

Garden News

ALISON McCREA, Foxlowe Garden co-ordinator, reports on the latest green fingered developments.

The pleasant pseudo-spring weather has provided lots of opportunity to visit the garden and, for the older generation, the focal point has been the view of the building development beyond our back fence. The gardeners have supplied a suitable 'viewing platform', which in the fullness of time will morph into a rose-covered wedding arch.

The arch is in place, we are working on the ideal orientation of the hexagonal slabs and the roses are ready to plant. Another innovation, promised earlier but now in use, is the gorgeous carved bench with a dragon on the seat, which has been kindly donated by Andy Collins, a long-standing Foxlowe supporter.

We've all been delighting in the Snowdrops, those wonderful harbingers of Spring, but have been slightly disconcerted by the appearance of other flowers throughout the winter, presumably more indicators of unpredictable climate. However, the warm periods also encourage insects to come out of hibernation, so it's good that some flowers are open to provide the nectar essential for keeping them alive. Urban gardens, managed organically, seem to be increasingly important refuges for insect populations.

With recent scientific reports on the global collapse of insect numbers that could potentially lead to an "ecological Armageddon", we are more than ever determined to do our best to support in-



sect diversity on our patch. Part of this involves encouraging, or at least tolerating in the right places, those weeds such as Dandelions that are essential for insect survival at difficult times. We also try to focus on flowers that still provide nectar, in preference to those highly bred cultivars with double flowers that have had their nectaries bred out and are therefore of no value to insects.

At present our garden volunteers come on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, alternating during the Winter. If anyone would like to join us on other days, we are planning some additional sessions to take place at weekends or early evening in the summer. One of these will be the refurbishment of the Bee Hotel, so all bee and other insect lovers are welcome. Just let me know if you are interested, so that suitable dates can be arranged.

Our next events are two Seed Shares, on Saturday, March 9 and Saturday, April 13, and one Plant Share on Saturday, May 11, all from 11am until 2pm. The Seed Shares will be in the bar and the Plant Share in the garden. Full details are on the Foxlowe website.

To get involved with the garden, contact Alison on 07753 172564.



Gallery News

The next exhibition to be staged in the Foxlowe's Gallery will showcase three artists work.

Penny Beautiman will be displaying her prints, Angela Munslow her sculptures, while Jack Skinner will be exhibiting his paintings and drawings.

The exhibition will run from Saturday, March 9 through to Saturday, May 9. Gallery opening times are Wednesday to Saturday from 10am until 4pm. The Foxlowe Gallery is kindly sponsored by LSGK Accountants Ltd.



Cruso Room is now bursting with lots of creativity

A NEW creative venture has opened within the Foxlowe Arts Centre.

The Fox & Crow Gallery opened its doors in February within the Cruso Room at the Foxlowe Arts Centre.

The new and exciting venture is being run by four local established artists: Sarah Taylor Studio, Cathey Yardley Design, Sarah Jayne Art and Chris Mayhew Photo Art.

They are not only displaying and selling their own work, but also creations by more than 20 other local artists. Cathey and Sarah Jayne studied, or are in the process of studying, for their BA Honours at Leek School of Art College (Buxton & Leek College) whereas Sarah Taylor completed her BA Honours at Staffordshire University.

They have participated in many exhibitions and events locally selling their art-

work and therefore are well known by the residents of Leek for their creative work already.

Their work consists of fused glass, textiles and photography, silver jewellery, watercolours plus felt illustrations and printmaking to create designs from local surroundings onto ceramics and giftware. Chris is now revisiting his love of photography after a long career in engineering, looking to create an 'illogical and chaotic viewpoint' through Photo Art.

Other creations on display at the Fox & Crow, which are by a host of local creatives, includes a mixture of paintings, handmade ceramics, linocut and dry point etchings, wire artwork, animal portraits in watercolours and charcoals plus some wonderful textile art and accessories.

The gallery is not only selling actual art-

work, but gifts created by them to suit individual tastes and pockets. The gallery owners aim to make artwork affordable and accessible at the same time as promoting local artists and designers.

The Fox & Crow is open from Monday to Saturday from 10am until 4pm and every first Sunday of the month between 10am and 3pm. For further details go online to www.thefoxandcrowgallery.co.uk.

