



EAST MIDLANDS

East Midlands in Bloom

Winter 2020

Dear Bloom, School and IYN Participant,

I am very pleased to let you know that the In Bloom Competition, School Competition and It's Your Neighbourhood Assessments will be going ahead in 2021.

We are formulating ideas on how this will work and will be liaising with groups and participants in the coming months through both our committee meeting in November and direct correspondence.

We know how much hard work you have put in throughout these challenging times and we know how much joy the campaign brings to people; it has never been more obvious how important community volunteering and a clean and well-maintained open space is, which so many people have been taking advantage of in unprecedented numbers.

The RHS and EMiB will continue to closely follow the Government's latest guidance and the ongoing situation with COVID-19 into the Spring 2021, but either way we will endeavour to carry out judging and assessing in the most considered and safe way for judges and participants.

The EMiB team will continue to work behind the scenes, and will be keeping the webpage and Facebook up to date; we encourage you to download the new marking guidelines to get yourself ready for next year, and don't forget to take plenty of photos of your activities and hard work.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us, please do take care, we hope you will all keep in touch with us.

Sharon Sutton, EMiB Chairman

Hello, I am the Tree of Hope

I signify strength and renewed hope
for the future. I was created by
Duston Parish Council and the local
community: I am made up of
individual components, lovingly
crafted by many local residents.

I am a fabulous piece of art,
celebrating my wonderful community
coming together and remaining strong
during these difficult and
challenging times



UPDATE FROM RHS ON NATIONAL JUDGING FROM KAY CLARK

The RHS have stated there will be no physical judging for Britain in Bloom in 2021, they will contact entrants directly as soon as they know how this will work, at the moment they are proposing a digital platform which will be set up for entrants to submit their entry, which could include a short film and extended portfolio. They also intend the Discretionary awards to be awarded to all entrants. The RHS have also suggested we could increase the number of entrants from five to eight, but more detail is needed before we can confirm this.

The other regions and nations are planning to carry out physical judging or a mixture depending on what happens and where we are with the virus.

It's Your Neighbourhood

The RHS have said they will continue to invest in Bloom moving forward and are fully supporting It's Your Neighbourhood next year which is great news.



Roots of Remembrance

How to get involved

Trees can be any size, shape or variety in order to suit everyone's budgets and capabilities. When trees are planted, we ask that you [complete the survey](#) to let the RHS know where the tree is or will be.

The information will be used to populate a map of the UK, displaying all the trees that have been planted. The map will represent all the contributions made to the natural world in the memory of those lost during the pandemic.

The RHS communities team would also love to hear a bit more about your tree and who it is planted for. You might like to use the [downloadable plaque](#) to write your loved ones' name on, and share a picture of your tree planting on social media, using the hashtag **#rootsofremembrance**, or you could email your photo and a short description of your tree and who it remembers to communities@rhs.org.uk

Find out more here: <https://www.rhs.org.uk/get-involved/community-gardening/remembrance>

The Woodland Trust, is offering free trees to community groups and schools, with the next delivery in March, which should still offer you a good planting window. [Apply by January 5th here](#) to take up this offer, and please mention the RHS in your application.



Sunflower Competition 2020



We had a few entries for our sunflower competition, each entry showed the difference that sunflowers can make to a garden/area, either by showing its height or being showy with their many heads.

Moonshine sent in by Irene won the tallest sunflower and Stamford won the most heads. Well done also to Boston, Market Harborough and Market Bosworth for their entries. Each entry received a certificate of thanks.

Thank you everyone for taking part

Bosworth's Sunflowers



**Jessica Allen's (Aged 10) Sunflower
from Market Harborough**



"Moonshine"
By: Irene Bates





EAST MIDLANDS

FUTURE DATES 2021:

24/02/2021 AGM 10am via Zoom

10/03/2021 Judges meeting 7.30pm via Zoom

24/03/2021 Seminar 10am via Zoom

07/04/2021 Assessors meeting 7.30pm via Zoom

Details for these meetings will be sent via email

Presentation to be held on 21/09/21 in Grimsby



A message of optimism from Patience Atkinson-Gregory, Amberol's MD
(www.amberol.co.uk)

It's been a difficult year for everyone. With cancelled Britain in Bloom competitions, regional and national lockdowns and the demands of social distancing, many groups across the East Midlands have been finding it challenging to plant up and maintain public areas. However, it seems that where there's a will, there's a way, no matter what the circumstances. At Amberol, we have observed throughout the year that many of our local customers have 'kept calm and kept on planting' - all within the essential health and safety regulations around lockdown and social distancing of course. And so, after a short factory closure in March, we were delighted to open up and continue manufacturing self-watering planters and litter bins for our customers. In fact, despite the challenges, looking back over the year, there have also been numerous high points to celebrate.

