



# Evington Echo

**EvingtonEcho.uk**

Keeping you up to date with Evington's news  
Issue 297

The newspaper of Friends of Evington Charity No. 1148649  
August and September 2022

Circulation 5,900

## Celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in Evington



Two Jubilee events , organised by the community and for the the community, were on Evington Village Green and Sedgebrook Open Space.

St. Denys Church used the occasion to open the Platinum Jubilee Community Garden and launch their Faith and friendship tent. More information on pages 6 and 7.



## The Friends of Evington Elected Trustees

Paul Archdeacon (Chair), Helen Pettman (Secretary), Nilesh Chauhan (Treasurer), Jason Chauhan, Jeff Henry and Suzanne Henry and Harkesh Farma. co-opted trustee.  
www.friendsofevington.com

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## A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Dear readers



The Evington Echo has had a continuous publication history since 1981 and a distribution approaching 6000. This is a remarkable achievement for a magazine written, edited and distributed by a voluntary group.

As a community media project, the Evington Echo's approach to sourcing, gathering, editing and sharing stories starts with you, the reader. It is with this in mind that we are pleased to announce that there will be a new way for contributors to communicate with us.

It may be low-tech and traditional but we think it has a characterful charm of its own.

The Vintage Café has kindly agreed to make space for our new Evington Echo post box which will be visible through the café front window. While you enjoy a hot beverage and a delicious cake why not put pen to paper and insert your thoughts into the post box?

We are particularly interested in:

Your reaction to letters to the editor  
Your own coverage of community events  
Invitations to events in Evington  
Photographs of gardens and wildlife  
Obituaries and tributes  
News of retirements  
Celebrating achievement in the Evington family of schools  
Your feedback about articles you have read  
News from groups, clubs and societies.  
Recommendations about who to interview  
Voluntary activities in Evington...

The Editorial Team looks forward to checking

the post box for your notes and letters.

Thanks for supporting your village magazine.

Also if you didn't get a chance to write a question to ask Her Majesty the Queen at the Jubilee event on the Village Green, you can post your question in the postbox at the Vintage Café. We are a little short of 70 questions, but we want to send these on to the Queen as soon as possible.



Judges came to Evington on 14th July. Photos and a video about Evington in Bloom's judging day, written by Rob Watson, are on the evingtonecho.uk website with an article in this magazine on pages 14/15. Many thanks need to go to Evington in Bloom's volunteers who have worked so hard to keep their various projects looking good. Our feature article by Harkesh Farma is on pages 8/9.

We look forward to seeing you at Evington Village Fete and Show on 13th August.

Helen Pettman - Editor

Sir Jonathan North Girls' College, Knighton Lane East, Leicester LE2 6FU



**OPEN EVENING**

**Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> September**


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## EVINGTON VILLAGE FETE AND SHOW

On Saturday August 13th the fete and show returns to Evington after a gap of two years. The show tent promises to have a huge range of exhibits from Cut Flowers to Pot Plants, Art, Bakery, Wine, Photography and Handicrafts to name but some.

We welcome back Bakanalia Border Morris dancers and Lutterworth Town band together with Silver Swans dancers and folk singer, Anunty Ange, in full Caribbean costume, with favourite songs such as 'Come Back Liza' and 'Island in the Sun'.

In the craft area Falconry displays, the Bee Keeper and willow weaving will all be keeping us in touch with nature, while for our younger visitors a Bouncy Castle, remarkable magic shows, Punch and Judy and face painting will bring delight to all.

The Air Training Corps celebrating 50 years since its formation will be providing other events around the show ground, along with the many stall holders.

Leicestershire Fire and Rescue, Leicestershire Police and Blood Bikes will all be in attendance. In the Baptist Chapel their fabulous exhibition of Evington Remembered will be on display.

In St Denys Parish Church there will be a special service of evensong at 3pm with the Pheon Singers, alumni from the Chapel Choir of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge. The Faith and Friendship Tent, an interfaith community art project, will also be open. Other groups in the church include the Calligraphy Group and the Family History Group.

Lunches and Teas will be available in the Village Hall throughout the time of the fete and tea and cake will also be available

in the St Denys Parish Centre.

The raffle this year includes prizes of 'One week stay at a holiday cottage in Wales', Trial Flight Voucher from Leicester Aero Club, £30 Boden voucher, and a collection of gardening equipment from Bennett's along with many other items.

We are very grateful to our supporters Leicester City Council Community Ward funding, Tesco and the Community Fund of the National Lottery. See you there!

Chris Hossack. Chair of Evington Village Fete and Show.



**Evington Village Fete and Show 2022**  
**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> August**  
**12 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.**  
[www.evingtonvillagefete.org.uk](http://www.evingtonvillagefete.org.uk)  
 Held on the Village Green  
 Church Road  
 Evington  
 Leicester LE5 6FA

Logos: Evington Village Fete & Show 2022, Supported by Leicester City Council Community Ward Funding, St Denys Church Evington, Tesco, and Community Fund.

## APPEAL FOR APPLES AND OTHER FRUIT

(Don't let it rot)

If you have apple trees in your garden, or other excess fruit, don't let it rot on the ground.

Please contact me so fruit can go to a food bank. If you have fruit and no way of picking it, then I can organise help. When fruit is donated to food banks it goes to people who are genuinely struggling with the cost of living crisis.

For more information and/or to offer help, please contact me.

Zuffar Haq  
 Mb. 07788558955

## TARGETS ACHIEVED

This year 222 for 2022 in Evington has been achieved and surpassed. (Project funded by Friends of Evington through the National Lottery, People and Pollinators grant.) The choice of whip trees that were given away included crab apple, hazel and bird cherry.

The Sunflower project is to have 100 new sunflowers in Evington gardens in 2022.

Many thanks to Jeff and Suzanne Henry for facilitating and managing this.

## NEW ADVERTISEMENT

The Evington Echo is pleased to welcome local hearing care professionals, Home Hearing, as regular advertisers for the Evington Echo. See advert below.

They offer earwax removal, a hearing test and a full range of private hearing aids. They come to you so all of their services are provided in the comfort of your own home! See advert below.



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**OPEN EVENING**

**Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> September**

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## LETTERS

Dear Editor

### TRAFFIC ALONG SHADY LANE

I was interested to read the Leafy Shady Lane article in the June/July 2022 edition of the Evington Echo and the concerns expressed forty years ago about the potential increase in Evington traffic due to the development of the Arboretum. At the present time, this could now be exacerbated by the current Stoughton Park development. While agreeing that the volume of traffic is excessive, I'm not aware that I've ever seen any data on this topic. Therefore I decided to start my own survey choosing three random thirty-minute morning, afternoon and evening observations. I found that what I did, watching traffic from the War Memorial seat and the bottom of Shady Lane seat over 5 days and 6 different times gave me a mean average of some 9 vehicles a minute. However I am aware that there are other variables, for example traffic during the school drop-off and pick up times. I hope a more extensive survey can take place for later comparisons.

