



## Elegant Touch Beauty

### Mother's Day Offer

Spoil your mother this Mother's Day with one of our fabulous packages:-

**Pamper Day - £75**

Elemis Pro Collagen Quartz Lift Facial

Hot Stones Back Massage

Light lunch from The Boardwalk

**Mini Pamper Package - £38**

Mini Elemis Facial

GEleration Manicure


We have a fantastic range of gift sets in the salon, including Elemis, Jessica and Sienna X.

Gift Vouchers are also available.




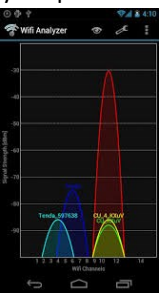
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Find us on Facebook at Elegant Touch Beauty

### The Marina WiFi

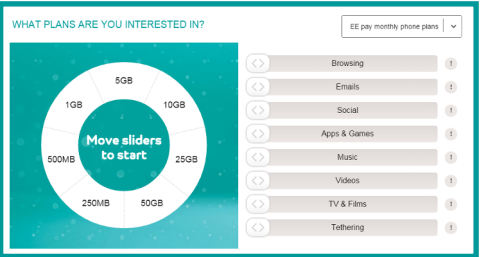


There are a lot of moorers and lodge owners who use the Marina WiFi. The W32 service transmits data via microwave links so is much faster and more reliable than the previous service which came through BT copper telephone lines. At its best, the download speed on this service can be around 10mps inside your boat. This depends on a strong link through to the 'right' Marina mast and a fast, clean computer. At this speed, video games, music, iPlayer and Skype will be of good quality. The best test for a good connection is BBC iPlayer. You can test your connection speed for free by going to [www.speedtest.net](http://www.speedtest.net) and there is an App for your phone if you want to test it that way. You may find that you're not getting that level of performance in your boat/lodge. Our boats and the lodge walls are very effective in blocking most radio signals. To get a good signal to your device you may need to sit by the doors at the end of the boat or be in the cratch or under the pram cover. What a couple of dozen people have done, with Wynne's help, is set up a good link with an external aerial which carries the signal by cable to a router inside a boat or lodge. This router, programmed for each boat/lodge and dedicated to the strongest WiFi mast, then relays the signal (which has lost none

of its strength) through the boat or lodge. And a number of different devices can be connected and used at the same time quite successfully (iPad, laptop, wireless printers, phones, etc.). It is a nice solution which does not affect the Marina's WiFi signal for other users and those for whom he has set this up all speak of a dramatic improvement in their internet access. The aerial and router cost £70; Wynne's time and advice is free. If you want to talk about this, then use my (Jo James) email or phone and I'll get Wynne onto it. Other people have found other solutions, but with Wynne being asked frequently for his help, it seemed sense to give a bit of an explanation to everyone. You should anyway make sure that you are connected to the 'right' mast for your position in the Marina. And that you stay connected to that mast. The WiFi Analyser App is a free download for your phone. When you run it, you will see a graph with coloured curves showing the different wifi signals that can be 'seen'. They will include mobile wifi networks, individual boat or lodge wifi networks and, importantly, the Marina WiFi with the mast number/s. The taller the curve, the stronger the signal. You should see your obvious choice. So when you're connecting to the Marina WiFi and choosing your network, make sure you've chosen the right mast.



Finally, a word about data usage. Some have been surprised when they find they used their data allowance in what seems to be a short time. General surfing of the web and reading and writing emails don't use much data . It would take about 30 browsing hours or the downloading of 10,000 plain text emails to eat up a gigabyte. But that gig would be used up in 5 hours of Skype calls, watching a movie or 4 hours on iPlayer. To give a rough idea of what your usage is likely to be, pop into EE's calculator. You don't need to be an EE customer! <https://my.ee.co.uk/data-calculator/>



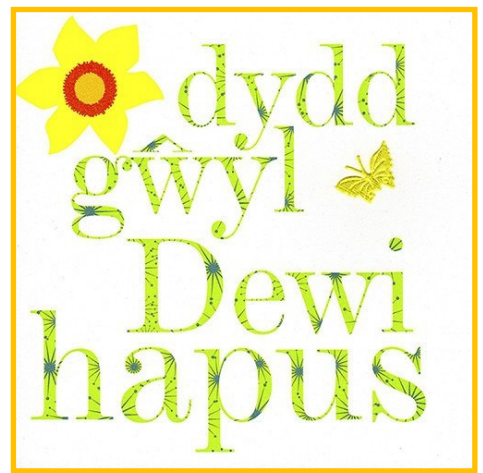
### Elegant Touch Beauty

#### MOTHER OF THE YEAR

This Mother's Day we will be giving you the chance for your mum to receive this special title by giving away a **FREE PAMPER AFTERNOON** consisting of an Elemis Facial and Body Massage. To enter this special competition, please tell us on Elegant Touch Beauty Facebook page, in no more than 100 words, why your mother is deserving of this recognition. Winner to be announced 13th March.