Inspiring each other

Having commemorated 50 years in business in 2019, we were delighted to mark the occasion by releasing our free Inspired Plant-Ups guide during the summer. The downloadable booklet celebrates the inventiveness and imagination of our customers, containing a range of colourful examples of different planting schemes to inspire, as well as offering handy tips for planting, design and displays. Perfect for perusing during the winter months when planning for 2021, the booklet can be downloaded for free by going to www.amberol.co.uk/downloads/inspired-plantups



Leighton Blooms



Reasons to be cheerful in 2020 continued

Green is good for you

Autumn marked the publication of another project that we were very happy to be involved in:

The project was a study carried out by the Royal Horticultural Society and a collaboration of Universities (Sheffield, Westminster and Virginia) to investigate the link between green spaces and mental health. A highly topical issue for 2020, the report demonstrated that having a greener front garden can make people feel happier, more relaxed and closer to nature. We were pleased to be able to support this very worthwhile project by donating a number of free and cost price self-watering barrel planters which were distributed across areas with high levels of deprivation. Now an RHS Wellbeing Fellow, Dr Lauriane Suyin Chalmin-Pui conducted the research as part of her PhD. Dr Chalmin-Pui's results suggested a significant link between stress reduction and having access to green spaces like front gardens. Such research is important in helping to inform how living spaces should be designed and built in the future.



Norwich planters

Reasons to be cheerful in 2020 continued

Competition updates

Regular readers of our newsletters and social media will know that we run competitions throughout the year as a way of thanking customers for their support. One of our favourite competitions this year has been the 'Name the birdie' challenge for our one-off chocolate orange bird bin – eventually named Chomp by the winner, Shirley Tuck of Blundeston in Bloom. We hear reports that Chomp has proved very popular with children and adults alike in his new home – and is busy gobbling up all the rubbish - as befits his name.

We have also revamped our annual photo competition for 2020 which will now be running all year round. This means that entries for our customer galleries can be submitted at any time throughout the year via the online form on the Amberol website www.amberol.co.uk.

Winning photos will be awarded £200 worth of Amberol vouchers to spend on any rotationally moulded product.

Social distancing in style

At Amberol, we are frequently amazed by the imagination of our customers, and one such example of innovation has been the use of our large floor standing planters to act as floral barriers to ensure social distancing. Products such as the square, promenade and parade planters which can interlock, have been used to create walkways in pedestrian areas or to block off streets that are closed to traffic in order to free up pedestrian space in areas of high footfall. Floral planters are certainly an attractive alternative to rows of bare fencing – and we all need a little colour to brighten our lives in these difficult times.

And so, we head into 2021 with some much-needed good news about vaccines and a cautious sense of optimism. Although we have been unable to meet up with you all in person as we so enjoy doing, we have continued to support East Midlands in Bloom as best we can, including through sponsorship and staying in touch.

We would also like to assure customers and friends from In Bloom groups across the East Midlands that we are excited at the prospect of working with you during 2021 – and helping to spread some blooming beauty across the region.

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in the UK
we have over
150 years
manufacturing
experience.



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CROW WOOD CIC

Kate Ball and Katy Doncaster started up their not-for-profit company, Crow Wood CIC, in June 2019, with the intention of running horticultural and creative sessions with vulnerable adults and children and the local community:

"We were able to move onto our inner-city allotment site in November 2019 and with our home educating families and other volunteers, we managed to make fencing, move the shed, build another shed, move fruit trees and make raised beds before lockdown in March."

During lockdown, Kate and Katy could still work on the site, but not together or with volunteers. They planted up the raised beds, installed the beautiful new greenhouse (which they had Lottery funding for) and also acquired another plot, which was mostly laid down to vines!

Throughout the summer, they have been able to run volunteer, one to one, and home education sessions, as these have all been exempt from the various lockdown regulations and have provided valuable respite and support for people.

They do lots of horticultural activities and the greenhouse doubles up as a workshop space, from which they run home education art sessions, which form part of these children's core curriculum.

In some of their sessions, they like to do cooking, especially using things that have been grown on the allotment – apple fritters have been very popular, as well as haloumi and chard filled pittas! All of the recipes (there are many!) are published on [Crow Wood's website blog](#), so please do take a look. Crow Wood also has a large volunteer group of local residents who have taken over the care of an area of greenspace, and a separate volunteer community project is the development of a new 'Friends Of' group for the local park.

In the New Year, they also will be using the allotment site for University of Derby students, to deliver sessions about outdoor education, as well working with a local disability support organisation, helping them to develop their brand new garden, just a short walk from the allotment site.