David Bulbeck

Dear Editor,

### SPENCEFIELD LANE

Surely no one could disagree if I stated that Spencefield Lane has become untidy and litter-strewn over recent years?

At one point, the Lane was so well kept it was a pleasure to walk into the village. I could easily suggest reasons for the deterioration, but would far rather use this platform to say thank you to the man who appears to have decided to do his own litter pick on a fairly regular basis. He passes my house and has pricked my conscience.

He has certainly made me realise that, instead of bemoaning the state of the

pavements, it is time I followed his example and took things into my own hands. Maybe if lots of us helped we might restore Spencefield Lane to its former glory?

Jean Mc Diarmid

### A WALK IN THE PARK

How fortunate we are in Evington to have such a wonderful park in Evington with so many amenities. Once a private estate with a large house, and then opened to the public in 1947. Now a place, to relax and enjoy nature within a stone's throw from where we live. After the cold days of winter, we see changes taking place. The bright colours of rhododendron and azalea bloom. Aconite, anemones, iris, crocus, and snowdrops push their way through the hard earth to signal the arrival of spring. Then there are the flower beds. Another annual WOW! Displays which would win a prize at any annual floral competition. Wander on to the ponds attracting a wide variety of wildlife. eg: pond skaters, water snails, dragonflies, damselfly. Enjoy watching the life cycle of the common frog from spawn to tadpole, to full grown frog.

We must be grateful to our Victorian forefathers for finding from many parts of the world the large variety of trees seen in Evington Park, some of which are over many hundreds of years old. Probably the oldest is the mulberry tree growing behind the house near the rose garden. Seating is provided for us to relax and experience the peace which can always be found where old trees are, and feel closer to nature and history.

My wife, often seen on the park with her binoculars has spotted all the birds listed, this year:

Wood pigeon, Redwing, House martin, Blackbird, Tree creeper, Black headed gull, Magpie, Greater black backed gull, Jackdaw, Nuthatch, Grey heron, Great tit, Goldcrest (our tiniest bird), Kestrel, Green finch, Chaffinch, Mallards (on pond), Goldfinch, Willow warbler, Black cap, Bullfinch, Red kite (seen in flight),

Mistle thrush, Song thrush, Swallow, Long tailed tit, Coal tit, Blue tit, Robin, Magpie, Green woodpecker, Great spotted woodpecker, Carrion crow, Red poll, White egret, Sparrowhawk, Buzzard, Wren and Swift.  
Roger Farmer

### CROWN HILLS COLLEGE RECEIVES THE LORD LIEUTENANT COMMUNITY AND BUSINESS AWARD FOR ENVIRONMENTAL WORK IN THE SCHOOL AND LOCAL COMMUNITY

Crown Hills Community College are excited to announce that they have received the Community and Business award from Her Majesty The Queen's Lord Lieutenant of Leicestershire. These awards were given to 70 organisations across Leicester, and Crown Hills were lucky enough to receive one!

They were recognised for this prestigious award for all their environmental work in school and in the local community. As part of their character education, a group of Year 7s went on a litter pick around the local community. After the litter pick, the students were helped to melt down the bottle lids and make key rings.

Crown Hills College have established an apiary (bee hives) within school grounds, which will bring exciting new opportunities for children, staff, parents and the wider school community.

The platinum students were given specially minted commemorative coins as a reward for organisation, uniform, respect, punctuality, attitude, class/homework and equipment.

### CROWN HILLS OPEN EVENING AND TOUR DAYS

Our Open evening will be from 4.00-6.00pm on 6th October.

Tours of the school take place from 8.15am - 9.15am and 1.30pm - 2.30pm on Monday 3rd October, Tuesday 4th October, Wednesday 5th October.



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Dear Editor

### CARS PARKING ON PAVEMENTS

I always thought that cars were for the road and pedestrians walked on the pavement; seems it's different along the top of Harringworth and Skampton roads, between 2.15pm and 3.15pm, where I have to walk on the road with a pushchair dodging cars coming round the corner as there is no room on the pavement. We have a new councillor now, and I thought all the councillors were going to tackle the cars on pavements. I've not seen any improvement at all. When are they going to do something about it?



Name and address supplied

Dear Editor,

### LITTER IN EVINGTON PARK AFTER A CRICKET MATCH

I am a regular dog walker on Evington Park. I am also a committed litter picker as a member of South Leics. Litter Picking Wombles. The average day will yield a bag or maybe two of assorted litter. Today,

after a weekend of cricket on the park, the sight was absolutely disgusting. The pitch littered with bottles, cans, samosas, paper. Dog walk aborted after he had eaten two samosas, so back on a lead and back home. I returned to the park without dog to tackle the mess. Two and a half hours later and having filled 14 bags full of rubbish, the park looks lovely as ever for the enjoyment of all. Yes there is a sense of satisfaction of job well done, but I am appalled at having to do it when I know it will be just the same next Monday. Despite the abundance of bins, there were plastic and glass bottles secreted in the middle of bushes, the children's play area was full of discarded food waste and dirty plastic plates (just the thing that rats would love). There was evidence of several barbecues right underneath big trees. They had even left the bag of restaurant charcoal thrown in the bushes. The broken glass bottles is a real risk to children and other park users. The crazy thing is that we know who the offenders are - the cricket players and their spectators. They are there all day. There ought to be a way of charging a hefty deposit for park use, which is then forfeited if the park is not left pristine. Or we need litter wardens who can go around at the end of a match and slap huge fines on these yobs. This situation cannot continue. Maybe all the rubbish collected after their matches needs to be dumped in the middle of the pitch to show what an appalling mess they are leaving week after week. Given the number of parks in the City, and I hear that Evington Park is not the worst, the Council workers who have the job of emptying the bins cannot be expected to go around hunting out all the rubbish.  
Dr Susan Ablett

*This letter was sent to Park Services for a reply, which was received as follows:*

Dear Dr Ablett and Evington Echo

Firstly we would like to thank you, Dr Ablett, for the extraordinary effort you went to in aiding other park users to enjoy the park safely and in turn supporting our Parks Service to keep Evington Park clean and safe for all to enjoy.

We share your concerns regarding the lack of care taken for the park or thought for other users during the recent cricket match held on the park; there is simply no excuse.

We are working with our Sports Services team to ensure booked requests are communicated with regarding to the expectations placed on approved bookings including keeping the site clean and tidy throughout. There will always be a degree of unauthorised sports activity on parks and open spaces where customers see their games as recreational, and assume there is no need to book. These can be problematic to manage or to hold to account after the fact, if they leave the site full of litter. We do communicate with all regular clubs who book but these informal games are mostly community gatherings. I summarise the response from Sports Services: The activity in question does not reflect the proposed event application, and documentation submitted for permission. We will take action concerning this.

