

Pride of the Borough, Oadby & Wigston

EMiB Gold Award 2019



Monthly Newsletter April 2020

Welcome to the Pride of the Borough monthly newsletter this April morning in what only can be described as the strangest of times. I hope that I find you all well and most importantly safe.

Having just passed the Easter weekend, instead of preparing for a long bank holiday weekend we found ourselves confined to our homes with everyone doing their best to help stem the spread of this dreaded coronavirus or as it is now termed COVID-19. I don't know about you, but I had never heard of it 6 months ago, then it appeared in China and even then, I had no concerns that it would even get to our shores let alone across the globe. Now we have all these new phrases and buzzwords in our daily vocabulary - lockdown, social distancing, flatten the curve, fluid situation, unprecedented, flatten the curve and this is for me the best one I've heard so far immunocompromised. I had a job working that one out because the specialists just throw these words into the conversation like we all know exactly what they mean. So, apparently immunocompromised means "having an impaired or compromised immune system". Got it? Well nearly. Ok try again People might be immunocompromised due to an underlying condition or due to a medication they are taking for a condition. Being immunocompromised may put a person at a higher risk for COVID-19.

Right that's your science lesson for this month since I am sure that you have probably had enough. However, we really must heed the advice we are being given and we will come out of this to what I am hoping will be a "new normal".

Now, back to Easter and the big question **Why do we have Easter eggs?** Here's a few bullets to help:

- Today, many associate Easter with Easter eggs. The egg has many interpretations, but it is known as an ancient symbol of new life, and it has been associated with festivals celebrating spring.
- From a Christian perspective, it is believed Easter eggs represent Jesus' resurrection. The outside of the egg looks dead, but inside there is new life, which is going to break out.
- Orthodox Christians dye boiled eggs red to represent the blood of Christ, according to Anne Jordan's book, Christianity.
- The tradition can be traced to early Christians of Mesopotamia, and from there it spread into Russia, and later into Europe through the churches.
- Chocolate Easter eggs became popular because Easter is the end of the Lenten fast.

So, guys I hope you have a Happy Easter and of course it goes without saying STAY SAFE.

Now onto the Pride of the Borough business news for this month and things you should be looking at in your garden.

Membership Numbers

At the time of writing the 2020 membership, currently has **1022** members signed up.

Unfortunately, all the outlets where you can pick up a membership card are currently closed and we are also unable to access postal applications at this time.



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For new card holder's information these are

The Elected Officers of PotB

Chairman: Simon Lucas

Treasurer: Sarah Dickinson

Secretary: Mike Connelly

contact details can be found at the foot of this page.

Participating Businesses April 2020

At the end of February, our records are showing 54 businesses offering discounts to Pride of the Borough members. If you know of a business which would like to be part of our scheme, please let us know.

The Participating Businesses locations are as follows:

Oadby: 26 businesses

Wigston: 23 businesses

South Wigston: 5 businesses

A change to merchant offers during this COVID-19 period comes from

Epic Accessories:

"Due to the current situation we would like to offer free local delivery to all Pride of the Borough card holders if they live within 5 miles of the shop. However, the current 10% discount offer will be suspended, as we encourage everyone to stick to the government guide lines"

Additionally, we have a new business being added to our Participating Businesses.

Black Owl - your digital experts for homes, schools and businesses

Covering IT and digital support in **Leicester** and **Leicestershire** are offering:
15% off remote desktop and laptop support sessions.
Normally £20.00 / hour.

For further details contact www.blackowl.co.uk or phone 0116 4561024

For the full listing of the participating businesses [Click Here](#)

3rd Saturday Monthly Working Parties (MWP):

On Saturday March 21st, 2020 saw six (6) volunteers collect 14 bags of litter from A6 ASDA area, Ellis Park, Brabazon Road, and the rear of Marriott House / Cemetery. It ended up a rather shortened day and of course socially separated but well done to those who attended.

In line with government advice all MWP activities, maintenance of town centre planters and projects that we had in cooperation with Oadby & Wigston Council for the near future have been suspended. As soon as the government relaxes the social isolation restrictions and conditions begin to return to normal we will restart them.

Keep a check on our website Events Calendar for further advice and updates.

[PotB Monthly Events - Click Here](#)

Take Pride

The Pride of the Borough new Campaign THINK LITTER continues to encourage residents of our Borough NOT TO DROP LITTER.

The working group for this initiative is planning some interesting projects for this coming year so continue to watch this space.



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Pride of the Borough Floral Display Competition 2020

Due to the restrictions PotB have decided that it is impractical to organize and run the Local Floral Competition as we have done for the past 14 years. There are parts of the competition that are very difficult to manage for example the school entries, therefore it has been decided that the Floral Competition in its normal format will be suspended for this year.

