

## A visit to Jetty Field

A narrow entrance leading from The Green in the middle of Braunston takes you to Jetty Field, Braunston's Pocket Park.

Go through a gate and you are immediately in the shade of tall trees.

This is The Spinney. In spring, the sparkling white flowers of cow parsley line the path.

Keep going and in a short distance you emerge into the brightness of the Main Field. Here you are looking south down a slope to the old pump house and other canal buildings beyond the boundary of the park. Jetty Field is a convenient route for people walking into Braunston from the Grand Union Canal.

Turn to your right, looking west, and across the field, you will see the houses in Archer Avenue, a reminder of how well-located Jetty Field is for the people of Braunston to use. It is just a short walk for most people to get here.

In late spring and summer the grass gets tall and meadow flowers such as buttercups appear. Wildflower meadows provide shelter and food for bees and other insects which pollinate our crops. There are over 250 species of bee in the UK and they play a vital part in growing our food and supporting our ecosystems.

There are many different types of grasses with attractive seed heads and interesting names such as Meadow Foxtail and Yorkshire Fog. These native grasses have beautiful seed heads and provide superb habitat for butterflies and moths. Many of them like to lay their eggs in the protected environment of long grass.

There are also some large trees in the Main Field. This is a lime tree. If you look closely at the leaves and use a tree identification app you can find out the names of all the trees.

There are two lines of lime trees in the field forming a tree avenue from the top to the bottom.

Around the edges of the Main Field are other species of tree. This ash tree is on the western boundary close to the gardens of the Archer Avenue houses.

This hawthorn is on the edge of the Spinney. In May it has lots of blossom.

There is a tall willow tree at the top of the field.

The edges of the field provide a different environment and so attract different plants such as this flower which is called campion

and in a similar location is more cow parsley. The campion, cow parsley and other wildflowers provide the food for the bees and insects we depend on.

Against the brick wall at the bottom of the field, volunteers have planted some fruit trees which will form a community orchard for the village.

One of the aims of Jetty Field is to act as a nature conservation area to support plant and animal life. The whole Pocket Park does this, but one section is especially devoted to conservation. This is the nature reserve in a fenced area next to the Spinney.

There are many trees in the Nature Reserve, but some areas are kept clear of trees to form glades. This allows more light in. Many species benefit from this, including dormice and other small mammals, dragonflies which forage for insects, birds such as nightingales and chiffchaffs, and grass snakes which like to bask in a sunny glade but have taller plants nearby for protection. Butterflies and moths benefit from the bigger range of flowers and grasses that you get by having grassy open spaces amongst the trees.

The next area to look at is the garden. This is an area of the Pocket Park where there are trees, shrubs and flower beds.

The garden is near the entrance and is an area for people to stroll through.

Jetty Field includes an area of allotments. There are about 20 plots of land used by people in Braunston to grow vegetables and fruit. Each one costs £10 a year to rent. In this picture you can see the canes that have been used to make a frame for runner beans to climb up. It takes less than six weeks for each small plant to climb to the top of the frame. There will be small flowers, usually red, which if they are pollinated by bees or other insects will grow into long, green beans. This allotment holder has planted some bright yellow flowers which will attract more bees which will pollinate more beans. To the left is some netting which is to protect fruit bushes from birds which like to eat crops such as blackcurrants.

Potatoes are a popular crop on the allotments. The plants here will be dug up in about July or August when they have made a good crop of potatoes under the soil.

What we can see here will grow into tall sweetcorn plants, each one producing 2 or 3 cobs of corn.

Rhubarb plants stay in the ground all year. In the spring they grow the stems we like to eat.

Tomato plants are grown from seed indoors in late winter. After the last frost, it is safe to plant them on the allotment. There will be tomatoes on these plants in about 6 weeks.

We hope you have been interested in this virtual tour of Jetty Field. We would like each Year 6 pupil to produce something that shows what you have learnt about the Jetty Field Pocket Park.

You can choose what to do. You might want to submit a piece of art, make a model, write a poem or any other method you choose. It can be handed in physically at school or sent in electronically.

You might want to carry out your own investigation into one or more of the things in Jetty Field. You could research the tree types, the wildflowers, the grasses, birds, insects or reptiles.

Each year the Gallie Cup is awarded to the Year 6 pupil who submits what the judges decide is the best entry.

The judges want to see what you have found out about Jetty Field. This should include all the different parts of the Pocket Park and the plants and wildlife found there. You will also be judged on how well you communicate this whatever method you use.

Thank you for listening and watching. We look forward to receiving your competition entries.