In the hope of minimizing future incidents of this kind we at Park Services take the following actions:

- \* Temporary, moveable events bins on site in the cricket playing area
- \* Cleaning staff to get around as many parks and play areas as they can
- \* Park warden team made aware and will monitor at weekends
- \* Litter penalties issued when an individual is witnessed dropping litter.

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(Baptist)

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www.evingtonchapel.org.uk

For further information contact: 0116 2412087

"We preach not ourselves,  
but Christ Jesus the Lord"



## JUBILEE TEA AT THE CHURCH OF GOD, DOWNING DRIVE



This photo shows some neighbours and friends at The Church of God annexe on Downing Drive. It was taken on 12th June at our celebratory Jubilee tea which everyone greatly enjoyed. We have a regular neighbourhood tea on the first Sunday of each month at 5.00 p.m. but this one was special because we had a short message about the life and work of our wonderful Queen Elizabeth. We also enjoyed a fun quiz. Many of us also come to our coffee morning on the first and third Friday of each month at 10.30am. Anyone who comes along to these events can be sure of a friendly welcome. We'd love to see you.  
John Martin

## THE GOAN SPORTS CLUB



These photos show ladies from the Goan Sports Club at the Evington Youth Club Platinum Jubilee Celebration on Saturday 4th June 2022. The GSC is a sports, social and cultural club for Portuguese Goans settled in Leicester. They are regular service users of the Evington Youth Club and they host a range of events such as cooking competitions, food bring and share, musical activities, sports activities such as cricket, football, volleyball, badminton, carrom for all ages and gender, and art for kids. One of the organisers is Zoya Shaikh who brims with enthusiasm and is keen to hear from anyone who would like to join them to have some fun and relax with a family-friendly group. Zoya can be contacted via goansportsclub@gmail.com

## ST DENYS CHURCH'S JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS – SATURDAY 4TH JUNE

This event was held in the Vicarage garden and St. Denys' Church car park. It was an occasion to meet, browse some stalls, sit and chat over refreshments, visit the Faith and Friendship tent and the newly made Platinum Jubilee Community Garden. A special guest of honour was the Bishop of Loughborough,

Bishop Saju Muthalaly spoke about the reasons for celebration. The Faith and Friendship tent was developed as a partnership project led by Anita Barrand, the project officer from Equality Action, who are delivering the Vitamins mental health project. It is also an interfaith community arts project. Bishop Saju Muthalaly opened the Garden, pictured below.





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## IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING NISA LOCAL, EVINGTON

**Mon. - Sat. 6am - 10pm and Sun. 7am - 10am** ☎ 0116 2106266    38 - 40 Main Street

We are exciting to let you know changes are afoot.  
Nisa Local Evington Village Store is changing, with plans to be even better and more importantly cheaper!



We are pleased to announce that we have teamed up with Morrison's Daily, and within 8 - 10 weeks we will be a fully operational Morrison's Daily Franchise Store.

So what's changing? The signage over the store will be changing to the Morrisons branding, along with own branded items being stocked, helping us bring you better priced goods.

The Morrison's brand is bigger better and cheaper. We will be able to buy direct from Morrison's Wholesale rather than buying Co-Op goods through a third party, Nisa. (Basically cutting out the middleman and their constantly increasing prices).

The big change will be Morrison's own brand grocery lines, along with their massive fresh meat, fish, dairy, fruit & vegetable offers. We will continue to stock our varied range of Artisan breads from both Hambleton's and Italian supplier Seechi. The Big Brand names that we have added will continue, Costa Coffee, andr Slush, Tango Ice Blast, F'real Milkshakes and Fwip Ices. Also our delicious Halal samosas and curries from our local supplier, based right here in Leicester.

So its all exciting stuff and just what Evington needs, to be honest we can't wait, so watch this space. BIG changes are coming!

We would appreciate any feedback regarding your previous Morrison experience ie what lines you like etc Lynn, I and the team, look forward to welcoming you to the next chapter of the journey within Evington Village Store.

Kinds regards  
Rich & Lynn



## WOMEN'S INSTITUTE IN EVINGTON COMBINING HUMBERSTONE HEIGHTS AND BELGRAVE WI



We held our Jubilee Party to celebrate the Queen's Platinum anniversary at Evington Village Hall on the 14th June. Members and guests had a lovely strawberry cream tea that was enjoyed by everyone. Jean Matthews brought plants that she had grown and very nice they were too. One of our long-standing members, Valerie, held a book stall with enough books to fill Evington library, but she sold quite a number as there was a wide variety. We held a raffle with prizes donated by members. Thank you to all those that helped. The Hall was a picture. It was decorated in flags and bunting galore. We ended the lovely afternoon with a toast to our Queen and attempted to sing the National Anthem. I don't think we will be asked to join the choir any time soon!

However, if you are free on the second Tuesday of the month and you want an entertaining afternoon, please come and join us from 2.00pm to 4.00pm and you will be made very welcome. We have speakers on lots of things and tea, coffee, soft drinks and biscuits.

Take care everyone, summer's well here now.

Josie Rowles,  
President of the Women's Institute that meets at Evington Village Hall

## EVINGTON'S JUBILEE CELEBRATION ON EVINGTON VILLAGE GREEN – 3RD JUNE

This was a great event with lots of people turning out from our diverse community to celebrate and relax. A full list of thanks to supporting organisations can be seen on the [evingtonecho.uk](http://evingtonecho.uk) website.

Her Majesty the Queen is head of the Commonwealth as well as Great Britain. It was a fantastic opportunity to appreciate her hard work over 70 years.

Zuffar Haq



## ON SEDGEBROOK OPEN SPACE



On Sunday 5th June, the local community held a party. Despite the atrocious weather conditions a good number of stoic residents turned out to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. All those attending had an enjoyable occasion meeting other locals and getting to know each other. The 'Queen' was in attendance in the form of Margaret Syers, complete with handbag of marmalade sandwiches and accompanied by two of her favourite corgis. Anthems were played by our own music man Guy along with a great collection of familiar songs of the past. It was great to see so many Evingtonians come together for a day of fun and laughter and to help each other in such difficult conditions. Many of the local shopkeepers took part with a window display and the winning display was by Salon 57 hairdresser.