#### Photo Competition

Don't forget the Marina's monthly photo competition. A bottle of Prosecco or a box of chocolates awarded to the person who sends in the best photo taken at Mercia Marina. Please email in your photos to [lucy@merciamarina.co.uk](mailto:lucy@merciamarina.co.uk) – who knows your photo could end up in the 2016 Mercia Marina Calendar!



### Gold David Bellamy Award

Mercia Marina's 2014/15 Conservation Award makes four years in a row that our whole estate has been judged at this top level. This Award is no shoo-in. The annual visit and inspection is complete and very thorough; changes from the year before are noted, new developments evaluated and checks are made on the progress of agreed suggestions in earlier reports. A full site tour is made, people are interviewed, copies of all paperwork taken. And all of it within the context of an overall strategic development plan. So congratulations are due to the many Mercia Marina people whose hard work is being recognised in this way.



Then and Now



Commercial development projects usually have landscaping as an afterthought and with little or no planning for the encouragement of natural wildlife. So we are fortunate to have a 76-acre site where, from the very beginning, there was a focus on its environmental health. The surveys undertaken before the Marina was built found poor soil, poor grass, some trees, a few frogs, trout from the stocked fishing ponds, some common bird species nesting within hedgerows and water birds such as mallard, coot, moorhen, mute swan and heron. In other words – not much! Looking around now, it's hard to believe it's the same site. The leadership on the Estate development comes from John and Michael Thornton and

*Whilst the primary use for Mercia is as a marina, a key objective has always been "to maximise the wildlife value and habitat diversity"*  
[Wildlife Management Plan]

Robert Neff. The expertise and responsibility for implementing the development comes from David Boddy supported by Stewart Reeves, Sven Osborne and Pete Keen. They all put in a huge amount of work, day in day out and in all weathers. A few years ago, when Sam Culley was part of the team, we walked past him as he was planting out the whips for the hedgerow behind the bridge by the Chandlery. It was icy cold and late in the day but in years to come his hedge will stand testament to the hours he spent on its creation. All across the Marina and in the two fields on the other side of the road - South Field and the Heritage Field - similar stories can be told. Trees, shrubs and bushes have been



planted, moved or brought in, ground cleared for a wild flower meadow, aquatic plants put in and grasses tended. Not least with the intention of attracting a growing number of wildlife species. The Marina team has been supported by volunteers who have planted, cleared and dug with the best of them. The site has a variety of different habitats – hedgerows, woodlands, the grasslands. the scrub and wildflower banks, the basin margins and open water with walkways and islands, and the pond in the South Field. Each area has its own plan so that flora and fauna can – ideally – thrive. All of this has an impact on the timing and severity of the maintenance operations. While public area is kept neatly 'groomed', the habitats are dealt with differently. For instance, in the boaters' area, hedges, thickets and shrubberies are not trimmed during the nesting season. Leaf litter is allowed to build up under various plantings to encourage insect populations which feed birds and amphibians. Areas of the wildflower banks are left standing until



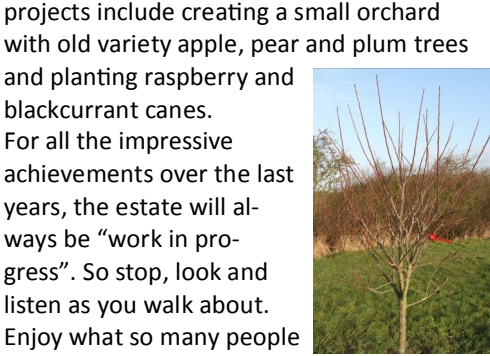
the boaters' area, hedges, thickets and shrubberies are not trimmed during the nesting season. Leaf litter is allowed to build up under various plantings to encourage insect populations which feed birds and amphibians. Areas of the wildflower banks are left standing until

the autumn to provide food for birds. Grasses and water plants are cut back in rotation so there is always shelter and cover for - particularly - the water birds. Undesirable weeds and algae in the water are controlled using bioremediation (barley extract) and removal by hand.




