

December
2021



Leicestershire
County Council

Communities
& Wellbeing

Volunteering News

Seasons Greetings

"Can I take this opportunity to say a big thank you for all your volunteering contributions in what has been a very difficult year. You have helped to make a very real difference to people and communities in Leicestershire, and your support is very much appreciated. We look forward to working together into 2022 and wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year."

Mr Dan Harrison,
Chairman, Leicestershire County Council



Volunteers win regional award!

At 9.00am on 1st November 2021 a small group of volunteers and Participation Team staff stepped onto a minibus headed to the British Museum in London to take part in a celebration event. Little did they know they would be returning home as winners of the East Midlands Regional Marsh Trust Award for Volunteers in Museum Learning.

"Do You See What I See?" was the project responsible for scooping this prestigious prize which saw more than 100 people from diverse groups living in and around Loughborough taking a new look at history, heritage and culture.

Volunteers took part in a series of bespoke workshops looking at heritage and culture from their unique viewpoint, as well as sharing their treasured objects. The project culminated in the Do You See What I See? exhibition at Charnwood Museum, which was co-curated by the volunteers.

Judges of the award from the British Museum said, "It is a wonderful example of a project that brings people together, celebrates differences and increases understanding."

The project was also commended on its digital exhibition developed in response to limited access during lockdowns and can be viewed in the new virtual museum at <https://digital.onetoneddevelopment.org/charnwood>

Congratulations to all the volunteers, staff and partners involved in this fantastic project!

To find out more about the project check out the DYSWIS? film at

www.youtube.com/watch?v=I1Y6pQxNfzU

"We are delighted with our achievement and want to do more. We feel more comfortable and very confident about taking part in future projects like this."

- Anila, Volunteer
Anand Mangal Ladies group

"Receiving this prestigious award has been the highlight of my year! The DYSWIS? Project has made a real difference to me as it has enabled me to share my love of Sooty with other people, as well as helping improve my social skills and meet new people!"

- Esme, Volunteer

"It was an amazing adventure... The DYSWIS? project allowed us to look at objects from an individual point of view... I felt accepted by this country and its people. It is difficult for a Pole to exist in a foreign land, and here is such a blessing. I am very happy with this success and I think this is just the beginning."

- Jola, Volunteer



Complete our survey! Great prizes on offer!

The Bosworth Battlefield Medieval Festival takes place over a weekend in late August to commemorate the anniversary of the battle which changed English history.

Have you ever visited Bosworth Battlefield's Medieval Festival? Maybe you're thinking of visiting in the future? Maybe you've never heard of it but are intrigued? Share your thoughts in our survey

and be in with a chance of winning an annual family pass to either Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre or the 1620s House & Garden, or £30 worth of book vouchers!

Follow the link to take part: <https://surveys.leics.gov.uk/snapwebhost/s.asp?k=163765398526> or scan the QR code below.



BOSWORTH
BATTLEFIELD HERITAGE CENTRE
1485 TITHE BARN
AND COUNTRY PARK



Research Volunteers are back at Melton Carnegie Museum!

After a break due to covid, we are happy to announce that this month we reintroduced the Research Volunteers group at Melton Carnegie Museum. Following a successful recruitment, we are also happy to welcome five new volunteers to the team!

