



EAST MIDLANDS

East Midlands in Bloom Summer 2020

An Introduction from your Chair:

As we move into late summer we thought we would do an additional newsletter just to let you know we are all still out there doing our Bloomin bit! Covid_19 has stalled us but not fully as you will see in the following pages, communities are still hard at work making their areas colourful, clean and welcoming. We hope to meet with you in November but as time goes on it seems unlikely this will take place in person, we hope to set up a zoom type meeting for those with the technology, we will let you know nearer the time how we intend to do this.

In the meantime we will continue to keep you informed and look forward to a Seminar in February, if we're allowed to that is!

Sharon Sutton

Photo credit: David Neave, Market Bosworth



Positives from Boston

Week five of lockdown & it was all go here for Boston in Bloom. On the Urban Meadow we were busy clearing away fat hen & brambles. We're getting ready for the first stage of our Arts Council grant to install a plinth ready for a buoy, donated by Boston dock, to be installed.

Artwork will be created by Bex Simon an artsmith who has appeared on the BBC one programme Money for Nothing. This is part of our Boston buoys trail project ready for next year.



Paul Collingwood



LEICESTER GROW A RAINBOW CHALLENGE 2020

For years, community groups have clubbed together under the protective wing of Evington in Bloom in their quest for horticultural excellence and blooming beauty throughout the village. Undeterred by the cancellation of the Royal Horticultural Society schemes due to Covid19, our intrepid volunteers from the Evington Ward continue in adversity.

Rainbows have become an important symbol during these challenging times. In the absence of the Bloom scheme this year, we are thrilled that Evington in Bloom support Leicester Grow a Rainbow Challenge 2020. In July, flowering displays have reached their pinnacle of glory, so volunteers have taken photographs of individual flowers in the tubs and gardens. The images are grouped together in this rainbow of flowers. These achievements of Evington in Bloom will be recognised and showcased by the Leicester Environmental Volunteering team at Leicester City Council.

Although some projects have been delayed due to the current circumstances, individual households have been contributing to outdoor public displays whilst observing the pandemic guidelines, to ensure that a rich tapestry of colour around Evington continues to bring smiles to all who pass by.

The flower displays in Evington Village have been looked after by volunteers since 1992 and the tubs and containers continue to increase in number, variation and scale to this day. When you step onto the village green from the main road, the herbaceous bed and borders, which are beautifully tended by Evington in Bloom volunteers, offer colour and form throughout the year. The village hall front gardens continue to evolve and grow in splendour, as do the gardens that surround St Denys Church.

Moving away from the centre of the village towards the City boundary, volunteers look after a Peace Garden on Gamel Road. Just around the corner, the flower displays on Downing Drive and Landscape Drive continue to be looked after by residents and are often included in the East Midlands in Bloom judges' route when they visit.

Although the focus of this article is flowers, I also wish to mention those who look after wildlife gardens, promote and support the heritage of the village and acknowledge the volunteers who litter pick the surrounding streets and open spaces, encouraging us to recycle.

The Evington in Bloom scheme also reaches out to the allotments at Ethel Road and Hilltop, offering Mayflower Primary School additional space to grow flowers, edible produce and learn about wildlife gardening. This passion for gardening and hydroponics continues at Graceworks to spectacular effect.

I am sure the volunteers' flower displays around the Evington Ward over the years have delighted many people. Leicester City Council wishes to acknowledge your wonderful contribution and urges those who may have considered helping to get involved. You would be made most welcome and your weeding, dead heading and watering for a couple of hours a week would support their dedicated team. Whilst it is not possible to mention everyone here and all the projects, you know who you are and you are all immensely valued, thank you.

With grateful thanks to Helen and the Friends of Evington team for all your dedication over the years.

Penny Brown, Volunteer Co-ordinator, Leicester City Council.

Oadby and Wigston

The last two monthly Pride of the Borough Committee meetings have taken place on Zoom. Following our most recent meeting, I have been reminded to update you on one of our activities that sort of falls into your category and that is of the rejuvenation of the pond on the Hill Way Island. The island, which is at the end of a residential cul-de-sac, was one of the first Pride of the Borough initiatives. Earlier in the spring, residents dug out the old small pond creating a larger, more wildlife friendly pond complete with varying levels of water, assorted plants, a board for amphibians to get out of the water and surrounded the site with stones. There is also, of course, a safety notice designed by local children!



David Carter



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IN BLOOM®**
with the RHS

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Further recollections from 12 years as a National Britain in Bloom judge....