However, we still want our Borough to look good and cared for and for residents to enjoy their garden. We are therefore going to simply highlight front gardens that in our opinion look good and worthy of a mention. Our normal judging is scheduled for July which is where we are hoping that the worst of this situation will be over plus judges can view front gardens from outside and so have no need to have any contact with residents. Sometime in July we will visit the gardens that we have been informed about. There will not be an overall winner but feel it important that amongst all the gloom we all keep smiling and as we all know a lovely looking and well-tended garden is something, we can all be proud of. Gardening is also good exercise for you!

If you would like to be involved in a greater Floral Community spirit please let us know at chairman@potb.org.uk by the end of June.

East Midlands in Bloom 2020

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



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An update from the RHS communities' team

RHS had planned to send emails to their various communities with a range of things that they could get stuck into. However, they find themselves in quite a different world, and sadly, getting together with others – to garden or otherwise – is no longer possible.

Like other organisations around the world, the RHS has sadly had to postpone and cancel many events and competitions, including the UK Britain in Bloom Finals due to the ongoing threat of COVID-19.

They are also advising anyone that has signed up to, or planned to take part in **Grow Social** – the new RHS initiative to bring people together through gardening- postpone their activities. RHS very much hope that that you will have a chance to bring your exciting ideas to life later in the year.

Several of the regional and national bloom competitions, including the **East Midlands in Bloom 2020**, have also been suspended. PotB will monitor the EMiB website for up to date information in our area.

April in your Garden

Now we are well and truly into spring, April is perhaps the most exciting month of the year. The garden suddenly begins to look green and vibrant and the warmer days and lighter evenings help to gladden the heart of every gardener. You can begin to prune early flowering shrubs now and start dividing perennials. Regular weeding and deadheading will keep your garden trim. A few things to do this month are:

Continue watering newly planted trees and shrubs if the weather is dry. Plant evergreen trees and

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shrubs; in cold exposed positions provide protection by putting up windbreaks.

Tie in the new shoots of climbers and prune early-flowering shrubs as well as those grown for large or colourful foliage, such as cotinus. Give grey-leaved shrubs a trim too, in order to keep them bushy. This is also the time to spray roses against blackspot.

Divide perennials, stake the tall-growing ones and protect young growth from slugs and snails. Pot up or transplant self-sown seedlings that you come across in beds and borders and sow annual climbers and grasses.

Deadhead your daffodils and keep on with the weeding. You can pull up all annual weeds by hand but always dig perennial weeds right out. Sow or turf new lawns, if you need to, and feed established lawns during April.

Sow greenhouse crops such as tomatoes and continue sowing and planting vegetables outdoors. Prick out or pot up seedlings before they get congested and grow "leggy".

LAST CHANCE Cut down any dead growth left over winter on perennials, especially grasses, before there is too much risk of damaging new shoots. Plant summer-flowering bulbs and sow sweet peas.

GET AHEAD Prepare trenches for runner beans and plant up hanging baskets if you have space under cover to shelter them for a few more weeks.

Now our monthly **Weather Watch**. On the whole, days are now warming up, but do beware of very cold nights with sharp frosts. These can damage fruit-tree blossom. Clear, warm, balmy weather makes it very tempting to put out young plants, but slightly tender plants still need daytime protection with cloches. Some garden centres (when they re-open) will have bedding plants for sale; don't buy yet unless you have a frost-free greenhouse.

Some strong winds, which should begin to recede now, but in some parts, we may still experience near enough gale force winds but hopefully only for 1-2

days. So, ensure that you have protected young plants.

Even sunshine. The amount of sunshine over the country as a whole is normally regarded as fairly even this month. Up north they may well see 170 hours on average this month whereas the south could well see 180 hours.

Showers. This month is of course well known for its April showers which may well bring forth May flowers, but we all hope that the showers ease off. In and around our area we may see up to 50mm of rain so there is a need to conserve water where we can.

Lastly, and keeping my fingers crossed, in the month of April heavy snow showers are rare. This area is usually quite mild and we rarely get any snow.

For more from the weather specialist [click here](#)

Monthly Topics of Interest

This month's **Topic of Interest** comes from Cherry Lane Garden Centre and is from their gardening series for this year.

Pest and Disease Control

There's nothing more annoying than finding plants you have carefully nurtured are being attacked. Whether by leaf-chomping or sap-sucking insects or diseases that cover the leaves and stems of the plants, pests and diseases are highly detrimental and should be remedied as soon as possible.

Identifying the disease on your plant can be difficult and people often don't notice until the plant is showing definite signs of stress.

Following is a guide to identifying, treating and preventing the most common pests and diseases in your garden.



