

Mercia Mercury

LOTUS



When Lotus opens on the Piazza, it will bring a refreshing and imaginative twist to the classic British curry house and individuals or dining groups will be part of the 'small plate/sharing plate revolution'. Rather than ordering his or her own meal with separate courses (starters and main), diners will be encouraged to choose several small dishes of food from which they help themselves or, if dining with others, share. This dining style is a proper reflection of how Indians themselves eat with sharing of food a common practice. Most dishes will be small portion size so diners can try four or five dishes for the price of one 'traditional' main course portion. There will also be half a dozen curries on the menu at a slightly higher price to reflect a larger serving. The cooking will be very traditionally Indian - authentic versions of classic dishes with family favourites, street food staples, chaat and each curry cooked from scratch with its own spices and flavours giving individual integrity. You will be offered a wide selection of vegetarian and non-vegetarian food on a short, well-ordered menu which will change and develop over time. You can choose whether to eat with cutlery (spoons) or, as most Indians do, with the tips of your fingers. These are certainly more convenient for eating flat breads (naan, roti and chapati) and small plates and there's an art to making a boat-like shape with the flatbread so they can scoop sauces, gravies and curries without letting them run onto your fingers!



The planning and research behind Lotus has been very careful and thorough. UK's 'small plate' revolution began in London and is spreading through other cities. Having visited many of the restaurants and cafés – particularly in London – it was clear Lotus couldn't just be an imported look from London. It had to be something that would work here, that was sympathetic to the local culture and environment and still offered an authenticity of flavours and an authenticity of dining style.



The general atmosphere will be more relaxed and café-like with stripped wood tables, cutlery put in containers, a décor that reflects the semi-rural setting, natural materials and stone, neutral/pastel colours with fabric and antique artefacts brought over from Rajasthan. The open kitchen will allow diners to watch the chefs at work. There will be a well-stocked, large bar with classic Indian lagers, six draught beers, ale from Derbyshire micro-breweries, soft drinks and a wide variety of cocktails with an Indian twist.



Opening in the middle of June from 11am to 11pm with around 120 covers which could expand to the outside space overlooking at the Marina when the weather allows, Lotus will happily cater for everything from a single person coming in for a glass of sparkling water to a group of 30 arriving for their Christmas Party. Locals can set up an account and have a preferred take-out order which can be phoned in and then picked up. There is a genuine intention to be flexible and respond to the wishes of the clientele. Indeed, some exploring is going on as to whether there would be a demand from the local community for breakfast – again traditional street food recipes.

Lotus is a hugely attractive new addition to the Marina. It will have a menu priced to encourage everyone (the 'small/sharing' plates from around £3 or £4 each and the slightly larger portion size curry at £6 or £7 each), a décor which is relaxed and interesting, an ordering and eating style which will encourage conversation and informality, a series of new authentic taste sensations and a take-out option which will be attractive to us all.

We wish Sunny Chandhoke, his brother Harcharan Chandhoke, Sanjeev Kumar the very best of luck in this new venture and we welcome Vid Patel (owner of Kinara in Willington) as General Manager.



Mercia Marina Photography Competition



Mercia Marina has a photography competition every month. If you've got a photograph taken at the Marina which you think is pretty good, then send it in to tony@merciamarina.co.uk. The winner (or winners) each month can choose from a box of chocolates or a bottle of Prosecco. All the photographs submitted are put on the Marina's Facebook page so everyone has the chance to see what's being entered. Winners from March were Bill Jeffries, Jessica Highman and Jo James with the Black Swan, the Boardwalk/Piazza in the snow, snow falling at sunset. Full sized images are on the Marina's Facebook Page as are all entries.



Community Events' Programme

Events are usually also on the Mercia Community Facebook Page. If you can't find what you want, ask! Ask in the Office or ask your group leader or a neighbour - there is plenty of help around. It is important - particularly through the Summer - that you keep in touch with any arrangements for your group.

----- Summer 2018 -----



For the most part, groups don't follow their regular meeting dates from May to August (inclusive). With people out cruising (including group leaders) and people's diaries busier with visits and trips out or informal gatherings on lovely evenings, it's an opportunity for everyone to have a break and return refreshed for the Autumn stint! But you may find there's summer projects being suggested, so if you can't or didn't get the last meeting of your group/s, ask someone who was there.

Things do change, so please check Facebook (or ask a member of the group) in case there is a summer gathering.

At the moment, the following has been fed in by group leaders: **Craft Group** had its last meeting on the 25th of April. There may be *ad hoc* meetings when Nancy Harman is around, so check!

