

## Litter Summit - Birmingham March 2014

Two members of the Village in Bloom team recently attended a Litter Summit organised by the City Council. Presented by senior members of the council and the police they outlined proposals to tackle the litter situation and declared that Birmingham intends to be a leader in the fight against litter. The 'Keep Britain Tidy' organisation told the meeting about recent experiments in which they kept one side of a selected street litter-free and left the litter uncollected on the other side for a period of time. The results showed that the side where the litter was left tended to be the one where more litter was dropped, highlighting how the problem can escalate if litter is not dealt with.

At the Summit a voluntary Litter Charter was launched in Birmingham with Big John's takeaway and Wetherspoons leading the way having pledged to help by:

- Changing public behaviour by promoting the anti-littering message
- Reviewing and reducing packaging
- Managing and collecting litter generated from the business
- Disposing of business waste responsibly

The Bloom team were moved by Birmingham's Young Poet Laureate, Lauren Williams who composed a poem about litter. Every verse of her poem began 'There's no pride in Birmingham!'. Fran Lee the Bloom co-ordinator said :

"I would hope that this sentiment brings home that the main way to stop littering is to instil pride in our citizens. This is best done through examples set by those in authority and particularly parents, schools and considerate local people in Acocks Green. Let's hope that we can adopt some ongoing initiatives in our village to improve the litter problem. If you have any ideas please let us know. We desperately need to hear from those people who are prepared to take responsibility for their area and be proud of where they live". You can contact the Bloom team on 706 0076 or email: [fran.lee47@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:fran.lee47@yahoo.co.uk)

*'You either have to be part of the solution, or you're going to be part of the problem' - Eldridge Cleaver*

## Acocks Green Station Update

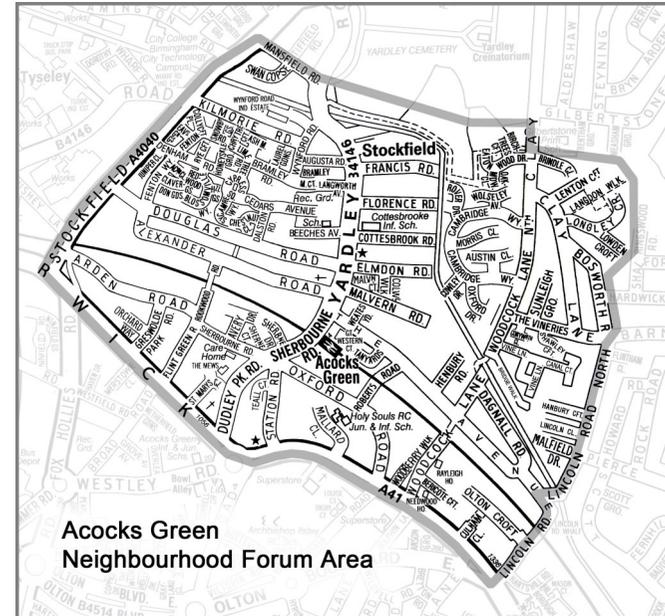
Work has now begun on installing lifts at Acocks Green train station. It has been the busiest station in the West Midlands without step-free access so the new lifts will finally allow easy access between the platform and car park. The improvements are partially funded by the Dept of Transport as part of the 'Access for All' scheme. The original station building dates from 1852. The 132 space car park stands where there was originally a second platform. This free parking makes a great facility for commuters on the busy Solihull to Birmingham route and Centro hope that the better facilities will increase the use of our station and local rail services. The improvement work is due to be completed this summer.

*check out our website: [www.acocks-green-neighbourhood-forum.org](http://www.acocks-green-neighbourhood-forum.org)*



# Acocks Green Neighbourhood FORUM NEWS

April 2014



The next Neighbourhood Forum meeting is **Tuesday 29th April, 7.30pm** at the Glynn Edwards Baptist Church Hall, Yardley Road (on the corner of Alexander Road). Everyone is welcome to come along and share their views.

Anyone from the forum area is invited to find out more about what is going on in our area. There will be a short presentation from Healthwatch Birmingham (see inside for more details). Our local councillors, prospective councillors, the police and other agencies will also be there, so you will have an opportunity to raise your issues and concerns.

