

Middleton Tyas Village News

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What a transformation has taken place in the village over the course of the past month! The shop is open for business and we have fresh bread, Danish pastries, tempting pies and so on the doorstep. (Is anybody planning to run a class for slimmers to counterbalance all this good living?)

It is a gem and must surely be one of the nicest looking rural shops in the country. Not only that, but we have the WI to thank for what will be a really charming garden where until very recently there was an ugly oil tank, rubble, overgrown bushes, saved only by the valiant efforts of a few, including the Brownies, who kept it looking reasonable. The garden is already fulfilling the WI's objective of providing a focal point for the centre of the village and a place for people to stop and enjoy.

By next summer we shall feel that both the shop and the garden have always been there at the heart of the village. Before we start to take it all for granted, let's record an enormous vote of thanks to the people who have worked so hard to make the shop a reality, building up from the papers, to the opening of the new post office last summer and now the shop. It is a tremendous achievement and the whole community is greatly in their debt.

The WI's vision for the garden – and sheer hard work in bringing it about in just over two weeks from the time that the Saturday morning cake sale started to bring in funds – rounds it off perfectly. The WI would like to thank everybody for their help, support and amazing generosity during the creation of the garden and the parish council and Michael Heseltine for their financial support. It is we who should thank the WI for such a worthwhile enhancement to the village.

Meanwhile, work on refurbishing the Memorial Hall is well under way Watch this space!

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WI garden is village focal point

Work on the newly-opened Village Shop in Middleton Tyas meant that the 'garden' around the Memorial Hall was cleared of the old, intrusive old tank but rapidly filled with builder's rubble. Middleton Tyas WI seized the opportunity for a major community project. In just two and a half weeks from the time they raised £287 with a very successful Saturday morning cake stall, they cleared the site, designed and created a landscaped garden around the hall and shop.

Daphne Carter, Middleton Tyas WI President and one of the prime movers of the project said: "The site was roughly levelled for us but when we started it was still covered in rubble. It was real pick and shovel stuff but when it became obvious that we were getting stuck in to some serious labouring, people were so generous with their help, materials for the hard landscaping, donations towards plants, cups of tea and beer and so on. Just as welcome was the interest and support it attracted from people passing by. There has been a real sense of community about the whole project and everybody in the WI has been involved, whether or not they could wield a pick!"

"This has been a big project for us and we have only been able to do it in the time thanks to the financial backing from NYCC and the parish council, which meant we didn't have to spend much time fundraising. We were determined the garden would be finished for the official opening of the shop and we certainly couldn't have made that deadline without the help of the 'WI husbands' whose support was amazing."

Lindsay Deeble, who designed the garden, commented: "The shop and the hall are the focal point of the village and we wanted to make the garden a place where people could stop, sit down for a few minutes to have a chat and just enjoy themselves. The garden is designed for low maintenance and to attract insects and wild life so we have lavender, sedum, thyme, buddleia and a variety of shrubs so there is always something to look at all the year round. Butterflies were arriving before plants were even out of their pots".

PHOTO CAPTION WI members Susan Mahaffy, Lindsay Deeble and Daphne Carter (standing) take a few moments to relax in the newly-created garden WIGARDEN1.jpg



EVER argue with a WI member when she's got a pickaxe in her hand... The area in front of the village shop has been a bit of a jun-jun for years. Then after the new village was created, it was piled high with rubble. Not a pretty sight. And this is how it looked three weeks ago. It then Middleton Tyas WI took the job...

...just that short time, they planned garden, raised the money, cleared rubble, laid paving stones, lugged cobbles - with just a little help from a few hands. "It's been brilliant," says Middleton Tyas WI President Daphne Carter. "All sorts of people have helped, given money and made us tea while we've been working."

When the WI took the project on, member and garden designer Lindsay Deeble drew up the plans. "But first we realised we would need lots of money so the great WI stand by and had to keep the stall," says Daphne.

They expected members to make a difference. "But they were staggering in with trays full. Many of our members are, shall we say a bit older, so knew they couldn't dig or mix concrete or do heavy work, but they really rallied together with the baking."

Then other people gave us some very generous cheques. Ravensworth very gave us a generous discount on its. People have stopped and chat and given us money. Other people have given us an hour or two of their time. But it's all helped. It's been really good, a real team effort."

Lindsay designed the garden to be low maintenance - the WI have taken it as a permanent project - and to be a meeting place where people can sit and chat. It's wheelchair and pushchair friendly, a lavender hedge leads to a path, with a view of the village green and there's a wealth of flowers to attract butterflies.

Members went to local quarries to collect cobbles and gravel. Only the WI would collect stones in a Calvin Klein style... and gave rise to a whole new system of measurement. Not to ruin the

suspension on their cars, bags of stones could be no more than "one fat lady". Barrow loads of cement came in standard and "lady barrow" size.

"It's been a lot of hard physical work. People have been a bit surprised to see us with pickaxes and cement mixers. A lot of men think that women can't do things like this. But I think we might just have proved them wrong."

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Digging deep: Lindsay Deeble, left, and Daphne Carter gets to grips with the garden

Pictures: CHRIS BOOTH



TWO W.I. HUSBANDS AND TWO PARISH COUNCILLORS





AND TWO WEEKS LATER, WHAT A DIFFERENCE !!!

*And all as a result of the cake sale
Thank you everyone*





WORK IN PROGRESS
Bad backs all round!





N.I. HUSBANDS - A GREAT HELP



TWO W.I. HUSBANDS AND TWO PARISH COUNCILLORS