Let's all hope that we can get back to really seeing Bloom in action again next year, but in the interim, a few more thoughts about the above, following on from those in the Spring Newsletter. In my first year of National Judging we often used to visit two communities in one day, which could be hectic and involved some careful route planning and checking of options on the part of the RHS before they let the judges loose. My co-judge and I were in Warkworth in Northumberland in the morning, a lovely village, and the tour ended with lunch. The Warkworth team had arranged for a taxi to take us to our next venue (Melrose, a lovely town in the Scottish borders), due to be there for the tour at 16.00 that afternoon. Melrose didn't have a rail station. The taxi turned up, in we got, off he went...after about an hour the driver asked us how to get to Melrose...not ideal since neither of us had a road atlas with us and internet signals in the emptiness of the area were non-existent. We did arrive on time, by the skin of the teeth, based mainly on the description of our venue in their portfolio as being 'nestled between two prominent hills', and judges looking out of the taxi windows!!!



Filby, a very floral village in Norfolk, was (as many villages are) memorable for the individuality of the entry. The main floral features were on the roadside verges passing through the village, brilliant bedding and some high-quality sculptures. A floral boat was particularly striking, and the boat had been 'modified' by the Bloomers to include a high prow...with the intention to indicate Filby's heritage as a Viking community. Just for the judges, two Bloomers had dressed up in armour and helmets, with swords and spears...this is stood at the side of an A-road with all the traffic, and several near-accidents! The armour and weapons lacked a little authenticity, appearing very like left-overs from the film Spartacus...

Tarrington down in Herefordshire were also focused on their heritage, but in this case the judges were taken to meet a very large, but fortunately very docile, Hereford Bull. We were pleased that this was not the mode of transport around the village - which turned out to be 1929 motor car, and a horse-drawn carriage complete with top-hat-and-tails coachpersons and black horses, normally used for funerals...

As judges, we were sent the Portfolios in advance of the judging meaning we were able to 'gen-up' beforehand. One year, a village in the North-West fascinated both of us as the portfolio said we would see a very rare tree that they had been unable to identify, even with the help of the arboricultural officers from the County Council. When we got to the site, my co-judge and I were looking all around for this rarity, and since we couldn't see anything 'odd' we asked the Bloomers. "That's it", said the tour leader, pointing to the (very common) holm oak, *Quercus ilex*. They were quite upset even though we let them down gently.





Bloom judging is perhaps the best 'job' there is in so many ways, as everywhere you visit wants to show off how much they love their community. This is the case at regional level, but much more so nationally, as the entrant is aware you don't know their place. So the 'royal tour' is the norm, and to have personalised guided tours, by enthusiasts, is a delight. Sometimes it goes beyond wonderful, notably when we visited Tresco, entered in the Small Village category by South-West in Bloom. This is, for horticulturists, a trip to paradise even if you go on holiday (as I had back in the early 1990s): to go as a Bloom judge meant a personal guided tour of the island by the Curator of the Abbey Gardens...who then (after the tour was over and done with) asked if we'd like a tour of the Abbey Gardens with him. Our transport wasn't due to leave for a couple of hours, so how could we refuse...

Jeff Bates



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Oasis Community Garden Worksop

Lots happening here with our COVID-19 response project called OPERATION OASIS... giving out food hampers, toiletry/essentials hampers, special surprises kids packs and free seeds. We also gave away 350 bunches of Spring flowers during March/April. We raised £35,000 in grant funding for this project.

Steve Williams



Dates for your Diary:

Obviously all large and small gatherings are currently not permitted so our plans for the presentation have been cancelled and the dates for the committee meeting and AGM will be confirmed nearer the time

16th September 2020 - Presentation at Grimsby - **cancelled**

18th November 2020 - Committee Meeting -**TBC**

24th February 2021 - AGM and Seminar **TBC**



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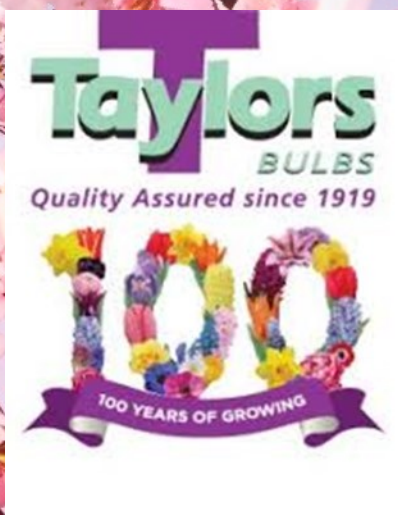
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The Art Department: We opened our doors in 1986. Since that time, we have developed into one of the nation's leading large format graphics providers.



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DART was founded in 1999 to meet a growing demand for work-based training and development. Since then, we have expanded geographically and offer Apprenticeships, Study Programmes, Traineeships, Schools programmes and short courses in Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, the West Midlands Leicestershire, Staffordshire and South Yorkshire. We also provide high quality training within Agriculture, Animal Care, Horticulture, Trees and Timber, Street Scene and Veterinary Nursing .

Thanks for reading

We hope you enjoy this newsletter, any future suggestions / contributions are very welcome, please email ideas to: **secretary@emib.org.uk**

Please find “East Midlands in Bloom” on Facebook and post comments and pictures of your wonderful flora, fauna and people!