There will also be refreshments and a chance to talk to like-minded locals. Please come along and help make Acocks Green better for everyone.



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## A Conservation Area for Acocks Green

If you have been keeping up to date with the hyperlocal news you will know about the proposed conservation area and the public consultations that took place earlier this year. The counting of forms is now completed and the result is an overwhelming majority in favour of the Conservation Area close to Acocks Green train station. The Management Plan, Character Appraisal and all the responses will shortly be submitted to the City Council to await their decision. Acocks Green Focus Group is also considering its response to the comments received.

**Village in Bloom Launch** - Saturday 26th April.  
From 10am Mallard Community Orchard.

Come along to find out more about The Village in Bloom 2014 Campaign at our little orchard just off the Warwick Road opposite Holy Souls church. There will be plant sales, seed sowing, gardening advice, plant swaps and the launch of our Children's Poster competition. You can even pick some herbs from the orchard herb bed for your dinner.

Also come and see the famous **Acocks Green Hoard!** A selection of hidden 'treasures' that the team dug up from the orchard site last year, in preparation for its planting. This year is Britain in Bloom's 50th anniversary so they are asking for those taking part to plant yellow and golden colours to celebrate the milestone. Our volunteers have been out gardening most weeks, and the spring flowers are already enhancing the village. We have a friendly team and they are always looking for more people to get involved. Even if you can only spare an hour or so now and then, come and introduce yourself.

You can contact the Village in Bloom co-ordinator, Fran Lee on 706 0076 or email: [fran.lee47@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:fran.lee47@yahoo.co.uk)



HEART OF ENGLAND IN BLOOM CELEBRATES  
**50 YEARS**  
RHS BRITAIN IN BLOOM



*Dates For Your Diary:*

**Love Your Bike** - Tues 13 May 4-6pm Acocks Green Train Station  
Free maintenance checks, security marking and advice to encourage cycling. This is organised by **Network West Midlands** to encourage more sustainable travel.

**Acocks Green Carnival** - Saturday 5th July - Recreation Ground, Westley Road. Acocks Green's Community Event of The Year!

## Expansion of Birmingham City Council's Recycling Scheme.

We can now put a wider variety of items in our fortnightly recycling boxes, as long as they are clean. As well as the usual glass bottles and jars, cans and plastic bottles we can now add :

- Yoghurt pots, cream and custard pots
- Margarine tubs
- Ice cream tubs
- Plastic trays (that are NOT BLACK\* in colour)
- Trays from meat and fish
- Fruit and vegetable punnets
- All bottle tops, lids and triggers
- Soup pots and Instant Noodle pots
- Tubs for dishwasher or laundry tablets
- Aluminium foil containers

\* Black plastic items cannot be processed by the 'Magic Eye' sorting machine!

**Healthwatch** The independent consumer watchdog for Health and Social Care was launched almost 12 months ago to gather and represent the views of the general public. The body works towards helping local people get the best out of their health and social care services and gives people a voice at a local and national level.



We welcome Helen Baglee and Claire Lockey from Healthwatch to our public meeting to give us a brief insight into the role of Healthwatch and how we can access the services. You can also find out more at their website: [www.healthwatchbirmingham.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchbirmingham.co.uk)

**Update on Smart Route - Acocks Green Village** The Smart Route was voted through by the Executive Cabinet on 17 March. This is the single-carriageway route which will replace the present dual carriageway on the Warwick Rd between Station Rd and Dolphin Lane. The plan has always been that the extra space created by the removal of the dual carriageway will be used for an avenue of trees and more parking. It looks as though we will get the promised avenue of trees. The parking space plans have run into difficulties and at the time of writing the final outcome is still unclear. It has emerged that there is a large BT cable box located in the tree embankment area. Access to the box needs to be kept clear of vehicles and it would cost around £300,000 to move. It looked as though this would interfere with the hoped for extra parking. However, BCC are now looking at a new scheme in which, without moving the cables, the layout of the area could be repositioned so that the cables are in a pedestrian refuge area, leaving more for parking elsewhere. This is still under discussion and may not be possible, but all being well there could be a new plan out by around mid-April. Check local websites, and look out for consultation details. - **Julia Lardon, Focus Group**