Jenny Joannou

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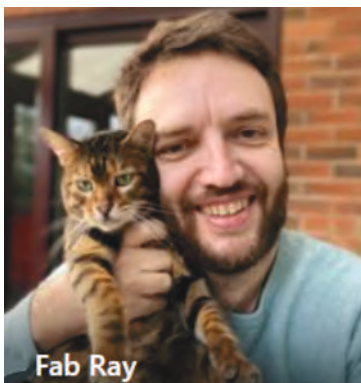
## A humanitarian volunteer's work with refugees on the Polish-Ukrainian border

Harkesh Farma

Readers, you may have seen these images: innocent civilians standing dazed and bewildered outside the ruins of their homes, children swaddled in shawls and blankets, lying on subway station platforms and the lone pianist playing in the ruins of a desolate city. The last is a reminder that amidst the humanitarian disaster of war there is also to be found defiant courage.

Some of the most life-affirming and love-affirming personal accounts have come not from war correspondents and hardened journalists but from the Ukrainian people themselves and from those who have listened to them, witnessed their plight, and consoled with them. Recording their lived experience is an important act of oral history-making not least because official war records often omit the narratives of civilians. In Ukraine these civilians are children and their mothers, the elderly and those unable to enlist.

One of the witnesses to suffering is my dear French friend, Fabien Raymondaud. He left his home in Shrewsbury to travel to



Fabien with Clara

the Polish border from where he sent me regular updates. He was moved to act and be present side by side with those affected by this appalling invasion.

The meaning of the word Ukraine is distant land, a faraway place, somewhere over there near the border. This appellation of otherness was originally a pejorative term but we reclaim it now to mean borderland since Fabien's missives arrived from Poland's border with Ukraine.

No people in Europe have demonstrated the extent of welcome and hospitality that the Polish people have to Ukrainian refugees. They have received with open arms their Slavic brothers and sisters and when European history documents the invasion and its aftermath there will surely be an honourable mention for Poland.

Extracts from Fabien Raymondaud's journal have been edited by me and we managed to find time for a Zoom interview. He writes about his spiritual mentor; he tells of his encounters and describes his volunteer duties. Weaved within the fabric of his account are little sub-narratives about his drone flute and pearls of wisdom from several spiritual traditions.

Fabien and I hope that Evington Echo readers will appreciate these scenes of life on the Polish-Ukrainian border.

Please send your thoughts to:  
Harkesh Farma evingtonecho9@gmail.com

## Frère François - the freelance Franciscan friar.

Four years ago, quite unexpectedly in Italy, I met the person who was to become my friend and spiritual mentor. Frère François, although affiliated to the Franciscan Order, has an independence of spirit. He is one of the most inspiring and impressive people I have ever met. His unique mindset combines an enterprising yet humble outlook without the preachiness that often emanates from religious leaders.



He set up the Pèlerins de la Charité (The Pilgrims of Charity).

Thanks to public donations, shipments of medicines to Ukraine have been ongoing. 20% of the medicine stays at the Polish border so that the Pilgrims can meet the needs of the refugees, who continue to arrive every day in their thousands. 80% are sent to Ukraine thanks to the collaboration of Franciscan brothers.

When Russia invaded Ukraine, I asked Frère François how we should respond. I wanted to go on a pilgrimage to Moscow but François popped the bubble of my delusion by saying that I would make little impact with the Kremlin. What was needed was an 'élan du cœur'. This is tricky to express in English but I think 'heartfelt enthusiasm' comes close. François experienced this élan and suggested I put down my pilgrim's staff to keep my hands free to volunteer with Caritas, to do, in the words of St. Therese of Liseux, "little things with great love."

## Intentions, Preparations and Prayers

It took me two weeks to master the pronunciation of Przemyśl and to assuage the hesitations and fears of loved ones when I declared my intention to travel to the Polish border with Ukraine. My mother was anxious about the effects of witnessing trauma on my mental and emotional wellbeing. Those who know me realise that when I am determined to

do something it is hard to stop me.

## Przemyśl

I travelled from Warsaw to the border city of Przemyśl in south-eastern Poland. The city lies in an area connecting mountains and lowlands known as the Przemyśl Gate (Brama Przemyśla), I may have mastered the pronunciation but nothing prepared me for the daily arrival of 7000 war refugees at Przemyśl Grosny (the local railway station).



## Medyka and Przemyśl

I cannot passively watch suffering from afar. I needed to bear witness, to listen to the narratives of displaced Ukrainian families forced to flee their invaded country. Above all I needed to act.

I felt humbled and privileged to be with volunteers from around the globe. I am warmed by the rays of humanity radiating from volunteers at this bustling station.

## What are days for?

Days are where we live. Every day brought unique encounters and testimonies but each day brought also repetitive routines. Daily at 8am we had to remove all the mattresses off the floor. We piled them up like a tower of thick bread slices and stored them with the blankets and sleeping bags. Other helpers collected and delivered all the bedding to a laundry. In the evening the whole process was reversed with the laying out of mattresses and the making of beds for the night. Today I found a broom and swept the dormitory. It kept me humble doing little things with great love. During the day the large dormitory was open only to women and children for private relaxation with refreshments available throughout the day.

## The Flute Maker and his wife



Native American drone flute

I have no musical background but a month before I flew to Poland, I was reading about a Native American drone flute. One shaft produces a continuous drone and on the other a melody can be

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# THE BORDERLAND

played. Thankfully for an untrained musician like me, it is impossible to strike a false note or to disharmonise because the flute is designed to self-harmonise. I had started playing a standard Indian flute in Shrewsbury with the sole vague aim of producing a pleasing sound. Not being in possession of a drone flute it was a challenge to create a tuneful melody.

There are serendipitous events that one hears about but it is not until they occur to you that you feel the sensation of fortuitous chance meetings. A Polish gentleman, having heard me play, approached me, and announced he was a flute maker. He referred me to his Facebook page. Ten days later he placed in my hands the drone flute he had handcrafted especially for me. Shortly afterwards 2 km away, I heard that the Tesco supermarket had just been transformed into a refugee centre. I visited to offer help and was introduced to a lovely Polish lady. I discovered that she was the flute maker's wife!

## Flute Therapy

I realised soon that the flute sound triggered certain latent emotions. I used it as a cathartic tool to communicate without language. Its plaintive sound moved some to tears and moved others to speak to me. Overwhelmingly the reaction was positive from young and old alike. The flute became a talking point, a segue into conversation and a reason for and means of bridging the language gap. I connected with many Ukrainian refugee children and they delighted me with their charming curiosity. The flute music must have given them a different focus and provided temporary relief from thoughts of displacement and separation. I would have gladly turned into the Pied Piper to lead the children from the war zone, out of the precarity of life in the borderland and into a safe, stable future. I hope and pray that they will grow up in a free sovereign Ukraine which is their birthright. I know that I am an idealist but I sincerely believe war is not inevitable for humanity. Peaceful coexistence is possible but we must work towards it.

