

Young people really can make a difference.

The people of Castle Bromwich now have a beautiful Sensory Garden which can be enjoyed by all members of the local community on the Village Green. It has been championed by Castle Bromwich Youth Parish Council who have worked tirelessly along with numerous community groups to enable the garden to become a reality. The garden was opened in October 2010 by the parents of Rifleman Joseph Murphy, an 18 year old local man who lost his life in Afghanistan. The garden is dedicated to members of the Armed Forces who have lost their lives in armed conflicts around the world.

On Friday 15th April 2011 members of Castle Bromwich Youth Parish Council ably supported by Councillor Mrs Allen along with local Brownies, Scouts and representatives from Park Hall Academy spent many hours weeding the garden in preparation for further planting on Sunday 17th April 2011.

We would like to thank members of the community for their support and encouragement. It was really wonderful that so many local people took the time to come and talk to us. One local resident commented on how lovely it was to see young people contributing to the community in this way, other people thanked us for all our hard work and others offered their support and advice to make our task a little easier. People sat on the circular bench and chatted to us, one gentleman stayed for some time helping the younger children with the weeding. It really was an evening to feel proud.

We returned on Sunday morning with our spades, forks and water for the plants, to find Carl Ferris from Halls Garden Centre unloading our plants with Councillor Mrs Allen. Unfortunately we soon noticed that 18 of the box hedge plants were missing. One of the Youth Councillors had seen three young women pull all of the plants out after leaving the nearby Public House on the Saturday evening. She informed the authorities and after they had gone went out and collected all the plants from around the Village Green and put them in water. This has happened on a number of occasions and we would like to thank the local residents who have replanted them on our behalf, their community spirit is really appreciated.

Our first task on Sunday morning was to replace the plants which was most upsetting. We had gone to so much trouble to make the garden look lovely and given up our time, only for a few to wreak havoc in a few minutes of madness. However we were not to be thwarted. We organised ourselves into groups, some of us did the planting, others laid out the garden design according to our plan, others fetched water from helpful residents. We worked really hard and were rewarded by a beautiful show of flowers and a garden to once again be proud of. We were all shattered, but felt a real sense of achievement and pride.

The Youth Parish Council would like to thank everyone who helped on the day as well as local residents who have given up their time to weed the garden at other times, all this help really does make you proud to be a member of the Castle Bromwich Community. We have dedicated the garden to those who have lost their lives in armed conflicts around the world by planting a peace tree in their memory and would ask everyone to respect this and to enjoy the garden.

We are proud to be entering this community garden in the Britain in Bloom competition – fingers crossed!

Councillor Miss Natasha Browne, Chairman
Castle Bromwich Youth Parish Council.