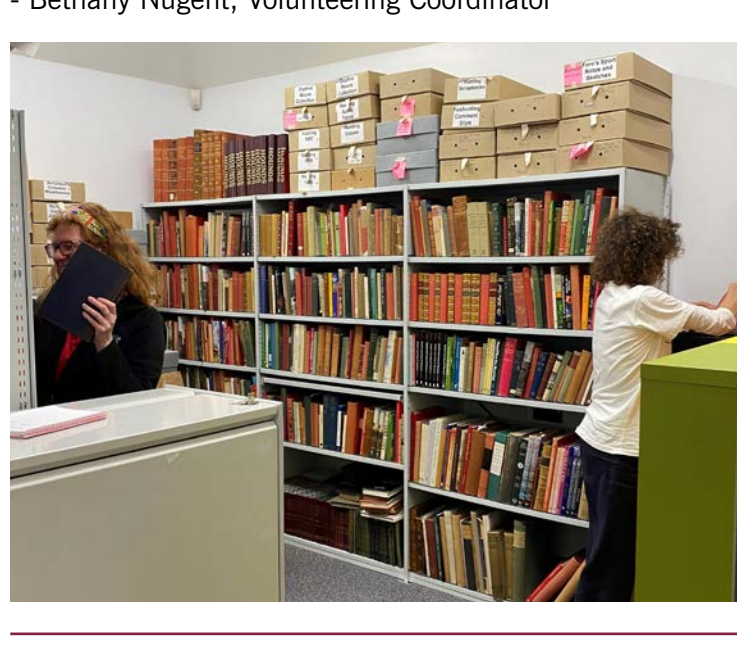
"The amount of interest we had for this role was fantastic. After only advertising the opportunity online for one day, we received twenty expressions of interest. This really highlights that despite the challenges around covid there is still a real desire from local people to volunteer; whether that be to gain new skills, meet new people or contribute to their local heritage."

- Bethany Nugent, Volunteering Coordinator

The group meet once a week and conduct research using the museum's Local Studies Room, as well as through online record sites such as Ancestry and the British Newspaper Archives. The Research Volunteers have already started their first project, looking at royal connections to Melton Mowbray, for an exciting exhibition celebrating the Royal Jubilee in 2022.

If you know of any interesting royal stories related to Melton Mowbray, we would love to hear them.

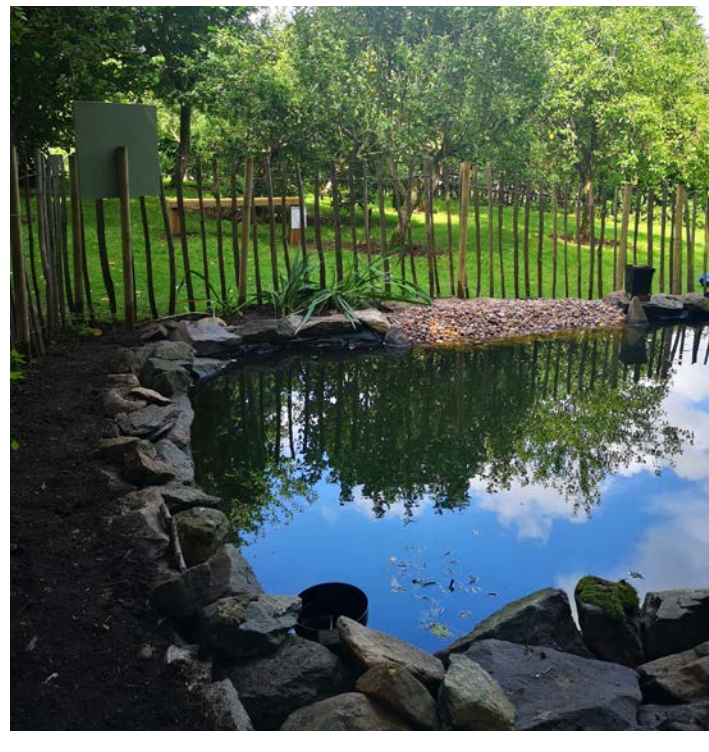
Get in touch at meltonmuseum@leics.gov.uk.



**MELTON
CARNEGIE
MUSEUM**

Wildlife pond at 1620s Manor House - looking for residents

As winter approaches and another season at the 1620s Manor House comes to an end, the newly created wildlife pond is complete, and we are all looking forward to seeing what new residents it will bring in Spring 2022. Lots of dragonflies and amphibians are anticipated along with a fine display of water, marginal and bog plants all from the period of the house.



**THE
1620s
HOUSE & GARDEN**
at Donington le Heath

Inspired by History

The creation of a wildlife pond was first discussed in the summer of 2019, whilst enjoying a coffee at the on-site Barn Café. One of the garden volunteers was reading an information sheet about the life of a young boy living in the house in the 1600s and there was mention of several dykes running through the gardens which emptied into a lake. The young boy spoke about catching eels and fish to use in the kitchen.

