BRITAIN IN BLOOM with the RHS

EAST MIDLANDS

IT'S YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD 2022

Name of entry: **KNIGHTON WILD**

Assessed on: 7.9.22

Assessor: Sue Smith
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INTRODUCTION

Knighton Wild was established approximately eight years ago is a voluntary organisation that encourages wildlife in the Knighton Green and the Carisbrooke Road Triangle areas. They undertake management and improvement of the area and record any wildlife activity. The nearby Church has benefitted from improvement works also. This year has been very busy, and many projects and work have been achieved since restarting after the pandemic. The group is very well supported by the local Council Parks Department.

Section A – Community Participation 39/40

Some of the residents in Carisbrooke Road have started looking after and planting the triangle of land in the middle of the road junctions. This has been very successful in bringing together neighbours who now socialise after work party days. The boundary hedge in the church yard has been laid and cut back and this has opened up the vista for passing residents to be able to view the church. Also, a hedge has been laid at a local home for the elderly using the expertise of one of the Knighton Wild participants. Leicester City Council are leading a project and Knighton Wild are partnering them in a project called 'Saving Saffron Brook.' This is funded by the Green Recovery Challenge fund and Knighton Wild has received funding to purchase wildlife monitoring equipment and develop a family friendly nature trail. Family learning events will be held also. Work will be starting soon on the watercourse flowing through Knighton Green to improve three areas - create reed beds, building a seating area and a pond. This will benefit visitors and enable them to enjoy the stream and its wildlife. A community food and allotment project called Saffron Acres had a family friendly nature detective event in July. Knighton Wild helped to deliver this with 100 people attending and undertook organised walks looking at wildlife and pond dipping. Nature trail explanatory boards around the Knighton site have been created by commissioning a local artist to work with children and families to draw and paint the animals and plants on Knighton Green. Knighton Wild also took part in the Christmas Tree Festival at the local church. £500 was donated to Knighton Wild and this will be used to support local greening projects. They will be launching the scheme by inviting people to identify a neglected green space which would benefit from some attention. The key aims of this project would be to improve the environment, provide opportunities for people to engage with nature and to take ideas back for their own gardens. There is an email list of 150 people who are interested in keeping informed about the site and approximately 20 people take part in working party days and litter pick as and when needed.

Section B – Environmental Responsibility 29/30

Bird boxes have been installed in the graveyard of the church. The newly laid hedge at the church will provide a good habitat for wildlife. When the hedge was laid any spare materials, e.g., sticks etc. were used to make a 'dead hedge,' again benefitting wildlife. Monitoring of wildlife and the quality of the water in the brook is regularly undertaken. Nesting boxes are cleaned out regularly and monitoring has discovered that there has been approximately 80% uptake by birds and bats.

Section C – Gardening Achievement 25/30

The newly established Carisbrooke Road Triangle had both wild and garden plants introduced there along with bulbs in the Spring. The flower borders were colourful and were attracting a good array of insects. Passing residents have become interested in these new beds and many good comments have been given. Future plans include extending the beds. On Knighton Green the native perennial bed had many different wild flowers, again attracting insects. There was a wildflower bed also which had been planted with a Dragonfly mix of seeds. This was colourful also. The newly planted trees in a part of Knighton Green are doing very well and brambles and weeds underneath the trees are kept tidy and managed.

Total Marks Awarded 93

Award Level 5 - Outstanding