## To Our Relations

Kramatorsk is a city in the north of Donetsk in Eastern Ukraine. Its 19th century railway station had already been destroyed once during the Second World War. 77 years later war ravages Kramatorsk again and its beleaguered station was bombed again in April 2022. This Russian military assault left several hundreds injured and over 50 dead. The innocent civilian victims were at the station to board a train to safe refuge having fled their war-torn country. One day Kramatorsk station will be rebuilt in bricks and mortar but it will take love and patience to rebuild lives. Over the decades, buildings come and go in the urban landscape but there is no return for the dead. At least, not in this life.

A scarred woman shared her sorrow with me about this tragedy. I helped her



*Train carrying civilians from Medyka*

children and luggage onto a train to a safe destination. We hugged in silence and tried to smile through the tears. She could have been my grandmother and her children my nieces and nephews. There is a Native American Lakota dedication: 'To all our relations'. It is a prayer of oneness and harmony with all forms of life: other people, animals, birds, insects, plants, and even rocks, rivers, mountains, and valleys.

For humans it implies that we are all related: brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, sons, and daughters. There is no separation between us. One does not need to be spiritual or a humanist to know about our inter-connectedness instinctively and rationally.

## Frère François

He renounced his Parisian priesthood and the status and wealth attached to it to serve more authentically as a humble monk. I have never seen anyone so fulfilled in their vocation. When I look at him, he radiates beingness. "What is that?", you may well ask. I invite you to discover for yourself.

One of the pearls on the thread of wisdom proffered by Frère François is 'What is not given is lost.' Wow, that's a whole meditation, man. Happiness is not found in accumulation. What's more, asceticism is not that you own nothing but that nothing owns you. It seems a mysterious paradox that in giving we receive.

Medyka is a village in Przemysl County in south-eastern Poland and is one of the main road crossings between Poland and Ukraine. It has a major railway line running through the village, connecting both countries. Medyka welcomes Ukrainian refugees who cross the border. I walked across this border into Ukraine. In the silent open countryside, I felt a sensation of eeriness. War hung thick in the air but no one was to be seen, not even a bird. This village near Medyka was unknown to me but it also seemed unknown to the world. I saw no wheat fields here and the simple, deserted village seemed frozen in history. How did it subsist? It opened my eyes to a Europe unknown to me.

## Kharkiv

Kharkiv is the second largest city in Ukraine. At the beginning of the 20th century, the city was predominantly Russian in population, but after the Soviet government's policy of Ukrainization the city became populated mainly by Ukrainians with a significant number of

Russians. Kharkiv was a major target of the North-eastern Ukraine offensive in Russia's invasion of Ukraine that began in February 2022. During the Battle of Kharkiv, the city was designated as a Hero City of Ukraine. I met a teacher from Kharkiv who spoke about shells swooping like thunderbolts and devastating urban infrastructure. Many Ukrainians with Russian ancestry were among those killed and injured. What a human tragedy.

## The Afghanis

There were two refugees who could only speak Pashto. I attempted to communicate with them through my translation app. They told me that they had traversed ten countries on foot. Their intended destination was France but after walking for eight months they had arrived in Poland. As they spoke about their gruelling journey, we were interrupted by a South Korean man who had taken great interest in our conversation while enjoying his goulash lunch. He worked for a charity and he was accompanying refugees to Strasbourg. The outlook for my new Afghani friends suddenly appeared brighter. We scheduled a meeting for the following morning to arrange their transfer but there remained the challenge of providing these young men with overnight accommodation. I made some enquiries and the sisters from the convent up the hill (as we now called them) opened the whole convent complex to all who needed refuge including the Afghanis.

## The Sikhs



To my astonishment, I met a group of Sikh people carrying out seva in Medyka. Seva means service in Punjabi. The concept of community service is one of the central tenets of Sikhism. Their presence in Poland surprised me and, in turn, I surprised them by reciting the Mool Mantar, the most important composition written by the founding father of Sikhism, Guru Nanak. These British-born bilingual Sikhs were full of bonhomie. They were astounded to hear the rudimentary recital of a common Punjabi prayer by a Frenchman in Poland!

My new-found Sikh brothers and sisters were there as volunteers of [unitedsikhs.org](http://unitedsikhs.org) which provides emergency relief and which is affiliated to the United Nations.

The learning I returned with travelling abroad to carry out humanitarian work has taught me to be open to spontaneous experience. I have realised that each new day is a gift. I will no longer take peacetime in England for granted. Each day has been unique and has brought its unique challenges. I will remember and hold in my heart the people I met. I hope that I have made a positive difference however small.

To all our relations.  
Fabien Raymondau



## EVINGTON DWELLERS AND NON-DWELLERS

I am delighted to be introducing you to this new series of articles.

This series will be based on conversations with various members of the 'walking family' from our COVID Walking and Talking days.

It gives me great pleasure to have had my first conversation with my walking partner, Val.

Val originates from Grenada, a Caribbean island known for its spices, for example, nutmeg.



When last did you have the pleasure of this spice? She had a very happy and carefree childhood which is reflected in her personality today. She loves life, lives it to the full and is kind and personified. She arrived in England to study nursing in Rickmansworth, which makes

perfect sense as she had been an Assistant Pharmacist. It was hard and enjoyable work, learning new skills, caring for patients, meeting and working with new colleagues. However, she soon realised that she had a greater interest in prevention rather than cure.

Her life was full, as you can imagine, settling into working as a nurse and in a different culture, however, Val found love which gave her even more energy. She got married, her husband found a new job in Leicester and a new chapter of her life began. Val's first impressions of Leicester were that she had arrived in a rather rural environment that was different from the

buzzing, edgy, culturally-divergent capital, London, that she had left. Although it felt like a dot in the ocean, there was a comforting and warming sense of community here. The City enabled her to be herself.

The change from London and no longer working as a nurse, gave Val valuable thinking time enabling her to revisit those earlier thoughts about where her real passion and focus should be placed. After much soul-searching she decided to work with children. They could be taught good habits and could be influenced, through their parents and other adults, to look after their health, to be thoughtful and kind, to love learning and to lay down the other foundations to become good people and citizens. This is a whistle stop tour though a full life that still has a long way to run.

Val decided to do social and community work through The Children's Society. It started as a project which was fantastic, focused on childcare and supporting parents in that role. It added a lot of value to family life. Unfortunately a problem with projects is the funding method, often having to reapply for the finances every one, two or three years that will allow it to continue. Eventually the funding ceased which meant the end of the project. What to do now? It had been successful by several measures and should continue for the sake of the most important people, the children, and their parents/carers.

Val is a very resilient woman, never daunted by situations, she will take her time to think things through before making a decision. This attitude, with a quiet determination, led to a plan which she executed with the support of a few other organisations. She worked closely with a business development unit and social services. Having had an appropriate

gestation period, The Children and Parents' Alliance, otherwise known as CAPTA, was born. At the Centre various activities were undertaken for example, contact visits, carnival workshops, computer training sessions and, most importantly, a nursery with culturally-appropriate books and toys. The workshops and training sessions provided an additional benefit of enhancing the parents' skills and interests. It was a social enterprise that gave parents an opportunity to continue working in the knowledge that their children were being looked after well and safely.

