

## MORLEY GALA RETURNS AFTER 26 YEARS

It is at least 26 years since the sleepy village of Morley had a Gala but there has been an upsurge in community spirit, starting last weekend with the first Morley Open Gardens which saw an incredible 21 gardens open to the public, bringing the whole community together and raising £2,700 for St Matthew's Parish Church.

This coming weekend sees the Morley Gala, located at Morley Retreat, a former Georgian rectory with extensive grounds and a splendid walled garden, already nicely preened from the open garden event. Open from 11am to 4pm on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> July and probably going on till the beer, food and ice cream run out, it is sure to have something for everyone.

The Gala is attracting a lot of special events, with a wide range of craft stalls, displays by the Women's Institute, a concert by Morley Junior School, a mammoth plant sale of Broomfield College plants in aid of the MS Society, specialist beers and ciders to complement David Barlow's hog roast, and other delicacies followed on by a wide selection of Bluebells ices. There is a classic car show too, featuring the Jaguar Driver's Club, and also lots of children's entertainments. Wimbledon fans will be delighted to know the tennis will be televised on the big screen in the conference room, accompanied by strawberries and cream.

The village of Morley consists of four individual groups of residential areas separated by farmland, and without a central core, it tends to be difficult to organise community activities. However, the open garden scheme and now the Gala are bringing the community closer together, with some families being introduced for the first time to others in the same village they have never met.

Morley Retreat was purchased from the Church about 6 years ago by SureScreen who use it for medical research and forensic work, and some of their exciting work will also be on view. It's an ideal venue with lots of interesting buildings, unusual mature trees and shrubs, and plenty of space for those classic cars and children's events.

The old threshing barn that was converted with support from a University of Derby grant and was opened by Pauline Latham MP, has since been used for DNA analysis of protected species. During the Gala the barn will host a display by the outstanding Morley School, and a

display by the Women's Institute that contains some rarely seen archive material; it's an ideal time to view the barn conversion designed by Wirksworth architect Derek Trowell.

Expect some unusual stalls too, for example selling rare prints. Please give the Gala your support and help cement the upsurge in Morley's community spirit. Entry is free, with parking £3 per car.

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For immediate release

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MORLEY RETREAT WITH ST MATTHEW'S CHURCH IN THE BACKGROUND