 half centuries (82, 77, 66 and 66). Other half centuries were scored by Ankit Sharma (54) and Rob Howe (52).

Martin Huffer was the only bowler to claim over 20 wickets (22 wickets); 5-wicket hauls were taken by Ben Williams (6-30), Martin Huffer (5-3) and Dave Straiton (5-22).

Once again the club managed to win a Twenty20 tournament, this time at the end of May in Loughborough.

The club would like to take this opportunity to thank all the people who have supported the club's on-field efforts this season, with pitch preparation, umpiring and scoring, and as well as the continued support of The Manor Bar & Restaurant.

and is very often the first to become established on bare ground. When it does, it can play an important role in the formation of soils as well as providing a wildlife habitat – as it did at Toton sidings – but a planting scheme for the restoration of this site which aims for a direct 'like for like' replacement of the trees that existed prior to the clearance might not be the best option for improving its value to wildlife.

Instead of planting silver birch alone (or even at all) a variety of native trees and shrubs could be considered. These would have to be

selected with care to ensure that they are suitable for the soil conditions and chemistry of the site and need not be planted at the density of the previous woodland. Leaving some areas within it unplanted will allow other plants to become established making it attractive to a greater diversity of wildlife.

Areas on substrates such as those that exist at Toton sidings can become particularly valuable for wildlife. The Local Nature Reserve by Beeston sidings is a good, but far from isolated, example of this and

the trees that have thrived here could guide a planting scheme at Toton.

Restoration of the Toton site to maximise its value to wildlife would allow it take its place amongst adjacent wildlife rich areas such as Erewash meadows and the Toton bank, which runs alongside much of the sidings. Let's hope that an appropriate scheme – and the funding for it – can be put in place sooner rather than later.

Jack Smith
Local ecologist



Thought for the Fortnight

Don't just stand there with your hands in your pockets.

Put them to work – give someone a hug.