Although the year didn't quite start as they imagined, it has certainly developed in interesting ways and they are thrilled to be working with so many different people on such diverse projects!



Education: Using the outdoors to support pupils return to school and your Bloom entry

The impending return in September 2020 to school, to college or university was a great cause of anxiety for many. You may know or have children or grandchildren who had worries about being back in an educational setting- whether they be a pupil or a member of staff. We are all under no illusion that all educational establishments are under enormous pressure to keep young people safe whilst also trying to continue providing them with an education. Further, there are many reports about young people worried about falling behind, altered friendships the worry of mixing with people again and catching the virus alongside the worry of spreading it to loved ones in their family and community.

We as members of EMIB are aware, through many years of promoting the benefits of outdoor learning in school, our own love of gardens and gardening, of the positive effect it has on well being no matter of age and experience. So we encourage you as Bloom groups across the East Midlands to keep in touch with your local schools as they, as you will not be surprised, have had an upsurge, particularly in Primary schools in the development of more lesson time outdoors. They are an important part of the community so please contact them to perhaps be a part of your Bloom effort or to encourage them to celebrate their work by entering the School competition element in 2021.

More information will appear on the website as time unfolds

Emma Schofield, Vice-chair EMiB/Schools Co-ordinator



GROBY ROAD ALLOTMENT – LEICESTER

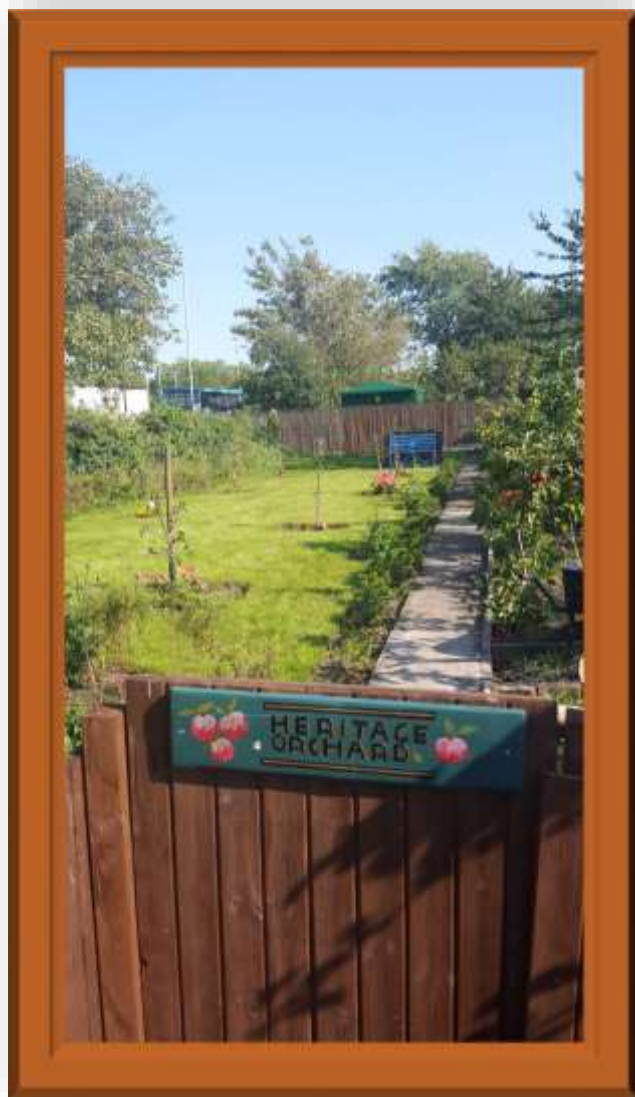
We've had some moments of excitement on site this year. Early on we began to establish a Community Heritage Orchard on a small plot that we were unable to let. We had a Ward Grant award from our local councillors which started the ball rolling. Then Western Power installed some new equipment on their mini-power station next to our new orchard and donated enough money to our society to buy two apple trees for us.

We were able to plant all our trees and put down turf around them before lockdown in March. We have been able to maintain the orchard with volunteers over the summer. We are looking forward to a wassail sometime over Christmas to wake the trees into production next year!

Unfortunately we were unable to gift our produce from our Get Growing plot, supported by the Leicester City Council project, to the Red Cross but we were able to distribute the crops to new members on site, while they wait for their plots to get going.

Our society members have been following guidelines and have enjoyed having the "green space" to visit and fresh fruit and vegetables to take home. Due to guidelines we have been unable to have any open days but did our Kings Seeds sponsored "heaviest pumpkin" competition as a virtual event and presented trophies to our winners.

Looking forward to getting our Peace Garden planted ready for In Bloom judges next year.



CHRISTINE BRADLEY