During this busy period in her life, Val also gave birth to her one and only son of whom she is very proud; born and bred in Leicester. She was very happy to have him, enjoyed bringing him up, observing his development and noticing the transitions from childhood to adulthood. As if this wasn't enough to do, she also responded positively to requests to sit on a number of committees for The Children's Society. Their focus was on policies, their implementation and funding related to multi-culturalism, which meant frequent trips to Birmingham and London.

Domestically, the decision was made to settle in Evington because of the rural and friendly atmosphere, the proximity to the City centre and easy travelling distance to good schools. She has become a proud Evingtonian and is currently a member of Friends Of Evington and has been very involved with Evington In Bloom. One of her hopes for the future is that more young people will get engaged with local activities to ensure that they are sustained and further developed and to continue strengthening that endearing Evington atmosphere.

Suzanne Overton-Edwards

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## SSHN (SAFER STREETS, HEALTHIER NEIGHBOURHOODS) SCHEME IN EVINGTON

After ITN Central Live visited local people who were concerned about Evington's SSHN scheme this June 2022, I wrote to both the protesters and Evington's three councillors (Cllr. Deepak Bajaj, Cllr. Sue Hunter and Cllr. Shalid Khan) to ask for their comments on a short video of ITV news' visit.

In summary, the local residents made the following points:

- \* The SSHN in Evington will reduce access to and from residents' homes on Davenport Road, Greystone Ave., Newhaven Road and Mickleton Drive, causing great difficulties.
- \* It will force residents and local traffic onto already congested/dangerous main roads with greater risks for public safety.
- \* It will increase pollution with longer car journeys.
- \* Cars on the school run will need to turn around, putting pedestrians at more risk.
- \* Essential workers will experience significant problems due to the planned barriers.
- \* The Evington scheme was designed without the input of the community.
- \* No prior notice of the plans were given to the public.
- \* Residents living in the streets involved only received communication in English.
- \* These measures will be in place 24/7 for the year, but residents have no issues with traffic other than at the school run times.

Evington councillors replied making the following points:

- \*We were invited to a protest meeting against the Council, not a meeting to engage with residents about the issues. Therefore it would be invidious to attend.
- \*Roads are being used as 'rat runs' to avoid Goodwood Road.
- \*In 2014/2015 local residents petitioned for traffic calming measures.

\*The experiment is a direct result of pressure from local residents.

\*Many other residents support this scheme.

\*Cllr. Adam Clarke is committed to scrapping the scheme if it causes more difficulties, based on evidence.

\*We are carrying out the wishes of residents to save lives and act in the best interests of residents.

Helen Pettman

Dear Editor,

### RE: SAFER STREETS, HEALTHIER NEIGHBOURHOODS IN EVINGTON

I have written the following letter to Sir Peter Soulsby, City Mayor.

... As you know, I was elected on a manifesto that promised to create towns and cities in which walking and cycling are the best choices. The manifesto also promised to improve children's health and well-being, with street designs providing freedom for physically active outdoor play, while ensuring that the zones around our schools are safer and have cleaner air.

Many residents have contacted me to raise concerns over the amount of traffic and dangerous driving on the streets of Leicester East, and so measures designed to increase safety on the roads in the constituency, tackle air pollution and the climate emergency are very welcome. However, while I support aims of improved air quality and reduced traffic that underpin Safer Streets, Healthier Neighbourhoods, I am concerned that similar Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) schemes have proved to be divisive when implemented elsewhere.

To be successful, Evington's Safer Streets, Healthier Neighbourhoods plan must fully engage and benefit all residents. The scheme will fail if it simply displaces, rather than reduces traffic, creating congestion on roads that previously flowed freely.

Since the Council's consultation letter went out, I have received correspondence from residents raising the following concerns about the scheme:

The closure of Greystone Avenue and Davenport Road risks pushing traffic onto Uppingham Road, creating congestion on Goodwood Road, which may make travel more difficult for residents while causing additional pollution from engine idling.

Greystone Avenue is currently used as a through-road by emergency services. If this road becomes a 'cul-de-sac', it may add time onto these essential journeys.

The proposals may increase journey times for people living in Evington, adding pressure and additional stress to their daily commute.

The local bus service is considered too expensive, infrequent and insufficient to encourage people to stop using their cars, and residents would like to see improvements to these services before roads are closed.

Residents have suggested other means of calming traffic, such as introducing traffic lights onto Greystone Avenue, Uppingham Road, Westmeath Avenue, Goodwood Road and Wicklow Drive junction.

There are concerns that the residents of Evington have not been adequately consulted prior to the scheme's announcement. At a meeting on Gamel Road, set up by the organisers of the Safer Streets Healthier Neighbourhoods plan, residents expressed considerable concerns about the scheme. A petition has been signed by 484 people.

I would be very grateful if you could explain how the Council will address these concerns as it moves forward with the scheme. I will continue to work with residents and Leicester City Council to ensure that plans for improving the constituency's transport infrastructure benefit all residents, while addressing existing concerns. I look forward to discussing this matter with you further.

Claudia Webbe MP Member of Parliament for Leicester East.

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## MY WORD POETRY GROUP



An open evening organised by the My Word Poetry group, (which meets on Tuesdays from 4.00pm to 5.30pm at Cafe Blends on Downing Drive) delightfully demonstrated that there is no theme too small or too big for poetry.

There was a wide range of subjects framed in poetical form: personal memories, dedications to loved ones, gardens, nature and pets. There was much humour and bonhomie during a sunny evening. These poets are more than budding, they are flowering with creativity. Just consider these metaphors for a while and you will feel their aptness: the literal translation of the Greek-origin word 'anthology' is 'a collection of flowers'. They have produced a calendar and an anthology with all profits going to support 'Loros'. Thanks to Zahir at Cafe Blends who hosted and provided delicious light refreshments.

New members at the regular sessions will find a warm welcome. If you thing you couldn't write poetry, come along and join others who've now discovered they can!

Tel: Dorothy on 07804495527

## EXHIBITION

An exhibition which celebrates '50 years of Ugandan Asians in Leicester' is now open at Leicester Museum and Art Gallery on New Walk.

## AMALIA YOUNG RETURNS TO EVINGTON TO PLAY IN A VIOLIN RECITAL 8TH OCTOBER 2022



Violinist Amalia Young, currently London-based but raised in Evington, will return to St Denys Church in October to perform a recital of Georg Philipp Telemann's 12 Fantasias for solo violin. Completed in 1735, this set of Fantasias is a collection of playful and eccentric pieces influenced by an eclectic mix of 18th century genres, including folk dances of the time. You are warmly invited to experience a colourful journey through the musical imagination through Telemann's adept and creative writing for the unaccompanied violin.