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Protecting Fruit & Vegetables

Always check the label of any pesticides that you apply to your crop. Note the number of times you can apply it and the interval required between each treatment or harvest. If you cannot find a suitable product, cover with netting or insect protection mesh instead to act as a barrier.

Aphids

The most well-known aphids are Greenfly and Blackfly. They gather around succulent young stems, leaves and buds of many plants, extracting the sap. Aphids can quite easily be seen, however, signs to look for on the plant are curled or contorted young leaves or a black mould on the leaves that feeds off the honeydew produced by the aphids. Wooley aphids (which look like a layer of mould) attack woody stems further down the plant. Treat with a systemic insecticide that works inside the plant and kills the aphids through the sap they consume. If you've had problems with aphids before, keep a close eye on the young growth of Roses, Fruit Trees and other susceptible plants in the early summer.

Caterpillars

These are the pupae of moths and butterflies, most of which do not become a serious pest. They eat holes in the leaves of annuals, herbaceous perennials, brassicas, and some shrubs. Spray the leaves with systemic insecticide where needed or pick and destroy them if this is manageable. Caterpillars can be voracious feeders and a bad infestation can strip plants before it is noticed. Monitor plants that have been attacked in previous years.

Slugs and Snails

Possibly the gardener's worst enemy. They lay waste to perennials such as Hostas, Delphiniums and Irises as well as stripping down bedding and vegetable plants, leaving nothing but the tell-tale slime trails. Damp weather makes it easier for them to get around. Sparingly scatter slug pellets around susceptible plants.

Vine Weevil

Grubs of the vine weevil mostly attack perennial and alpine plants in containers. The adult beetles eat U-

shaped notches in foliage during the summer and leave their eggs which hatch and eat the roots, leaving the foliage above loose and shrivelled on top. Where plants have been attacked, bag up and dispose of the compost in the dustbin and wash the pots out thoroughly. Treat nearby containers with a soluble Vine Weevil Killer. This can also be done in the summer should notches be seen in the leaves.

Powdery Mildew

A common disease of Roses, Honeysuckle, Apples, Asters and many other plants. White powdery mould forms on the surface of the leaf, hampering photosynthesis. Spray with a suitable fungicide.

Black Spot

A disease found commonly on roses that cause large black blotches to appear on leaves from July eventually causing them to go yellow. Use a rose spray in advance of symptoms emerging if possible and clear up fallen rose leaves as the disease can remain on these over winters.

Rust

This is a disease that affects Hollyhocks, Roses, Antirrhinums, Pelargoniums and other shrubs and flowers. Raised pustules usually appear orange or brown on the underside of the leaf. It usually occurs when the plants are overcrowded. Spray with fungicide or pick off the affected leaves.

That's just a few of the most widespread pest and diseases.

Ref: Cherry Lane Garden Centre Information Guide: Pest & Disease Control January 2020

For more expert gardening advice on what to do in March in your garden go to (use CTRL key + click):

<https://www.thompson-morgan.com/what-to-do-in-the-garden-in-april>

<https://www.cherry-lane.co.uk/blog/april-jobs-for-the-month/>



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Out and About in the Borough

Each month we call for volunteers to offer up any articles that they would like us to publish here is an article I spotted on Facebook regarding **Wigston Academy Trust (WAT)**

“Well done to our ADT department as they have produced the first batch of protective masks and delivered some to Birkett House School. Others are bound for those in need in our community.”



Keep up the great work WAT, I'm sure your efforts were very much appreciated.

So, as I close out for this month just one last statement from Wigston College.



Notice of Monthly Meetings for April / May 2020:

The April monthly meeting should have been held on **Monday 13th April 2020** however, due to the current COVID-19 situation **and the restrictions advised by the government** this meeting was cancelled.

At this point we hope that the current situation improves enough to allow the meeting for May, due to be held on **Monday 11th May 2020 at 5.00pm at Brocks Hill Visitor Centre, Washbrook Lane Oadby, LE2 5JJ**, to take place. Again, please check on the Events calendar for confirmation nearer the time.

To see complete calendar for 2020, see ([use CTRL key + click](#)) **Events**

All members - meaning those who have a 2020 membership card are welcome to attend the meeting and are entitled and encouraged to submit motions for discussion.

Call for Volunteers and Articles

Pride of the Borough is an organisation run by volunteers for residents of the Borough of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston. We are always on the lookout for additional people who can spare some time to assist us in the running of the organisation in various categories. If you have some spare time and would like to become a team member helping to keep PotB running, we would be pleased to hear from you.

Additionally, anyone out there who may have an interesting article, recipe, event notice or even a gardening problem etc. that you think that PotB would be interested in publishing and that such item fits in with the PotB philosophy please do not hesitate to send us for our consideration.