Book Club had its last meeting on the 24th April and summer readings were suggested.

Ukulele Group finishes in April and will return September or October. Please keep practising!

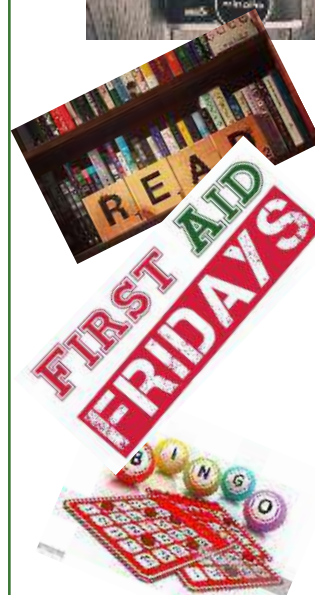
Beetle Drive and **Bingo** dates are notified on the Events section of the Community Facebook Page.

Photography Group will meet on Wednesday 9th May at 7pm in the Willows. Ian Carroll will be leading a round table discussion, so watch for any more information.

Music Group will meet, for the last session before a break for the summer, on Tuesday 1st May at 7pm in the Willows.

Watercolour Group will carry on through May and maybe after that, depending on what is decided with Dave Tattersall about who will be around. So make sure you keep in touch with things.

First Aid Fridays and **Fire Prevention/Health & Safety** won't be running through the summer but will be back in the Autumn so watch for dates.



Pontoon/Street Party, Sunday 20th May



From 1.00pm onwards, on the grass by Facilities Block 2

Although the date is just after the Royal Wedding, you don't need to be a royalist to come and celebrate our community get together! Pontoons are being asked to get together and ensure everyone knows about the Street Party. Make sure you talk to your neighbours and include everyone. Each pontoon can then decide on what plates of food they want to make/provide for sharing between themselves just like a big picnic. You provide your own drinks and glasses but the MAC team will organise plates, napkins, knives, forks and spoons. We will also be hiring tables so need to know how many people are coming. All you need to do if you are coming is to either post on our Facebook Community page or by emailing mercia.community@gmail.com You need to let us know the following information

- 1 - put your name and the name of anyone else you are replying for
- 2 - your pontoon name

We need the numbers no later than May 10th.

We will be arranging tables by pontoon names so it's important we get the right number of tables. You will need to provide your own chairs so

if you need help bring things to the event please let us know.

Midland Chandlers

**FIRST AID
FRIDAYS**

7pm Willow Tree

Tea Rooms
(various dates)

Fire Safety & Maintenance

We care about YOUR safety!



Thanks to Midland Chandlers, as always, for their support for the Newsletter, printing the hard copies and having them carried to the Marina in their van. And thanks for their new contribution to the Marina



"Double Your Discount"

Some Marina talks and events are of particularly importance - health and safety issues, fire prevention, good boat maintenance and having moorers welcomed into the community. To encourage your attendance, there is now an incentive! Individual discount vouchers will be given to the moorers or lodge owners attending. Terms and conditions are on the poster and vouchers. Keep your eyes open for the next event!



Mercia Marina 10th Anniversary Weekend Saturday and Sunday 15/16 September

On that weekend, the Marina will be celebrating its 10th Anniversary. A weekend of fun is being planned. On Saturday 15th there will be a party for all moorers and lodge owners with a Hog Roast, BBQ, fuddle picnics, music and more. Many more details will emerge as the plans are made and finalised. It will be a ticketed event so that the right number of everything will be provided. You will be given lots of warning and about and when! No need to do anything more other than 'Save the Date'.

On the Sunday there will be a celebration on the public side of the Marina with, again, lots going on and lots of plans being made. This will be open to everyone and, of course, you are welcome to attend also. So another 'Save the Date' for you.



Piscatorial Society

John Welch reports: "The opening match of the season was away at Longford Fishery, Alder Carr on April 12th. It was freezing cold but an excellent time was had by all.

Steve Winning came in with the winning weight (10lb 10oz) with Sarah Cunnington at 10lb. Nigel Hunt was third (also with the biggest fish at 4lb 7oz) and John Welch fourth. Congratulations to Janis and Howard who pleasure fished, with Howard landing a nice 3lb carp (see picture). It was a good effort by the Marina group as the pro anglers in the lake behind were coming in with similar weights.

We are preparing for the first home match on the 29th of April for club members. It should be a good session as there are lots of fish moving about and at last the carp are back. The 28th of July will be the Neil Wakeham memorial match held at Longford. We have 20 pegs booked but space for 30. It will cost £20 for your day fishing; £10 will go to Macmillan Cancer Support, the other £10 for the match entrance fee and full cooked breakfast. We are keen for this to take off as an annual event and it is open for new or old anglers.