As the birds, butterflies, dragon and damselflies arrived in increasing numbers, we kept records. A monthly bird survey is done by the Wetland Trust for the RSPB, nestlings are ringed, night-time moth surveys are done and bat species are recorded and logged in the long warm summer evenings. Fungi are

watched for during the Autumn, bird boxes are checked and renewed as needed and there is a continuous planting schedule. The latest projects include creating a small orchard with old variety apple, pear and plum trees and planting raspberry and blackcurrant canes. For all the impressive achievements over the last years, the estate will always be "work in progress". So stop, look and listen as you walk about. Enjoy what so many people are working hard to create and develop.



*"The park is a wildlife wonderland which is bursting with bio-diversity"*  
David Bellamy







Volunteer Lock Keepers

Our volunteer lock keepers play a crucial role during the busy summer boating season - and help keep age-old traditions alive.

We are currently recruiting Volunteer Lock Keepers for Stenson Lock on the Trent & Mersey Canal near Derby. The role of the modern-day lock keeper is to provide a polite and friendly welcome to waterway visitors, assist boaters through locks and help maintain the lock area. No previous experience is needed, you'll be given a full induction, some practical safety training and you'll work alongside an experienced volunteer or employee to learn the ropes.

Want to know more? Visit our website to browse the latest opportunities and register your interest.



Get involved, join us

T 01827 252 010  
E tom.freeland@canalrivertrust.org.uk  
Visit: canalrivertrust.org.uk/volunteering

Canal and River Trust are recruiting for Volunteer Lock Keepers across the country and they have had over 600 people express an interest. Just along from Mercia Marina is Stenson Lock and if you would be interested in helping there, then go to the CRT website. Although applications were asked for by the end of February, it's never too late to get involved.

Coot, Nests and Your Boat

The nesting season is almost upon us and coots are very clearly sizing each other up as likely partners! Last year you may remember Bruce Napier

(nb *Sanity Again*) offered a tip which he's reminded me of again. He says:

"the year before last, a couple of boaters found themselves unable to move their boats because coots had built nests on the stern fender and rudder. Once they've started breeding, it's an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act to disturb them, so you might just have to wait until the chicks have fledged and gone off before you can shift the nest or the boat. A rusty, shiny bin bag looks very unattractive to coots as a base for a nest and though it will be a while before they start nest building, Spring is on its way and it's no use waiting until they do. " Thanks Bruce! I'm off to find a bin bag!



Thank you Midland Chandelers for your continuing support for the Newsletter. It's very much appreciated by all.

Still Waters Shop

An Excellent Bit of Shopkeeping!

Chrissy and Grahame of Still Waters, got a letter the Council recently which notified

them that their shop had properly refused to sell alcohol to an underage customer. Which left them a bit puzzled since it's not often that sort of thing happens. But they were relieved too!

While is about just doing the job properly, it carries very severe penalties if mistakes are made. A quick conversation with Michael and all became clear. He had had a young lad in asking for alcohol and, as Michael wasn't sure of his age, he explained the law to the lad and asked if he had some ID on him. When this wasn't produced, Michael did what he's done on a couple of other occasions - said politely that he was sorry but he couldn't sell the product. Given the nature of the Shop and its location, it's likely that lad was a 'test' customer. If so, Michael, you passed with flying colours!!



WILLING ARTS FESTIVAL

Subject: "Willington Today"

Closing Date - 10 May 2015

Six categories - Painting, Photo, Drawing, Sculpture, Poetry, Mixed Media



The Drummonds Win!



Congratulations to Bob and Christine who won Mr & Mrs Night at the Willow Tree Tea Rooms on the 11th February. Coincidentally this was the same day as Bob & Christine's 45th Wedding Anniversary. AND, finally, also Christine's birthday! Happy Anniversary to you both, Happy Birthday to Christine and, last but not least, Happy Valentine's Day!

February's Beetle Drive!

The second Beetle Drive was a fast and furious affair! With most people now knowing what to do, there was no time to stop and think! A break at half time offered a chance to find out about table mates whom you might not have

met before - the movement between games was a great way of mixing everyone up. Thanks to the Entertainments Committee and Chrissy and Grahame for the bar.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY  
WEDNESDAYS AT THE WILLOWS

4th March - 7.00 p.m. Craft . Bring your work, come and learn. All welcome and help is at hand!

11th March - 7.00 p.m. Beetle Drive with teams of four.

18th March - 7.00 p.m. Music Evening. Bring an instrument, come and learn. Have a bit of a jam!

25th March - 7.00 p.m. The Monthly Quiz. Teams of four.



Trading Boats

There are two new Trading Boats on the moorings at the end of the Boardwalk.