The current team of garden volunteers are always looking for ways to enhance the garden in line with our understanding of life in the 1600s and whilst it would not be possible to re-create dykes and a lake, we certainly could create a wildlife pond. Permission was therefore sought out and granted in late autumn 2019.

The making of the Wildlife Pond

Just as the first barrows of soil were being removed covid struck and the project was unfortunately delayed by a year. Work began again in the spring of 2021 and the pond was finally filled with water in August 2021 – just in time for plants to be put in place before the winter months.

Quite a large amount of soil needed to be removed to create the pond and much of this was used to create a viewing mound with its own guard rail. Local stone has been sourced from within the grounds of the manor house and used to provide a firm edge to the pond and to create a landscape. The pond also features a beach area for birds and mammals to take a drink.

The pond now needs a couple of years to mature and for the plants that have been put in place to grow. We are looking forward to seeing a wealth of wildlife making use of this new feature and we will be keeping a log of all species spotted. We hope that visitors to the house and gardens will appreciate this new feature.

- Roland Cox, 1620s Garden Volunteer

Bringing people together through great literature!

**ISR
LEICESTERSHIRE
Shared Reading**

Leicestershire County Council's Library Service, supports a thriving network of 'Make Friends, with a Book' Shared Reading groups. These groups bring people together through great literature to talk, laugh and share!

Hear from Jessica, about her experience as a Shared Reading volunteer.

"Hi! My name is Jess Pascal and I'm an undergraduate student of Modern Languages at the University of Leicester. I did my Read to Lead training in September 2021 and have recently started co-leading one of the online groups. Shared reading is such a great way to meet people and get out of the 'uni bubble'. Everyone I've met from the organisation so far has been really kind and helpful, and I feel completely supported in my development. I'm learning a lot from this experience, and the training I had before starting was excellent, giving me the confidence I needed to begin. I would absolutely recommend shared reading to anyone considering it."

How to get involved!

Volunteer with us!

Do you enjoy reading for pleasure?

Confident reading out loud to a group?

Interested in people and their stories?

We're looking for volunteers to support our Ashby, Lutterworth and Zoom groups.

Come and join a group!

Just drop in and enjoy listening to a story or poem - there's no homework, and no pressure to read or talk.

Visit our website to find out where our groups are based - we even hold sessions over Zoom!

We look forward to welcoming you.

For more information about volunteering or attending a group visit

www.leicestershiresharedreading.org

Introducing Better Impact

This month we have launched a new volunteering database called Better Impact. This is where your personal details and relevant information linked to your volunteer roles will be safely stored. You'll even be given a login to access the Better Impact database, allowing you to update your own information and manage your own 'volunteer profile'.

To coincide with the launch of this database, during December we will be asking volunteers to fill out a short audit form to ensure the details we hold are accurate and up to date.

Everyone will need to complete this audit- but don't worry we hope we have made it as easy for you as possible and it should only take 15 minutes!

Thank you in advance for your support with this and we look forward to introducing to you some of the great features that Better Impact has to offer!



Thank you to all volunteers for your ongoing support and dedication during 2021. We look forward to welcoming you back in the New Year and wish you all a Happy Christmas

If you have any questions, please feel free to email Nicola Levin, Senior Volunteering Manager at nicola.levin@leics.gov.uk

**Your community
Your opportunity**

Keep in touch and stay safe

**Culture
Leicestershire**
Heritage, Libraries, Collections and Learning

**MELTON
CARNEGIE
MUSEUM**

BOSWORTH
BATTLEFIELD HERITAGE CENTRE
1485 TITHE BARN
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**1620s
HOUSE & GARDEN**
at Donington le Heath

**charnwood
museum**

**Creative
Learning
Services**

**Harborough
Museum**

The Record Office
for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland

LIBRARY
KNOWLEDGE • DISCOVERY • ENTERTAINMENT