The second photograph is of Keith Griffiths with his first ever carp. It's great to see new people joining us (Janis and Howard as well as Keith) and it's just what both Nigel and I want - giving people the experience, teaching them about our fishy friends and launching them into a lot of fun and good company.

If you would like to join us or find out more about fishing, then get in touch with me."

**John Welch
Nb Sharazad
Nuthatch Pontoon
07958 322631**



Mercia's Winter Weather (plus April!)



We've had the Met Office weather station in place for just over a year now with the team taking daily readings - sun, rain, cloud cover, air and ground temperatures. Looking

back over the twelve months (thanks to Dave Smith) we can report that overall we had 1,440.2 hours of sunshine - which was 16.7 hours more than the UK 10 year average. On the 19th of June last year we had 14 hours of sunshine! July had below average sunshine and above average rainfall and the year was wetter than the average. For those who might like sleeping outside, February was colder than normal and it was -6 on the 28th of February. The best month to be out and about was April last year - 177.5 hours of sunshine compares to the average of 144 hours and only 13.6mm of rain compared to the month's average of 48.9mm.

April last year was beautiful so let's compare the first 13 days of April 2017 to the same in April 2018. In 2017 it only rained on one of those days (1.5mm). This year it rained on 9 of the days with a total of 61.9mm. Last year 87.2 hours of sun in thirteen days of April. This year? We only had 19.6 hours. And who can forget our deluge on 13th March - 22.8mm (a third of the month's average rainfall). We feed the data directly into the Met Office data-bank and, of course, have the data available for us here on site. It's an interesting browse because while not forecasting, it provides useful statistics and as the years go by, we'll be that much more able to report on our local weather.

Rachel and Thomas - New Arrivals



Rachel, Thomas and Layla (seen below happily bouncing round the field!) arrived at Mercia with their new-to-them narrowboat in the middle of March. Rachel was amazed it was that recent - she feels like she's been here forever! Buying the boat and moving on as liveaboards was not a sudden impulse but rather a combination of changes in family circumstances, not seeing a way of getting onto the bricks and mortar property ladder and both loving boats, water and the outside environment. This was their chance to live together in their own home.

They are both local, so Mercia is ideally placed for both their work and keeping in regular touch with families. They were frequent visitors to the Marina and were building their 'wish list' spec for a boat they could afford - knowing it would be a bit of a project but neither of them are afraid of some hard work. One standout wish for Rachel was a kitchen/galley with lots of working space and surfaces. So, as they travelled the

marinas viewing boats and searched online, they were more than prepared when 'their' boat leaped out at them (and it has amazing worktop space in the galley - more, Rachel says, than in her Dad's three bedroom house!). The design of the boat, too, pleased them - the 20-year-old, 61' trad stern shell having bulkheads dividing the space well and giving a feeling of lots of rooms and lots of space. There is work aplenty for them to do - replacing the stove, the floor and they know as they do one thing, three or four more will add themselves to the list!

Their boat came from Whilton Marina so Thomas and his friend, Darren, brought it up to Mercia through the mini-beast from the East with no heating. For some five or six days they slept fully clothed in sleeping bags - a spartan and tough trip. But this, and all the work they are now beginning, will give them invaluable knowledge about their boat and boats in general. Thomas has watched videos, read a huge amount and - with a fair amount of experience at practical work - is both enthusiastic and realistic. They already know of the help and advice this community is ready to offer and will take any and all contributions!

They both work, so need to fit boat work around their jobs. Thomas is at Five Lamps Derby whilst pursuing an acting career; Rachel has three significant commitments - supporting her Dad by doing his shopping and providing other care, doing office and admin work for the King's Crescent development in Derby and working with the community interest non-profit company founded by her and her friend Annie Fielder six years ago. Whiffle Pig (whifflepig.com) runs creative therapy workshops in hospitals and care homes (including, recently, her Dad's home), providing support to adults and children. Do look at the website to get a better idea of their work - justice can't be done by a quick sentence here.

They are delighted with their life at Mercia. Layla, too, has settled in happily even though this has all been very new to her - the movement and noises on a boat, the community (dogs and human!), the multitude of smells. Rachel particularly loves the Facilities Block and its cleanliness; she never fails to thank the team when she sees them. Both of them love the community, the people, the atmosphere, the environment and the wildlife. Every morning they wake up, look at where they live, listen to the early morning sounds, think of the day ahead and - as they say - "it just puts a smile on your face".

