

Help protect reserve

WILDLIFE-lovers are being called to join a brand new group to help protect the River Arrow Nature Reserve.

The Friends of the River Arrow Nature Reserve is being formed by volunteer nature reserve wardens Stephen Godfrey and Rebecca White. And they are appealing for local people with an interest in nature to come forward and offer their services.

A meeting to kick off the Friends of the River Arrow Nature Reserve was held last week in a bid to rally supporters for the nature reserve in Alcester.

But there is still a chance to join in the unique environmental project.

Local residents are already highly involved with the management of the reserve with the site being visited by local volunteers on a monthly basis to carry out a range of works including tree planting and scrub clearance.

The Friends of the River Arrow Nature Reserve hopes to expand on this.

Mr Godfrey told the paper the main aims of the group would be to spread the word about the reserve and encourage more participation in its work.

He explained: "Members of the new group will be kept in touch

with news of events and activities at the reserve and will have the opportunity to get involved with conservation and monitoring projects."

The group will also work closely with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, which manages the reserve, he added.

The nature reserve was created in April 1993 by Stratford District Council and English Nature. In 2002, it was enlarged with the incorporation of Abbey Fields and comprises 4.71 hectares of land adjoining the River Arrow close to the centre of Alcester.

Although the site is small, it contains a wide diversity of habitats including river margins, ponds, grassland, woodland, tall herb and hedgerows.

It forms a pleasant landscape containing a mosaic of habitats typical in lowland Britain, but which are slowly disappearing.

Amongst the flora and fauna are the locally rare small teasel and kingfishers. The meadows are let under an agricultural tenancy to a local farmer who uses them for grazing as part of the reserve's grassland management.

For more information on the Friends of the River Arrow Nature Reserve or to join call Stephen Godfrey on 01789 765536.



Making waves – Dr Adrian Madge, Stephen Godfrey, Mary Madge, Sandra Covey, and Rita Godfrey are calling for people to join the Friends of the River Arrow Nature Reserve. 48.06.029. nc

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Pensioner's death remains a mystery

Court hears woman had been depressed

MYSTERY still surrounds the death of a woman who drowned in the River Avon at Bidford earlier this year, an inquest has heard.

The body of 69-year-old Mavis Anderson, from Studley, was discovered by police officers on February 4, after she was reported missing by concerned family members.

An inquest held at Leamington Town Hall on Tuesday (December 5) heard that Mrs Anderson had suffered terrible depression after her husband's death in 1998.

In a statement from her son, Peter Anderson, the inquest heard she lived in a care home in Bidford.

She had survived five separate suicide attempts – all from sleeping pills – until late 2005 and had also developed a drinking problem.

PC Murray said officers were called to the stretch of river after her car was discovered nearby. They found Mrs Anderson face down in the water, fully clothed.

Inquest report by Ben Lindon

He explained there was a slip of paper with her address and a friend's telephone number written on it, there was also an empty blister pack of anti-depressant medication.

According to officers there was no indication where she had entered the water and no sign of any struggle.

Dr Smeyatsky told the inquest he treated Mrs Anderson for depression some years before and added her suicide attempts had been an 'acute response to her husband's death.'

"She was suffering from loneliness and a lack of support. She had taken to drinking heavily and told me she suffered from hopelessness, isolation and guilt over her husband's death."

A post mortem revealed Mrs Anderson died from drowning. There was no alcohol and some medication in her system, but no evidence of an overdose.

Coroner Michael Coker said there was no evidence of suicide, accident or suspicious circumstances and recorded an open verdict.

Speaking to the family he said: "We have tried to answer the question of how she came to be in the river but there is just not enough evidence here, you have all our sympathies."

WHAT'S ON AT 'THE SWAN' THIS CHRISTMAS

Christmas Menu

Now available from 8th December - 24th December (lunchtime & evenings)

3 courses - £12.95 - vegetarian dish available on request

2 courses - £9.95

Main course only - £7.95

Christmas Day Lunch - 1.30pm - Bookings now being taken (limited spaces available)

6 Course menu - plus bucks fizz on arrival - £49.95 (adults)

Children £24.95 Vegetarian dish available on request

Entertainment for December in our non-smoking function room:-

Friday 8th December - Karaoke Night

Wednesday 13th December - 'Paul Da Vinci' (the original voice of 'Sugar Baby Love')

Friday 15th December - Karaoke Night

Wednesday 20th December - Henley 'X Factor' competition with cash prizes - £50.00 - 1st prize, £25.00 - 2nd prize, £10.00 - 3rd prize

Friday 22nd December - 70's/80's Disco/Karaoke

Sunday 24th December - Disco/Karaoke

Friday 29th December - Karaoke

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Wednesday 13th December

Annual Christmas Turkey Show and Sale
Sales of live, long legged and dressed turkeys
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Wednesday 20th December

Sales of long legged and dressed turkeys
Sale Time: 12 Noon

Saturday 23rd December

Final Pre-Christmas sales of long legged and dressed turkeys
Sale Time: 10am

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT
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