

Neighbourhood News



from the Bell Tower Community Association

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A cool afternoon of partying



HAVING FUN (clockwise from top left): Tasty food from the Moderation, Burt the DJ, the return of the band, and the party in full swing (Photos: David Neale, Claire Thatcher)

The year so far has yielded political upheaval and civil unrest, but when the bunting went up and the vehicles were moved away on a day in June, local residents could count on at least one constant in their lives: the annual Bell Tower street party in Newport Road.

The Moderation's Andy and Bee lured people from their terraces on a cool Saturday afternoon with generous free servings of Thai green

curry and rice, while party-goers were offered an extra treat when a family kindly set up shop outside their home to serve potato bhajis straight out of the tiffin.

Neighbours met, ate and mingled over the nostalgic bangers from the perennial rock band – known up and down Newport Road as the warm-up to Reading Festival – which congregated for another year of covers spanning The Beatles and

Kings of Leon. When they downed tools, in came the steady grooves and good vibes of Burt's DJ Buda Nova.

And for those were born a couple of decades out from *Aha Shake Heartbreak* and may have no idea what vinyl is, there was the return of the people's favourite, Splat the Rat, along with a jumbo Connect 4 game, face painting and a colouring competition. All children's activities were supported by New Hope.

Later in the afternoon came the keenly anticipated annual quiz, expertly conducted by quizmaster Richard Chandler. Teams chewed on questions about everything from chip-maker Nvidia's astonishing share price to the box office prospects of Ryan Gosling action comedy *The Fall Guy*.

Throughout the day, the Bell Tower stall – staffed by the association's chair Liz Hobbs and Mark Ralph – drew new members eager to support local events, and encouraged everyone to join the front garden competition, which took place in July.

A big thank you to the organisers and everyone else who pitched in to help with activities and music, along with set-up and take-down. Special thanks go to the Moderation and New Hope for their continued support. The summer party reflected the enduring community spirit of Newport Road and the wider Bell Tower area.

Manori Ravindran



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Fantastic blooms



WORTHY WINNERS: gardens by Priya (top) and Brian & Lee (Photos: Bob Murrant)

Congratulations to Priya from Addison Road, who has won first prize in the Bell Tower gardening competition and gets a £30 voucher from Richfield Garden Centre. Priya's beautiful garden scored 56 points out of 60. Brian and Lee from Northfield Road came second with 54 points and win a plant from Nood Stores.

Hope community project garden. No doubt their harvest will be plentiful.

All entrants received some seeds for planting next year courtesy of one of the judges. Look out for our next gardening competition and have a go – who knows, you might win.

Bob Murrant

Competition sponsored by



and



Both of the winning gardens were stunning, with lots of colour and well planned out placement of plants, and virtually weed free.

Liz and myself from the Bell Tower Community Association were joined by Claire and Jodie from Nood Stores in Caversham in judging the Bell Tower garden competition. Judging took place on 20 July. As we walked around we were also stunned by a number of gardens that unfortunately had not been entered but would have made our job of judging much harder. We were also amazed at the New

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SATURDAY 21 SEPTEMBER
MEET OUTSIDE THE MODERATION
213 CAVERSHAM ROAD

Come and meet us any time between 1.30 and 2.30pm

Fun for all the family! All welcome.
 Free entry – just come along and have fun.

Please note: part of the treasure hunt will involve walking along the river bank, so children will need to be supervised by an adult.

Growing for the community

After months of dedication and care, the New Hope community garden has yielded its first harvest! A few days ago, we gathered a plentiful crop of potatoes and beetroot, which, with the help of the team, we proudly displayed in baskets by the garden for our community to enjoy.



The response was heartwarming, with many expressing their happiness and support for the project. While we await the ripening of our tomatoes, which should be ready by the end of September, we are preparing to plant our winter vegetables, Swiss chard, turnips, kale, and hopefully radishes. We anticipate a bountiful winter harvest by November and welcome any volunteers who would like to join us in this effort!

Sajjad Zalaki