



**NEWS RELEASE**

**7 OCTOBER 2021**

## **First ever Wildlife Arts Festival is a community success**

Otley's first ever Wildlife Arts festival was a success for local community and is likely to be repeated say the organisers Wildlife Friendly Otley.

The free daytime exhibition and talks programme, all focused on wildlife themes at Otley Courthouse attracted a good attendance all day. In the evening, the international award winning wildlife cameraman Ian McCarthy gave an inspiring and entertaining presentation with stories and film clips based on 30 years working on TV programmes such as the Blue Planet and Autumn Watch.

“The feedback has been great and showed there is wide interest in wildlife and nature in a variety of forms,” said Neil Griffin, Wildlife Friendly Otley education officer. “We’ll definitely do it again. It has both furthered our aims and given the talented artists of the town a platform.”

Altogether six local creative groups were involved at the Courthouse, plus a further 22 individuals, both amateur and professional. All were sharing their creative response to the wonder of nature, but there was a great variety in the way that they did this. As well as painters and photographers, poets and prose-writers, there were displays of wildlife in textiles, mosaics and wood carving, plus talks on nature.

Wildlife Friendly Otley said it was a success for the Otley community, showcasing local arts talent and attracting wide support. Thank you to all who came, the participants, its members, volunteers, Otley Courthouse, the festival sponsor, Sinclair's and Otley Town Council for their valuable financial support plus help from Artworks, Courtyard Planters and Petwise. All were key to the festival's success.

### **Photos.**

**Good attendance at the wildlife exhibition.**

**Wildlife cameraman Ian McCarthy**

**Photo of Waxwing from the exhibition AND Shane Green wood carving of a woodpecker**