Amalia enjoys a varied career as a performer of classical and experimental music. She trained at the Royal Academy of Music, and has recently completed a Masters degree in music performance at the University of Oxford.

This concert will take place on 8th October 2022 at 7.30pm, at St Denys Church, Evington. Tickets are £8, which will include a glass of wine or a soft drink.

Contact [amaliayoung12@gmail.com](mailto:amaliayoung12@gmail.com) or call 07523361545 to reserve a ticket; tickets may also be bought at the door.

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### 19th Leicester (Evington) Scout Group

We have three sections according to age: Beavers for ages 6 to 8, Cubs for ages 8 to 10, and Scouts for ages 10 to 14, all meeting at our HQ on Davenport Road. If your child is interested in joining you can contact us in any of the following ways:

Phone - 2209017

Email - [info@evingtonscouts.org.uk](mailto:info@evingtonscouts.org.uk)

Facebook - search for Evington Scouts and send us a private message.

### Evington Women's Institute

Second Tuesday in the month 2.00pm - 4.00pm. Evington Village Hall.

Tel: Barbara Garlick on 07713804407.

### Tai Chi

Thursdays 10.00-11.30am.

Outside in Evington Park, or indoors at Mayflower Methodist Church, depending on weather. £8.25 per session.

For further information, and to confirm venue, contact Laraine on

Email: [larainetucker@icloud.com](mailto:larainetucker@icloud.com), or

Tel: 07779434742.

### My Word Poetry Group

Tuesdays at Blends Cafe Downing Drive 4.00pm to 5.30pm Tel: 07804495527. See article on page 12.

### Evington Park Bowls Club

Monday 5.30 - 7.30pm.

Tuesdays 10.30am - 12.30pm and 2.00 - 4.00pm.

Wednesdays 2.00 - 4.00pm.

### Evington Local History and Heritage Group

This group will meet again in September at St Denys Parish Centre at 7.00pm on the second Thursday of the month. Further details from Chris Hossack 2415153.

### Evington Social Club

Wednesdays 10.15am to 12.15pm. Evington House, Evington Park. Tel: 0751 4302570. See advert below.

### St. Denys Church LE5 6FA

5th August 11.00 - 12.30pm, Teddy Bear's Picnic in St. Denys Church and Parish Centre.

2nd September 10.00 - 11.00am, Musical Toddler Group meets in the parish centre and continues weekly.

2nd, 16th and 30th September 7.00pm, Youth Club meet in the parish centre.

### Regular weekly services at St. Denys:

Sundays at 10.00am - traditional, alternating weekly between Matins with hymns and Holy Communion.

Sundays at 3.00pm - informal, family friendly, alternating weekly between holy communion and more modern/contemporary worship.

### Summer and Autumn Festival of Music in St. Denys:

Saturday 3rd September 3.00pm, music performed by the highly talented Erica Lees-Smith and Charlotte Bradley - saxophone, piano and singing! Refreshments provided.

Saturday 10th September 7.00pm, Organ Recital given by Simon Headley ARCO, formerly Leicester Cathedral's organist. Refreshments provided.

Saturday 24th September, 3.00pm (tbc), Penny Campling and friends - piano and singing. Refreshments provided.

Saturday 8th October, 7.30pm, professional violinist Amalia Young performs the 12 Fantasias for solo violin by Georg Philipp Telemann. Refreshments provided. For more details contact Qyan, Arnachellum (Administrator) 07803828454.

### Evington Garden Club

16th August 'Garden Joys' with Stephen Ashpole.

20th Sept. 'Pumpkin Extravaganza' with Russell Attwood.

18th Oct. 'Bulbs for Spring' with Angela Holland.

The club meets on the afternoons of the third Tuesday of the month in the Village Hall at 2.30pm. Doors open 2.00pm.

Visitors £2. Annual Membership £12.00.

For any queries please phone Peter Jackson on (0116) 2735487.

### Evington House Yoga at Mayflower Methodist Church Ethel Road, Leicester LE5 5E

Mondays 6.00 - 7.00pm with Manjula (Ladies only)

Wednesday 6.00 - 7.00pm with Manjula (Ladies only) For more information tel: Manjula on 07448 7332696. [manjula.odedra.yoga@gmail.com](mailto:manjula.odedra.yoga@gmail.com)

### Nordic Walking

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[ministryofnordicwalks@gmail.com](mailto:ministryofnordicwalks@gmail.com) or phone Penny on 07502 576764.

### Bhangra Classes

Mondays: At Judgemeadow Community College for adults and children.

Saturdays: at Hamilton Com. College for adults.

Tel: Preet on 07525153284 for more information.

### Evington Rummikub Club

Mondays from 10.30am to 12.30pm in Evington Park House. £1.50 per meeting. Rummikub is a tile based game for 2 to 4 players combining elements of other games. It can be easily taught.

For more information contact Lesly Biro on 2419096.

### Goodwood Evangelical Church Gamel Road Leicester LE5 6TD

11.00am. Sunday Service. All Welcome.

4.00pm on the first Sunday of each month - Messy Church. All ages.

Wednesdays 9.30am - 11.30pm. The Ark. Parents, carers and pre-schoolers.

Thursdays 7.45pm Prayer Meeting.

For further details contact Stephen Taylor on 079022946004.

[www.goodwoodevangelicalchurch.org.uk](http://www.goodwoodevangelicalchurch.org.uk)

### Evington Family History Group

Wednesdays 10.00am to 12 noon. St. Denys Parish Centre. Tel: 2764409.

Do you want to know who your ancestors were and what they did for a living? Did they serve in the forces? Are you interested in their social history? If so, a group has been set up so that we can explore our family history and offer mutual support when we come up against those brick walls.

The group is self-financing so there will be a small charge, payable six weeks in advance. Meetings are at St. Denys Parish Centre, Church Road, Evington, Leicester, LE5 6FA every Wednesday 10.00am to 12.00 noon. Car parking is available in the Church Car Park opposite the Church.

For more details contact Judith Walmsley on 2764409.

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## Evington Social Club



**Why not come along and join us!**

**When: Every Wednesday 10.15am - 12.15pm**

**For games and lots of conversation and refreshments**

**Cost: £1.00 per person**

**Location: Evington House, Evington Park**

**Contact: Renuka 07514202579**

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## FIVE WAYS THIS OLD DUFFER WILL TRY TO REDUCE HIS CARBON FOOTPRINT IN 2022

### Part Four – Invest in the Future Jeff Henry

As a member of a group of society sometimes referred to as 'Baby Boomers', I'm conscious of the fact that I have taken full advantage of the opportunities that have come the way of people my age. As a result, I own my own home and a fairly new car and have saved well enough to be able to retire before the age of sixty.