Paint-a-pot studio on board a 70ft boat. Choose from almost 200 different ceramic shapes, there's something for everyone. Choose your pot, paint on board, then leave it for us to glaze and fire for you to collect a few days later. We can post out to you if required or if you're visiting us whilst on holiday. You can also paint T-Shirts, Caps and Canvas Bags - these can be painted on board and taken away with you once dry. Baby hand and footprints on various shapes capture precious memories and make very special presents. 3D Hand and Foot prints now being made.

Birthday Parties for children and adults, Hen Parties, Corporate events and group bookings for Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts etc. Gift Vouchers and personalised items made to order.



Wänderlust

Wänderlust is a gallery on a Narrowboat drifting on the canals in Wales and England. Magda and Berth will be staying for two months this time before they go on their tour 'Artists on the Canals' which starts May 1st at Atherstone and ends July 21st in Cassiobury Park. Magda is a land artist. She says "you can make land art in any shape or size all depending on budgets. My speciality is land art with objects found in the landscape and create with them a temporary and sometimes a more permanent piece of work " Berth makes his wooden sculptures on board.

Magda and Berth will use natural materials at the Marina to create their art and we look forward to their first sessions with us.

Carbon Monoxide Safety

If you are asleep, you may not notice any symptoms as they develop

Even if you are awake, early symptoms of CO poisoning can easily be mistaken for the flu, food poisoning, a hangover or general tiredness.

We have listed some of the common symptoms, but not everyone suffering CO poisoning will have all of them

Common symptoms include: -

- Headache and bad temper
- Feeling sick and dizzy
- Feeling tired and confused
- Stomach pains and being sick

The greater the amount of CO there is in air or the longer you are breathing in CO, the worse your symptoms may get

- Drowsiness, lethargy, extreme tiredness, difficulty concentrating
- A feeling of general weakness, difficulty in walking or moving
- Loss of balance and sight and memory problems

...and with very high CO levels

- Chest pains
- Increased heart rate
- Difficulty breathing, breathlessness
- Seizures
- Collapse, unconsciousness and death



All boats and lodges should have received a leaflet on CO safety, together with a note with summary details specifically of relevance to those at the Marina. The Boat Safety Scheme has issued new advice about the dangers of CO, so much of the waterways literature at the moment has articles which repeat the advice. Because CO is such an insidious danger, all of this bears repeating and if, as a consequence, it saves one life then it will have been worthwhile. And much of the advice is just as relevant to those living in houses. Every boat, every home and every motorhome should have both Fire and CO Detectors in place. And they should be checked regularly.

Boates/Lodge Owners Forum

The next meeting of the Forum will be on Tuesday, 10th March. If you have any issues you want raised, please talk to your Representative.

Nigel Hunt (NB Mary Ann) Finch, Grebe, Heron

Ian Cowlshaw (WB Popsey Bell) Ibis, Jay, Kingfisher, Lapwing, Moorhen

Tony Wilkinson (NB Cheers) Nuthatch, Owl, Peregrine, Quail, Redshank

Terry Evans (NB Gentle Gypsy) Sandpiper, Teal, Upland Goose

Bob Drummond (NB Mrs D) Veery, Woodcock, Xantus

Mike Coates (NB Aphrodite) Yellow-hammer, Zebra Dove, Avocet, Blackbird, Albatross, Bullfinch

Bev Wilcockson (Fir Tree Lodge and NB Esme) The Lodges

The Woodcutter's Song

Beechwood fires are bright and clear  
If the logs are kept a year;  
Chestnut's only good, they say,  
If for long 'tis laid away;  
Make a fire of elder tree,  
Death within your house shall be;  
But ash new or ash old  
Is fit for Queen with crown of gold.  
Birch and fir logs burn too fast,  
Blaze up bright and do not last;  
It is by the Irish said  
Hawthorn bakes the sweetest bread;  
Elmwood burns like churchyard mould  
E'en the very flames are cold;  
But ash green or ash brown  
Is fit for Queen with golden crown.  
Poplar gives a bitter smoke  
Fills your eyes and makes you choke;  
Apple wood will scent your room  
With an incense like perfume;  
Oaken logs, if dry and old  
Keep away the winter's cold;  
But ash wet or ash dry  
A King shall warm his slippers by.

NUTTY CUPCAKES - STRICTLY FOR THE BIRDS!

One box of animal suet  
One jar of reduced salt crunchy peanut butter  
Three handfuls of porridge oats  
Two handfuls of crushed cornflakes  
One handful of plain flour  
Two handfuls of bird seed  
Small handful of dried fruit  
Melt the suet and peanut butter in a large pan  
Add the rest of the ingredients one at a time  
Mix thoroughly  
Put mixture into bun cases and into the freezer  
Take out when needed