I know not everyone – including many other 'boomers' – is in this position. This leaves me feeling a keener sense of responsibility to invest in ways that will help reduce the effects of climate change on future generations.

There is one simple, free way we all can do this: check the investments made by companies that provide our banking and insurance and those we invest our savings in. If they invest heavily in fossil fuels, switch to someone who doesn't. Consider switching to an energy company that invests directly in renewable energy supplies, rather than maximising profits for shareholders.

Secondly, anyone who has money to invest, put it into solar panels and a battery. If not on your own house, maybe a close family member if they can't afford their own.

If you'd prefer a lower level of investment, how about getting someone in to check your house insulation and get it upgraded if necessary? This home improvement will pay for itself in only a few years.

For those of us lucky enough to be able to buy a car: look to buy an electric – you might well find it is way better to drive and cheaper to buy over time than petrol/diesel, meanwhile the charging point situation is improving. Maybe start, as I have, with a hybrid and immediately improve your fuel consumption.

Finally - again if you're able to afford it - when your current heating system needs an upgrade, why not heating to an electric heat pump? With your solar cells and battery, you'll probably have electricity to spare to power it for free.

In each example above, there's an investment to be made but in every case, it will save money in the long run. Above all it should reduce our reliance on fossil fuels, reduce pollution and make a significant contribution towards tackling climate change.

So, here's my plan (and I know that not everyone can afford it but we'll do what we can):

Find out whether my bank, insurance, and savings companies invest in fossil fuels and switch to those that don't (done);

Switch to an energy company that invests profits in renewable sources of energy, rather than shareholders (done - Ecotricity);

Invest in solar panels and a battery (done and it's amazing!)

Get my home insulation checked and upgraded where necessary (done);

Set a date by which I'll switch to an electric car (2025) – maybe get a hybrid in the interim (done);

Plan to upgrade my central heating to a heat pump (2025 when my gas boiler passes ten years old)

### OUTSIDE EVINGTON VILLAGE HALL



Children from Mayflower Primary School came with their mother to Evington in Bloom's buffet lunch and are in front of Evington Village Hall with Claudia Webbe, MP and Daxa Patel, an Evington in Bloom volunteer.

Mayflower Primary School and Judgemeadow Community College were nominated by Evington in Bloom for the Best School Garden competition, which was also, but separately, judged by other East Midlands in Bloom's judges.

## EVINGTON IN BLOOM JUDGES WENT TO SEDGEBROOK COMMUNITY GARDEN



Some volunteers from the Sedgbrook Community Garden group in front of one of three new perennial flower beds.

Volunteers have completed the planting of the flower beds and are eagerly anticipating the arrival of the picnic bench to complete that part. The wildflower meadow area had been coming along quite nicely with planning to add a few more plug plants to those that were becoming established. Unfortunately, an employee who normally mows parks in a different area was drafted to Sedgbrook to cover an ill colleague and didn't realise that the meadow was part of the plan and mowed it flat. Never mind, we were planning to resow in September anyway.

Meanwhile the mowed paths have been measured and mapped to provide a walking route of about 500 metres. Walk ten time round for your 5k or five times round quickly for a thirty-minute brisk walk as recommended by the NHS. Alternatively, take a relaxing walk and talk with family or neighbours.

The judges learned that the Sedgbrook Community Garden volunteers wished to increase the number of local people that visit and use the facilities on Sedgbrook Open Space. The judges liked the way the volunteers had worked constructively with the council parks department to produce a site agreement. The way local residents had got involved was highly praised, as were the range of planting and the colour schemes in the flower beds. The judges wished the volunteers good luck with the future plans of developing the wild flower meadow and woodland area and encouraging people to walk the mown paths.

Jeff Henry (Trustee of Friends of Evington/Evington in Bloom and Volunteer leader for this project).

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## EVINGTON IN BLOOM'S JUDGING DAY

Being invited to help with the judging day for Evington in Bloom was a pleasure. It meant I could visit Evington and talk to people about their contribution, and to take lots of photographs of the judges as they toured the sites where gardeners are making a valuable contribution to civic life in Evington.



As I got off the number twenty-two bus, Helen was busy at work cleaning an information board. I was soon pushing a wheelbarrow over to the library for Helen Pettman to sweep around the planters. As a competition, Evington is judged not only on the floral arrangements, but on the upkeep and maintenance of the environment around them.

When the judges arrived, we had to contend with a pigeon that wanted to build a nest above where they had been asked to sit. The pigeon was bringing one twig at a time over, and it looked determined that this would be where it was going to nest. Let's hope that this was a lucky sign that the day was going well.

Then we were off on the tour with the judges. Guided by Chris Hossack, we headed to the War Memorial first, then around into the Village Green. We were lucky with the weather, which was sunny but cooler than it had been. Chris was explaining how Friends of Evington have an arrangement to help maintain planters, flower beds and verges around the neighbourhood, and that different approaches are taken, such as the wild-flower embankment leading from the Village Green to the Cedars pub.

We stopped off at the pub, not for a beer, but to look at how the pub's pond and its surrounding vegetation has become a feature that entertains the diners. Then we pressed on towards Evington Park. On the way looking at the planters outside the shops, which give the Main Street a much-needed lift – even if the visiting cars and delivery vans do tend to block the pavement.



Visit the new website at [www.evingtonecho.co.uk](http://www.evingtonecho.co.uk)



At the pond at the Cedars

Our walk through the grounds of the park up to Evington House took in the bowling green, and then on to Burnaby Gardens and the fruit garden. Chris even had the opportunity to give directions to some passing ramblers.



While the judges had a short-driven tour to Sedgebrook Open Space, I headed down to the village hall, because the next leg of the tour was to St Denys to view the Jubilee Garden, and to see how magnificent Piggy's Hollow looks, with the wind blowing through the grass and the branches of the trees.



While the judges went on to visit the 'best' front garden, I went back to the village hall, where afternoon tea was being prepared. Harkesh did a magnificent job of providing a proper tea, with sandwiches, tea and coffee, and as this is Leicester, some very tasty samosas. It was lovely to see so many people sitting and chatting, and enjoying the summer afternoon.



We had a short message of thanks and support from Claudia Webbe MP, who remarked that she thought that the community spirit shown by being involved with Evington In Bloom is an example to the rest of the city.

Afterwards, when I was sitting on the bus heading back into Leicester, I looked through the photos that I'd taken, and felt that we have to do more than just talk about civic pride and fostering a sense of belonging in our communities, and that projects like Evington In Bloom are a great example of how our intentions can be put into practice. I felt very welcome.

Dr. Rob Watson  
[robwatson@decentered.co.uk](mailto:robwatson@decentered.co.uk)



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